



POLISH HIGHLANDERS ALLIANCE OF NORTH AMERICA

Chicago, IL

AIMS AND GOALS OF THE POLISH HIGHLANDERS ALLIANCE

The Polish Highlanders Alliance was established to pursue both ideological as well as material goals. Its main aim is to organize Polish highlanders, spread throughout the United States and Canada, into a single, cohesive highlander family in America.

Main goals of the Polish Highlanders Alliance include:

- Mutual moral and educational support.
- Raising the feeling of brotherhood and mutual respect within our ranks.
- Awakening the feelings of attachment and love for our fatherland among members and their children.
- Increasing the Polish Highlanders Alliance members' fondness of the Podhale dialect, literature and arts – the pride of the Podhale region.
- Cultivating Podhale legends, traditions, customs and traditions as well as Podhale folk costumes, music, songs and dance, so that all these treasures of our region can be adopted by future generations born and raised here, and raise the love and attachment to the land of their forefathers.
- Bringing material assistance to villages in the Podhale region and providing financial support to institutions contributing to the preservation of the region's beauty.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance was registered on November 6, 1929 in the state of Illinois. Henryk Lokański, Editor-in-Chief of the "Dziennik Związkowy" newspaper became its original Chairman. Currently, Mr. Stanisław Zagata serves as its 15th Chairman, holding the post for the second consecutive term. The Polish Highlanders Alliance consists of 86 Chapters and includes approx. 3,000 members. Thanks to the efforts and funds of the Polish Highlanders Alliance in North America, a monument of Władysław Orkan was unveiled in Nowy Targ in 1934. The Alliance also partially financed the creation of a new bronze replica of the monument.

Management and delegations of the PHA met with the Holy Father John Paul II in Rome on numerous occasions during private audiences. Alliance representatives participated in the 1st and 2nd Congress of Polish Highlanders, held in Poland in 2000 and 2010, and in the celebrations of the 600th anniversary of the Miraculous Figure of the Mother of God in Ludźmierz. PHA has provided generous support to churches, schools and Volunteer Firefighter Engine Companies in Poland. It has also provided relief to cataclysm victims in the Podhale region. Our Highlander Home has hosted outstanding representatives of the Polish political and cultural scene. The Polish Highlanders Alliance headquarters hosted former President of the republic of Poland, Mr. Lech Wałęsa. In 1996, PHA delegation met with then President Aleksander Kwaśniewski during the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, GA. On February 10, 2006, PHA delegation led by Chairman Stanisław Zagata met with President Lech Kaczyński at the White Eagle restaurant. During the meeting, Stanisław Zagata presented the Polish President with a gold highlander pin. PHA has also hosted distinguished representatives of the clergy, including the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Józef Glemp and Metropolitan Archbishop of Krakow, Cardinal Franciszek Macharski. PHA members represented the Alliance during meetings with US Presidents and with other state and church dignitaries.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance has received numerous Polish-American, American and Polish awards for its cultural activities, including the "Gloria Artis Cultural Achievement" Medal – a Polish medal awarded by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage in 2006 and the Polish Spirit Award granted in 2006 by the Polish Museum in America. In recent years, the Highlander Home has undergone renovation. The charming palace of Podhale region culture has become a monument and a breeding ground for Polish folk culture in Chicago.

Since 1930, the PHA has been publishing "Co słycać wśród Podhalan," a Podhale region column. The Alliance has published periodicals, including Echo Podhalańskie and Podhalanin. The first banner of the PHA was consecrated in 1937 at the Five Holy Martyrs church. On one of its sides, the banner bears the image of the Holy Mother of God of Ludźmierz, on the other – PHA logo with a chamois head inside a circle.

Events organized by the Executive Board: Christmas Wafer Ceremony preceded by a Holy Mass, Highlander Picnic attracting approx. 3,000 people from the Highlander and Polish-American community; Podhale Church Fair, which begins with a Holy Mass. PHA organizes a Highlander Holy Mass as well as celebrations and ceremonies devoted to Holy Father John Paul II. Each year, the Executive Board and its Chaplain, Rev. Wacław Lech, hold the Way of the Cross and the Rosary processions through the streets of Chicago. In the course of the year, the Event Committee

of the PHA organizes a number of regional events: "On a Highlander Note" International Festival preceded by the Dance Pair Competition, PHA Queen Elections, Highlander Robber of the Year Contest, "Józefinki" (review of Highlander folk bands), Caroling Band Review, Easter Palms Making Demonstration, Palm (pussy-willow) Blessing, Easter Basket Contest (organized by the hosts of the "On a Highlander Note" program), Children's Day. A Christmas Eve Dinner (Wigilia) is held for lonely persons, originated by Maria Remiasz, Manager of the Highlander Home.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance includes an Educational Committee, whose main task lies in raising funds for the Scholarship Fund for students from the Podhale area.

Regional cultural activities constitute an important part of the PHA life. Currently we support 20 dance ensembles, 3 musical bands and 20 highlander folk bands called "muzyki." The Polish Highlanders Alliance systematically increases its ranks and raises the number of chapters. The process of accepting new chapters to the organization is overseen by the PHA Development Committee.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance plays an important part in the life of Polonia, promoting and developing both the Polish culture as well as the regional folk culture of the Podhale region. Highlanders' sons serve in the US armed forces, not sparing their blood, if needed ready to sacrifice their life for the land of their fathers.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance has achieved a lot in the field of promoting sports among Polish and Highlander youth. In August 1994, the Podhale Soccer League was organized, consisting of four teams: Małe Ciche, Ratułów, Szafłary and Ostrowsko. Currently, the league involves eight teams: Ciche, Halny-Midway Autohause, Odrowąż, Orawa, Podczzerwone, Ratułów, Szafłary, Wicher Dursztyn. PHA chapters involved in sports include: Chapter 47 – "Tatra" Ski Club, Chapter 56 – "Podhale Sports Club and TOPR Rescuer and Supporter Club.

The Polish Highlanders Alliance is constantly growing in strength and numbers for the benefit of the Republic of Poland and the United States.

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Polish Highlanders Alliance Of North America, Inc.

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