

# Team Baltimore Celebrates Polish Independence



**Baltimore, MD.** On a chilly Saturday morning, October 30th, following a stormy Friday night that brought flooding to the area, PNA Council 21's "Team Baltimore" gathered at the historic Fort McHenry to do its part to participate "virtually" in WPNA's annual Polish Independence 5K Walk/Run. With great enthusiasm, the group started its Walk at noon and continued for three full rounds of the property, enjoying the historical scenes, the beautiful grounds, and the crisp air.

What started as a cloud-covered event eventually turned into a sunny and bright adventure, ending with group

photos and even the participation of the local gentleman who reenacts and educates people about the Fort's history and significance. In fact, PNA Council 21 president and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland for Maryland, Richard Poremski, chose this location for the 2021 Walk because of its history in keeping the United States independent.

During the War of 1812, the British attempted an assault on the Fort, hoping to take control of the port city of Baltimore, which was crucial to their plans. Still, this attempt was thwarted by the American force that defended Fort McHenry. This defeat

of the British at the Battle of Baltimore in 1814 was a turning point in the War, and a peace agreement was reached the same year. This seemingly unimaginable victory against the greatest military in the world is the same event that inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Thanks to this victory, people from around the globe are not only able to visit this incredible National Monument and Historic Shrine, but they are also able to imagine how intense the battle must have been that led to the creation of the National Anthem of the United States. This year Team Baltimore was very intentional in choosing Fort McHenry to combine this legacy -- this monument to American independence -- into the celebration of Poland's regained independence which is the foundation of this annual Walk.

Following the Walk, everyone was invited back to the Lounge at PNA Council 21 to continue the celebration with complimentary food and refreshments accompanied by Polish pop, rock, and folk music. The organizers and participants had a fantastic time promoting Polish-American heritage and culture that everyone is already talking about next year's event.

*Michael Carnahan,  
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