

General Casimir Pulaski Society of El Paso, TX
(Originally Lodge No. 3155 of the Polish National Alliance of Chicago, IL)
**Brief history and activities of our Polish-American
organization in El Paso, TX since its foundation in 1960**

by **Dr. Kruszewski**

General Casimir Pulaski Polish-American Society of El Paso, TX has a relatively long history and has been very active in variety of cultural, social, and charitable activities since its creation 60 years ago. Much of that credit is due to the personality of its founder, US Army Colonel Frank Kajencki. Colonel Kajencki born in Erie, PA was a second generation Polish American – a leader, writer, and a person with a mission to introduce the story of the 10 million Polish America (“Polonia”) into the mainstream of American history. He was very well educated (3 Master of Arts degrees in History, Journalism and Engineering). He wrote half a dozen of books on the topic of Polish leadership contribution to American history. In the 1960’s he was stationed at Fort Bliss, TX and then at the Pentagon in Washington DC. In 1960 while stationed at Fort Bliss, TX he created a very unusual organization: General Casimir Pulaski Society, which was composed mostly of soldiers and officers of Polish heritage stationed at Fort Bliss. It promptly affiliated with the Polish National Alliance, a leading organization in Chicago established in 1880, and with the Polish American Congress organized in 1944 to be an umbrella political pressure group for all of some 3,000 Polish American organizations operating in the USA and which was active on behalf of the Polish allies, who after the WWII were under Soviet control.



Considering Col. Kajencki’s ideas in organizing the El Paso, TX General Casimir Pulaski Society it is no wonder he charted and implemented a multilevel program for that organization. On the local El Paso level it included participation in international festivals and charitable activity contributing scholarship to UTEP (for Polish-American students) and participation in El Paso Community Foundation. On the national/community level the organization belonged to both PNA and PAC (also through the Polish-American Congress of Texas Division) and was interested in participating in variety of sociopolitical activities on the national/USA level. Since at the beginning all 30 members were the US military personnel from Fort Bliss it was natural for the organization to support and help members of the Polish Army coming to Fort Bliss for training in the 1990’s and especially after Poland became member of NATO in 1999. Enormous amount of help, support and friendship was extended to all Polish Army soldiers and officers arriving for training at the Sergeant Major Academy, as well as officer specialized rocketry-training at Fort Bliss. Individual members of the society spent large amount of their money on showing those Polish Army soldiers the USA (and especially Southwest of USA) and entertained them in their homes.

Colonel Kajencki started a publishing company and wrote 6-7 books before he died some 10 years ago. The Society and his family sent his papers and documents plus uniforms to the Warsaw Military Museum.

The society in the 1990's and the beginning of the 21st century admitted as members many newcomers from Poland. The reformed society decided to break the organizational links with PNA and PAC and decided to embark on its own sociocultural program of activities. For several years it introduced to El Paso, TX the International Women's Day celebrated on March 8 at the Coronado Country Club with a number of city's ethnic organizations. The society participated every year in the ethnic Christmas celebration at the El Paso Museum of Arts. It introduced traditional Polish dance to El Paso and co-operated in joint programs with other well established El Paso ethnic clubs. We have also introduced Polish films to the El Paso Film Festival.

The very name of our organization is well related to El Paso history since Fort Bliss was until 1941 the major training base for US cavalry which was created in 1775/76 by colonel Casimir Pulaski who died fighting for USA at Savannah, GA.

Although our Society's program was devastated by the Covid-19 we do hope to continue our activities according to our past achievements in the post-virus future. As of activity coordination we are continuing our support of Polish Army soldiers and officers training now under NATO cooperation at Fort Bliss at the Sergeant Major Academy and especially in rocketry training provided to them by the US Army. We are providing them with the social support, entertainment and generally introduce them to the USA (especially the Southwest).