

Polonia Congratulates Captain Christopher Ferguson



The Polish American community proudly salutes NASA astronaut Christopher Ferguson (Captain, USN), pilot of the Space Shuttle Atlantis on its most recent mission and a Polish American with roots in Philadelphia. Son of Ian Ferguson (deceased) and Mary Ann (Florkowski) Pietras, Captain Ferguson graduated from Archbishop Ryan High School and earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Drexel University and an M.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School.

Following extensive pilot training in a variety of schools, he attended the Navy Fighter Weapon School (TOPGUN) and later served as an instructor at the Naval Test Pilot School. Following deployments to the North Atlantic, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, Western Pacific and Persian Gulf, Captain Ferguson was selected by NASA for the space program in 1998. After two years of training and evaluation, he was assigned to technical duties in the Astronaut Office Spacecraft Systems/Operations Branch involving the Shuttle Main Engine, External Tank, Solid Rocket Boosters and Shuttle Software. The crew of the Atlantis installed solar panels on the International Space Station to double the outpost's ability to generate power from sunlight.

We join the Ferguson, Cabot, Pietras, Florkowski, Gawronski and Jachimonowicz families in recognizing his accomplishments.

**2006 Polish American Heritage Month
Coloring Contest Artwork**

This artwork depicts the First Meeting of Benjamin Franklin and Casimir Pulaski in Paris, France, in 1777.

Artwork Prepared by Walter Cichocki



Pulaski Meets Franklin

In 1777, Benjamin Franklin an American diplomat, and Casimir Pulaski, an exiled freedom fighter from Poland, met in Paris, France. Realizing that Pulaski's military skill would be a great asset to the American Revolution, Franklin persuaded him to come to America to aid the colonies in their quest for independence. Following their meeting, Franklin wrote to George Washington, describing the young Pole as "an officer, renowned throughout Europe for the courage and bravery he displayed in defense of his homeland, Poland," and informed Washington of Pulaski's willingness to join the fight for America's freedom.

When Pulaski arrived in Philadelphia in 1777, he met General George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. Later, at the Battle of Brandywine, he came to the aid of Washington's forces and distinguished himself as a brilliant military tactician. For his efforts, Congress appointed him Brigadier-General in charge of Four Horse Brigades. Then, again, at the Battles of Germantown and Valley Forge, Pulaski's knowledge of warfare assisted the Commander-in-Chief and his men.

Later in 1778, through Washington's intervention, Congress approved the establishment of the Cavalry and put Pulaski at its head. The Father of the American Cavalry demanded much of his men and trained them in tried and tested cavalry tactics. He used his own personal finances, when allocations from Congress were scarce, in order to assure his forces of the finest equipment and personal safety.

Pulaski and his legion were then ordered to defend Little Egg Harbor in New Jersey, Minisink on the Delaware, and Charleston, South Carolina.

It was at the Battle of Savannah in 1779 that General Pulaski, riding forth into battle on his horse, fell to the ground mortally wounded by the blast of a cannon. The General's enemies were so impressed with his courage that they spared him the musket and permitted him to be carried from the battlefield. Two days later, on October 15, Pulaski died. Pulaski is an honored hero throughout the United States where monuments, bridges, highways, parks, and schools bear his name in memory of his gallant service to America.

Polish Language Classes at the Polish American Cultural Center

The Polish American Cultural Center at 308 Walnut Street in historic Philadelphia announces its fall semester Polish Language Classes. Two levels of the Polish language focusing on conversation will be offered. Classes will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 P.M. until 9 P.M. The cost of the twelve week program is \$135 plus book fee.

If you are interested in enrolling in the Polish language classes at the Polish American Cultural Center, you can call for an application, Monday through Friday between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. (215) 922-1700. You can also download an application at PolishAmericanCenter.org/LanguageClasses.html.

Visit the Polish American Cultural Center Museum on the Internet at:

PolishAmericanCenter.org



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**Congratulations
Polish American String Band**

The American Center of Polish Culture of Washington, DC, whose mission is to showcase Polish art and culture in this country and to ensure that the contributions of Polish Americans will neither go unnoticed nor be forgotten by future generations, has announced that the Polish American String Band of Philadelphia will be honored at the Center's awards dinner and ball. The event is scheduled for Saturday, November 11, 2006, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC.

The Polish American String Band, formed in 1933 and numbering over ninety musicians, has performed widely not only in the United States but also abroad. Its Captain is Mark Danielewicz.

As the String Band approaches its 2008 diamond anniversary, it continues to perform frequently in concerts, parades, and holiday celebrations. The American Center of Polish Culture, in honoring the group's achievement, celebrates the innovations which the Polish American String Band has introduced, as well as the traditions which it has maintained.

For more information, contact Dr. Monika Krol, Executive Director of the American Center of Polish Culture, at 202-785-2320 or e-mail at director@polishcenterdc.org.

The Polish American Congress, Eastern Pennsylvania District, along with the entire Polonia, extend congratulations to the Polish American String Band for its accomplishments. Sto Lat!

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