



Greenpeace pounces on PiS

Activists gatecrash convention in Krakow

Jaroslav Kaczynski got an unexpected surprise during an address to the Law and Justice (PiS) masses at a Krakow opera house when two Greenpeace activists abseiled down from the ceiling.

After their special-forces-style entry the eco-warriors unfurled a banner declaring "Poland Deserves More. Clean Energy", a play on the Law and Justice (PiS) election slogan "Poland deserves more," to amused applause from the audience.

Their arrival caught the PiS leader off guard but having regained his composure he made light of the situation, saying it was "very resourceful of you", and inviting the activists for a chat and a "cup of coffee" after his speech. He then continued talking, while they remained suspended above the stage.

The Krakow intervention follows another Greenpeace activist storming a podium during a Platforma (PO) convention in Warsaw earlier this month.

But the dramatic entrance of the two activists in Krakow raised suspicions that it may have been stage managed.

"You seem to be suggesting that it was a set up," said Mr Kaczynski in response to press questions about the incident. "Well I can tell you, hand on heart, it was not a set up."

Iwo Los, one of the Greenpeace activists who abseiled in, supported the PiS leader's



Jaroslav Kaczynski has denied that the incident was set up by the party itself

account. "It was not a set up," he said during an interview with news channel TVN24. "You can tell by the spontaneous reaction of the audience, which started clapping."

"How did we get into the theatre?" he added. "As it was not a set up and there was no third person involved I don't want to talk about the details."

But Mr Los did confess that he had a "fairly substantial conversation" with the PiS leader. "Mr Kaczynski said he was

aware of the problems posed to humans by plans for a new open cast mine in Lower Silesia," he continued.

After the end of the conference Jacek Winiarski, spokesman for Greenpeace in Poland, said that PiS had said that if it wins the election on October 9, it would appoint a representative for renewable energy.

Poland has been the frequent target for Greenpeace attacks. The organisation is at odds with the country's continued reliance on fossil fuels for its energy needs.

NATIONAL

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Ugly MPs "scare off voters"

Former PM Leszek Miller has caused outrage by suggesting that ugly candidates could potentially harm a party's chances during the upcoming elections. The comments were made during an interview on 'Tomasz Lis na żywo' earlier this week and, according to the Polish press, have caused something of a storm right across the country.

REGIONAL

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Burglary begins at home

Police arrested an 18-year-old Zabrze resident for stealing 100kg of wrought iron railings from his own home. The man's father called police to investigate the missing railings in September, and they soon found the stolen goods at a local scrap metal dealer's, establishing that the thief was none other than the victim's son.

SPORT

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Melikson for Poland?

Franciszek Smuda's preparations for Euro 2012 were thrown up in the air this week by news that Wisla Krakow star Maor Melikson was interested in representing Poland. Polish FA (PZPN) boss Grzegorz Lato posted a message on the PZPN website that, "Maor has stated his clear desire to play for Poland. His call-up to the national side is clearly only a matter of time."

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From the editor



There's a report this week stating the number of Polish mothers having children in the UK is on the increase. A nice little story that will no doubt be forgotten about as soon as the last dregs of coffee are drained away.

But dig deeper and you'll see where the real issues lie here.

A week ago I was talking to a friend who informed me that Poland's population dropped for the first time last year since 2004 due to a decrease in the number of births. He then told me about a Polish woman he knew in the UK who has had a baby and has since relocated back to Poland to live with family for a year or two.

No prizes for guessing which country she is claiming child benefits from.

Then there's another case I heard about recently of a Polish girl working at a UK school. She had originally planned to hand in her notice during the summer, but fell pregnant over Easter and will be moving back home for a while to "stay with relatives" after she has her child. Needless to say, no notice was ever handed in.

These are two incidents, but there will be thousands of people up and down Britain who could shower us with many more.

While people having babies in the UK then claiming benefits (which, don't forget, they are legally entitled to) when they return home is hardly news, isn't it about time the British government was pulled up on this?

It beggars belief that at a time when the public is being preached at about cut-backs and people like my grandmother who was a tax-paying citizen for 45 years can't even get help to pay for basic medication, this money is being handed out.

No wonder the UK is in the shocking state it is.

Quotes of the week

"Why would we need to enter into a coalition? We'll win outright." Jaroslaw Kaczynski seemingly confident on his party's performance in the upcoming election.

"The 'Pepper Man' should be praying to God to not punish him, not PM Tusk." Lech Walesa speaking his thoughts on Stanislaw 'Paprykarz' Kowalczyk who became famous after his crops were destroyed by a storm (see page 4 for full story).

"I'm fighting for my second term with the conviction that I know I have enough strength. Four years is OK, eight years is a good effort and 12 years, in today's world, can produce a great Prime Minister." Donald Tusk already looking towards his third term in the PM hot seat.

Have Your Say

Re: PiS - A "cool and jazzy" party
 Kaczynski's Law and Justice Party is "cool and jazzy" if you like hyper-Catholic, ultra-nationalist xenophobes and you enjoy listening to anti-Semitic Radio Maryja.
Tomasz - Pittsford, NY, USA

Re: Racist vandals strike again
 I was extremely depressed to read that even more racist vandalism had taken place in Poland recently. When will these knuckleheads realise that had the Nazis actually been successful in their mission to secure Poland as their own, they (due to the fact they are nothing more than brain-dead idiots) would have been amongst the first of the Poles on the list to be put to work in forced labour camps in conditions not too far off those experienced by the Jews. Cretins.
K.P. - Torun

Re: Police DNA kits cop criticism
 So what now? People are actually getting put away based on evidence from out of date police kits? Is there any low this government won't stoop to?
F. Wright - Krakow

This week in history

1878 (26.09) - The Great Synagogue in Warsaw is opened. Built by the Jewish community under main architect Leandro Marconi, it was eventually blown up by the SS after the Ghetto Uprising and never rebuilt.

1958 (28.09) - Karol Wojtyla is appointed Bishop - the youngest bishop in Poland. It would be a further 20 years until he was voted Pope, becoming the first non-Italian Pope since Dutch Pope Adrian VI in 1522.

1976 - The Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) is founded. Emerging under communist rule, KOR was a civil group set up to help provide aid to those who were detained after the labour strikes of the same year, and their families.

The NPE weekend QUIZ



Well folks, in this week's competition section we have two double invitations to give away for the Avant Art Festival taking place in Wroclaw.

The two whole-day tickets are for October 1 and October 2 and this year's festival is subtitled 'Switzerland'. The festival features international performers and is guaranteed to leave you gasping at the visual displays on show.

To be in with a chance of winning then, just tell us the capital city of Switzerland.

Send your answer (along with your preferred date for the tickets) to the usual address: editor@newpolandexpress.pl

Taxing day for taxi drivers

Taxi drivers in Warsaw staged a protest Thursday morning against what they claim is a failure by the local council to go ahead with pre-promised wage increases.

According to TVN24, the protest was planned to coincide with Europe's 'Day Without Cars' when car owners across the continent are encouraged to use public transport for one day instead of driving.

Taxi drivers met up at five separate points dotted around the city, then made their way collectively to the Palace of Culture and Science. However, reports on the news site state they returned home disappointed, claiming that, at best, the city's authorities only "became familiar" with their aims.

"Even before the local elections, Vice President of the city Andrzej Jakubiak promised us that soon after the elections, increases would be made," says Artur Oporski, Director of Ele Taxi. "Now we hear there will be no change this year. This is the main reason for the protest."

However, President of Warsaw Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz spoke out against the action. "I am just happy they are not in a similar position to taxi drivers in other cities. I won't name specific places but I was in one major city recently and drivers complained of not enough customers amongst other various things."

Rapist dad sentenced

A man suspected of subjecting two of his children to years of sexual and psychological abuse has appeared in a Katowice court on rape charges.

The 41-year-old was charged with six counts of rape, using underage pornography and violent and threatening behaviour. The mother of the children has also claimed he raped two or three of his other daughters.

According to news channel TVN24 the suspect first struck nine years ago when he raped his then 11-year-old daughter. Later, his eight-year-old daughter was also raped. The two were then abused, prosecutors claim, for years until the man was finally arrested this year having managed to keep the family silent with threats and intimidation.

But it emerged, however, that police, prosecutors and social services had all suspected that something was not right with the family at one point but had not pressed charges.

In 2009 worried teachers called in the social services, fearing that one of the daughters was being abused, and police started taking an interest in the family. Investigators learnt that neighbours of the family had long suspected that the man had a sexual interest in his children, calling him an "old paedophile" behind his back.

Despite the rumours of abuse the police claim they could not continue with the investigation. Assistant Commissionaire

Jacek Pytel said on hearing allegations of abuse the police "did everything it possibly could" but could not gather enough evidence to bring the man to court.

"The abused girls could not confirm the allegations made against their father and so the case was dropped," said the policeman. "They were probably already intimidated to such an extent that they were afraid of testifying."

It emerged that regional prosecutors, also investigating allegations of sexual abuse and incest, had "noticed an atmosphere of fear in the family but they could not force anyone to testify". Once again, without the hard evidence of a testimony the case was dropped.

It has emerged that social services also looked into the case. "Our social worker went there; he met the mother and she denied that anything had happened," said Bogumila Skowron, from Katowice social services. "How were we to monitor the situation?"

She added that laws stopped social workers asking neighbours about possible abuse in families.

Despite the alleged use of intimidation to keep the family silent, the case has raised question marks over how the police, prosecutors and social services responded. Child-care experts have queried whether the three services shared information and co-operated, and whether they had pursued the investigation with enough vigour to bring the man to court.



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New dealings for new drugs

Enterprising drug dealers in Lodz have come up with a novel way of doing business by exploiting the wonders of the internet and the post office.

Dealers specialising in legal substances that give users a similar kick to that of ecstasy and other illegal drugs have started taking orders over the internet, and then dispatching the required drug via the post office.

A report in *Gazeta Wyborcza* found one substance, known on the streets as "eth-cat" or "cat" for short, freely available to anybody surfing the net.

"Cat is several times stronger than amphetamines on the market, and had become difficult to buy owing to a lack of dealers," said Krzysztof, one man quoted by *Gazeta* who has bought drugs over the internet.

He explained all he did was go to the website, which contains no phone number or address. There he just filled in a form detailing the product and the amount wanted - 10 grams goes for PLN 5, but those wishing to buy in bulk can get discounts of up to 50 percent. Payments are made on receipt.

The e-commerce drugs trade has flourished since the government cracked down on retail outlets selling the substances earlier this year on health and safety grounds.

Gazeta also claimed online purchasing has become a boon with students, who like the uncomplicated way of lining themselves up for an unnatural high. The drug, apparently, gives users an experience of empathy, love and harmony with the world.

But experts have warned that the mail-order high could have a sting in its tail.

Anna Krakowiak, an associate professor from the toxicology department at Lodz's Institute of Occupational Medicine, said that one of the popular drugs, nicknamed dmmc, can potentially cause serious harm to the user.

"Usually next generation drugs are stronger than the original," she said. "Dmmc can disturb heart rhythms, and cause depression and mental complications."

With drugs such as cat and dmmc still legal, the police are powerless to stop the online trade.

Inspector Robert Borowski from the police's anti-narcotic unit said they were monitoring the situation but all they could do was refer cases to the sanitary inspection officials, which have the power to close traders down if they fail to abide to health and safety regulations.

PiS picks the Pepper Man

Leading opposition party Law and Justice (PiS) unveiled an unlikely weapon in its armoury this week in the form of a man known to public and media as Stanislaw 'Paprykarz' Kowalczyk.

According to news website TVN24, the man (nicknamed the 'Pepper Man') emerged on stage during the recent Law and Justice (PiS) convention in Krakow to announce that Donald Tusk's current government is on a losing streak which needs to be changed if the country is to progress forwards.

Mr Kowalczyk, a farmer from the eastern village of Sady-Kolonia, became something of a minor-media celebrity in August earlier this year when he and other locals were visited by Mr Tusk following an extreme storm the month previous which had destroyed numerous crops.

During the trip the PM was approached by a teary Mr Kowalczyk and, regarding a lack of government support for those affected by the storm, was asked "How do we live?"

After his speech at the conference, in which the farmer stated there was a need to "break the streak of the current government", Jaroslaw Kaczynski, stood back and stated dramatically, "Ladies and gentlemen, after what we have just heard a moment ago... what can I say?"

The PiS leader has since visited Mr Kowalczyk's home for a meal, but the farmer stresses that he was promised nothing in return and that he attended the conference "expecting nothing".

The move however has been written off as a cheap stunt by those in the Civic Platform (PO) camp, with MP Pawel Olszewski stating "The whole thing is just a PR ploy and this gentleman was simply taken advantage of."


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IN BRIEF

Death metal manifesto

Following the news last week that Law and Justice (PiS) claimed to be "down with the kids", a candidate for the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) has now released his own song. Backed by a band pumping out furious death metal riffs and aggressive drums, Jędrzej Wijas hollers his lyrics to voters and supporters which include lines such as "End of numb talk, stupid wars, a secular state. A decent life and freedom. That's my goal! Vote wisely!"

"In election campaigns there are times where politicians try to show that politics can be fun and enjoyable with disco songs and such," he explained in an interview with TVN. "I'm a bit weary of this, so I wanted to do something regarding issues that are important to me."

A great shot

It was announced this week that it is likely police snipers will be present at games during the upcoming Euro 2012 football tournament in Poland. The news, which was originally revealed by Rzeczpospolita, has since been confirmed by a spokesman for the forces.

In order to try out the idea, a test-run was carried out recently at the Poland-Germany game in Gdansk where the crowd was observed by armed police.

"We are still experimenting with different elements of security," said police spokesman Mariusz Sokolowski. "If necessary, we will be using armed snipers."

More babies in UK

New statistics claim that an increasing number of Polish women are choosing to give birth to their children in Britain as opposed to their native country. The report, published in Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, claims that last year alone as many as 20,000 Polish mothers gave birth in the UK.

According to statistics by Professor Krystyna Iglicka, the average child rate per Polish mother in Poland is 1.4, compared to the average rate for Polish mothers in Britain which is 2.4.

"These figures show that Poles want to have more children, but are bound by a government that discourages them from actively doing so," she says.

Jaruzelski back in hospital

Former Communist leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski has been admitted to the Military Institute of Medicine with pneumonia, although his condition is believed to be stable.

According to reports on TVN24, the 88-year-old became infected as a side effect of the chemotherapy he is currently receiving in his battle against lymphangioma - which he was diagnosed with in March this year.

"The General was taken into the haematology clinic of the Military Medical Institute on September 15 due to complications with his treatment," said Colonel Piotr Dabrowiecki, a spokesman for the Institute.

Ugly MPs "scare off voters"

Former PM Leszek Miller has caused outrage from both politicians and the general public alike by suggesting that ugly candidates could potentially harm a party's chances during the upcoming elections.

The comments were made during an interview on 'Tomasz Lis na żywo' earlier this week and, according to the Polish press, have caused something of a storm right across the country.

On the show, Mr Miller, leader of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) during its time in power from 2001-2004, stated that "unattractive female candidates can scare off voters" and has since been publicly criticised by a number of high ranking women.

In her blog, current SLD politician Joanna Senyszyn hit out at the former Prime Minister, claiming that she didn't believe him to be a 'real man' as no 'real man'

would ever say such a thing.

She continued, "Miller apparently believes that real men never apologise ... To all the Poles, I apologise for the thoughtlessness and disgustingly sexist statements he has just made. At the same time, let me assure you that the rest of my party colleagues are aware that there is no such thing as an unattractive woman but, at best, blind men. So please accept these apologies and show your support for SLD."

According to politics and current affairs site wsieci.rp.pl, Mr Miller also came under fire from former First Lady, Jolanta Kwasniewska.

"The remarks that were made were not to my taste," she said. "I feel rather disheartened by them to be honest. Whenever a man goes into politics, women don't consider whether or not he boasts the looks of Adonis."



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WITHOUT RHYME OR REGION



An irate group of football fans confronted PM Tusk this Wednesday during his tour of Poland.

Tusk listened calmly and dealt with them like a parent deals with a petulant adolescent. "We're being repressed", "You promised us Ireland and you've given us Belarus", and the crowning stupidity of, "What would the police do if a Muslim woman in a full burka was on the terraces - would they arrest her?" Tusk gave

the last comment in particular the contempt it deserves, saying simply, "The problems of Polish football are nothing to do with Muslim women." Quite.

The stropky, teenage reasoning of the fans amounts to nothing more than, "Leave us alone, we're happy as things are." How are things? Well, the stadiums are controlled by criminal organisations that murder, deal drugs, organise battles and generally deal in tribal, xenophobic violence and intimidation - outside the stadiums, too.

There is no way of distinguishing a harmless fan from a machete-wielding mur-

derer - until it's too late. So if anything is to be done, then all the fans have to suffer. Get real, and grow up. It's one thing to demand your rights, but even a seven-year-old should realise that along with rights, there come responsibilities.

The football idiots are good media fodder - loud and organised, cameras are drawn to them, but let's get a sense of proportion. The average attendance at football matches across Poland each week is around 60,000 - less than Arsenal or Man Utd attract to a single game. These inarticulate yobs are a tiny fraction of the population. It's time to stop listening to them.

MAZOWIECKIE

Three billion underground



The central section of the Warsaw Metro's second line is to receive a whopping PLN 2.77 bln in subsidies from the EU, without which the project

would be impossible. The total cost of the investment is expected to reach PLN 5.60 bln. The subsidy is the largest single amount received by a local government in Poland.

President Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz this week signed an agreement with Anna Siejda, director of the EU Transport Project Centre guaranteeing the investment. Jerzy Lejk, chairman of the Warsaw Metro, explained that the cash would enable the company to purchase as many as 35 new carriages, modernising its rolling stock on both lines.

Sweeping the record clean

Warsaw's Regional Prison Service has signed an agreement with nine local authorities in and around the capital to supply inmates for community service sweeping the streets. Press officer Elzbieta Krakowska told Polish Radio News that the inmates chosen for work would be carefully selected, those serving time for minor offences who are approaching the completion of their term. The idea is for the work to help reintroduce them into society.

Przemyslaw Zaboklicki, deputy mayor of Wawer, said as many as 20-30 prisoners could be out sweeping the streets, tending green areas or clearing drainage ditches around the district. The open-ended agreement is effective immediately, with the Prison Service guaranteeing it can provide dozens of inmates drawn from the capital's five prisons.

Steps in the wrong direction

Residents of Ochota and Wlochy in Warsaw Rare up in arms over the disappearance of a

bridge that crossed the railway tracks dividing the districts. As a result of the semi-demolition locals have to take a much longer route to the shops, to work, to school or to church. The bridge is still there, but the steps on either side have been removed by SPEC, the centralised energy and heating company that owns it.

Monika Mazurkiewicz, press officer for SPEC, told reporters the bridge was, "A temporary crossing," despite the fact that it has existed for over fifty years. SPEC controls the bridge as it runs along the path of one of their large heating pipes.

New steps will be in place though before the end of the year, but at a cost to the taxpayer. Ochota district council has paid PLN 150,000, while Wlochy will pay to maintain the object. Michal Wasowicz, the Mayor of Wlochy, didn't mince his words, telling reporters, "This is the utmost cretinism. I'm speechless. SPEC from the very start have been blackmailing us: you pay or there'll be no bridge. SPEC is still a public company, but it's operating to the detriment of residents."

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POMORSKIE

Tax spat hits court



The Gdansk Archdiocese faces a potential bill for PLN 6.8 mln if it loses a trial against the Office of Taxation in which the first witnesses were cross-examined this

week. The church received a whopping PLN 14 mln tax rebate for taxes paid in the years 1999-2002, but there is an argument over whether it was entitled to the refund due to the confusion caused by the Stella Maris publishing scandal.

"The interest on the tax was wrongly calculated, it should have only been around PLN 170,000," explained Piotr Kaczorkiewicz, representing the Treasury. However, lawyers for the church disagree, claiming that tax officers knew exactly what they were calculating and on what basis they returned the moneys to Stella Maris. If the church loses, they face the additional problem that they've no longer got any of the money.

The trial was formally opened several months ago, but it was only now that the first witnesses could be cross-examined. However, the session was held in camera as the Gdansk Archdiocese wanted to prevent the media from learning details of the organisation of church finances. At some point it is expected that Archbishop Gocłowski will be called as a witness, but the summons has not yet been issued.

Neptune forks off

Tourists turning up at the Long Market in Gdansk expecting to see the fountain adorned by a statue of Neptune - one of the city's symbols - are in for a disappointment as the figure has been removed for conservation work.

"The statue is going to be thoroughly renovated along with the fountain workings," explained Cezary Pawłowicz from the Historic Buildings Conservation Workshop (PPKZ). "It will be cleaned, conserved and protected from atmospheric pollution. But the most work will go into the cracked bowl, which needs reinforcing. That's the main reason for the work," he continued.

At the same time, the fountain's mechanism will be overhauled. The pumps, pipes and electrical fittings will be replaced, including fancy new LED lights. Neptune will return in all his glory in May next year.

The last time the fountain was dismantled was during World War II for its own protection. It was replaced only in 1954. Since then, Neptune has had only one brief holiday, for conservation purposes at the end of the 1970s.

SLASKIE

Thirty zloty murder



Police in Swietochłowice arrested a 15-year-old boy this Wednesday for the murder of his 20-year-old friend. The young boy wanted to borrow

PLN 30 and his older colleague refused, so he pulled out a knife and stabbed him repeatedly in the chest.

Police arrived quickly at the scene and the town's chief of police immediately called the local hospital to see if anyone had been treated for cuts. Doctors said they were treating such a patient, so the officer raced to the hospital, but the boy had left by the time he arrived. Doctors had his address, though, and police effected an arrest shortly after.

Burglary begins at home

Police arrested an 18-year-old Zabrze resident for stealing 100kg of wrought iron railings from his own home. The man's 61-year-old father called police in to investigate the missing railings in mid-September, and they soon found the stolen goods at a local scrap metal dealer's, establishing that the thief was none other than the victim's son.

The culprit admitted the theft but was unable to supply an explanation. He now faces a 6 month supervision order and must repair the damage to the fence.

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Pyrzowice's outside guest

Katowice's airport received its first ever Boeing 747 this Monday, when an El Al jumbo made a test landing there. "It's a great moment for Poland, planes of this size don't land here that often. We've been working long and hard to be able to handle such large craft," Artur Tomasik, President of the Upper Slask Aviation Society told reporters.

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WIELKOPOLSKIE

Catering to the mob



Krzysztof M., Lech Poznań's hooligan-in-chief, commonly known as "Litar", is still profiting from his position as leader of the club's

fanatical supporters, Wiara Lecha. When he was recently charged by prosecutors with spitting at and punching a fan at a friendly match because he was wearing the national team's colours rather than those of Lech Poznań, his contract to supply catering services to the stadium was removed. However, the new contract was awarded to a newly created catering company set up by Litar's long-term partner, Justyna Grabowska.

Her Trocadero company has been in existence for a long time as a clothing boutique. It was only in May this year that it expanded to incorporate catering services. Nevertheless, this lack of experience didn't stop the company winning the contract to supply food services to the City Stadium worth an estimated PLN 2 mln per annum.

At a recent match, *Gazeta Wyborcza* claims, the company provided catering to the VIP boxes and also to the police at the stadium, monitoring the hooligans - for which Lech Poznań was presented with a bill for PLN 55,000. Joanna Dzios, Lech Poznań's press officer, told reporters the company had submitted the, "most financially advantageous offer".

In a related incident Klima, another hooligan arrested by police who demanded a two year stadium ban, was banned by the club for one match. The club explained that the reason for the arrest was actually the club's fault, as the podium from which Klima usually led the chanting in the stands had been removed for the Red Bull X-Fighters display held a few days before. This led to him climbing on railings where he wasn't supposed to.

Ten years in the forest

Police arrested a man in the Piatkowo district of Poznań this Thursday who has been on the run for over 10 years. The man is suspected of defrauding as much as PLN 2 mln from a cigarette wholesaler back in 2000, but claims he has spent most of the period since then hiding in a forest hut.

The man was reported missing eleven years ago, shortly after which it was discovered that large sums were missing from the warehouse in which he worked. A warrant was issued but no trace of the man was found until this week. Prosecutors will now have to dig through their files in order to reopen the case.

MALOPOLSKIE

United by drugs



Krakow police this week broke up a gang composed of rival fans of Wisla and Cracovia, who are normally bitter enemies, that combined

forces to distribute drugs among supporters. More than a dozen people were arrested by officers of the Central Investigative Agency supported by Customs officers.

"It's one of the largest drug dealing groups in Malopolska and the surrounding regions," said Krakow police spokesperson, Dariusz Nowak. The drugs were stored in rented garages, where the larger shipments were divided up into smaller portions, including cocaine, marihuana, amphetamine and ecstasy. Officers seized as much as 7kg of narcotics worth around PLN 300,000.

Seven of those arrested have been charged with membership of a criminal drug-dealing organisation for which they face up to 10 years in prison. Two of them, Farid T. and Krystian L., have been additionally charged with controlling an organised gang.

Tatra tourist found

Tatra mountain rescue (TOPR) recovered the body of a tourist in Zawatowy Zleb this Wednesday, taking it by helicopter to Zakopane. "The accident occurred on Tuesday evening. The body was spotted on Wednesday by some passing tourists, who were heading away from Hala Gasienicowa. He most probably just slipped on a rock and fell," a rescuer commented. The man had been walking alone.

Conditions in the Tatras are poor at the moment, with damp, slippery paths and heavy mud in the wooded areas. Thick fog is reducing visibility high up and making orientation more difficult.

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Weakened zloty - time to rejoice

Reports circulating in the business pages of the papers this week suggest that Poland may in fact have a number of reasons to be cheerful following the recent weakening of the zloty.

The bizarre claims come after the news that additional EU funding to the country will still be handed out in euro.

According to Rzeczpospolita, while total funding from the EU will remain at the agreed EUR 6.3 bln (between 2007-2013), the value in terms of zloty may increase by as much as PLN 42 bln to an estimated PLN 300 bln.

The paper states that Polish farmers alone look set to receive approximately PLN 14.6 bln from the European Union (up PLN 2 bln on last year), which due to the euro's stronger position, will in turn help to bolster the economy.

"The weakness of our own currency is, in part, a reason to rejoice," says chief economist at BNP Paribas Michal Dybula. "It means we will be able to multiply the profits of certain exporters which, given the anticipated slowdown of domestic demand and high deficit in trade, we should be thankful for and just enjoy."

Shale gas split

New investigations state that one in five concessions for the exploration of shale gas in this country is owned by a Russian firm.

According to TVN24, the current set up of concessions could have negative effects on Polish companies as the split makes it easier to block deals and allows Russia an easier footing in exporting gas to EU countries.

Dziennik Gazeta Prawna also claims that there is little way of telling if a foreign firm is attempting to block or slow down work on extractions for their own interests.

Henryk Jezierski, Deputy Environmental Minister, has stated outright that none

of the 20 percent of concessions officially belong to firms with Russian capital, although reports claim that this is not possible to prove.

However PM Donald Tusk says that regardless of who operates explorations, Poland will still be the main benefactor. "Even if Russia is behind the concession, it is Poland that will be earning, so it is a pretty good story with a happy ending" he states.



What's going on in Poland?



Send comments and letters to editor@newpolandexpress.pl

NBP OFFICIAL CURRENCY RATES 23/09/2011		
Currency	Symbol	Mid-rate
Canadian Dollar	1 CAD	3,2320
Czech Koruna	1 CZK	0,1810
Danish Krone	1 DKK	0,6033
Euro	1 EUR	4,4900
Hungarian Forint	100 HUF	1,5547
Japanese Yen	100 JPY	4,3497
Norwegian Krone	1 NOK	0,5711
Pound Sterling	1 GBP	5,1244
Russian Ruble	1 RUB	0,1036
Swedish Krona	1 SEK	0,4845
Swiss Franc	1 CHF	3,6745
US Dollar	1 USD	3,3171

IN NUMBERS

67th
The official ranking of Warsaw's School of Economics (SGH) and the Kozminski University in 'Financial Times European Business Schools 2010'.

25%
The number of Poles who return home after working abroad with no savings to their name, according to statistics by the Strategic Advisory Centre.

Get a round-up of the major Polish news, business, entertainment and sports in English each week by subscribing free to our PDF. Visit us at www.newpolandexpress.pl

BUSINESS IN BRIEF

EU presidency boosts economy
Figures printed by Dziennik Gazeta Prawna state that Poland's current EU presidency could be worth as much as PLN 80 mln. According to the paper, during the six months Poland is in the European hot seat, the six brands specially selected as patrons (Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Orange, Orlen, Peugeot and Scania) are set to rake in a

fortune due to their association with the event. In addition to this, numerous bars, clubs, restaurants, hotels and various other businesses have been able to benefit financially. **Nasza Klasa catches up**
New reports by Rzeczpospolita claim that website Nasza Klasa is currently showing signs

of catching up with world-wide phenomenon Facebook in the popularity stakes. According to statistics by Megapanel PBI / Gemius, the Polish social networking site increased its user-base by 0.13 million (up to 11.9 million) between June and July this year, compared to Facebook which decreased by 0.14 million (down to 11.44 million) during the same period.



SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND from In Your Pocket



The October/November issue of Warsaw in Your Pocket has just finished, and before I settle in for a well-earned nap I thought I'd offer a sneak peek at some of the highlights from the upcoming issue.

Sight: I grumbled about trekking out to the new (opened in April) National Memorial Museum in the Palmiry forest earlier this month and had all my expectations shattered for what a small, wooded museum could be. Sure, it takes a bumpy 40-minute bus ride to get there, but all is forgotten when you reach the modern museum. The exhibit describes the role the forest has played in conflicts beginning with the Kosciuszko Uprising, but the main focus is on the 21 separate mass executions carried out by German soldiers against

1,700 Poles and Jews, many of whom were academic and cultural figures. The large cemetery of marked and unmarked graves outside makes the experience all the more vivid.

Eat: Magiel Café in Mokotow has a cute theme - it's decorated with laundry lines, framed vintage soap ads and antique washboards as a nod to its past as a launderette - and an even better menu. The dishes are fresh, seasonal and creative, with the artichoke tart and flat bean salads instant favourites. We were also impressed by their dedication to serving beers from small, traditional Polish breweries, which they plan to change up often. The respectable lunch crowd shows this neighbourhood has been craving a local haunt just like this one.

Bar: The focus of our feature for October/November is the Praga district, and one of the most unique places we

visited was a bar called Po Drugiej Stronie Lustra. The place is a lot like Praga itself: artsy, mysterious and a little bit junky. Bottle caps and coasters line the ceiling, and the bartender proudly pointed us to a wall made entirely of beer bottles. The only thing more epic than the strange décor is the beer selection, which offers a veritable tour of Europe in a bottle.

Café: Nothing makes me feel more productive than working at a café near a university, where students pile heaps of books on the tables but manage to spend most of their time doing anything but studying. MiTo Art Café by Politechnika Warszawa is a newcomer that distracts with its unique role as a bookstore and art gallery as well as purveyors of lattes. The high-ceilings and stark red/white/black colour scheme lure people in from the street as surely as the reasonably priced drinks do.

Gdynia

29.09 Thursday - Wild Shooter Band Blues Club, ul. Portowa 9, tel. (+48) 512 41 87 41, www.bluesclub.pl ▶ Concert starts at 19:30. Tickets 30/40zł. Available at Blues club box office (Open 15:00 - 02:00) and before the concert.

Warsaw

25.09 Sunday - 33rd Warsaw Marathon tel. (+48) 42 681-54-74, www.warsawmarathon.com ▶ Registration fee 100/150zł. Register at www.maratonwarszawski.com.pl.

27.09 Tuesday - Pepsi Rocks! presents Püdeli Hard Rock Cafe, ul. Złota 59 (Złote Tarasy), tel. (+48) 22 222 07 00, www.hardrockcafe.pl ▶ Concert starts at 20:30. Tickets 35/45zł. Available at Rock Cafe (Open 09:00 - 24:00).

Katowice

24.09 Saturday - Grubson Mega Club, ul. Żelazna 9, tel. (+48) 605 21 89 30, www.megaclub.pl ▶ Concert starts at 20:00. Tickets 40/50zł. Available at EMPIK, ul. Piotra Skargi 6 (Open 08:00 - 20:00, Sun 10:00 - 16:00).

Sopot

27.09 Tuesday - Jazz Travel - Vasti Jackson Blues Band Versalka, ul. Bohaterów Monte Casino 63, tel. (+48) 602 63 66 37, www.versalka.pl ▶ Concert starts at 20:00. Tickets 20/30zł. Available at Versalka (Open 09:00 - 24:00) and before the concert.

Send comments and letters to editor@newpolandexpress.pl





All About Freedom Festival 6-16 OCTOBER 2011

www.aaff.pl | www.ecs.gda.pl



Gdansk

24.09 Saturday

Time Machine - History Picnic
Wisłoujście Fortress Siege, ul. Starowiślna, tel. (+48) 512 41 87 41, www.mhmg.gda.pl

Gdańsk History Museum has invited 3 history reconstruction groups to present how war machines and weapons changed over the centuries from medieval to the Napoleon era. Beside shows of drill, shooting, medieval tactics and knight fights there are also history lectures and games for the audience. What a good way to say goodbye to the summer. ▶ Event starts at 10:00. Admission free.

Wroclaw

29.09 Thursday - 08.10 Saturday
Avant Art Festival

tel. (+48) 22 222 07 00, www.avantart.pl
The Avant Art Festival is an international presentation of experimental and avant garde art packed with original and unique cultural phenomena. This will be 4th edition and although there are artists from all over the world, there will be a special focus on Switzerland. With this in mind Stéphane Vecchione, the drummer of band Velma, will present an original performance and, amongst other interesting events, the group MIR will connect a host of styles characteristic of the 80s and 90s into one. Moving away from the Alps and onto dance Alexandra Bachzetsis will present a contemporary vision of femininity and the magicians from Minimetal band will play concerts and performers from Deviation will use the space of the BWA Avangarda gallery to create a show of art and music. Eminent producer Kevin Martin will perform under the stage name The Bug, his project shows the dark face of dance hall. Meanwhile Polish musicians 2g invite us for a hypnotizing, trance sound ritual while Campaigne Pal Frenak will introduce the audience to a new language in theatre and dance. A separate event will be the projection of the Austrian movie *FILM IST. a girl & a gun* by Gustav Deutsch with live music performed by a host of top notch avant garde players. ▶ Tickets 25zł. Pass 75zł. Available at Impart's box office, ul. MAzowiecka 17 (Open 12:00 - 18:00 Sat, Sun open 2 hours before events).

Poznan



24.09 Saturday - 2nd Poznań Waiters' Run
Śródka Market, tel. (+48) 42 681-54-74

Poznań's race of the waiters only started last year, Wisła's started in 1938, but it still attracted 70 participants all bearing trays. This time the waiters and waitresses compete for a laptop and a flatscreen TV. It's all organised to promote a little forgotten part of Poznań - Śródka. A town before it became part of Poznań in 18th century, the district has had a lot of work done for some time and it was connected with Ostrów Tumski by the Jordan bridge recently. Back to the event - the run will start at 11:00 at Śródecki Market over a distance is 465m. To make things a bit tougher, the waitresses they have to wear high heels, at least 5cm high. I'm not sure what obstacle the men have to overcome, doesn't say in my notes, we can only guess. ▶ Event starts at 10:30. Admission free.

Krakow

29.09 Thursday - 22.10 Saturday
International Sfogato Music & Arts Festival
tel. (+48) 647 15 25

The lofty aim here is to show the varied role music and art play in human life. Last year the inaugural festival was all about Chopin, this time the net will be cast slightly more widely as the focus will be on, amongst others, Chopin's friend Franz Liszt. There's a lot going on from the grand sounding Chopin Soirée Inaugural Gala Concert to an evening of his chamber music celebrating the 85th birthday of musical director Jerzy Kaszycki. Others remembered will be Ignacy Jan Paderewski as well as Nobel laureate Czesław Miłosz. The programme will also feature pieces written especially for the festival by young composers from Poland, U.S. and Finland. The final concert will be held on World Liszt Day and is entitled 'The Music of Abbé Liszt'. There's a lot on, check the website for details.

Warsaw

25.09 Sunday - 01.10 Saturday
Cross-Culture Festival
tel. (+48) 42 681-54-74



Get a taste of all that's cool in world culture and music at the Cross-Culture Warsaw Festival. Started by the town hall, it aims at opening up

the city and its residents to the cultural variety the modern world has to offer. There are workshops with 9 classes run by top professionals including outstanding multi-instrumentalist, Kouame Sereba and Giovanni Amati, who will show us how to do the tarantella. The Music Stage will mostly deal with European music, but there will be shows by artists from further afield including Femi Kuti at the opening in the Congress Hall. The rest of the concerts take place in the festival tent in front of the Palace Of Culture and Science and the artists lining up include Maria Kalaniemi (Finland), Mercedes Peón (Spain). The Mediterranean Moods of Psarantonis (Greece), Aynur (Turkey) sound inviting, as does the concert Vikings and Crows. There's an awful lot to see, check the website for more details. ▶ Tickets 10-70zł. Pass 100zł. Available at Empik Megastore, ul. Marszałkowska 116/122 (Open 09:00 - 22:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00).

25.09 Sunday - Open Family Day
Służewiec Racecourse, ul. Puławska 266, tel. (+48) 22 489 37 79., www.openfamilyday.pl

With a gastronomic area of 4000 square metres built on the grounds of the Służewiec Racecourse, get ready for a Mediterranean style feast. There's oodles to eat with unlimited access to food from the finest Polish restaurants as well as wine from all corners of the world. Also aimed at children, under 7s enter for free, under 16s for 40zł, there will be menus for kids and other attractions like workshops in making edible flowers, sushi, Savoir-vivre at table and more. ▶ Event starts at 12:00. Tickets 40-150zł. Available by phone and before the event.

Melikson for Poland?

Franciszek Smuda's preparations for Euro 2012 were thrown up in the air by news that Maor Melikson was interested in representing Poland. Polish FA (PZPN) boss Grzegorz Lato threw the cat among the pigeons by posting a message on the PZPN website that, "Maor has stated his clear desire to play for Poland. His call-up to the national side is clearly only a matter of time." But by Thursday, Melikson had changed his mind, announcing on the Wisla Krakow website, "At this moment, I'm not ready to play either for Israel or for Poland."

Despite declaring only recently that there would be no more foreign recruits, Smuda was licking his lips at the prospect of the attacking midfielder turning out in red and white. The about-turn was surprising, though, given Melikson's earlier declarations that Israel was his team. He has even turned out for them twice, scoring two goals against Ivory Coast, but neither match was a full international, leaving him free to change his mind.

He already has Polish citizenship, qualifying because his mother was born in Legnica, emigrating to Israel when she was six and acquired a Polish passport more than a year before leaving Israel, long before there was interest from Wisla in signing him.

Dudu Dahan, the player's manager, explained the reasons behind his sudden change of heart. "He's rapidly become recognised and valued in Poland. In Israel he's still not very well-known. There are players who are much worse than Maor who play regularly for the national side, but there's too much politics in the federation and ability takes a back seat," the manager commented.

News of the potential switch soon reached Melikson's homeland and provoked a negative reaction, some calling him, "A traitor who will play for an anti-semitic country that participated in the holocaust."

Eurosport.pl quoted Melikson as saying, "This has been the most difficult decision ever for me. Not one of the most difficult - the most difficult. It's also tough on my family who remain in Israel. I was raised there, it's where all my friends are, but I also see Poland as a second homeland, and there's no insincerity in saying that."

But the decision clearly wasn't final. "I'd like to concentrate on playing for my club and to do everything to achieve my goals of winning the Polish league and playing well in the Europa League," concluded the player.

Russian bronze better than gold

Poland's volleyballers won a bronze medal in the European Championships third-place play-off against Russia, the victory over their huge neighbour bringing a joy only slightly less than if they had won the entire tournament.

"This bronze medal is as valuable to us as the gold. Half the team had never taken part in a tournament of this importance, but we showed a lot of character to take third," commented one of the senior members, Piotr Gruszka at

a press conference at Okęcie airport on their return.

They were greeted by PM Tusk at a celebratory breakfast where he told them, "Your hard work and talent has shown how to build success on solid foundations - and in beating Russia, you've filled your fellow Poles' hearts with joy."

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 Stoke V Man Utd KO 18:30
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Saturday Night - Steve & DD
 Live & Acoustic - 21:00

Sunday 25.09.2011
 Ireland V Russia KO 07:00
 Argentina V Scotland KO 09:30
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SPORTS BRIEFS

Beer bonanza, but not at Euro

President Komorowski signed an amendment to the law on safety at mass events enabling alcoholic beverages with up to 3.5 percent alcohol to be sold in football stadiums. The amendment had a rocky road - it was rejected by the Senate, approved by the Sejm and many high-ranking people wanted it ditched, including Jaroslaw Kaczynski, Wlodzimierz Cimosiewicz and ex-national team manager Andrzej Streljau. However, the measure will not apply to stadiums during

Euro 2012 as UEFA has separate guidelines for the championships. "UEFA has no plans to sell alcohol in or around stadiums during the Euro 2012 finals," commented Juliusz Gluski, press officer for Euro 2012 Polska.

Other measures included in the amendment are aimed at crowd control, including a whole raft of increased penalties for any misbehaviour, such as pitch invasions or being in possession of a knife or a machete in a public place, when there are grounds to suspect it may be used to harm others.

Blade runner in Wawa

Controversial, double-amputee athlete Oscar Pistorius took part in the Kamila Skolimowska Second Memorial Event at the Orzel stadium in Warsaw this week. In the final event of the day the South African runner easily won the 400m sprint, albeit in a rather sedate time of 46.65 seconds. The event was the second meeting held in memory of Poland's Olympic hammer champion Kamila Skolimowska, who died unexpectedly two and a half years ago.

Classifieds: Place your free ads and community news here. Email editor@newpolandexpress.pl

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learning driving

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Kielpin, Lomianki. Plot of 1300m2 on ul. Ogrodowa in Kielpin bordering Lomianki north of Warsaw, with house 220 m2 plus garage 40 m2 in roofed raw wall state. No façade, windows, doors or internal works done. Septic tank and drill hole for own water on plot, gas and electricity in the street. Price: 550 000 PLN. Call Mikael: 662 164 987 or e-mail: Mikael_kg_andersson@yahoo.co.uk

French teacher sought

I'm an experienced Polish native teacher looking for a French native to exchange conversation classes with. One class in Polish, for one class in French. For more details, please contact: Edyta ernominee@gmail.com

Searching for flat or room

Looking for small flat or room to rent for the summer. Will consider house sitting situation. Must have internet. Please call: 692.931.278.

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Recreational lot

1/2 hour drive from Warsaw, in Pomiechówek, Brody Parcele, Serocka Street 3, 3720m2, Old trees. Has access to all media: water, sewer, electricity. Close to train station and shops. 3km from the Modlin Airport. Can be used for semi-industrial purpose or subdivided into 4 single family lots. Call: 660384 603 or mail: iga9@hotmail.com

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Free conversation lessons

Free conversation lessons take place at KLUB DIALOGU, Krakowskie Przedmieście 13/156 (entrance from Tokarzewskiego) every Saturday at 11:00 am and 12:10 pm.
Please call: 22-498-1010
or email us: info@klubdialogu.pl if you are interested

Church of England in Poland

We welcome Anglicans, Episcopalians and all others interested, to celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday morning at 10.30 am. Join us for light refreshments after the service to learn more about the activities of our church.
Place: Res Sacra Miser Chapel, ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 62, Warsaw.

The Sikh Community

The Sikh Community of Warsaw meets each Sunday at the Sikh Gurudwara in Rashyn, Ul Na Skraju 56. All are welcome. Kirtan starts at midday and langar is served after the Bhog at about 1400. For more information contact 22 868 4541. The Sikh faith is about equality, honesty and standing up to oppression. Anyone visiting the Guru's house is welcome, in return for due respect and consideration of the Sikh faith.

Role Playing Game in Warsaw

International English-speaking group in Warsaw, mostly foreign professionals, play tabletop Dungeons & Dragons fortnightly. No experience necessary but fluent English proficiency is required. Have a good time. Play some games. Meet new friends. Open your imagination. More info: Facebook group: <http://tiny.cc/zaffa> or [CreativeCowboy\[at\]yahoo\[dot\]com](mailto:CreativeCowboy[at]yahoo[dot]com)

Poland Tartan Army

A new Poland Tartan Army Facebook group has been created. If you are a fan of Scottish football and our national team please join the group by visiting Facebook and conducting a search for Poland Tartan Army. If anyone, who is not a part of Facebook, is interested in this idea then please email murraymaw@hotmail.com to register your interest.

HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

We are a Polish and Expat social group who organise a walk/run in a forest, park or around the city, followed by a few beers (or whatever takes your fancy!). We meet at the Marriott hotel on alternate Saturdays at 2pm. "Hash House Harriers" is an international group, which was originally established in Malaysia 70 years ago. All are welcome. For details, call Martin at 502-052-958. Email warsawh3@gmail.com or www.warsawhash.pl

International Women's Group

Meetings are held twice a month on the SECOND Monday at 10.30 (for location see our newsletter or website) and on the FOURTH Monday of the month at Restauracja Tapa y Toro located in the Zlote Tarasy Shopping Mall (ul. Zlota 59) from 10:00 - 11:00.
For more information see www.iwgwarsaw.eu or contact us at iwgwarsaw@yahoo.com

International Rotary Club

International Rotary Club - Warszawa Wilanow is the only English speaking Rotary Club in Warsaw. Visiting Rotarians are warmly welcomed to join the weekly meetings held at the Polonia Palace Hotel, Al. Jerozolimskie 45. Tuesday's at 12:00, except the last Tuesday of each month when the meeting is at 19:00. For more information: +48 601 897 731

Gospel Baptist Church

Services are held in Polish and English languages: Sun. 11:00, Thurs. 19:00. For more information contact: Pastor Paul Sock, mob. 0500-270-990, e-mail: paulesock@yahoo.com www.gbc-ekb.com.

GAA in Warsaw

Cumann Warszawa.Poland's first and only GAA club is up and running and is looking for players of all levels, all nationalities and both sexes. We offer weekly training, competitive games and regular social events as well as fresh oranges at half time.
Contact Eoin at 0518-425-587 or cumannwarszawa@gmail.com

Expat meetings

Meeting English speakers in Warsaw just got a whole load easier. We don't teach you Salsa, we make you pay for your own drinks, but we do promise to give you the premier multi-cultural event of the week at Warsaw's very own Professional Wednesday Meetup.

Contact - asamu@sniper-rook.co.uk or 691535566

Toastmasters club

Toastmasters club (Polska) invites all to its weekly meetings. Toastmasters is the international organization for learning the art of public speaking and enhancing leadership skills. Meetings every Wednesday at 19.00 at the Palace of Culture 12th floor (premises of Collegium Civitas) - entrance from ul. Marszałkowska side. For more details visit www.toastmasters.org.pl or call Etan at 696-292-451

Poznan International Church

Every Sunday at 10:00
Contact details: www.international.pl. It's simple at P.I.C.. Come and experience God through current music and relevant teaching. Grow in your relationship with God and others by making friends and joining a small group. Serve God and people by being generous with the gifts God has given you. Go and make a difference in the world by sharing the love of Christ.

CFM (Christian Fellowship Ministries)

Kościół Chrześcijański (evangelical/Pentecostal)
Location: Aleja Prymasa Tysiąclecia 74B (Wola, Warsaw)
Services in Polish and English:
Wednesday 19.30 hrs and Sunday 11.00 & 18.30 hrs
Every Saturday evening at 20.00 hrs: Film, Concert & Drama or other activities
Website: www.thedoor.pl
Phone: 784 653 666 (Pastor Jan-Willem van Dam)
Email: info@thedoor.pl

WOMEN'S FASTPITCH SOFTBALL

The Warsaw Diamonds train 2-3 times per week year-round in Mokotow and play in league games across Poland on weekends from Apr-Jun and Sept-Oct. The team is currently in 2nd place in the league and is planning a week-long tour through CZ or HU to play club teams in spring 2012.
Contact Coach Christopher at 601317432 or coach@softball.pl for details.