



Our Polish ANCESTORS



THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

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From Black Diamonds to Ball Diamonds - Stanley Coveleski and the Major League

By Trina Goss Galauner

As summer comes to a close major league baseball playoffs begin with the culmination being the World Series game in late October. Cleveland has only won two World Series championships, in 1920 and 1948. Our Cleveland Indians have tried unsuccessfully to regain the title these past 60 years. Perhaps this will be our year.

The Polish American researcher, Arthur L. Waldo, claims that Poles were the first to play a form of baseball on American soil. The first Polish immigrants that came to Jamestown in 1608 brought with them a popular Silesian folk game called "palant" or "piłka palantowa" which meant "bat ball". In Zbigniew Stefanski's 1625 memoir he states, "Soon after the new year, I, Sadowski, Mata, Mientus, Stoika, and Zrenica initiated a ball game played with a bat...Most often we played this game on Sundays. We rolled rags to make the balls."

So maybe it is natural that so many major league baseball players are born of Polish blood. Two hundred and fifty years later, a new set of Polish immigrants arrived in the U.S. for similar reasons, work, freedom and the pursuit of the American dream. A Pole from the area of Suwałki, near the border of modern day Lithuania, named Antoni Kowalewski, arrived in the U.S. in 1872. Work in the coal mines of north-eastern Pennsylvania drew him and many other Poles to pursue the American dream. Shortly after, on July 16, 1873, his wife, Antonia (also called Anna), arrived on the Steamer Frisia in New York. The two would make their home in Shamokin, PA and

Antoni would work as a coal miner at the Luke Fidler colliery.

The couple had 8 children in Shamokin, 5 boys and 3 girls. But the American dream wasn't as easy to obtain as was thought. A coal miner's life involved long hours and very dangerous working conditions. Mine explosions were always a

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Postcard of the Luke Fidler Breaker in Shamokin, PA

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Welcome

If you are not already a member of the PGSGC and would like to become one and receive this quarterly newsletter (cost is \$24.00 per year), please contact Anthonette Baciak at arbaciak@aol.com for more information.





Letter from the President

Summer has just about gone and it's getting to be that time when we put away our summer toys and tools and get back into our normal everyday all year activities.

Our monthly meetings have started again, beginning with our September meeting, and we look forward to hearing from those of our membership that traveled to Poland this summer. If YOU have made the trip back to your homeland and are one of those who are unable to attend our meetings in person, we would very much like to hear from you about your travels and discoveries.

I hope that your summer included at least a stab at doing some research for the missing links in your personal family history. On a personal level, I continue to ram at the "brick wall" that shields the ancestors of my 3x great grandfather, Antoni Krajczynski, who died in 1812 at the age of 42. If this record is correct, it should lead to his birth in about 1770 but I still cannot find any records dating to this time in Mazowieckie. In finding his birth record I would hope to find the names of his parents which would open up another generation of Krajczynskis. I still check genealogy websites daily to see if transcribers in Poland have added any new findings to their websites. If any of you have any thoughts about how I should proceed I would very much like to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Ron Kraine

CHECK OUT OUR



PGSGC Website is BACK!

After several months of being down, our Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland website is back up and running. Rootsweb had a security breach back in the fall of 2017 of which they had to take all their content offline and rebuild a secure platform. Don't worry, if you visited our site you are safe. With the new platform, our website address has now changed. The new address is.....

sites.rootsweb.com/~ohpgsgc

Please update your bookmarks on your computer, laptop or iphone/ipad.

Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland

c/o St. Mary's PNC Church

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Remember When: Cursive Writing

by John A. Prokop

The other day I sent a greeting card to a relative. There were no lines just a blank space on the inside. As I wrote on the empty space, I used my best penmanship (cursive writing). Despite the absence of lines, I wrote out my thoughts and feelings in a neat and legible manner with each row of words perfectly straight across the card. As I continued to write and fill up the blank space, it dawned on me that personal written communication is a disappearing art form replaced by texting, printing, email and voice mail. No longer do people want to take the time or make the effort to use handwritten communication. When I finished writing on the card, I thought back to when I was at St. Casimir School and learned cursive writing in “Penmanship” class. If I’m not mistaken, we learned the “Palmer Method” of handwriting in the third grade.

Third grade was the year we transitioned from the primary grades into the elementary ones. The transition was carefully thought out and planned. Nothing was ever random learning at St. Casimir's School. Our lessons were all part of a well-designed curriculum to discipline not only our thoughts but also our behaviors and study habits. Since we had accomplished the tasks of printing the alphabet and words it was time to move forward to the next competency level of communication which was writing. The lessons of the penmanship class were, 1) stay on the lines, 2) connect all the dots, and 3) bridge all the letters.

We were issued special pads of lined and dotted paper and number 2 Laddie pencils topped with large erasers. The erasers were important because if mistakes were made they were simply erased and we started over using the same sheet of paper. “Waste not, want not,” Sister told us. The purpose of cursive writing was to learn a faster, more efficient way to communicate. After all, there was so much to learn and so little time. We needed this essential skill to assist us in expanding and training our brains. We began learning the “Palmer Method” by drawing smooth, connected circles. Afterwards came the loops, squiggles, and curls, followed by the letter tails. Let's not forget about the slant to the right, which facilitated spacing and sequence properties. It was almost like learning a new language.

Once we mastered cursive writing, it became our primary form of written communication. Suddenly, book reports became due weekly, and it seemed every subject required one. Spelling words and themes had to be written. It was called “homework,” and all of it had to be written in longhand. The sisters told us our handwriting was a reflection of our personal character and we would be judged accordingly. Sloppy penmanship reflected a sloppy and disorganized student. Neat penmanship reflected the opposite. Every elementary grade classroom had the entire alphabet in cursive writing posted in the front of the room to constantly remind us what good penmanship looked like. We even had a place for a grade on our report card for “penmanship”.

Years later, when writing something in cursive, occasionally someone would ask me, “What Catholic school did you attend?” I guess the adage is true, “it takes one to know one.” Interesting how we can be connected through one’s handwriting.

Recently, while discussing my mother's polish kielbasa and pierogi recipes, I mentioned they were handwritten by mother. My brother asked for a copy and I agreed to make a copy for him. When I found the recipes, I was shocked to see that her handwriting looked very similar to mine. Then I thought, that shouldn't be a surprise. After all, she also was a graduate of St. Casimir School, Class of 1941.

When a communication is written in handwriting, it takes on a special meaning. Because my mother's recipes were written especially to me from her, they are a personal treasure and connect us forever. Many thanks to St. Casimir School for teaching my mother, my family, myself, and thousands of other students to master the valuable skill of cursive writing.



From Black Diamonds to Ball Diamonds continued from page 1.....

threat.

The Kowalewski family lived in the company-owned housing of the Mineral Railroad and Mining Company. Antoni's earnings went toward union dues and company store debt leaving the family with very little for anything else. It was necessary for his boys to quit school and go to work at the colliery at a very young age. Antoni and Anna's sons started work as "breaker boys" or "slate pickers", as early as the age of 12, for \$3.75 per week, 11 hours a day, 6 days per week. As a breaker boy, one would sit on a wood seat picking out slate and debris from the coal as it was sifted through the coal breaker. The only time they saw the sun was on Sunday. That was the day they could play ball. Their escape from the coal mines was at the sand lot.

A semi-professional baseball league arose out of the coal dust of northeastern Pennsylvania. Coal companies supported baseball as a pastime for their workers. It provided healthy competition and an outlet for the frustrations of the miners. Local churches sponsored teams and games were played Sunday afternoons after services. These hometown teams were very competitive and attracted many fans and spectators in addition to scouts looking for young, fresh talent.

Antoni and Anna's eldest son, Jacob, born in 1876, wanted to play baseball in an organized league. Of all of Antoni's sons he was considered the best pitcher. But the Spanish-American War interrupted his dreams of a baseball career and the U.S. Army called him to serve. As part of the 21st infantry, Company E, he was sent to the Philippine Islands when the U.S. annexed the colony. He, unfortunately like many soldiers during that time, contracted dysentery while in the tropics and died in a Philippine hospital in October of 1899. In the service, Jacob's surname was "Americanized" to Coveleski (also spelled Covaleski or Coveleskie). The rest of his brothers would from then on spell it the same.

Second son, Frank, born in 1881, was working as a coal miner by the time he was 18 and pitched for the local Shamokin team. Frank worked his way up to the International league and then to the Federal league, a self-proclaimed major league, which was considered an "outlaw" club by the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues. Early rheumatism ended Frank's baseball career.

Third son, John, born in 1884, began picking slate at age 14. Also a ball player, he was a third baseman and outfielder. In 1908, he played for Shamokin in the Atlantic League and, from 1909 to 1911, played in the Tri-State minor league for the Lancaster Red Roses. He hopped around the minor leagues but never made it to the majors. After his last minor league season in 1917, he opened a cigar store in Shamokin.

Fourth son, Harry, born in 1886, started out as a slate picker at age 13 and was promoted to mule driver. He was nicknamed "Donkey Boy" because he drove the mules that carried supplies in and out of the mines. Harry had the most promising career of the Coveleski boys as he was discovered by a scout for the St. Louis Cardinals in 1907 while pitching for the Bunker Hills sandlot team in Shamokin. He was offered a chance to play in New Jersey and while there caught the eye of the Philadelphia Phillies who offered a \$250 per month contract for the 1908 season. He played for the Lancaster minor league team and the Phillies called him up late in the season in their bid for the national championship. Harry's extraordinary showing, where he virtually single-handedly shut down the New York Giants chances for the title, earned him the nickname "The Giant Killer".

Harry peaked early but managed to play in the major league for several years including seasons with the Cincinnati Reds and the Detroit Tigers where he spent the last 5 years of his career. Pitching arm problems plagued him over the years and in 1919 he hung up his professional glove. He worked in Michigan for some time then came home to Shamokin where he joined the police force and later operated his own tavern which was called "The Giant Killer".

Stanley's story is perhaps the most fruitful of all the Coveleski brothers. The youngest son of Antoni and Anna, who was born July 13, 1889 in Shamokin, followed in his brothers' footsteps working as a slate picker and later



hauling timber for the miners while he honed his baseball skills at home. He would “put a tin can on a log, or tie it to a tree, and stand maybe 40 or 50 feet away and throw stones at it”. He became so good at it that he “could hit one of those cans blindfolded”.

At one of the local Sunday afternoon games in Shamokin, teenaged Stan was standing on the sidelines throwing a ball with a friend. The Bunker Hills team needed a pitcher so they asked Stan to fill in. He pitched the next 5 games for the team. Soon after, Stan and his brother, John, were at the movies and an announcement was made that “If Mr. Coveleski is in the house, he is wanted at the box office.” Not knowing which brother was wanted, they both went to the box office where Marty Hogan, the manager of the Lancaster Baseball Club of the Tri-State League, was waiting for them. He asked Stan if he would sign with Lancaster for \$250 per month. Stan, a shy young man, was reluctant and only agreed when the manager offered his older brother, John, a contract as well. Stan had “never



1909 Lancaster Red Roses Baseball Team
Stanley Coveleski, fourth from the left



Harry Coveleski (left) of the Detroit Tigers and
Stan Coveleski (right) of the Cleveland Indians in 1916
National Baseball Hall of Fame Library

been out of Shamokin before or ever on a train” in his life. When he went to Lancaster he was even too timid to eat with the team at the hotel. Some called him “The Silent Pole” because he was so bashful and quiet. But Stan made a name for himself while playing for Lancaster and, in 1909, won the Lancaster Red Roses the Tri-State League banner.

Shortly after the death of his mother in 1912, Stan got his major league break. Connie Mack, manager of the Philadelphia Athletics, asked him to come out and play for the team. After a few games, Mack decided that his rookie needed more “seasoning” and sent him to play for the Spokane Indians minor league team. Stan, with his new bride Mary Shivetts (Sewiec), packed up and headed out to Spokane. It was there where he developed his famed “spitball” pitch which he would become known for. In 1914, after a stellar two seasons with Spokane, he was traded to the Portland Beavers.

Stan’s respectable career with Portland led him to be purchased by the Cleveland Indians in 1916. He was scheduled to pitch the first game of that season against his brother, Detroit Tigers Harry Coveleski, but the brothers refused to ever compete against each other and the league never made them do it.

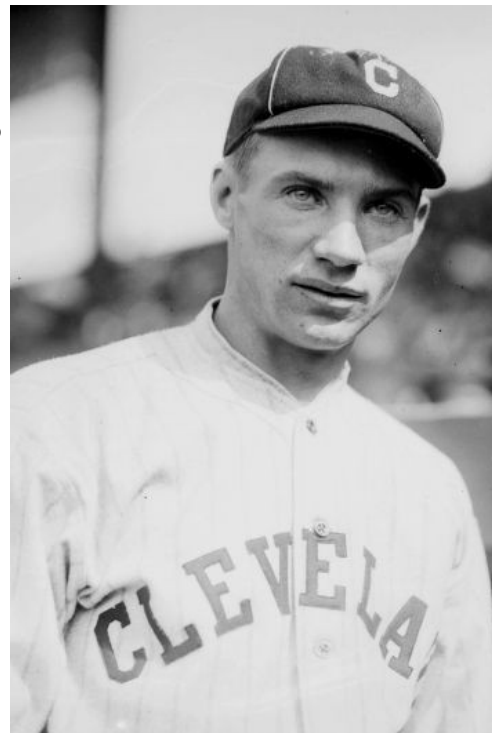
Stan claims he never looked for a strikeout and in many



innings didn't throw more than three pitches. He credits this pitching endurance to having good control. "If you have control, you can pick through the weaknesses and have no trouble at all", he said in an interview in 1969. He had tremendous control over his spitball. Stan claims to have "made a hitter out of Babe Ruth". The famed major league baseball player once told Coveleski that he was "the toughest pitcher he ever faced".

The spitball was banned by the league after the 1919 season but Coveleski was grandfathered in as teams were allowed two pitchers each to continue to use it. During the early 1920 baseball season, tragedy struck when his wife, Mary, died unexpectedly in May of pulmonary tuberculosis. Stan mourned the loss of his wife in Shamokin then returned to Cleveland in June. After this tragic loss he would reach the pinnacle of his baseball career later that season.

Coveleski became the starting pitcher for Cleveland in August and helped them win the American League pennant. Moving on to the 1920 World Series he beat Brooklyn three times allowing only two runs in 27 innings. In the final game of the series, Coveleski threw a complete game shutout giving Cleveland a 3-0 victory and the first World Series championship in franchise history. Coveleski had a remarkable 0.67 ERA which still stands as a World Series record.



Stan Coveleski, pitcher for Cleveland
ca 1920

Stan played another four seasons for the Indians during which time he married Frances Shivetts in 1922, the sister of his deceased wife, who had been raising his boys since Mary died. Coveleski played for the Washington Senators from 1925-27 and the New York Yankees in 1928. His father, Anthony, died in March of 1929 from long standing anthracosis, also called black lung disease, a typical cause of death for miners who had inhaled coal dust for years. Stan retired from baseball, returned home to Shamokin and opened a gas station. In the mid 1930s, he moved his family to South Bend, Indiana. Post baseball, Stan lived a quiet life and enjoyed fishing and teaching the local youngsters how to pitch.

Stan Coveleski was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1969 and into the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame in 1976. As his health declined, he moved to a local nursing home where he died in 1984 at the ripe old age of 94. In 1987, a minor league baseball stadium was built in downtown South Bend for the South Bend White Sox. It was named the Stanley Coveleski Regional Stadium but better known as "The Cove".

Stanley Coveleski found a way out of the coal mine and managed to grasp the American dream in the form of a baseball. To him, it was a way to make a living, he just happened to enjoy doing it. But maybe that's what the American dream is all about.

SOURCES:

Diamonds in the Coalfields by William C. Kashatus, 2002

Chasing the American Dream – Polish Americans in Sports by Thomas M. Tarapacki, 1995

WISL Tom Kutza interview with Stan Coveleski, 1969

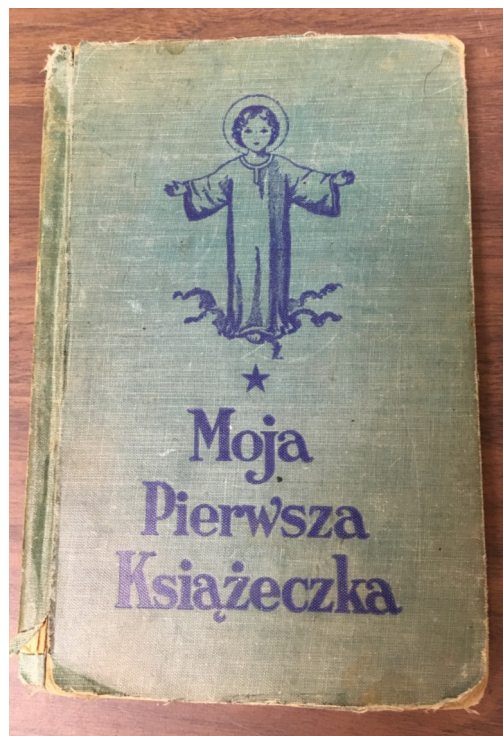
National Baseball Hall of Fame interview with Stan Coveleski, 1981

Deadball Stars of the American League by David Jones, 2006



Polish Family Heirlooms

This primary school Polish language book was used by Berni Sak O'Malley when she attended school at St. Adalbert's in Berea in the 1940s.



Annual Polish Dinner Meeting

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

St. Mary's Polish National Church
(basement dining room)

Once again, our PGSGC club will hold our "Annual Polish Dinner Meeting" featuring all sorts of homemade traditional Polish foods such as kielbasa, sauerkraut, stuffed cabbage and other Polish specialties. A short business meeting will begin at 6:00pm SHARP with the buffet dinner starting at 7:00pm. Cost is **\$10.00 per person** and guests are welcome. Reservations are required! The sign up sheet will be available at our monthly meetings. Contact Anthonette with what you will bring and please consider volunteering for table set up and tear down.

Persons whose last name begins with A-L are asked to bring an appetizer/salad to share.

Persons whose last name begins with M-Z are asked to bring a dessert to share.

PGSGC Facebook Page News!

Our Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland Facebook page membership has now increased to 360 members! Join this growing online community and meet even more researchers of Polish Cleveland!



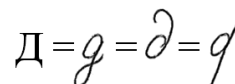
Breaking the Code Russian Cyrillic Handwriting - Part 2 - Ordinal Numbers

By Trina Goss Galauner

In Russian Poland, Polish was the official language for vital records from 1808 to 1868. But, after 1868, Russian was the official language. Therefore, vital records were written in Russian Cyrillic handwriting.

In the second part of this three part tutorial we will concentrate on ordinal numbers in order to recognize the numerical date of baptism, marriage or death in Russian Cyrillic vital records. The numerical day, month and year are not always in this order but generally the date of the event will be found in the first or second line of the entry.

It is important to note differences in lettering. The Russian letter Д found in many of the numbers can look like an English cursive “g” or “d” or a combination of the two.



Also, the Russian letter Т can look like an English cursive “m” or “y”. Т = m = y

So keep an open mind, the number may not be immediately recognizable. Look at the handwritten number in the documents before and after the one in question to help determine the exact date.

Use the chart on page 10 to translate the numerical day in the following Polish vital records. The answers can be found on page 11. Good luck!

1871 Baptismal Record from Skrwilno

№ 299
 Осталось в Скрвилно тридцать первого Декабря месяца во время
 Прозвучено сего семнадцатого первого года в первый час по полудни. Явился
 лично Адамъ Владиславъ (Adam Kablocki) работникъ двадцать пяти
 леть мителъ вельможъ в Прозвучено в присутствіи Иона Вина
 невскаго (Іона Winiuskiego) тридцати леть, и макте Симона
 Новичиса (Симона Nowickiego) тридцати леть работникъ
 мителъ вельможъ в Прозвучено, и предъавилъ Намъ младенца
 текаго пара, объявивъ, что оный родился в Прозвучено двад
 цать девятого Декабря текущаго года в седьмой час вечера
 отъ законной его жены Анны (Анны) урожденной Каминской
 (Kaminskiej) двадцать семи леть отъ роду. Младенцу отцу при
 Свѣтѣ Крещенія совершено въ сего числа дано имя Фран
 циска (Франциска) Косевицкиана его баба Симонъ Нович
 ий (Симонъ Nowicki) и Франциска Заблоцкая (Франциска Ка
 блоцкая). Актъ сей предъавленъ и объявленъ въ присутствіи
 Намъ прочитанъ и записанъ Намъ подписанъ



Russian Handwriting - Ordinal Numbers

by Trina Goss Galauner

English	Russian Print	Russian Script
first	первого	<i>первого</i>
second	второго	<i>второго</i>
third	третьего	<i>третьего</i>
fourth	четвёртого	<i>четвертого</i>
fifth	пятого	<i>пятого</i>
sixth	шестого	<i>шестого</i>
seventh	седьмого	<i>седьмого</i>
eighth	восьмого	<i>восьмого</i>
ninth	девятого	<i>девятого</i>
tenth	десятого	<i>десятого</i>
eleventh	одиннадцатого	<i>одиннадцатого</i>
twelfth	двенадцатого	<i>двенадцатого</i>
thirteenth	тринадцатого	<i>тринадцатого</i>
fourteenth	четырнадцатого	<i>четырнадцатого</i>
fifteenth	пятнадцатого	<i>пятнадцатого</i>
sixteenth	шестнадцатого	<i>шестнадцатого</i>
seventeenth	семнадцатого	<i>семнадцатого</i>
eighteenth	восемнадцатого	<i>восемнадцатого</i>
nineteenth	девятнадцатого	<i>девятнадцатого</i>
twentieth	двадцатого	<i>двадцатого</i>
twenty first	двадцать первого	<i>двадцать первого</i>
thirtieth	тридцатого	<i>тридцатого</i>
thirty first	тридцать первого	<i>тридцать первого</i>



Welcome — New Member — Witamy

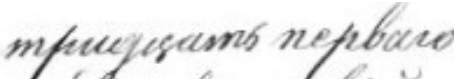
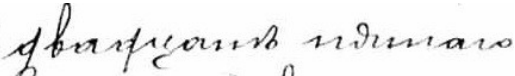
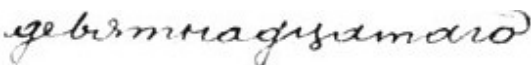
Kathy Krieger-Caja	echobase57@aol.com	Krieger (Krygier), Derbin, Czajkowski, Krajewski, Szymanowicz, Caja (Czaya), Morick, Hnat
Diane Dodge	7775 Brecksville Road., Brecksville, Ohio 44141	Sucharski, Wisniewski, Michalski, Dora, Zuchowski
Wayne Hacholski	256 S. Wrightwood St., Orange, CA 92869 mathac@earthlink.net	Chocholek, Czajka, Bajor, Basara, Trznadel, Michnal, Koza, Marek, Dabrowska, Gutowna, Mysliwiec, Mastey, Jakubek, Majka, Bielawa, Niedbalec, Gawenda

Catholic Heritage Archive

Findmypast.com is enlarging its *Catholic Heritage Archive*, which intends to become, “the most comprehensive online collection of Roman Catholic records for the USA, Britain and Ireland”, containing one hundred million records. The site’s front page claims, “Most of these records have never been accessible before by the public - either offline or online.”

Go to <https://www.findmypast.com/catholicrecords> and sign in or subscribe. Alternatively, use this pay site free at an LDS Church Family History Center; find one near you by going to <https://www.familysearch.org/locations/> and typing a zip code into the search box.

Answers: Russian Cyrillic Handwriting - Part 2 - Ordinal Numbers

- 1) Thirty first 
- 2) Twenty fifth 
- 3) Nineteenth 

Schedule of Presentations for Upcoming Meetings

Oct: **Best Polish Genealogical Strategies**

Join Jonathan Shea and Lisa A. Alzo on this hour-long journey to find your roots in Poland. We'll explore both online and traditional methods for tracking down Polish record resources, translating records, and discuss how to contact Polish archives and repositories. Recorded video.

Nov: **Annual Party**

Come join us for our annual pot luck dinner. It's a feast of homemade Polish cooking. No one goes away hungry and you have a great opportunity to try other families' long kept secret recipes.

Dec: **Ask An Ancestor**

If you could ask an ancestor one question, who would you pick and what would you ask?

The Polish Genealogical
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**Polish Genealogical Society of
Greater Cleveland**

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Visit us on the web at:
sites.rootsweb.com/~ohpgsgc

Please submit all correspondence to:
PGSGC Newsletter
c/o the return address above

About Us

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at St. Mary's PNC Church parish hall, 5375 Broadview Rd., Parma, Ohio. We have summer break in July and August. St. Mary's is located on the corner of Broadview Rd. and Wexford Ave. in Parma, Ohio. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM and are usually over by 9:00 PM. There is ample parking in the parish parking lot. The entrance is on Marietta Ave. Membership dues are \$24.00 per calendar year.

At many of our meetings, we have guest speakers who address the group on subjects in which we have an interest. The subjects may include genealogical matters, Polish history, heritage and traditions. When we do not have a guest speaker, we have "**Show and Tell**" nights when fellow members discuss their genealogical problems, ask for advice from anyone with a similar problem, tell us of their discoveries, or let us know what they've learned about their ancestors.

Our group maintains a library which is a popular resource our members enjoy. It contains various books, maps, pamphlets and newsletters from other genealogical groups. Materials can be borrowed from the library for a period of one month. We employ the honor system with regard to borrowing of books and other related materials.

We also keep a surname research list. This list includes the surnames of our ancestors which our active members are researching. In the past, members have discovered that they were investigating names that other members were also researching.

We publish a quarterly twelve page newsletter entitled, *Our Polish Ancestors*. Articles for the newsletter are selected that are of interest to our membership. Many are based on materials gathered from the many fine research facilities in and around the Greater Cleveland area, such as: The Cleveland Public Library, The Western Reserve Historical Society, The Cuyahoga County Archives, The Family History Centers and the many Polish-American churches in this part of northern Ohio. Articles written by our membership are always welcome.