



# IPA Newsletter

July-August 2012

Official Publication of the International Polka Association, Inc.®

## 2012 IPA HALL OF FAMERS



### Craig Ebel

Craig Ebel has been involved in polka music all his life. Craig grew up in a musical family with his mother, LaVay, singing and playing guitar in country western bands and his father, Elhart, building and operating the Bel-Rae Ballroom in Mounds View, Minnesota from 1964 to 1971. The Bel-

Rae became one of the most popular dance spots in the country and the foundation of Craig's musical career.

Craig has been playing drums professionally for over 35 years in all styles of music including rock, country, big band and polka. He has performed and traveled with America's Polka King Frank Yankovic, Canada's Polka King Walter Ostanek, Myron Floren of the Lawrence Welk Show, Dick Contino, The Mrozinski Brothers Aleatoric Ensemble, The Six Fat Dutchmen, Nashville's Joey Miskulin, Al & Alex Meixner, Karl & the Country Dutchmen, Frankie Kramer and countless more.

Craig and his wife Lori started their own polka variety band called DyVersaCo in 2003 in which Craig plays concertina. Craig's vision for the band is to promote polka music by giving the dancers a unique song selection and a solid beat. In less than 10 years, DyVersaCo has produced four recordings, appeared on local and national radio and television, traveled extensively and become one of the most sought after polka bands in the upper Midwest. Craig also plays keyboard and bass. His talents are heard on several recordings including those by Al Derke and the Melody Artists, John Filipczak & the Classics, the Marv Nissel Band, David Austin, Roger Bright and the International Main Street Polka Band. Craig has composed and arranged music for these bands and has produced his own recordings featuring numerous original songs.

(More on Page 3)



### Wally Dombrowski

Wally Dombrowski's journey into music began when he started taking trumpet lessons at five years old. Once he got the basics of the instrument down, it was evident that he could play by ear and would play along with recordings at home with-

out the aid of any written music. His perfect pitch assisted him in teaching himself how to play concertina at the age of six. At the age of nine, Wally's brother Rich organized the Polka Country Musicians and the band started performing at local functions around Connecticut in September, 1977.

Along the way, Wally also took piano lessons but used his ear and innate God-given musical gift to teach himself other instruments. As the popularity of the Polka Country Musicians grew throughout New England and the northeastern United States, Wally was featured not only on concertina and trumpet, but eventually on bass, drums, violin and clarinet.

As his musical prowess grew, Wally began handling the arranging of music for the band, as well as co-writing songs with his brother. The band's popularity slowly but surely grew with the release of their first three recordings over a five year period.

Wally and the Polka Country Musicians got their first "big break" when they were asked to record on the WRS label out of Cleveland, Ohio in the late 1980s. This yielded two highly successful recordings that took the band from regional popularity to the national state with their unique style that now combined polka music with an influence of country music. During this time, Wally expanded his horizons and began writing his own songs that appeared on those two recordings. The bands' "overnight success" (which was about 16 years in the making) reached its culmination with the release of the "Live-...And Jam" recording, which was recorded live in Cleveland, Ohio over a two day period. (More on Page 3)

**IPA CO FOUNDER, TRUSTEE, ELECTOR,  
AWARD WINNER AND HALL OF FAMER,  
EDDIE BLAZONCZYK SR. PASSES.  
SEE PAGE 6, 7 & 9**

**IPA HALL OF FAMER TERESA  
ZAPOLSKA PASSES. SEE PAGE 15**

**TOM "TOMMY" ALTENBURG - PIONEER  
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**PAUL WENDINGER - DECEASED CATEGORY  
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**HOTEL ROOMS STILL AVAILABLE FOR IPA  
FESTIVAL. SEE PAGE 9**

**IPA Newsletter**

The "IPA Newsletter" is the official publication of the INTERNATIONAL POLKA ASSOCIATION, INC.®. The "IPA Newsletter" welcomes submissions from readers and will publish them with consideration to space and time requirements. Pictures are welcome but used only when budget and space constraints allow. All items become the property of the IPA. If you would like a photograph returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Christy Krawisz

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The IPA logo

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**Membership**

Due are \$15.00 per person for all members. You can also purchase a lifetime membership for only \$200.00 per person. If you would like to join the IPA, please send your check or money order to:

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**VISIT THE I.P.A. HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM**

**If you are interested in visiting the International Polka Association's Hall of Fame and Museum, please Contact Dave Ulczycki at 312-315-2215 to make an appointment.**

**Please remember our US troops that work so hard, risk all, and sometimes even make the ultimate sacrifice to preserve not only our freedom, but the freedom of the entire world.**

**Please Remember Us In Your Will or Trust**

To assure the future of the IPA and polka music, your assistance is needed. When you write or review your Will or Trust, please consider leaving a charitable request. Ask your attorney to include the International Polka Association.

**IMPORTANT! MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

As reminders for membership renewals are mailed out, it would be greatly appreciated if these could be returned **as soon as possible**. Not only are these fees used to allocate printing and mailing expenses, but for various other causes. **So please return your renewals in a timely matter.**

**IPA RADIO SHOW**

Don't forget to listen to the IPA Radio Show on Sunday, 10:00–10:30 a.m. CT on WPNA (1490 AM) in Chicago or [www.wpna1490am.com](http://www.wpna1490am.com) via the internet with different DJ's every week or two weeks. President Dave Ulczycki, Vice President Rick Rzeszutko, Treasurer Linda Niewierowski, Secretary, Laura Mateja, Financial Secretary Christy Krawisz, Director John Krawisz, Director T. Ron Jasinski-Herbert, Director John Mikrut and Director Jerry Wantroba.

The IPA Radio Show will be on the Polka Jammer Network on Saturday from 4-5 pm and then replayed on Wednesday from 9-10 pm Central Time. DJ include Chicago Officers and Directors and Out of Town Directors. Be sure to tune in!

Visit: [www.polkajammernetwork.org](http://www.polkajammernetwork.org)

Please Call 1-800-TO-POLKA if you are interesting in advertising on the IPA Radio show. WE NEED SPONSORS!

**Craig Ebel - Continued from Page 1**

Craig is a graduate of the Brown Institute School of Broadcasting and has been in radio since 1981. He has worked as an announcer, reporter, musical director and producer of music programs. In 1991, Craig started "It's Polka Time!", a local radio show that featured all styles of polka music including German, Polish, Slovenian, Czech, Scandinavian and Conjunto. Over the last 20 years, "It's Polka Time!" has grown from one radio station to a network of over two dozen nationwide. It is also heard worldwide over the internet at [www.polkajammernetwork.org](http://www.polkajammernetwork.org).

Craig has dedicated his life to the promotion of polka music. From performing at prestigious events with numerous polka bands to strolling with his concertina at assisted living facilities, polka music is Craig's life. If you ask him which album has a certain song by a certain band on it, not only will he tell you the name of the album, but he will also tell you the year it was recorded and what the album cover looks like! What is so unique about Craig is his respect and love for all styles of polka music which he is passing on to his children.

**OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:**

**Edward Blazonczyk, Sr., IPA Hall of Famer, Co Founder, Trustee/Elector & Member.** Husband to Christine (Tish) Blazonczyk, Father to Kathy, Eddie Jr. (Cheryl), Tony (Rena). Grandfather to Cayle, Anya and Anthony, Jr.

**TERESA ZAPOLSKA, IPA Hall of Famer.** Our deepest sympathy to Teresa's family and friends.

**John Mateja,** Father to IPA Member Dan (Laura) Lindey, Ashley Mateja, Bernie (Ed) Sarah, Rachel, David Gajos, Donna (Steve) Ryan, Brett, Mike (Lynn) Jennifer, Jessica, Nicholas.

**Stella Dziegłowicz,** Daughter of IPA Member, Carol Dziegłowicz. Also, Mother to Martin (Rose Ann). Grandmother to Josef and Drew.

Our deepest sympathy wishes to all the family and friends of Eddie, Teresa, John and Stella. May you rest in Peace.

**Wally Dombrowski—Continued from Page 1**

At one of their high points of popularity, the Polka Country Musicians disbanded at the end of 1997 due to various commitments that took a few members away from the band. For the next two years, talk continued about the band and how greatly it was missed in the polka field. Recognizing the vacuum that had been left, Wally reformed the Polka Country Musicians in the year 2000. This resulted in the band performing a few reunion dates at major festivals across the country. This set the trend for other disbanded popular polka bands over the next several years to do the same. What was supposed to be just a few reunion dates eventually turned into something more permanent as demand to see the band play more frequently grew and, by 2003, the Polka Country Musicians were once again a major fixture in the polka field.

In addition to being a musician, vocalist, music arranger, bandleader, songwriter and music publisher, Wally has appeared on 18 recordings with the Polka Country Musicians, two solo recordings as well as other recordings by Eddie Blazonczyk's Versatones, Stas Bulanda, The Brass Connection and the Polkas For Charity recording, the proceeds of which were donated to St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Starting in 2008, Wally decided to expand his horizons further by getting involved in music production and handling the responsibilities of recording producer as well as recording and mixing engineer for his second solo recording and subsequent recordings by the Polka Country Musicians.

Wally's passion for music knows no bounds by fusing influences from other forms of music such as country and classic rock. He acknowledges the roots of Polish polka music from yesterday and bridges it to today with an eye on advancing the music into tomorrow.

**THANK YOU'S**

Thank you to June S. Ingram for another donation of \$125.00 from the sale of the Rich Bobinski CD Sales.

**In the Mail....**

**"Thank you once again for all the help and support the IPA gave to the Lisa Biskup Organ and Tissue Donor Foundation" Sincerely, Ron Biskup**

**"A donation from the family of Jerry Darlak has been given to the IPA in honor of the life and legacy of Eddie Blazonczyk Sr. May his gift of music which he gave to the world continue to inspire all who hear it" Thank you, Lynne Darlak Cox**



## Pioneer Category—Tom “Tommy” Altenburg

Tommy was born and raised on the north side of Chicago near Humboldt Park. He attended Bernard Moos Grade School and Lane Technical High School. Shortly after graduating from high school, he served an apprenticeship in the lithography trade, became a journeyman and spent most of his adult life employed in that field.

Tommy's love for polka music developed and nurtured while still in grade school listening to polka artists and DJs, namely Li'l Wally, Chet Gulinski, Chet Schafer and Leon Kozicki on radio station WOPA (Oak Park, IL).

In his early teens he took an interest in playing the concertina since he had two older cousins that played. At the age of 16 he started taking lessons from Joe Stacey, a very accomplished player and teacher. After a few years of lessons, graduating high school and purchasing a car, he was ready to start booking playing jobs. In 1962, he was approached and accepted an offer to play with Li'l Richard and the Shy Tones. That arrangement lasted about a year before Tommy decided to venture out on his own. Starting in 1964, his three piece band evolved into four and eventually a five piece group under the name of Tommy Altenburg and the Hap-E-Notes. This group progressed into playing all the major polka lounges in and around Chicago plus weddings, anniversaries and parties to the tune of entertaining and pushing polka music three and four nights a week. This schedule continued for many years.

In the year 1970, Tommy was approached by Emily Mucha Pinter and Carol Trebiatowski in regards to serving on the International Polka Association Board. He accepted and served as Sergeant AT Arms, Director and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President respectively for some twenty five plus years.

Throughout the late 1960s and early 70s Tommy was the promoter and organizer of concertina jam sessions at various polka lounges in and around the Chicagoland area. Also in 1970, he was honored to record on the Ampol Record label along with Tommy Kula, Wally Maduzia and Casey Homel as the Chicago Concertina All Stars.

In 1972, Tommy Altenburg and the Hap-E-Notes recorded their only album on Ampol Records entitled “Come On Smiling”.

In 1979, Tommy relocated to Milwaukee, WI, however he continued traveling back to the Chicagoland area to satisfy previous bookings.

In 1982, cousin Art Altenburg established the “Concertina Bar”. Tommy performed there regularly for some twenty two years until retiring in 2004 and moving to Florida.

For 18 years (1985 to 2002), Tommy and his wife Shirley, sponsored and hosted an annual bus trip from Milwaukee, WI to the Chicago area for the January Festival of Polka Bands to benefit the International Polka Association.

In the year 2011, Tommy was honored to be inducted into the World Concertina Congress Hall of Fame. This event took place in Allenton, WI.

Tommy and wife Shirley now spent their winters in San Antonio, FL and summers in Slinger, WI.

### IPA presents a Certificate of Appreciate to the Pulaski High School Marching Band.

The International Polka Association presented a Certificate of Appreciate to Pulaski High School Marching Band, who performed at the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, California. 200 Band Members were able to make the trip along with 200 of their family members. The Marching Band played the Red Wings Polka! Thank you to Laura Mateja and Rick Rzeszutko for their work on this project. A Special Thank you to Steve Rodgers for helping us with this project and Sheryl Rodgers for presenting the award to the Band Instructor on behalf of the IPA.

More information and pictures to follow in the next newsletter.

### DID YOU KNOW.....

In January, 1968 a steering committee comprised of Johnny Hyzny, Leon Kozicki, Joe and Jean Salomon, Eddie Blazonczyk and Don Jodlowski met to discuss plans for the next convention. After a series of meetings they began preparations for the formation of the International Polka Association. The Association was officially chartered by the State of Illinois as a "not for profit" corporation and was registered with the County of Cook (Chicago) in August of 1968.

Since 1968 the International Polka Festival has been presented under the auspices of the International Polka Association. The delegates to the 1968 Convention approved the establishment of the Polka Music Hall of Fame and the presentation of annual Polka Music Awards.



## Paul Wendinger

When one hears “Wendinger”, it is difficult to think of Peter without Paul. “Peter and Paul”, the concertina playing duo, had been a household name in the polka industry for over 47 years. Their partnership began as children playing with their tractors, pretending to be farmers. As they became older, they farmed 400 acres of land, milked cows, operated a large hog set-up, raised their families and did what they loved most – played polka music!

Peter and Paul did not come from a musical family, however, their parents attended many old-time dances and became friends of bandleaders such as Whoopie John Wilfahrt, Harold Loeffelmacher and Fezz Fritsche. Paul would smile when he talked about his childhood birthday parties. “I didn’t have classmates over for my parties. Ma and Pa invited musicians and their own friends and we had polka music”!

It was Polka Day 1962 when Peter and Paul’s father purchased their first concertina from the Christy Hengel display in New Ulm, MN. At the ages of 9 and 11 they formed a polka band in the tiny town of St. George, north of New Ulm and from there took the show on the road. Their first engagement was for the wedding reception of their neighbors, George and Marian Altmann. Compensation for the event was a pair of black socks for each of the boys. Their first actual “paid” job took place on January 15, 1964 for the John Deere Day in Gibbon, Minnesota. They received a check for \$5.00. Peter & Paul & the Wendinger Band grew in popularity and many times the “boys” were mistaken for twins. Their instruments, however, were “twin concertinas” and that’s how the band was promoted throughout the years.

The toe-tapping music with concertinas, bass, percussion and dynamic vocals led them to a world-wide travel industry and, in 1976, Peter & Paul escorted their first tour to a polka festival in Honolulu, Hawaii. Wendinger Band & Travel, Inc. is family owned and operated in the lower level of Peter & Dodie’s home.

When Peter & Paul Wendinger, Jon Wendinger, Mike Simon, Steve Moran, Larry Roepke, and in previous years Gary Schroeder and Gary Gleisner took the stage, it wasn’t “just” a band. What you saw and heard were “brothers”, partners and friends and that special bond continues today. Paul’s presence is felt with every beat of the music. Since Paul’s death on November 10, 2010 at the age of 59, Jon Wendinger, drummer and vocalist for the group, has taken on the responsibilities his father once held and joins Peter with booking jobs and carrying on the tradition of their weekly Sunday radio show in New Ulm, MN. Their musical group once known as the Peter and Paul Wendinger Band has now become “The Wendinger Band” proudly entertaining “for Generations with Generations”!

Peter and his wife Dodie are married 42 years and have four children, 8 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Paul and Joleen who were married 38 years, were blessed with five children, 15 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Paul gave every bit of credit for his success to God, his parents, family, fellow band members and the dedicated following of people who attended their dances.

Special recognitions over the years included: Began playing concertina at nine years of age; 1976 – beginning of Wendinger Travel – polka festival in Honolulu, Hawaii; 1985 – MN Ballroom Operators Old Tyme Band of the Year; 2005 – Induction in the Polka Hall of Fame, Chisholm, MN and Induction in the World Concertina Congress; 2007 – Induction into the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame. He was honorary co-chairperson of the Brown County Relay for Life in 2010 and could be heard on the weekly Sunday radio show broadcast world-wide on KNUJ (860 AM) and knuj.net; 23 recordings of polkas, waltzes and modern; and accomplished 4,832 band engagements and 1,108,930 miles in 47 years of entertaining.

In the year 2007, Paul’s career of music, traveling, farming and health began changing when he was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer. He continued to be involved with the family business as much as his condition allowed, but in that past year was unable to actively participate. Not wanting to exclude his brother, Peter kept Paul up-to-date as much as possible with discussions and decision making. Paul’s Caringbridge Journal, documented daily by his wife, kept in touch with an overwhelming 215,000 visitors to his site. Family, friends and his musical family from around the world sent comforting thoughts and prayers. The “miles of smiles” were slowly drawing to a close.

Paul Wendinger had a purpose in life. He loved his family dearly, he found sunshine above every cloud in the sky, always reminding people that “life goes on”, and he never hesitated to invite young musicians to the stage just as he and his brother had done so many years ago. Paul would be pleased to know that his musical contributions and that of so many wonderful musicians, living and deceased, have not gone unnoticed. He would proudly say, “Thank you to everyone who supports the music industry that makes people happy – Polka Music – and always remember to keep smiling”!

**Polka United ~ Uniting Everything  
Related to Polka Music**

Visit their Website [www.polkasunited.com](http://www.polkasunited.com)

**THE IPA RADIO SHOW IS NOW ON THE POLKA  
JAMMER NETWORK**

The I.P.A. Radio Show is now on the Polka Jammer Network from 4-5pm on Saturdays and then replayed on Wednesday from 9-10 pm. (Central Time).

Visit: [www.polkajammernetwork.org](http://www.polkajammernetwork.org)



## Remembering Eddie Blazonczyk, Sr.



A Very Special Thank You to Steve Litwin and Bel-Aire Enterprises for the use of their photos.

## Thank you note from the Blazonczyk Family



On behalf of the entire Blazonczyk Family we would like to sincerely thank our family, friends, musicians, promoters, DJs and fans of Eddie's for the unbelievable outpouring of love, support, condolences and prayers at this most difficult time in our lives. We are truly overwhelmed by the amount of cards, Memorial & Perpetual Masses, donations to charities in Eddie's name, flowers, plants, peace lilies, angel statues, a beautiful angel throw blanket, prayer boxes, and monetary gifts that continue to come in. We have not yet finished reading through all the email messages on the legacy.com and belairrecords.com web sites. The notes and letters that all of you are including in your cards are simply amazing. A true testament to the thousands of lives that Eddie touched. Many of you talk about the friendships you made through Eddie & the Versatones. Others share stories about weddings, family parties, anniversary events, graduations, etc..that Eddie entertained at. Promoters and DJs speak about what a grand event it was when Eddie played in town and how the crowds were often sell outs. All wonderful memories that now live in your minds and hearts. There is no doubt, a huge void in our lives and the biggest heartache we have ever experienced right now, but your kind thoughts and prayers are helping us to get through this one day at a time. Our intention is to continue the radio shows, festivals, dances, studio and record label, because Eddie would want us to. Our hope is that you will continue to support us, as you did Eddie.

Sincerely,  
Tish Blazonczyk & Family



### Eddie Blazonczyk Inducted into IPA Hall of Fame in 1970

Eddie Blazonczyk was a native Chicagoan, son of Fred and Antoinette Blazonczyk, who for years operated the Pulaski Village Ballroom and later the Club Antoinette in Chicago. Eddie started playing polkas in the early fifties with a four-piece combo known as "Happy Eddie and his Polka Jesters." They performed at many Polish weddings, anniversaries and other engagements in Chicagoland.

In 1958 Eddie went into the Pop music field as a song writer and recording artist for Mercury Records. Under the name of Eddie Bell and the Bel-Aires, he recorded a few hits. He toured the country and appeared on television on Dick Clark's American Bandstand and the Jim Loundsbury Show. In 1962 Eddie came back to the Polka field with a group known as the Versatones. They toured and played in all parts of the U.S.A. and Canada. A Poland European Tour included Italy and France. Eddie Blazonczyk was also a polka promoter, a disc jockey heard on WTAQ weekly, and president of the Bel-Aire Record Company with studios in Chicago. Eddie was honored at a testimonial in Buffalo, New York, in 1967, being given a gold key to the city and a gold plaque naming him the Nation's No. 1 Polka Man. This citation was registered with the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Some of Eddie's big hit recordings include "Angeline Be Mine Polka" (voted the best single recording of 1969), "Apples, Peaches, Pumpkin Pie," "Poor Boy Polka" and "My Girlfriend Katie, Polka."

**Eddie Blazonczyk, Sr., passed away on May 21, 2012. He was the Co-Founder of the I.P.A., First Secretary of the I.P.A., I.P.A. Elector and Trustee and I.P.A. Award Winner Numerous Times.**

## 29TH ANNUAL CONCERTINA JAM

It began in 1984 as a small room party organized by Adele Litwin to celebrate Steve's birthday and this year the Concertina Jam session marked its 29th year as part of the annual Polka Fireworks Festival at the Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Champion, Pennsylvania.

For the past 29 years, more than 200 different concertina players and over 300 total musicians from all over the United States have been a part of this jam session which has developed a loyal and almost cult-like following among musicians and fans alike. Steve and Adele have worked to keep the Jam what it was meant to be, a place where there are no stars and the novice can sit along-side the expert and everyone is equal. It features the music from the core of Polish heritage, played on the instrument the musicians all love. Primarily in an acoustic venue that is reminiscent of the village music of Poland the Jam is more the musicians performing for each other, than for an audience although now it draws several hundred in the audience.

Concertina Jam 2012 brought together 22 concertina players and a total of 30 musicians in the Matternhorn Lounge at Seven Springs on Sunday, July 1 for almost two hours of casual, off-the-cuff, Polish style music.

Several hundred filled the lounge to listen, watch and enjoy this year's event.

Litwin has played the concertina since 1975 and also plays accordion. This year is his 44th year of continuous writing for Polka and Polish publications and he is the Polka Music Editor of the Polish American Journal, a monthly newspaper published out of Buffalo, NY. He is a member and elector of the IPA and is a 2004 Inductee into the WCC Concertina Hall of Fame. Visit: [www.polamjournal.com/polka](http://www.polamjournal.com/polka) for more information.

Thank you Steve for all you do for Polka Music!



## Congratulations to John Huchrowski on 75 years performing on the Violin in the Polka Industry.

John has also performed with Joe Mlakar, Dave Miron Orch., The Northern Sounds of Fla. Tony Mandella Orch. in Etiwanda Ca. Hall of Fame Sam Pugliano, Johnny Vadnal, the Bee Sharps Orch. Lou Trebar, Frankie Zeitz, in Arcadia Ca. Herb Eberly in LaVerne Ca., Don Wojtila in Enon Valley, Polka Quads in Steelton Pa., Mikey Dee, Kosova Tamburitza and Bill Smartnick Orch. John has been with the following Button box groups: Fontana, Western Pa, White Valley, Myrtle Beach and Penn Ohio.

He has also performed with Hall of Famers: Matt Wasielewski's Polka Jets, Ray Jay & the Carousels. The Polka Family, the Marvels, Polka Happiness, Dynasonics, Joe Fiedor's Polish All Stars, Jan Cyman, Dorothy Ziemianski [Slovak - Hungarian music], Bob Jezewski & the Merry Makers, Andy Fenus & the Trel Tones, Chudaks, Chester Jonczak's Duo, The Goats Orch. Stardusters, Highlites, Polka Dynamics & The Western Pa. Polish Preservation Band. He has also performed for the WKHB Frank Powaski "Polka Marathon Show."



## 25th Annual Summer Music Fest Frankenmuth Michigan

**RAM Productions presents the Summer Music Fest, August 7-11 and August 17 & 18th, 2012.**

**Seven days of non-stop music events featuring 14 of the nations top polka bands.**

**They are proud to bring you the 25th annual Summer Music Fest. We hope you will enjoy the entertainment, dancing, food, and family atmosphere we offer. The Summer Music Fest takes place in Heritage Park along the banks of the Cass River just over the covered bridge from downtown Frankenmuth, Mi. 68 x 84 square feet of wooden dance floor, over 1,300 chairs and tables, a large variety of food and drinks all under a large pavilion to keep everyone in the shade or out of the rain. Parking is adjacent to the festival. Restroom facilities take care of personal needs very comfortably. The**

**Summer Music Fest is hosted by Mark Janson who continues to put together the right factors to attract people from across the nation and around the world. He believes music is a common denominator in all people and the Summer Music Fest features music to get your friends together for a good time. So come, listen and dance to your favorite style of music, whether it's polka, waltz, or rock'n'roll, because the 2012 Summer Music Fest has the right combination for a goodtime!**

**[www.frankenmuthfestivals.com](http://www.frankenmuthfestivals.com)**

### POLKA CRUISE WITH THE STARS VI

Full Circle is thrilled to announce the details of their next **"Polka Cruise with the Stars VI"**. Things went so well on their recent cruise this past March, they took some extra time to find just the right ship and itinerary to keep enhancing their guests' entertainment experience. So, if you're ready for another exciting eight days in polka paradise, mark your calendars from **February 2 - 10, 2013**. This time the cruise sails from Miami, FL on board the *brand new Carnival Breeze®* and visits the exotic ports of St. Thomas, Antigua, Tortola and Nassau! Tortola and Antigua are new ports for Full Circle cruises and are well known for their beautiful beaches. In addition to Full Circle, Jimmy Weber & The Sounds and The Boys will provide the best in live polka music. As usual, there will be lots of fun and games with our polka DJ Kenny Olowin as well. Those famous private cocktails parties are bound to keep everyone's spirits high, too! And, to fulfill your Sunday obligation, Father Tom Aleksa will conduct a Polka Mass at sea. The ship has many fantastic amenities that include the new *Punchliner Comedy Brunch* that lets you enjoy some of George Lopez's own recipes while you laugh, the *Carnival Waterworks®* - an onboard waterpark that features a 4-deck high *Twister Waterslide*, and the new *Red Frog Rum Bar* at poolside. Of course there's lots of shopping, multiple pools and relaxing spas, all kinds of themed lounges, top-notch theater productions, gourmet meals, and so much more. Full Circle cherishes the wonderful polka people that continue to bless them with their company each year. If you'd like to be part of their next tropical adventure, please contact Helga Leonard at (724) 234-2033 or [helga@adreamtrip4u.com](mailto:helga@adreamtrip4u.com). By the way, there is a special discount for past Full Circle cruisers and those who book early. Visit [www.GoneFullCircle.com](http://www.GoneFullCircle.com) and [www.polka-cruise.com](http://www.polka-cruise.com) for more information. Fulfill your dream in 2013 with Full Circle's **"Polka Cruise with the Stars VII"**

### Eddie B's Top 10 Songs

In 2010, Todd Zaganiacz asked Eddie Blazonczyk Sr. what were his personal Top 10 favorite songs he recorded in his polka career. Below is the list:

- 1) POLKA CELEBRATION
- 2) ANGELINE BE MINE POLKA
- 3) WHEN A BAND PLAYED A POLKA
- 4) ZAKOPANIE POLKA
- 5) MOM & DAD WALTZ
- 6) VISIT TO POLAND POLKA
- 7) POLKA HERO
- 8) I LOVE EVERYBODY WALTZ
- 9) AS LIFE ROLLS ON WALTZ
- 10) TWINKLETOES POLKA

Thank you Todd for allowing us to reprint this.

### UPC13 POLKA CRUISE

**March 10 - 17, 2013 on Norwegian PEARL.**

**from Miami to Bahamas, Jamaica, Grand Cayman and Mexico.**

**Starting at only \$849.**

**For More information call John Gora  
905-336-3055**

**Or email: [john@johngora.com](mailto:john@johngora.com)**

## ONLY A FEW DAYS LEFT BEFORE THE 44TH ANNUAL I.P.A. FESTIVAL BEGINS!

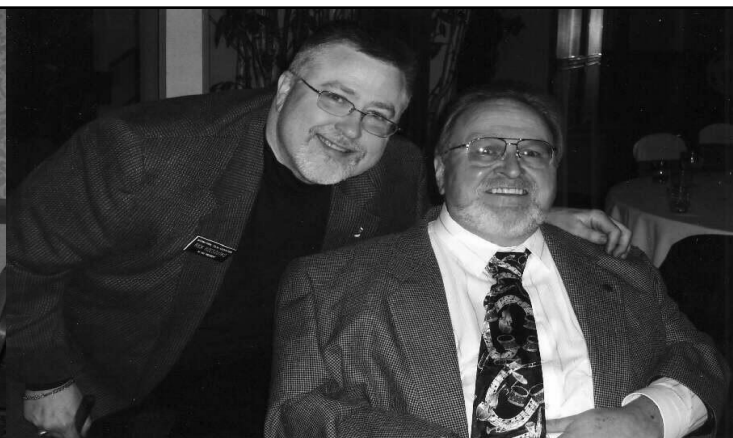


Well the I.P.A. festival is only days away. We hope you are going to be able to join us at the Embassy Suites~Cleveland-Rockside 5800 Rockside Woods Blvd., Independence, Ohio. The Embassy Suites is a beautiful hotel and we are excited about the move. On Thursday, August 2nd, **Squeeze Box** featuring **Molly B and Ted Lange** will be playing from 7-10:30 pm. On Friday, August 3rd, from 12-3 PM music in the Atrium by the **IPA Tribute Band**. In the Hall on Friday from 5 pm—1 pm,

music by **The Eddie Forman Orchestra, The Downtown Sound and Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push**. On Saturday, August 4th, the **43rd Annual I.P.A. Polka Music Hall of Fame and Music Awards Banquet** beginning at 10 am. Reservations are required and the price of a ticket is \$35.00. Please contact Linda Niewierowski 773-489-3987 or email her at [plkaqueen25@aol.com](mailto:plkaqueen25@aol.com). In the Atrium from 11-3 **DJ Kenny Konopka** will be entertaining you. In the Hall on Saturday from 4 pm—1 am, music by **The Boys, The Knewz and the IPA Tribute Band with Special Guest I.P.A. Hall of Famers**. On Sunday August 5, the **Polka Mass** begins at 9 am and the **Annual Election of Officers and Convention Meeting** begins at 10 am (current members only). Admission prices are \$10.00 on Thursday and \$15.00 on Friday and Saturday, payable at the door. No Advance Tickets. Children under 16 will be admitted FREE when accompanied by an Adult. For Hotel Reservations please call I.P.A. President, Dave at 312-315-2215. **THIS IS AN ALL SUITES HOTEL**. All suites have a private bedroom and separate living rooms, a wet-bar, microwave, refrigerator, coffee-maker and two flat screen TV's, Complimentary cooked-to-order breakfast each morning, Complimentary Manager's reception with light snacks and beverages each evening, Indoor pool, whirlpool, fitness center and seasonal outside sundeck.



Hall of Famer, Eddie Sr. with Hall of Famer, Fred Hudy



First Vice President Rick Rzeszutko with Eddie Sr.

Eddie Blazonczyk Sr. will have a special place in all of our hearts. Eddie was one of the Co Founders of the IPA, the first Secretary of the IPA, an Elector and Trustee. He was elected into the Hall of Fame in 1970 and has won numerous IPA Awards for Song, Vocalist and Band of the year. Please keep the Blazonczyk Family in your thoughts and prayers!

PLEASE VISIT [WWW.BELAIRERECORDS.COM](http://WWW.BELAIRERECORDS.COM) TO READ MORE STORY ABOUT EDDIE SR.

# Welcome New Members

## We would like to welcome our newest members:

Judy Kwiatkowski, Seth Drzewicki, Father Tom Aleksa, Milton F. Brzozowski, Constance M. Brzozowski, Terri Lipchinsky, Lorraine Matusovich, Linda Demke, Randy Demke, Alan Mammoser, Donald Lewandowski, Steve Coblish, Linda Walczynski-Louie, Debbie Walczynski-Greene, Katie Greene-Schultz and Carol Schminski

## Members are very important to the International Polka Association!

With the dues we collect, we are able to pay the month operating expenses of the International Polka Association. The Officers and Directors of Illinois voted to have a membership drive and incentive program. Please tell your family and friends what a great organization the International Polka Association is. This is the perfect time to help the IPA get more members. Membership is only \$15.00 per year, or you can sign up for a lifetime membership, and that is only \$200.00.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR RENEWAL MEMBER ENVELOPES BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!**



Sunday August 19, 2012

Chet's Melody Lounge - Picnic Grove  
7400 Archer Avenue  
Summit, Illinois

**Music by: Rick Rzeszutko  
and the Music Company**

Gates open at Noon ~ Music from 12:30-4:30 pm

Admission: \$8.00

(\$1.00 off if you show your current I.P.A. membership card)

Food Available for purchase  
Grilling by "Chef John"

*44th Annual*

## INTERNATIONAL POLKA ASSOCIATION FESTIVAL

**Thursday, August 2 - Sunday, August 5th, 2012**

<p><b>POLKA MUSIC &amp; DANCING</b> Three Music-Filled Days from the Nation's Best Polka Bands</p>		 <b>New Hotel</b> <b>Embassy Suites</b> 5800 Rockside Woods Blvd Independence, OH  \$99 per night plus tax. Must mention IPA Polka Festival. Reservations must be made by July 18, 2012. 216-966-9900 Website: <a href="http://clevelandindependence.embassysuites.com">clevelandindependence.embassysuites.com</a>
<p><b>THURSDAY, AUGUST 2<sup>ND</sup></b>          Music by Squeeze Box with Molly &amp; Ted Lange (OH)          \$10 at the door</p>	<p><b>FRIDAY, AUGUST 3<sup>RD</sup></b>          The Eddie Forman Orchestra (MA)          The Downtown Sound (IL)          Lenny Gonnulka &amp; Chicago Push (MA)</p>	
<p><b>FRIDAY &amp; Saturday \$15.00 at the door</b></p>		
<p><b>SUNDAY, AUGUST 5<sup>TH</sup></b>          9:00 a.m. Polka Mass          10:00 a.m. Annual Election of Officers &amp; Convention Meeting (IPA Members Only)          Bands subject to change without notice</p>		
<p><b>SATURDAY, AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup></b>          The Boys (MD)          IPA Tribute Band (IL) with Guest IPA Hall of Famers          The Knewz (NY)</p>		<p><b>43RD ANNUAL IPA POLKA MUSIC HALL OF FAME MUSIC AWARDS BANQUET</b>          Saturday, August 4th          \$35 Advance Reservation Only</p>
<p><b>POLKA PARTIES</b>          Friday Noon-3:00 p.m.          Saturday 11 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.          IPA Tribute Band</p>		<p><b>CONTACT THE IPA</b>          1-800-TO-POLKA          (1-800-867-6552)</p>

**Visit the IPA Website at [www.internationalpolka.com](http://www.internationalpolka.com)**



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## ***The International Polka Association Tribute Band proudly presents “Yesterday’s Songs”***

*It features a mixture of songs originally recorded by IPA Hall of Famers and Award Winners, along with some arrangements recorded as a Polka for the very first time to offer you something new and fresh. Our goal was to record a CD that has something for all Polka fans, both young and old. Whether you like traditional Polka music or enjoy some newer melodies, we hope there is something for you on this recording.*

*During the course of this project, we lost two very important people in our lives. We would like to dedicate this recording to the memories of two of our fathers, Eddie Blazonczyk, Sr., and John Mateja, both of whom provided support and inspiration to our musical endeavors over the years.*

*A very heartfelt “Thank You” to our Executive Producer—Gene Swick, who without hesitation was eager to lend his support to this project. We appreciate you very much. A big thank you to all the IPA Officers and Directors for their support and encouragement. Also, special thanks to Barbara Kociolek, Anna & Bob Borowski, and Andrew Okrzesik for their contributions as well.*

***Since 1968, the International Polka Association has been promoting Polka Music by honoring Polka artists through our Hall of Fame inductions and annual award presentations for recording and performance. Please join the IPA in helping to keep our music and Hall of Fame alive.***

***Membership information is available at  
www.InternationalPolka.Com,  
or call 1-800-TO-POLKA • (1-800-867-6552).***

**Thank you for your support!**

To purchase a copy of this CD, please send a check or money order made payable to the IPA, for **\$18.00 (\$15.00 plus \$3.00 postage and handling)**. Mail it to: International Polka Association, 4608 S. Archer Avenue, Chicago, IL 60632.

PLEASE BE SURE TO SEND YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE, so we can mail the CD to you.

You can also purchase a copy of this CD from any IPA Tribute Band Member.



### **Rich Bobinski - 26 Classic Hits from the past**

New CD Release! Co-Producer & Sound File Enhancement by Peter J. Danielczuk, I.P.A. Sgt. At Arms. A portion of the proceeds from this recording are being donated to the International Polka Association. The I.P.A. is instrumental in the preservation and promotion of Polka Music throughout the United States. Distributor and Co-Producer is Jimmy K Polkas, 440-846-0404 or visit [www.jimmykpolkas.com](http://www.jimmykpolkas.com)

## T.K. Frank's Best Sellers - CD's

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 "Polka Thriller" NEW  
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 "Gamel'ots Story"  
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**THE BOYS** - "A New Day" NEW  
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 "Paloma Blanca" "  
 "Jak Sie Masz" "  
 "Update those Good Old Polkas" "  
 "Polkas on Fire" "  
 "Polkarisma" "  
 "Super Duper Polkas" "

Paloma Blanca" "  
 "Jak Sie Masz" "  
 "Update those Good Old Polkas" "  
 "Polkas on Fire" "  
 "Polkarisma" "  
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 "New Ulm Favorites"  
 "What God Has Joined Together"  
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 "Polka Celebration with Joey Miskulin" New  
 "Care Free" New  
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**PIWOWARCZYK, ANIA**  
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## IPA HALL OF FAMER IN THE PIONEER CATEGORY IN 2008 - TERESA ZAPOLSKA PASSES

Westbury, N.Y. (PMN)—Teresa Zapolska (right) passed away on May 8, 2012. She had been inducted into the Polka Hall of Fame in the Pioneer Category in 2008.

Zapolska grew up in Jamaica, New York. During her early years in school, she was taught the piano by the nuns and played for all of the Polish shows held at the school. On the request of her mother, she also began singing and accordion lessons. At an early age, her polka career began with the Bernie Witkowski Orchestra for the grand opening of Polkas on Broadway at the Arcadia Ballroom, for the Kosciuszko Ball in the grand ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City, along with many more infamous locations. Not only did she sing with the band, but she also composed and orchestrated polkas and Polish songs.

With this new found popularity, Zapolska at one point was performing with a total of twenty bands. Her extensive career in polka music took her to performing not only with Frank Wojnarowski, but she was a vocalist with such great artists as Bernie Witkowski, Mike Miskiewicz, John Tyburczy, Eddie Gronet, Ted Maksymowicz, Joe Yasinowski, Larry Chesky, Eddie "D" Dmuchowski, Ed Zavaski, Sr., the G.T. Express and many more. Zapolska's recordings with these artists can be found on the RCA Victor, Musico, Rex, Silverbill, Dana, Rolo, Dyno, Rim, Eurotone and Polka Towne record labels. In 2008 her record label, Polka Towne, was in its 45th year in existence.

Having difficulty switching between bands, she decided to go with just one band. That decision was to perform with Frank Wojnarowski.

Frank Wojnarowski, in the beginning, wasn't extremely comfortable with Teresa. Within a short time, he grew to becoming very fond of her. Zapolska admits to idolizing Frank and his wonderful music. She wrote many songs for him. He was so impressed with her work, he never questioned any song she gave him. He just used it. Zapolska teamed with Wojnarowski to run two big polka festivals, one in Manhattan Center in New York City and the other in Bridgeport, Connecticut at Pleasure Beach Ballroom. Not only did she sing, write songs and orchestrate them, she also made the costumes for the band, as well as handled his bookings. Upon Wojnarowski's retirement in 1975, Teresa began her own band, the Teresa Zapolska Orchestra, then the Teresa Zapolska All Girl Orchestra Plus One.

In 1984, Zapolska decided to take over the Polka Show on Long Island. She has worked with WBAB-WGR in Long Island, New York for a few years, and became a program engineer and show producer for WUSB in Stony Brook, Long Island.

When she had some spare time, Zapolska also was a news reporter for the *Polish American World* in New York. Some of her accolades included receiving two awards for best female vocalist, as well as two entertainment awards in 2006. She appeared on two television programs in the 1970s, and produced eight more for television syndication. Zapolska, was a consultant for Jay Jay records, traveling nationwide visiting distributors, record stores and radio shows. She held the capacity of vice president in charge of artists and repertoire for Gateway Industries Recording Studios in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and Associated Industries in Cleveland, Ohio, for their Dyno and Rim labels.

Zapolska was the recipient of Cambridge's Who's Who Professional of the Year in the Polka Music Industry award in 2006, 2007 and 2008. Teresa Zapolska was president and floral designer of Polka Towne Florist and Gifts, overseeing all operations and floral design certifications. Polka Towne's major products included custom designed floral arrangements, gift items and novelties, balloon bouquets, gift baskets and polka records, tapes and CDs.

[The foregoing information is adapted from the website of the International Polka Association. Some of this was copied from Polonia today with permission.]

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY ~ STO LAT - IPA MEMBERS!

## JULY

**July 3** - Edward Nowak; Ken Yash;  
**July 4** - Hank Haller; Leon Kozicki (IPA Founder);  
**July 5** - Jan Sweet;  
**July 6** - Steve Litwin; Rita Niewierowski;  
           Jennifer Bulanda  
**July 7** - Andrew Putz; Felix Sobecki  
**July 9** - Bea Zawada; John Wisneski  
**July 10** - Mona Sus; Jerry Wantroba (IPA Director);  
**July 12** - Jacob Dill;  
**July 13** - Theresa Jagielski; Theresa Pawlicki  
**July 15** - Arthur Kalena; Wally Dombrowski;  
**July 16** - Bernard Sandowski; Thomas Hartwig;  
           Cheryl Furmaniak;  
**July 17** - Thomas Kalinowski; Pat Mikos;  
**July 18** - Steve Swiader; Hedy Wozniak;  
           Maggie Zabielski  
**July 19** - Sue Conway;  
**July 22** - Bonnie Potoniec  
**July 23** - Carol Dziegłowicz  
**July 25** - Eddie Labuda;  
**July 26** - Karen Mikrut;  
**July 27** - John Gora, Dr. Ann Hetzel Gunkel;  
           Edward Pietraszek;  
**July 28** - Cheryll Hogue; Lorraine Matusovich  
**July 29** - Emily Pinter  
**July 31** - Len Fornek

## AUGUST

**August 1** - Eugene Bryda, Mary Lesniak;  
           Sandy Schuster; Maryann Cuglewski  
**August 2** - Tony Blazonczyk (IPA Director);  
           Chuck Stastny;  
**August 3** - Mike Stapinski;  
**August 4** - Susan Matysiewicz; Kathleen Zielinski;  
           Happy Louie Dusseault  
**August 5** - Rose Marie Tynski; Frances Ziemba  
**August 6** - Jeff Veverka; MaryAnn Jukubielski  
**August 7** - John "Foo" Furmaniak; Edward Guca  
           (IPA Director); Bob Zima; Camille Hjelm;  
           Berne Locke  
**August 10** - Helen Curtin;  
**August 11** - Chester Kniec; Dave Ulczycki (IPA Presi-  
           dent); John Robinson; Keith Pietranczyk  
**August 12** - Leonard Wolski;  
**August 13** - Carol Forman; Steve Zalewski  
**August 14** - Wanda Kowalik; Barry Niccolai  
**August 15** - Ed Svoboda; Edward Burczyk  
**August 16** - Neil Rothrock; Diana Walk;  
**August 17** - Eleanor Kania;  
**August 18** - Rena Blazonczyk; Tom Czyzewski  
**August 19** - Michael Matousek (IPA Director);  
**August 20** - Ed Cygan; John Sobczak; Ken Machelski  
**August 21** - Tony Petkovsek;  
**August 22** - Eugene Gawle; Julianne Mossak  
**August 23** - Stas Golembewski; Randy Vokral;  
**August 24** - Connie Hvizdos;  
**August 25** - Rose Marie Sukacz;  
**August 26** - Mary Ann Moon;  
**August 28** - Joyce Fornek; Judy Krason;  
**August 30** - Dianne Winarz; Grazyna Danielczuk



If your name is not listed above and you are a member, we must not have your birthday in our computer! If you wish to have your birthday listed, please send an email to: [Christy-ipa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Christy-ipa@sbcglobal.net) or send it to: Christy Krawisz, IPA Birthdays, 4608 S. Archer Avenue, Chicago, IL 60632. Please remember, you must be an IPA Member.



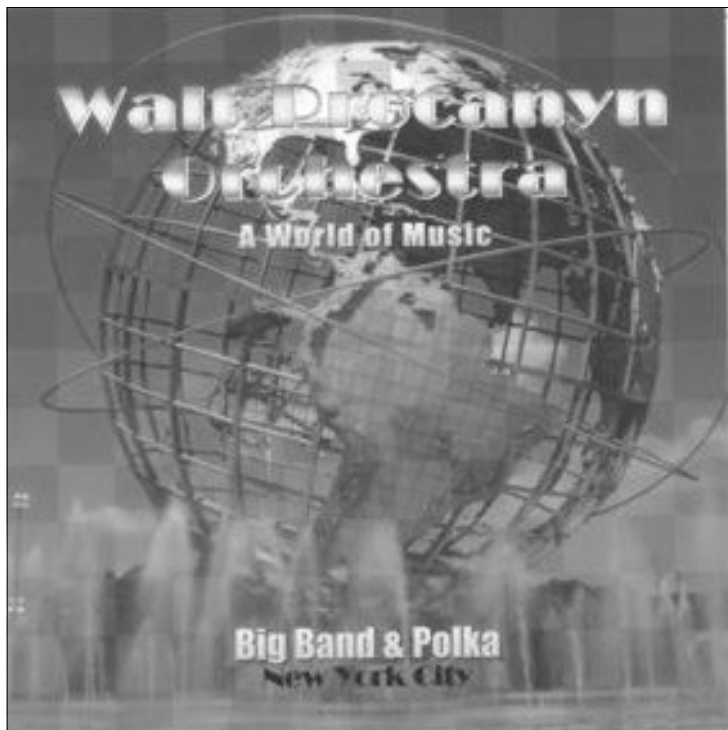
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13. I BETCHA DO POLKA (VOCAL)
14. PAPER DOLL (VOCAL)
15. I KNOW I'M GONNA DANCE POLKA (VOCAL)
16. MISTER SAX POLKA
17. ALWAYS WALT'S ACCAPELLA SINGERS
18. YOU MADE ME LOVE YOU (SOLO TRUMPET)
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Details on Page 9

August 5, 2012—10 am  
Convention Annual Meeting  
And Election of Officers

August 19, 2012  
IPA Summer Picnic  
12:30pm-4:30pm  
Chet's Melody Lodge  
Music by: Rick Rzeszutko's  
Music Company. See Page 10  
for more information

**Advertise in the IPA Newsletter**

**One Issue**

Full Page .....\$75.00 per issue  
Half Page .....\$55.00 per issue  
Quarter Page .....\$40.00 per issue  
Eighth Page .....\$25.00 per issue

**Three Issues**

Full Page .....\$67.00 per issue  
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Quarter Page .....\$36.00 per issue  
Eighth Page .....\$22.00 per issue

**Six Issues**

Full Page .....\$60.00 per issue  
Half Page .....\$40.00 per issue  
Quarter Page .....\$32.00 per issue  
Eighth Page .....\$20.00 per issue

PLEASE NOTE: For advertisements requiring pictures,  
please add a one-time charge of \$10.00.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS!!**

As reminders for membership renewals are mailed out, it would be greatly appreciated if these could be returned **as soon as possible**. Not only are these fees used to allocate printing and mailing expenses, but for various other causes. **So please return your renewals in a timely matter.**



**International Polka Association, Inc.®**

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