

We Are Betting on the Young People in the Polish Community

The Twenty-First Annual Dinner of Business People and Professionals in Windsor

For many years, Windsor has been the location of the largest border crossing between Canada and the USA. Presently awaiting completion is the section of Highway 401 leading to the planned G. Howe Bridge, which will link Canada to the United States with a new span. The new connection will greatly increase the flow of goods from the USA, our biggest partner in commerce. Windsor has changed its economic standing in the last two years from the city with the highest level of unemployment in Canada to one with the lowest level. Once more, companies are looking for people to work for them; this is a great success for businesses in Windsor.



Meeting of young people and other guests

At the VIP Reception before dinner at the Meeting of Windsor Business People, on November 4, 2016, the Head of the Polish Diplomatic Corps in Canada, Łukasz Weremiuk, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., was in Windsor for the first time and met with several elected representatives, city authorities, business owners of Polish heritage, leaders of the Polish community, and a large group of young professionals and students. Also present at the meeting were representatives of Polonia from several Ontario cities, in line with tradition guests from Detroit representing the Polish American Congress as well as the leaders of local, ethnic organizations. The President of the Business and Professional Association of Windsor, Jerzy Barycki, greeting the assembled guests, noted that in a month Windsor will be on the world stage for the FINA swimming competitions, with participants from 176 countries, including Poland. He congratulated the Mayor of Windsor, who was present in the hall, for putting Windsor on the map of the world. He drew attention to the presence of about twenty representatives of the younger generation, which for many years the Association promotes and supports. He mentioned the large exhibition being prepared with the Leddy Library of the University of Windsor, on the occasion of Canada's One-Hundred-and-Fiftieth Anniversary next year. It will comprise eight individual exhibitions, in three thematic groups: the first dealing with the most famous Canadians of Polish origin (Gzowski, Kierzkowski); the second about events for which Polish people are grateful to Canada (for holding the Wawel Treasures in safekeeping, the training camp for the Polish military at Niagara-on-the-Lake from 1917 to 1919, as well as the recruitment centre in Windsor from 1941 to 1942); and the third on Poles with contributions to the world, whose legacy brings benefit also to Canada (Pope John Paul II, Maria Skłodowska-Curie, Frédéric Chopin).



VIPs: Frank Simpson, Percy Hatfield, Łukasz Weremiuk, Tracey Ramsey, Brian Masse, Barbara Lemecha, Drew Dilkens, Jerry Barycki, Zbigniew Pona

In the first part of the programme, the guests for the evening presented their greetings and brief comments. Łukasz Weremiuk congratulated the Association for its exceptional involvement and also for its attention to the youth of the Polish community. He emphasized the growing activities of Poland and Canada on the economic and military fronts as well as the visits this year by President Duda to Canada and Prime Minister Trudeau to Poland. He noted that the CE- TA Agreement of Canada with the EU also set the scene for increased cooperation between Poland and Canada. He made reference to the joint project of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland with our Association and the Parliamentary Canada-Poland Friendship Group. This was the exhibition about A. E. Kierzkowski, the first Member of Parliament of Polish heritage in the first Parliament of Canada, in the year 1867. It was presented just two weeks ago at the Parliament in Ottawa. He congratulated President Barycki on his recent election as Chair of the Council of the Canadian Polish Congress.



Jerry Barycki

Frank Simpson

Łukasz Weremiuk

Brian Masse and Tracey Ramsey

Brian Masse, the Member of Parliament for the Riding of Windsor West, emphasized that the recent and highly successful event presenting Kierzkowski in the Parliament had aroused the attention of a large number of elected representatives. He commented on the active collaboration of many years with the Association as providing encouragement for the continuation of such events in the Parliament. In conclusion, he invited Tracey Ramsey, the MP for Essex, to join him in presenting a congratulatory letter to the Association. Percy Hatfield, Member of the Provincial Parliament for Windsor-Tecumseh, as always spoke warmly about the active involvement of the Polish community in Windsor as well as this year's exhibitions by the Association in the Ontario Parliament, which brought together many elected representatives from the different parties.

The Mayor of Windsor, Drew Dilkens, who already had visited Poland and Lublin twice, in 2010 and 2015 respectively, spoke of a series of successes of Windsor, proudly presenting the latest unemployment statistics as down to 5.3%, the lowest level for more than fifteen years. He emphasized that next year there will be important city anniversaries, Windsor's One-Hundred-and-Twenty-Fifth Anniversary and the Seven-Hundredth Anniversary of our Twin City of Lublin. Preparations for visits by delegations from the cities already are in progress and the international contacts will be renewed. Already in the near future, Windsor will host more than 1,000 guests in connection with the FINA World Swimming Championships. The Vice President of the Polish American Congress, Michigan Division, Barbara Lemecha, of Detroit, read a letter of congratulations from the President, Ann Bańkowski, which gave recognition to the work of our association, emphasizing that it provides a good example to be followed by Polonia.



Percy Hatfield



Drew Dilkens



Barbara Lemecha

After a tasty meal, during which scenes from the twenty years of activities of the Association were shown on a large screen, the Keynote Speaker, Rick Walawender, made his presentation. He is a Principal with the major law firm, Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone in Detroit, with offices across the USA and other countries, including Poland, namely in Warszawa, Wrocław and Gdynia. He studied at the University of Michigan and helped Lech Wałęsa to form the first commercial bank in Poland. In a remarkably interesting presentation, he guided those present through the Polish phenomenon of the road to freedom and more than twenty years of economic success. He emphasized that Poland now has great potential for investment in the USA and also in Canada particularly after the recently signed CETA trade agreement. An example of major investment by the large Polish copper company, KGHM, was the purchase of copper-producing firms in Canada, the USA and Chile to the value of more than US \$3 billion.



Speakers: Łukasz Weremiuk, Rick Walawender (Keynote Speaker), Michał Kustra, Jakub Rybaczuk; organizers Zbigniew Pona, Jerzy Barycki



Rick Walawender (Keynote Speaker)

The role of the Association in the support of the activities of young leaders in the Polish community in Windsor as well as across Canada is widely known and documented. This is why each year presentations have been made by young professionals, who are active in Polonia. Jakub Rybaczuk, a Member of the Council of the Canadian Polish Congress (KPK), Windsor-Chatham Branch, as well as the Polish-Canadian Students' Association of Windsor, presented an outline of the life of A. E. Kierzkowski. It was excellent that a young person was speaking about the successes in Canada of the young Kierzkowski from more than one-hundred-and-fifty years ago. He described Kierzkowski as a pioneer of multiculturalism in Canada. He also listed the names of the cities in Canada and Poland where the Kierzkowski Exhibition had been shown. The presentation was interesting and it came as no surprise that Jakub was invited by the W. Reymont Foundation to make the life of Kierzkowski known to students, as the award celebrations in Toronto for scholarships of the Foundation draw closer. Michał Kustra, President of the Polish Students' Initiative in Canada (PISK) and Member-Elect of the Head Council of the Canadian Polish Congress for 2016-2018, spoke about the activities of PISK. He also presented the results of the elections at the recent Conference of the Canadian Polish Congress in Hamilton, emphasizing the entry into the Head Council of the Canadian Polish Congress of six representatives of Polonia youth aged under thirty-five. This is undoubtedly a signal to the Polish community in Canada that the dynamics of Polonia organizations are changing and that necessary generational adjustments are taking place. With regard to the last Canadian Polish Congress in Hamilton, it is noteworthy that the youth delegations gained an agreement on the organization of Youth Conferences of the KPK, parallel to the Annual Conferences of the KPK. They also recommended the creation of a new function for the KPK, that of Vice President for Youth. Young people will have a greater influence on the setting of activities for the Head Council of the KPK and also will be able to prepare their own delegates for next year's World Polonia Conference in Poland, where for the first time there will be a parallel World Polonia Youth Conference.

THE POLISH - CANADIAN BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WINDSOR

INVITATION

You are cordially invited to attend the 21st Annual Polish-Canadian Society Business Dinner on Friday, November 4th, 2016, at the Dom Polski Hall, 1275 Langlois Avenue, Windsor. The VIP Reception starts at 5:30 p.m. and the Programme at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Richard A. Walawender
Keynote Speaker

Principal at Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.L.C., Law Firm with offices in the United States, Canada, Mexico, China and Poland.

Co-Leader of the Corporate Group, Director of the International Practice and Autonomous Vehicle Practice, and Co-Founder of the firm's Polish partnership.

A group picture from the 20th Annual Polish-Canadian Society Business Dinner in 2015

We respectfully request that participants purchase tickets before October 15th, 2016. Tickets \$75 per person, for young professionals \$45 and for students \$20. Please use the Eventbrite link: polishbusinessdinner2016.eventbrite.ca for payments online. Alternatively, please mail a cheque - payable to the Polish-Canadian Business Association - to 2050 Willstead Cr., Windsor, Ontario, N8Y 1K5. Please provide the names of the participants.

Windsor-Lublin Twin Cities since 2000

For more information, please contact Jerry Barycki, e-mail jerrybarycki@gmail.com



Jakub Rybaczuk, Windsor youth representative, Member of the CPC Council, Windsor-Chatham Branch



Michał Kustra, youth representative, Member-Elect of the Head Council, CPC



Thank you to our generous sponsors



Participants at the dinner with the group "Tatry"

In summary, the XXI Annual Dinner of the Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association in Windsor was a great success. As usual, a great deal of attention was devoted to the younger generation and to plans for the future. The sponsors and organizers of the event were acknowledged with thanks. Words of recognition were directed at the Keynote Speaker, Rick Walawender. The Master of Ceremonies, Frank Simpson, Professor of Geology at the University of Windsor, was rewarded with enthusiastic applause for his efficient and punctual handling of the programme and for his closing comments. A group photograph was taken and it will appear on the cover of the programme for the XXII Annual Dinner in 2017. It is appropriate to note that all photographs were taken free of charge by Sooter's Photography. An interesting fact is that at the end of the evening's activities, an application for membership of the Association was submitted by a student of medicine. This is a good sign, for we are betting on the youth of Polonia. In keeping with tradition, the programme came to an end with performances of the Krakowiak and Rzeszów dances by the Song and Dance Ensemble, "Tatry". Dancing superbly, singing and performing Polish folklore, the young people provided a beautiful ending to the XXI Annual Business Dinner.

Ewa Barycka

Windsor, Ontario, 09.11.2016

Translated by Frank Simpson

Windsor, Ontario, 13.11.2016





