



PRESS RELEASE

Former Polish President To Speak About Democracy

February 21, 2006

PENSACOLA -- Lech Walesa, former president of Poland and Nobel Laureate, will present a free public lecture, "Democracy: A Never-Ending Battle," March 31 at 7:30 p.m. at the University of West Florida Field House.

"We learned that former President Walesa was going to be available to speak at selected universities, and we thought the opportunity to hear his views on democracy would be valuable to our university students, faculty and staff and to the wider Pensacola community," said Sandra Flake, UWF provost.

In 1990 Walesa became Poland's first democratically elected president, winning more than 74 percent of the votes cast. He is the founder of Solidarity, an independent trade union which led to the end of Communist rule in Poland. He made the country a model of economic and political reform for Eastern Europe to follow and earned it the honor of receiving one of the first invitations to join an expanded NATO. Walesa now heads the Lech Walesa Institute, advancing the ideals of democracy and free market reform throughout Eastern Europe and the rest of the world.

"The opportunity to hear from a Nobel Peace Prize winner and world leader is rare, and one we are very pleased to have," said Flake. "I hope that our campus and the Northwest Florida community will take advantage of this special occasion to learn more about recent world history and how individual commitment can change the course of a nation."

The lecture is part of Festival on the Green, a two-day, entertaining outdoor event scheduled for March 31 and April 1 that will welcome the Northwest Florida and South Alabama communities to the UWF Main Campus. Last year, the festival attracted more than 16,000 attendees.

For more information on the lecture, contact Kim Spear, UWF Office of the President, at (850) 474-2200 or e-mail kspear@uwf.edu.



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