

## **Kosciuszko Day Report 2009**

On Saturday, February 7, 2009, Polish American pride was once again highlighted as people gathered to recognize the accomplishments of General Thaddeus Kosciuszko, an American Revolutionary War Hero and Freedom Fighter for Poland. The 12 noon Tribute Ceremony took place in the Betsy Ross Ballroom of the Holiday Inn Hotel, 4th and Arch Streets in Historic Philadelphia. Michael Blichasz, President of the Polish American Congress, Eastern Pennsylvania District, conducted the program welcoming elected officials, representatives from Polish American organizations, Polish & American army veterans, Frankford High School JROTC, Archbishop Ryan High School Band, General Thaddeus Kosciuszko, portrayed by Richard Klimek and Irene Darlak, who sang the Polish and American national anthems. Various federal, state and city of Philadelphia greetings were acknowledged. Special guests for the ceremony included Pennsylvania 7th District Congressman Joseph Sestak, Philadelphia City Controller Alan Butkowitz and Philadelphia Councilman at large, Bill Greenlee, as well as former city controller, Jonathan Saidel and William Piszek, President of the Copernicus Foundation. Children from St. Adalbert Polish Language School, under the direction of Maria Koleda, performed during the the ceremony and luncheon.

Following the ceremony, the Kosciuszko Day Luncheon took place in the Franklin, Jefferson & Hancock Ballrooms of the Holiday Inn Hotel. Michael Blichasz, President of the Polish American Congress thanked all for attending Kosciuszko Day, including the coordinating committee: Theresa Romanowski, Vice President of the PAC, Richard Klimek, PAC Secretary, Henry Cieplinski, PAC Communications, Msgr. Francis Feret, Pastor of St. Adalbert Church and PAC Vice Chaplain, Rev. Krzysztof Mendelewski, Pastor of St. Valentine Church, and Kosciuszko Day Committee members, Caroline Ciesielka, Jean McCloskey, and Judge Bernice Soban DeAngelis, who swore in the officers of the Polish American Congress for 2009.

To all who assisted the officers of the Polish American Congress, Eastern Pennsylvania District with this event, attended the 2009 Kosciuszko Day program and offered financial support as sponsors and patrons, the Polish American Congress, Eastern Pennsylvania District extends a sincere thank you. *Dziękujemy bardzo!*