

**Wrocław Krasnal Remarks**  
**Wednesday, May 16, 2012, CMR, 12:00**

*Panie Prezydencie, Pani Minister, Panowie Ministrowie, Szanowni Państwo*

Dear Guests, I welcome you all to the Chief of Mission Residence, on this beautiful day when we honor and celebrate the special relationship that has been forged between the American Mission and the City of Wrocław. When I say forged, I literally mean forged, from bronze, in the symbolic form of a Wrocławski Krasnal, a symbol of Poland's solidarity movement and one of the most charming cultural symbols of Wrocław, a city that will in a few short years be the European Capital of Culture in 2016.

I remember the first time I saw a Wrocław krasnal, at the old Wrocław airport terminal. As I recall, it was the "Late Traveler" krasnal, who presumably had just missed a flight. Though I was not late on that particular day, I felt like I could identify. The statue piqued my curiosity about Wrocław. I wanted to know more about the Wrocławskie Krasnale and about the charming city of Wrocław, or "Vrots-Love", a city with so much personality. I have now come to know many personalities in Wrocław, many of them charming.

And I have also learned that there are dozens of krasnale across Wrocław, marking the city's cultural monuments and other important places that honor everyday Wrocław life. I liked the krasnale so much that I even brought my family back to Wrocław for a fun city search for more statues. I will carry that memory with me always.

By the way do you know what happened with the “Late Traveler” krasnal? Has he moved to the new airport terminal? I imagine with such a fine new, modern airport terminal, you have many, many more travelers than before, and I only hope that few of them are late. But of course any late travelers will find solace in the charming late traveler krasnal that shares their plight.

Today we are honored by the presentation of a very special krasnal from the City of Wroclaw. The krasnal has long served as a symbol of solidarity, and as a symbol of Poland’s resistance to communist authority. It has also semi-officially become one of the symbols of Wroclaw.

Today, it also becomes a symbol of our valued friendship between the US Mission to Poland and the city of Wroclaw, a professional friendship which is underscored by personal friendships with mayor Dutkiewicz and many esteemed Wroclaw colleagues. On behalf of all the members of our American Embassy and the American Consulate in Krakow, I would like to say thank you.

And I would also like to take this opportunity to boast of the wonderful cooperation that we have built together over the past years. First and foremost is the Wroclaw Global Forum, a fantastic example of Mayor Dutkiewicz’s ability to create something important and wonderful out of vision, hard work, and strong relationships.

On our side, the American Mission has also hosted numerous successful educational and cultural programs ranging from cooperation with the College of Eastern Europe, to poetry readings with famous American poets, to workshops on women's issues with Wroclaw NGOs and local institutions. Wroclaw was also the site of the 2010 Floodwall exhibit and we have been an active partner with the newly restored White Stork Synagogue. Additionally, our Mission has sponsored many joint programs with Wroclaw University and the Wroclaw Polytechnic talking to students and supporting faculty exchanges.

The American Corner, opened in 2006, receives over 1,000 visitors monthly and is one of the most vibrant Corners in all of Europe. It has a wonderful location on the Wroclaw market square and we have received excellent support from our partner, the regional library. For us, "Vrots-Love" has truly been the "meeting place".

Today, we are honored to have with us our Wroclaw guests, who bring with them a symbol of our friendship and collaboration. This krasnal statue will have a unique place at the residence to commemorating the special relationship between the American Mission and the City of Wroclaw. It is a reminder of the strength of friendship, on a personal level and at a national level, reminding us how the Polish and American people have stood together through Solidarity, and back through history during WWII and as far back as our American Revolution. To all who represent the American people and the U.S. Government this krasnal statue will serve as a daily reminder of the enduring power of the Polish-American friendship.