

# Kopernik Lodge

## Newsletter



### **POLAND - Our Homeland!**

Poland – it is us, our hearts, and our actions.

Patriotism, responsibility, loyalty, respect, culture, memory – values that cannot be bought or sold.

They have guided us through the centuries and will guide us into the future if we remain faithful to them.

Poland is not just a place on a map; it is a place in our hearts.

It is childhood memories, the smell of grandma's bread, holidays with grandparents, the first cinema with our parents.

Although life sometimes takes us far from our homeland, Poland remains – in our hearts, in our language, in our memories.

It is pride in our origins that cannot be extinguished.

It is the memories, traditions, the history of our ancestors, and ours.

### **Kiwi Christmas Magic**

New Zealand's Festival of Christmas brings a unique twist to holiday celebrations, transforming the small town of Greytown into a winter wonderland each July. This monthlong extravaganza, aptly nicknamed the "happiest festival in New Zealand," offers a delightful blend of festive cheer and ingenuity.

Although it began only five years ago as a pandemic initiative, the Festival of Christmas has quickly become a beloved tradition, drawing visitors from across the country. The event's timing in July, which is winter in the southern hemisphere, allows New Zealanders to experience a more traditional chilly Christmas atmosphere, complete with the (unlikely) promise of snow.

The festival boasts an impressive array of activities and attractions. Visitors can marvel at spectacular light displays, participate in workshops, and celebrate the Māori New Year. The program also includes vibrant night markets, lively parties, and an abundance of festive food and drinks, including the warming winter favorites of mulled wine and gin.

One of the festival's unique features is how it embraces a "Fire and Ice" theme, creating a captivating contrast that adds to the event's charm. Attendees are encouraged to don Christmas sweaters and gather around braziers (portable outdoor firepits), fostering a cozy community atmosphere despite the winter chill.

But the Festival of Christmas isn't just about entertainment; it's a community effort that brings together families, school children, and local groups. This collaborative spirit is evident in the diverse range of events, from art classes and author talks to "Books at the Bar" reading parties.

While the festival primarily takes place in Greytown, it has put the region of Wairarapa on the map as a winter destination. The event has grown to attract people from all around New Zealand, boosting local tourism and showcasing the region's hospitality. With its unique blend of traditional Christmas elements and distinctly Kiwi touches, this midwinter celebration offers a fresh perspective on holiday festivities, proving that the Christmas spirit thrives in New Zealand, summer or winter.





"Love your native land. Love your holy faith and the traditions of your own nation. Grow up as people of honor, always faithful to the highest values you recognize, which you must serve with your whole lives." -

Captain Witold Pilecki



**WŁASNIE ZA TO KOCHAM  
JĘZYK POLSKI!**



Dżdżystym rankiem gzęgżółki i piegże, zamiast  
wziąć się za dżdżownice, nażarły się na czczo  
miąższu rzeżuchy i rzędem rzygały do  
rozżarzonej brytfanny

Jezyk polski jest piękny!

„Kochajcie  
ojczystą ziemię.  
Kochajcie swoją  
świętą wiarę i  
tradycję własnego  
Narodu.  
Wyróśnijcie na  
ludzi honoru,  
zawsze wierni  
uznanym przez  
siebie, najwyższym  
wartościom,  
którym trzeba  
służyć całym  
swoim życiem” -  
Rotmistrz Witold  
Pilecki



**Poland is beautiful**



## Remembering the Warsaw Uprising

In Poland, 1 August is a highly celebrated anniversary of The Warsaw Uprising (Polish: powstanie warszawskie;) sometimes referred to as the August Uprising (powstanie sierpniowe) or the Battle of Warsaw. It was a major World War II operation by the Polish underground resistance to liberate Warsaw from German occupation.



The Warsaw Uprising broke out in the summer of 1944, and it was led by the Polish resistance Home Army (Polish: Armia Krajowa). The uprising was timed to coincide with the retreat of the German forces from Poland ahead of the Soviet advance. While approaching the eastern suburbs of the city, the Red Army halted combat operations, enabling the Germans to regroup and defeat the Polish resistance and to destroy the city in retaliation.

The Uprising was fought for 63 days with little outside support. It was the single largest military effort taken by any European resistance movement during World War II. The defeat of the uprising and suppression of the Home Army enabled the pro-Soviet Polish administration, instead of the Polish government-in-exile based in London, to take control of Poland afterwards. Poland would remain as part of the Soviet-aligned Eastern Bloc throughout the Cold War until 1989.

The Uprising began on 1 August 1944 as part of a nationwide Operation Tempest, launched at the time of the Soviet Lublin–Brest Offensive. The main Polish objectives were to drive the Germans out of Warsaw while helping the Allies defeat Germany. An additional, political goal of the Polish Underground State was to liberate Poland's capital and assert Polish sovereignty before the Soviet Union and Soviet-backed Polish Committee of National Liberation, which already controlled eastern Poland, could assume control. Other immediate causes included a threat of mass German round-ups of able-bodied Poles for "evacuation"; calls by Radio Moscow's Polish Service for uprising; and an emotional Polish desire for justice and revenge against the enemy after five years of German occupation.

Despite the early gains by the Home Army, the Germans successfully counterattacked on 25 August, in an attack that killed as many as 40,000 civilians. The uprising was now in a siege phase which favored the better-equipped Germans and eventually the Home Army surrendered on 2 October when their supplies ran out. The Germans then deported the remaining civilians in the city and razed the city itself. In the end, as many as 15,000 insurgents and 250,000 civilians lost their lives, while the Germans lost around 16,000 men.

Casualties during the Warsaw Uprising were catastrophic. Although the exact number of casualties is unknown, it is estimated that about 16,000 members of the Polish resistance were killed and about 6,000 badly wounded. In addition, between 150,000 and 200,000 Polish civilians died, mostly from mass executions.



Photo: Warsaw Uprising Museum

## The “Tiny” Heroes of Warsaw Uprising.

On August 1, 1944, the Warsaw Uprising began. It was the largest armed uprising by the Polish resistance movement against the German occupiers during II World War. Not only adults, but also children, boys and girls, joined the fight for their Motherland. Some of them were trained in the Scouts' Grey Ranks, however the majority of them had to gain experience only during the uprising itself.

Children willfully wanted to help, and volunteered to fight. Participating in the uprising was very important to them. The youngest participants in the Warsaw Uprising were not armed. Arms were very scarce in the uprising, only enough for a few adults. Even the youngest children participated in the uprising. "Of course, there was a rule that we didn't conscript anyone under 14, and efforts were made to keep the youngest as far away from the combat zone as possible; but there were exceptions, so even very young children fought.

Children who were accepted into the insurgent army, however, served in important roles. The youngest helped with tasks such as distributing insurgent leaflets, delivering sanitary supplies, and preparing food and drinks. Slightly older children were entrusted with more challenging and responsible tasks. Children served as postmen for the Scout Field Army. "They were also liaisons, also known as 'runners.' Children were also used to fetch water, and were assigned to acquire and transport food, sanitary supplies, and carry ammunition through sewers.

Children often on purpose exaggerated their ages, as leaders were unwilling to accept underage candidates for soldiers. Officially, the youngest insurgent is considered to be 11-year-old Witold Modelski, "Warszawiak." He died on September 20, 1944.

Róża Maria Goździewska was only eight years old when she helped in the field hospital of the “Koszta” company located at 11 Moniuszki Street. Her father was murdered by Gestapo a year earlier. Eight-year-old Róża not only carried out her duties at the field hospital with dedication, but also served as a ray of hope and a source of laughter for many. She was determined to help at all costs. She gave water to the wounded, chased away the flies, and helped with all her might.



Many young insurgents received military ranks in recognition of their service: rifleman, corporal, or platoon sergeant. Some were awarded the Virtuti Militari Order, the Cross of Valor, or the Cross of Merit with Swords. The youngest Home Army soldier to receive the Virtuti Militari Class V is Jerzy Bartnik. The 14-year-old was decorated by General Tadeusz Komorowski "Bór" himself. The boy fought in the Warsaw Uprising, including in the Wola district, as a member of the Home Army "Parasol" Battalion in the "Radosław" Group. During the uprising, he was seriously wounded and lost an eye. However, he returned to his unit after surgery. After the uprising's collapse, he was taken prisoner.



## Polish Storks

In Polish tradition, the stork is widely considered a symbol of happiness, prosperity, and well-being.

Its presence on the roof of a house is believed to bring good luck and protect against misfortune. The sight of a flying stork is also often interpreted as a good omen, heralding good fortune and good news. Regardless of its symbolism, this sight is always enchanting.

The migration of white storks is a fascinating phenomenon, involving long journeys between their breeding grounds in Europe and wintering grounds in Africa, and in some cases, Spain. At the end of summer, European storks migrate south in search of warmer climates and food, and in spring they return to Europe to breed.

There are two migration Routes:

**Eastern Route:** They cross the Bosphorus in Turkey and follow the Nile Valley to central and southern Africa, avoiding the Sahara. Most storks from Poland fly this route.

**Western Route:** They cross the Strait of Gibraltar (Spain) and cross the Sahara. They winter in Central Africa.

Both routes maximize the use of thermal currents and conserve energy. The eastern route is the most frequently used, and hundreds of thousands of storks travel it each year. Approximately 120,000 white storks pass through the Strait of Gibraltar each summer.

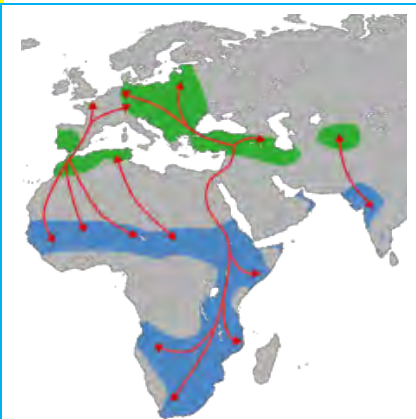
White storks migrate in groups, ranging from several dozen to several thousand individuals. A group/flock is a mix of adult and young storks, with the latter constituting 30-60% of the group. Experienced, older storks act as guides to the wintering grounds. Flight altitude (300-1,500 m), flight length (100-250 km), and flight speed (45-60km/h) depend on weather conditions. A stork's flight from Poland to Africa takes about 49 to 80 days, depending on the route and individual storks' behavior, with the average trip being around 49 days.

In recent decades, it has been observed that many white storks, especially adults, no longer migrate to Africa but winter in Spain, using garbage dumps and wetlands as food sources. This means they make shorter journeys and return to nests more quickly, which may increase their survival rate. Young storks, however, still traditionally migrate to Africa.

Polish people always welcome them back with joy and look forward to their return.



White Stork



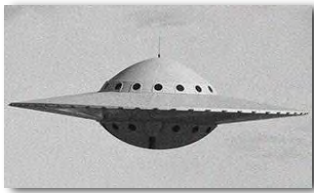
Migration routes



Getting ready for the trip



## Flying Saucer Frenzy



In early July 1947, something strange happened on a ranch near Roswell, New Mexico. It all began after a night of intense thunderstorms.

The next morning, rancher Mack Brazel rode his horse to check on the sheep. What he found has inspired curiosity, conspiracy, and hysteria ever since. Metal debris was scattered all over the ground. A shallow trench ran for hundreds of feet. When Brazel showed some of the metal to his neighbors, the Proctors, they offered one explanation: it was a UFO.

Excited citizens making UFO sightings had become something of a fad during early 1947. This incident only stoked the fever. Many insist that not only did a flying saucer crash near Roswell but aliens had been recovered by the military. Conspiracy theorists contend that the military then scrambled to cover the entire incident, chalking it up as the recovery of a fallen top-secret surveillance balloon, complete with life-sized test dummies.

Fifty years later, in 1997, the Air Force was still trying to put rumors to rest. It released a 231-page report: “Case Closed: The Final Report on the Roswell Crash.” Each July, however, believers and skeptics alike gather in Roswell to celebrate the UFO Festival. Attendees are encouraged to parade while dressed as their favorite ET and listen to evidence presented by panels of scientists and authors.

UFO sightings aren’t limited to Roswell. Records from the Roman Republic around 200 BC describe ships descending from the sky. Japanese fishermen swore to an at-sea encounter with an alien in the year 1803. And in 1946, Swedish military personnel reported strange “ghost rockets” in the sky. Since a worldwide phenomenon deserves a worldwide holiday, July 2 is now celebrated by many as World UFO Day.

## Planet Over Plastic

For many, plastic bags from a grocery or convenience store are a common part of day-to-day living. But there is a movement dedicated to reducing, with the goal of altogether eliminating, the use of plastic bags..

The average plastic bag is used for only 25 minutes but takes approximately 20 years to decompose. Even then, they don’t completely disappear; they just break down into microplastics. Even more shocking, according to Zero Waste Europe, every minute one million plastic bags are in use worldwide. Bags in use this minute will most likely end up in landfills, trees, the ocean, or recycled into other things like bottles, carpets, and clothes.

As of July 15, 2024, businesses in BC cannot provide single-use plastic bags and must charge a minimum of \$2.00 for new reusable bags and \$0.25 for new paper bags.



## Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

July 14 was International Town Criers Day. In olden times, when much of the populace could not read and newspapers weren’t widely available, it was the job of the town crier to stand in the middle of town, ring his bell, and shout out the important news of the day. Town criers also shouted “Oyez! Oyez!”—the Anglo-Norman form of “Hear ye! Hear ye!”

Today, the sight of someone wearing a tricorn hat, a powdered wig, and a ruffled collar while ringing a brass bell and shouting the day’s news might be strange. But some towns still carry on the tradition of town crying. The American Guild of Town Criers was founded on July 5, 1997, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The North American Town Crier Championships, first held in Canada in 1983 and in the United States in 1991, have been held each year to promote “the ancient art of town crying.” Though the position is ceremonial, town crying is a source of both pride and joy for many communities.





# ICE-CREAM Cone Day *Social*



## Talking Heads

A special announcement for all those ventriloquists out there! Cincinnati's annual ventriloquists conference, known as the Vent Haven ConVENTion, takes place July 16–19 at the Holiday Inn Cincinnati Airport in Erlanger, Kentucky.



The convention is named after the Vent Haven Museum in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky—just across the river from Cincinnati. Vent Haven is the only museum in the world dedicated to the art of ventriloquism. The word *vent* is short for *ventriloquist*, and the museum is certainly a haven for those in the

business. William Shakespeare Berger, known to his friends as W.S., was a Cincinnati businessman and amateur ventriloquist who amassed a vast collection of ventriloquism memorabilia. For years, Berger also served as president of the International Brotherhood of Ventriloquists. He even published a monthly magazine called *The Oracle*, which kept up on the latest in ventriloquism news. By the time Berger died in 1973, his collection had grown museum-worthy.

Ventriloquism relies on the ability to “throw your voice.” Ventriloquism first began as a religious practice, where people made guttural sounds from their bellies and interpreted those sounds as the voices of the dead. Other cultures regarded it as witchcraft. Over the centuries, though, that which had been feared became entertainment. By the 1700s, traveling showmen were delighting audiences with fanciful ventriloquy, speaking mostly to imaginary friends. Before long, ventriloquists introduced their dummies and puppets.

So how do “vents” throw their voices? When noise is trapped in a larynx, it sounds as if it’s coming from a different direction or distance. Any other insights... well, those are closely held trade secrets.

## Weather or Not

It may seem strange that Americans use a groundhog to help predict the weather, but those in Britain look to the sky. According to an old rhyme about July 15, St. Swithin’s Day:

*St. Swithin’s Day if thou dost rain  
For 40 days it will remain.  
St. Swithin’s Day if thou be fair  
For 40 days ’twill rain nae mair (no more).*

Saint Swithin was the bishop of Winchester. At either his or other clergy’s request, he was buried outdoors where he could be among the people and where the rain could fall on his grave. After more than a century outdoors—on July 15, 971—the monks brought his remains to a shrine inside a newly built cathedral. And, as legend has it, torrential rains followed. Ever since, people have believed that the weather on St. Swithin’s Day will foretell the weather for the next 40 days. Those who have looked into the weather records from 971 say there’s no proof of 40 days of rain, but the legend lives on.

## Eye-Catching Diversity

One out of every 100 people experience this rare genetic trait of two colors.

This genetic phenomenon is most common in cats, dogs, and horses. But humans, too, can experience heterochromia, or two different colored eyes. Our eye color develops shortly after birth due to the pigment melanin. More melanin means darker eyes, and less melanin means lighter eyes. It just so happens that sometimes two eyes develop differently. In fact, sometimes one eye can have two different colors, such as a blue iris with a brown ring around the pupil, or a completely brown eye with a splash of green. This is just one way that we are each a unique work of art.







# A PERFECT BLEND OF *Smoothie* PARADISE





# A Dose Of Smoothies

## Fresh & Healthy





## A Day for Kings and Queens

Every year on July 20, chess enthusiasts around the world come together to celebrate International Chess Day. This special day commemorates the founding of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) in 1924, which marked a significant milestone in the organization and standardization of chess as a competitive sport.

Chess itself has a rich history, originating in ancient India over a millennium ago. It evolved from a game called *chaturanga* and spread across the globe, influencing cultures and fostering intellectual development. Today, chess is played by millions worldwide, transcending language and cultural barriers.

International Chess Day was first celebrated in 1966, inspired by UNESCO, to highlight chess's role in promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding. The day is now recognized by the United Nations, which officially acknowledged it in 2019. On this day, chess clubs, schools, and communities organize tournaments, workshops, and events to celebrate the game's enduring appeal and educational benefits.

What makes chess so special? It's not just about moving pieces on a board; it's about strategy, patience, and sportsmanship. Chess teaches valuable life skills and values, making it a beloved pastime and educational tool. Whether you're a seasoned grand master or a beginner, International Chess Day is a chance to connect with fellow chess lovers and enjoy the game's unique blend of challenge and camaraderie.

So, grab a chessboard, gather some friends, and join the global chess party. Whether you're playing online or in person, you can celebrate the game that unites us all. To borrow FIDE's motto, "*Gens Una Sumus*": "We are one people, united by our love for chess."



## Reel Nostalgia

Drive-In Movie, was the classic American pastime of outdoor cinema. The first-ever drive-in theater, opened in Camden, New Jersey, in 1933. Invented by Richard Hollingshead, the drive-in provided families with an affordable and comfortable way to enjoy movies from their cars.

At their peak in the 1950s and 1960s, drive-in theaters numbered over 4,000 across the U.S. Though their popularity declined with the rise of indoor multiplexes, drive-ins have seen a resurgence, especially during the pandemic, when social distancing was necessary.

Drive-In Movie Day is a great excuse to relive the magic of watching a film under the stars. Whether you visit a classic venue or set up a backyard screen, it's a perfect way to enjoy cinema in a unique, nostalgic way!

## The Birth of a King

On July 18, 1953, a young man named Elvis Presley walked into the Sun Records studio in Memphis, Tennessee, to make his first record. The resulting acetate disc, with just two songs—

"My Happiness" and "That's When Your Heartaches Begin"—was supposed to be a gift from Elvis to his mother. Rumor has it, though, that the Presleys did not even own a record player.

And besides, his mother's birthday had long passed. Many speculate that the recording was an attempt by Elvis to get the attention of Sun Records owner Sam Phillips.

Apparently, Elvis made an impression, because he was invited back to the studio a year later, on July 5, 1954. At first, the session was uninspiring. The band was about to give up when Elvis began fooling around, goofing off, and singing. That sound was exactly what Phillips was looking for, and the King of Rock 'n' Roll was born.



## Journey Back to Oz

August marks a celebration for fans of *The Wizard of Oz*—the 86th anniversary of the beloved film’s release on August 25, 1939. In addition, the 125th birthday of the classic book, first published in May 1900, was celebrated earlier this year. Whether you first met Dorothy and Toto on the page or the silver screen, their journey down the Yellow Brick Road continues to charm audiences of all ages.

L. Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was a sensation from the start, quickly becoming a staple in American children’s literature. Over the decades, the story has inspired sequels, stage plays, and, most famously, the 1939 MGM film starring Judy Garland as Dorothy. The film dazzled audiences with its Technicolor magic, memorable songs, and a cast of unforgettable characters: Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, and, of course, Toto (who was played by a female Cairn terrier named Terry).

The book and the movie differ in small ways—Dorothy’s slippers are silver in the book but ruby red in the film, for example—but both deliver the same heartwarming message about friendship, courage, and finding your way home. The story’s appeal has lasted in part because it offers both adventure and comfort. As author Ray Bradbury once said, “Oz is what we would hope and like to be,” a place where villains aren’t so villainous and hope always wins out.

The Wizard himself is a memorable figure, too. When his secret is revealed, he admits, “I’m really a very good man, but I am a very bad wizard,” reminding us all that sometimes, good intentions matter more than magical powers.

So, why not revisit Oz? Dust off the book, queue up the movie, or share the story with a grandchild or other young friend. After all, as Dorothy reminds us, “There’s no place like home”—and for many, Oz will always feel a little like home, too.

## Heartthrob of the Silent Screen



He was born Rodolfo Alfonso Raffaello Pierre Filibert Guglielmi di Valentina d’Antonguolla, but his devoted fans knew him as Rudolph Valentino. Valentino was one of Hollywood’s earliest stars of the silent era. He was tall, dark, and handsome—a perfect on-screen hunk. After dancing a tango in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, he became a national sensation. His sudden death on August 23, 1926, threw his legions of fans into hysteria. Some even attempted suicide. A reported 100,000 mourners lined up outside the church where services were held. By train, Valentino’s body made its last trip to Hollywood for a final silent goodbye.

## Cents and Sensibility

It’s one of those things you don’t appreciate until it’s not there—the Take a Penny/Leave a Penny Tray. What luck when the tray is there, brimming with shiny pennies so you don’t have to pocket a handful of change.

There are many who deem the lowly penny a useless denomination of currency. In the United States, it costs 3.7¢ to make one penny. In 2012, Canada decided a penny wasn’t even worth minting. The lowest denomination of currency is now 5¢. Such a change in currency won’t help the U.S., however, where it costs a whopping 13.8¢ to mint one nickel. Why does it cost so much to make these coins? It all depends on the price of copper, a component in coins. Even when the price of copper fell in 2014—saving the U.S. Mint \$29 million in overall production costs—it still lost money minting pennies and nickels. It seems that coins are becoming more of a financial burden than a practical currency in today’s economy.





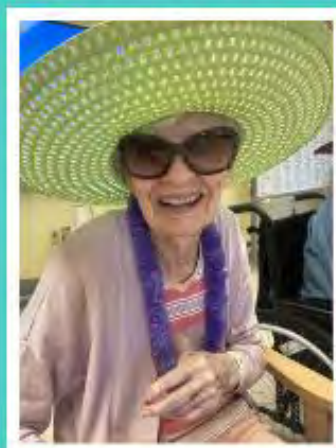
Having  
a  
good  
time  
smoothies  
and ice cream







Always  
something enjoyable, delectable and special.





## What's in the Name-Day?

In Poland, celebrating imieniny (name day) is almost (or just) as popular as celebrating one's birthday.

While generally the tradition is more popular with older people, the younger generations are fond of it too (they're just too shy to admit it), so good wishes (wszystkiego najlepszego), flowers, little gifts, and spending time together are surely welcome on the occasion.

Why do Poles celebrate name days?

The history of name days in Poland is quite interesting. Name-days come from the Christian - Catholic tradition. Each saint is commemorated on special day during the calendar year; and has his or her own day in the liturgical calendar. In ancient times, children were named after a saint who was commemorated on a given day. Therefore, a name day is a holiday celebrated on a particular day by people with the same name, in memory of the Catholic Saint – Patron whose name a person carries.

You may not know someone's birthday, but you can find out when a person celebrates their name day. Most Polish printed calendars include the list of the name days. Only traditional, known Polish names are listed in the calendars. If you have a foreign name, you must look whether it has a Polish equivalent. You can also look up in the dates online.

However, there is a trick. Very often, it is not enough to search for person's name day on the Internet or in the calendar, because some names appear in them multiple times. This does not mean, of course, that a person celebrates each of these days, because name days are celebrated only once a year. Typically, a Polish person would pick one day and stick to it. It is customary to celebrate either on the first date on the list after one's birthday, or the date closest to one's birthday.

According to the internet the most popular name days in Poland are:

Women: Anna, Katarzyna, Elżbieta, Agnieszka, Krystyna, Joanna.

Men: Krzysztof, Andrzej, Marcin, Jan, Piotr.

There are also name days that have turned into a tradition and are celebrated not only by the name day person, e.g. Jan's (John) name day - June 22 (Midsummer Night), Nicholas Day ("Mikołajki" - December 6), or New Year's Eve ("Sylwester" - December 31).

In autumn, these are Katarzyna's name day - November 25 ("Katarzynki") and Andrzej's name day ("Andrzejki" - November 30). Andrzejki is an opportunity for fortune-telling and fun.

Barbara's name day (December 4) is the so-called St. Barbara's Day, or "Barbórka", patron saint of miners, celebrated especially in the Silesia region.

**Polish Name Days**  
*More Than Birthdays*



Popular proverbs are also associated with name days, e.g. "Saint Anna brings cold evenings and mornings." (Anna's name day - July 26.)

## Ignacy Jan Paderewski

Paderewski was born Nov. 6, 1860, Kuryłówka, Podolia, during the partition of Poland. He died June 29, 1941, New York, N.Y., U.S.

He was Polish virtuoso pianist, composer, activist, polyglot, orator, politician, statesman, humanitarian, businessman, patron of art and architecture, winegrower, film actor, icon and statesman.

Paderewski exemplifies extraordinary talent, relentless work ethic, and a great gift for self-promotion. He was the epitome of the 19th-century Romantic artist and an astute 20th century self-made man, tirelessly crossing the globe in pursuit of fame, money, adulation, and powerful allies, and channeling it all into causes he cared about – Polish independence, music, and philanthropy.

Ignacy was at first tutored at home, but at the age of 12 he was accepted into the Warsaw Conservatory – Chopin's alma mater – a school whose piano faculty he joined only 6 years later in 1878. He studied in Vienna from 1884 to 1887 under Theodor Leschetizky, who did much to improve a limited technique. During this period he also taught at the Strasbourg Conservatory. Between 1887 and 1891 he made his first public appearances as a pianist, in Vienna, Paris, London, and New York City.

Paderewski became an international sensation as he performed throughout Europe and the United States. His success with the public was overwhelming; his personality on the concert platform generated a mystical devotion. Paderewski's piano playing epitomized and refined a late Romantic style of dramatic shifts of color, irregular tempo (rubato), heavy pedaling, and lyrical, 'singing' melodic lines. Chopin, Bach, Beethoven, and Schumann were the chief composers of his repertory.

Paderewski never forgot his homeland and throughout his life he was an ardent Polish patriot and nationalist. He funded numerous philanthropic endeavors, including the construction of monuments commemorating Polish history and the 500th anniversary of the victory of the Poles over the Teutonic Order. Paderewski conducted extensive publicity and fundraising campaigns on behalf of Polish national independence. He also performed concerts to benefit the Polish Relief Fund, a philanthropic organization that he and his wife had founded. He urged USA Pres. Woodrow Wilson to support the cause of Polish independence.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized for Paderewski's remains to temporarily rest in the vault of the Mast of the USS Maine Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, until he could be buried in a free, independent Poland.

On June 27, 1992, a horse-drawn caisson and U.S. military honor guard accompanied Paderewski's remains from Arlington National Cemetery to Andrews Air Force Base for the flight to Warsaw. After days of ceremonies in Poland, which included stops in Warsaw and Poznań, his ashes were interred in a crypt at Warsaw's St. John's Archcathedral on July 5, 1992. U.S. President George H. W. Bush and Polish President Lech Wałęsa both attended the final ceremony.

Paderewski's heart remains in the United States - literally. His heart is encased in a bronze sculpture at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, a town with a large Polish-American community.





## The Timeless Tale of Qixi

On the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, which this year is August 29 on the Western calendar, the Chinese celebrate Qixi — also known as the Double Seventh Festival. It's a holiday born of the myth of two lovers: Zhinü the weaver maid (a fairy runaway from heaven) and Niulang the cowherd.

Niulang was a kindhearted cowherd who, after losing his parents, lived with his cruel brother and sister-in-law. His sister-in-law demanded that Niulang bring nine cows to pasture and return home with 10. Forlorn, Niulang set off on his impossible task and met an old man who assured him that he could find a sick ox beyond the mountain. After searching for weeks, Niulang finally found the ox, which he restored to health. Imagine Niulang's surprise when he discovered that the ox was actually a supernatural being from heaven. The ox was so thankful that it introduced Niulang to a beautiful fairy. The fairy's name was Zhinü.

Zhinü was the seventh daughter of a goddess. Bored with heaven, she descended to Earth, where she married Niulang. The two were very happy, but when Zhinü's mother discovered that her daughter had married a mortal, she became enraged and returned Zhinü to heaven. With the help of his ox, Niulang chased after his wife. When the goddess found out, however, she created a huge river between the lovers, separating them forever. Niulang and Zhinü's heartbreak so moved the hearts of all the magpies of the world that the birds created a bridge over the river. On the seventh day of the seventh month, the mother goddess allows Niulang and Zhinü to meet. For this reason, Qixi is considered China's Valentine's Day.



## When Tomatoes Fly

The story goes that during Buñol's traditional parade featuring Giants and Big-Heads figures (costumed characters prominent in Spanish festivals, dating back to the 16th century), a playful scuffle broke out among some young people. When a participant lost his temper and started hitting things, nearby vegetable stalls became the battleground. Tomatoes flew, and a chaotic food fight erupted, which police had to stop. The following year, the youngsters deliberately brought their own tomatoes to recreate the fun, and La Tomatina was born.

Though the festival was banned in the early 1950s by the Spanish government for lacking religious significance, the locals protested passionately. In 1957, they held a "tomato funeral," carrying a coffin with a giant tomato through the streets accompanied by funeral music. This clever demonstration convinced the authorities to allow the festival again, and it officially became part of Buñol's annual festivities.

Today, La Tomatina, the last Wednesday in August, attracts over 20,000 participants from around the world. The event kicks off with a slippery pole climb called *palo jabón*, followed by an hour-long tomato battle where trucks unload around 150,000 overripe tomatoes onto the streets. Participants gleefully throw the squishy fruits at each other, turning the town square into a red, messy playground.

More than just a food fight, La Tomatina celebrates community spirit, spontaneity, and fun. It has grown from a local prank into an internationally famous festival, recognized as a Fiesta of International Tourist Interest. Whether you're young or young at heart, La Tomatina is a joyful reminder that sometimes it's good to let loose and enjoy a little harmless mess.