



IPA Newsletter

September-October, 2020

Official Publication of the International Polka Association, Inc.®

A Note From Our President

It is hard to believe that we completed our First Virtual IPA Event. Since June, the IPA Plan B committee had been working day and night to put this great event together for you. I hope you got a chance to watch and enjoy the finished product. If not, you will be able to catch all replays on YouTube. Just do a search on YouTube for "Virtual IPA Festival".

Thank you to Keith Stras, our game show host, Ed-die Blazonczyk, Jr., Tim Okrzesik, Paul Futa, Gerry Tarka, Brian Kapka, Tony Blazonczyk, Chris Bogdon and Rick Rzeszutko, the game show contestants, Katie Krawisz, Johnny Krawisz Mike Nowakowski for all of the laughs during the news broadcast. To all of the polka kids, Alex Yash, Sebastian Pucowski, Aleya and Hadley Kaminski, Ally Kapka, Andrew and Emma Bogdon, Becca and Emily Olszewski, Braxton Fox, Emily Czerniak, Katie and Hayley Krawisz, Nick Yash, Phillip and Matthew Olszewski, Teddy Gomulka, Zander and Helaina Raymakers, Kayla Urbanczyk, Hannah Yash, Anne Stec and Christy Nowakowski, who submitted the marketing videos, and to everyone else involved in some way during these events, Thank you!

It was great seeing the interviews that we did with past and current Hall of Fame Inductees, as they told some fantastic stories about special polka events in their lives. I had tears in my eyes when the production company, Darque Syde of D'Lyte Productions, Inc., showed us some of his ideas and put our visions to light. Thank you, Zernul.

To the 2020 Polka Hall of Fame Inductees, Bill Shibilski (NY), David Zychowski (PA), Rick Rzeszutko (IL), the family of Tony (Krew) Krupski (NY), and Ellsworth "Babe" Wagner (MN), Congratulations! We are sorry your big day had to be postponed this weekend, but don't worry; we will have a fantastic celebration for you next year at our 53rd IPA Festival and Convention.

To the 2019 Music Award Recipients, Congratulations, and thank you so much for all that you do and for the love and passion you have for polka music.

To Fred Bulinski, Fred Kendzierski, Brad Turk, and all the current IPA Trustees and Electors, thank you for all that you do for the Hall of Fame. Fred Bulinski, thank you for your video presentation of the IPA Hall of Fame Inductees and music awards videos.

We really would like to thank our Master of Ceremony for the entire weekend, Craig Ebel. Craig was incredible as the MC, and we appreciate all the time, effort, and research that Craig put in for the weekend. We also would like to thank Craig's son, Chris Ebel, for spending the entire weekend with the IPA. Chris is a great young man who loves polkas and has a passion for promoting polkas. So much so, that I appointed Chris our Youth Advisor on Sunday evening of our event.

The IPA would also like to send a special shoutout to all the bands performed live at the weekend. They were as professional as always, and we were thrilled to have them. On Friday night, Tony Blazonczyk and New Phaze and Steve Meisner brought down the house. On Saturday, the IPA Tribute Band did a masterful job as always in playing the tunes from the past IPA Hall of Fame Inductees. Finally, on Sunday, the Dynabass rocked the place with the songs off their 20/20 Polkas CD released this year. We were glad that all the bands could find time to perform for the Virtual IPA Festival.

We would also like to extend a huge thank you to The KOSMIX and Father Dennis Bogusz. The IPA received so many positive comments on such a great Polka Mass. The time and effort it took to record and edit that mass was much appreciated by everyone.



Thanks to all the bands that submitted pre-recorded band videos that we used for the Virtual IPA Festival. These bands and people include:

- WSKG/Let's Polka and Billy Flynn
- The Boys
- Maestro's Men
- John Gora and Gorale
- Lenny Gomulka and the Chicago Push
- Fred Ziwich
- FreezeDried
- Jimmy Sturr
- Eddie Blazonczyk's Versatones
- Lynn Marie Rink
- The KOSMIX
- Polish Connection
- Polka Country Musicians (*Mark Komar for the video footage of PCM*)

To all of the board members, thank you for all of your support during this crazy year. I appreciate it.

Lynn Kaminski, thank you for all the time you spent on putting slideshows together and getting them off to Stephen to edit and for all my last-minute calls to make changes. Cheryl Furmaniak and John Furmaniak Sr, thank you for handling the calendar raffle for us. I appreciate all that you have done.

To the Plan B Committee; Chris Bogdon, Stephen Kaminski, Brian Kapka, Johnny Krawisz, Lindsey

Mateja, and Keith Pietranczyk, thank you for the countless number of hours you put into this project. The last several months have been so extremely stressful, but you all handled everything thrown at you so professionally and got the job done. Well, mostly professional. LOL. Your talents and skills amaze me!!! I will never be able to thank you enough, and it has been a real honor for me to work with you on this event. You guys are truly amazing, and once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you to Mark Trzepacz from the Polka Jammer Network for all that he did to make sure the broadcast of our events went smoothly over our festival weekend, as well as all of the listeners that tuned in to the Polka Jammer that weekend. We hope that you enjoyed the live music. We are grateful for the relationship we have with the Polka Jammer as we all do our best to keep this going for the love of the music.

And as always, if you have feedback about the IPA Virtual Festival, or have any questions, please don't hesitate to send us an email at info@ipapolkas.com.

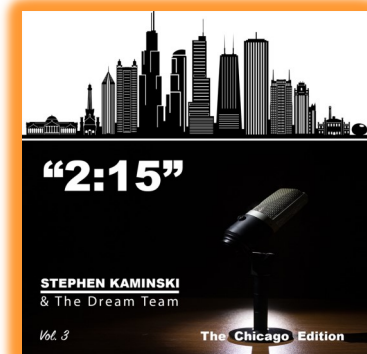
As the holiday season quickly approaches, it is my deepest wish that you and your families have a very Happy Thanksgiving, no matter how you spend it this year.

Musically Yours, *Christy*

New Recording Coming 2021

Stephen Kaminski is pleased to announce the third installment of his solo project series to be called "Stephen Kaminski & the Dream Team, Volume 3 - The Chicago Edition".

The first single from the upcoming project is a song entitled "2:15".



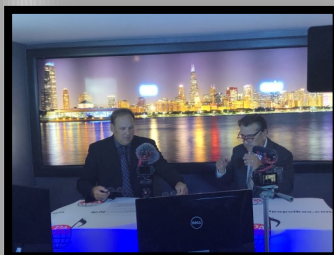
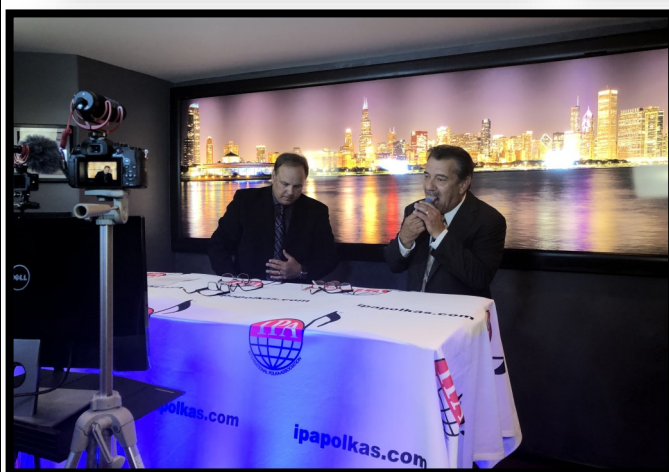
The song was debuted on Craig Ebel's show "It's Polka Time" and is reminiscent of a '70s song by Red Sovine called "Teddy Bear". It is done as a similar narrative and recounts a heart wrenching story

of a simple request from a little boy named Stuart to a polka DJ. The song is meant to bring back our sense of community and human kindness, and how choosing to go out of your way for someone, even a stranger, can sometimes make a difference. It also brings some new life to an old classic!

The single "2:15" is available now as a digital download exclusively on the IPA Website's Store Page. All proceeds from the sale of the single are being graciously donated to the IPA.

Once the album is released next year, it will also be found here as an exclusive download.

Please visit the IPA's Website Store, download "2:15", get a box of tissues, and enjoy Stephen Kaminski's single "2:15".



IPA Polka Hall of Fame® & Music Awards Committee Update Committee Evolves

In the fall of 2014, the IPA established the Polka Music Hall of Fame® and Awards Committee to oversee and enhance the various processes necessary to properly recognize deserving polka professionals. The most recent three-member committee comprised IPA 2nd Vice President Fred Kendzierski and IPA Director Brad Turk and was chaired by Polka Hall of Famer® Fred Bulinski. During its tenure, this committee incorporated a number of improvements that helped to better represent all polka genres. Special thanks go out to Fred Bulinski

who personally managed an extreme workload for over six years for the good of the greater polka industry. Congratulations for a job well done, gentlemen!

In keeping with the IPA's objective for more inclusion and diverse participation, the Executive Board recently approved the expansion of the committee to a five-member team. The new committee now leverages the talents of Polka Hall of Famers Gary Brueggen, Jackie Libera, Mike Matousek, Jimmy Weber, and Fred Ziwich. Welcome aboard, mates!



New Innovations!

As the IPA marches forward to embrace new technologies, the Polka Hall of Fame/Music Awards Committee is thrilled to announce the following innovative enhancements to the Hall of Fame and Music Awards submission processes. <https://www.ipapolkas.com/application-musicawards/>

Attention IPA Hall of Fame Candidates!

The process for polka professionals who would like to be considered for possible IPA Hall of Fame induction has been electronically simplified! No more hard copy writing, printing, and physical mailing! Candidates just need to go online to <https://www.ipapolkas.com/application-hof/> and upload their biographies into the new electronic biography submission application. With the click of a button their information is forwarded to the Board of Trustees for review. Remember, to determine if a candidate is qualified to be placed on the HOF ballot, the trus-

tees look at three areas: 1.) **Experience** (must have 25 years or more of dedicated professional experience in the polka industry), 2.) **Awards, Accomplishments, Achievements**, and 3.) **Contributions toward Preserving and Advancing the Polka Music Industry**. Contact information for references is also required. Complete instructions are available on the website. The deadline to submit for consideration in the next voting cycle is December 31, 2020. Questions may be directed to HallOfFame@ipapolkas.com.

Hi Christy,

We would like to Thank You, your officers, board and members for the Certificate of Appreciation honoring our 50 years of promoting and supporting polka music.

Both our present and past officers and board have worked hard to keep polka music alive. Without our bands and members this would not have been possible.

It is a great honor to be recognized for our hard work. Hopefully this pandemic will come to an end so we can all enjoy the music we all love and get to hear and dance to a polka once again.

Please be safe and stay healthy.

Sincerely

Chris Tanski
President



"Checking in from Pittsburgh...thanks to all for bringing my beloved Polish Polka music to us this long holiday weekend" - Paula McComb-Adkins 9/4/2020 during the IPA Virtual Festival

WE NEED YOUR HELP in Preserving our Polka Legacy

The IPA is embarking on a journey to archive any IPA Hall of Fame induction speeches from the past. These moments are essential to preserving the music history that we love. If anyone has any IPA Hall of Fame induction videos on VCR tapes, we would like to borrow them and convert them to digital format. The IPA will then publicly post the videos on our website. All the VCR tapes will be returned after we completed the process. If you already have the videos in digital format, we would gladly take these as well. For more information, you can contact the IPA at archives@ipapolkas.com or you can mail the VCR tapes to the following address: **International Polka Association, Inc., PO Box 1484, Plainfield, IL 60544.**

Attention Polka Artists Vying for IPA Awards!

Polka artists interested in possible music awards recognition now have an easy electronic method to get on the ballot! Beginning this year, all working polka artists seeking IPA awards for the current year must go online to www.ipapolkas.com/application-musicawards to submit their information. All those who register are eligible for the IPA's *Favorite Band* and *Favorite Vocalist* award categories. Recording artists have a special section to upload their musical tracks and graphics to be considered for their additional awards. In all, deserving polka artists are recognized with music awards that include *Favorite Album*, *Favorite Song*, *Favorite Band*, *Favorite Male Vocalist*, and *Favorite Female Vocalist* for Polish and International (Slovenian, Czech, German, Dutchmen, etc.) polka styles. An academy of 195 electors from across the country determines the award winners by casting their votes on annual ballots. The lists of polka artists on these ballots will be generated by the submissions received through the new electronic process. So, you've got to submit every year to win! Complete instructions are available on the website. The deadline to submit for consideration in the next voting cycle is January 14, 2021. Eligible recordings must have been released between January 1 and December 31, 2020. Questions may be directed to MusicAwards@ipapolkas.com.

"So incredibly impressed with everything IPA has done. You're all to be commended for your hard work. We are blown away by the quality of this weekend so far. Dobra robota!!" - Tyler Zawatski 9/5/2020 during the IPA Virtual Festival



Willkommen Mitarteiter!

I hope all our members and families are staying healthy and safe! I heard from numerous Florida members over Labor Day weekend, who tuned in to the IPA virtual festival. Everyone agreed that it was a fantastic and creative way to kick off the Fall polka season by celebrating together virtually. Several Na Zdrowies were enjoyed that weekend!

Oktoberfest season is upon us. There will be ample opportunities to support local clubs and share a toast with friends. Just remember that whenever someone raises a glass, you are obliged to raise yours - look in their eyes - clink glasses and shout "Prost"! If you fail to meet these 'requirements', you curse both parties to 7 years of bad luck. Everyone can agree that we definitely don't need any more bad luck, so be sure to follow these steps and enjoy!

If you are planning a visit to Florida, please add these dates to your polka calendar:

SNPJ Lodge #603 in Samsula is our newest member of the IPA. "Najlepsza hvala" for joining! They are having an Oktoberfest event on Friday October 16th from 5-9pm, featuring Frank Moravcik Band from Cleveland, Ohio. Homemade dinners will be available along with a full cash bar. Call Cindy: (386)-689-9454, for more info.

The Polish American Pulaski Club of Daytona Beach is planning to have dinner/dances resume on October 8th with Frankie K trio.

October 25th will feature Polka Classics for their Oktoberfest/Halloween event. November and December dances are currently TBD at this time. You can check out their Facebook



page and website for updated information.

The Polish American Society of St. Petersburg

was scheduled to open their doors on November 1st, but now have decided to stay closed until January 2021. The club will be celebrating their 70th anniversary on January 22, 2021 featuring Mollie B. and SqueezeBox. This is one of several special events being scheduled to celebrate the OLDEST Polish Club in Florida. Sto Lat! Event details will be posted on their website and Facebook page.



By Brad Turk

The General K. Pulaski Club in Belleview is tentatively planning to reopen on December 13th for their annual Christmas Party dance with music by Northern Sounds. Contact Brad for more info.

The Polish American Social Club of Vero Beach

is currently planning their New Year's Eve 2020 celebration. Additional information will be posted on their Facebook page, or you may contact the club (772-778-0039). Mark your calendar for Sunday, January 31st - Michael Costa & The Beat will be making their first-time appearance in Florida. The club will also be hosting John Stevens, Alex Meixner, EFO, and Box On in 2021!

As a reminder, Florida's favorite IJ's are: 2009 Hall of Famer Joe Oberaitis with Polkas 101 and Slovenian Polka Blast Show; Crankin' Polkas with Ray Skorka, and Dick Ozimek with Cousin Ozzie's Basement.

If you would like any additional information about our clubs, polka dances or special events, please email me at bradturk@cox.net or call: (352) 875-3961. Stay Safe and remember that October is Fire prevention month, so please **change the battery in your smoke detectors!** Auf Wiedersehen.

Hall of Famer Joe Oberaitis, IPA member Dave Swiderski, Florida IPA Director Brad Turk

NEWS RELEASE

"The Polka Place KCHK welcomes It's Polka Time!"

DATELINE: New Prague, Minnesota:

Starting October 4, 2020, It's Polka Time! with Craig Ebel will be heard every Sunday evening from 9 to 11 p.m. over 95.5 FM and AM 1350 KCHK in New Prague, Minnesota. Known as "Classic Music" KCHK (500 -watts) features vintage country; 50's-60's rock and roll, and is best known for playing polka music for the Czechs (hence, the station's call letters KCHK) that settled the area starting in the mid-1850s. KCHK's signal covers a large area of Southern Minnesota including the cities of Faribault, Northfield, Cannon Falls, Mankato, New Ulm, Saint Peter, Jordan, Waconia, and also "skirts" the Southwestern suburbs of Minneapolis. KCHK can also be found streaming on the Internet at kchkradio.net.

According to KCHK's general manager, Tom Goetzinger, "KCHK Radio proudly calls itself the Polka Place! It's Polka Time will now be a fantastic finishing touch to an entire Sunday offering of polka music starting at 6am, with this show wrapping up the programming from 9-11pm. In addition to the whole day on Sunday, K-Check plays polka music 5-8am and 1-3pm Monday through Friday."

It's Polka Time! is produced from the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, and is also heard on 18 other radio stations all across the United States including:

San Bernardino, California, on AM 1050 KCAA Saturdays 5 to 7 a.m. PST

San Bernardino, California, on FM 102.3KCAA Saturdays 5 to 7 a.m. PST

San Bernardino, California, on FM 106.5 KCAA Saturdays 5 to 7 a.m. PST

Long Prairie, Minnesota, on AM 1400 KEYL Saturdays from 5 to 6 a.m.

Durand, Wisconsin, on AM 1430 WRDN Saturdays from 8 to 10 a.m.

Durand, Wisconsin, on FM 107.3 WRDN Saturdays from 8 to 10 a.m.

Marshfield, Wisconsin, on AM 1450 WDLB Sundays from 5 to 7 a.m.

Hibbing, Minnesota, on AM 650 WNMT Sundays 7 to 9 a.m.

Manitowoc, Wisconsin, on AM 980 WCUB Sundays from 7 to 9 a.m.

Dubuque, Iowa, on AM 1370 KDTH Sundays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, on FM 102.3 KRCQ Sundays from 12 to 2 p.m.

Michigan City, Indiana, on FM 95.9 WEFM Sundays from 1 to 2 p.m.

West Point, Nebraska, on AM 840 KTIC Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m.

West Point, Nebraska, on FM 98.3 KTIC Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m.

West Point, Nebraska, on FM 98.7 KTIC Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m.

Maquoketa, Iowa, on AM 1320 KMAQ Sundays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Maquoketa, Iowa, on FM 92.5 KMAQ Sundays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Seymour, Texas, on FM 94.3 KSEY Sundays from 4 to 6 p.m.

It's Polka Time! is also heard over the Internet on www.polkajammernetwork.org Saturdays from 7 to 9 p.m. CST. and archived.

Information regarding It's Polka Time! radio shows and these radio stations can be found on the Internet at www.itspolkatime.com. Radio stations interested in broadcasting It's Polka Time! can request a demo of the show by sending an e-mail to itspolkatime@hotmail.com. Polka bands and record labels interested in having their recordings considered for airplay on It's Polka Time! can send their material to P.O. Box 32757, Minneapolis, MN 55432-0757.

You weren't the only one to miss HTPD 2020,
don't let it happen again,
Make Plans to Attend...



- APRIL 15, 16 & 17, 2021 -

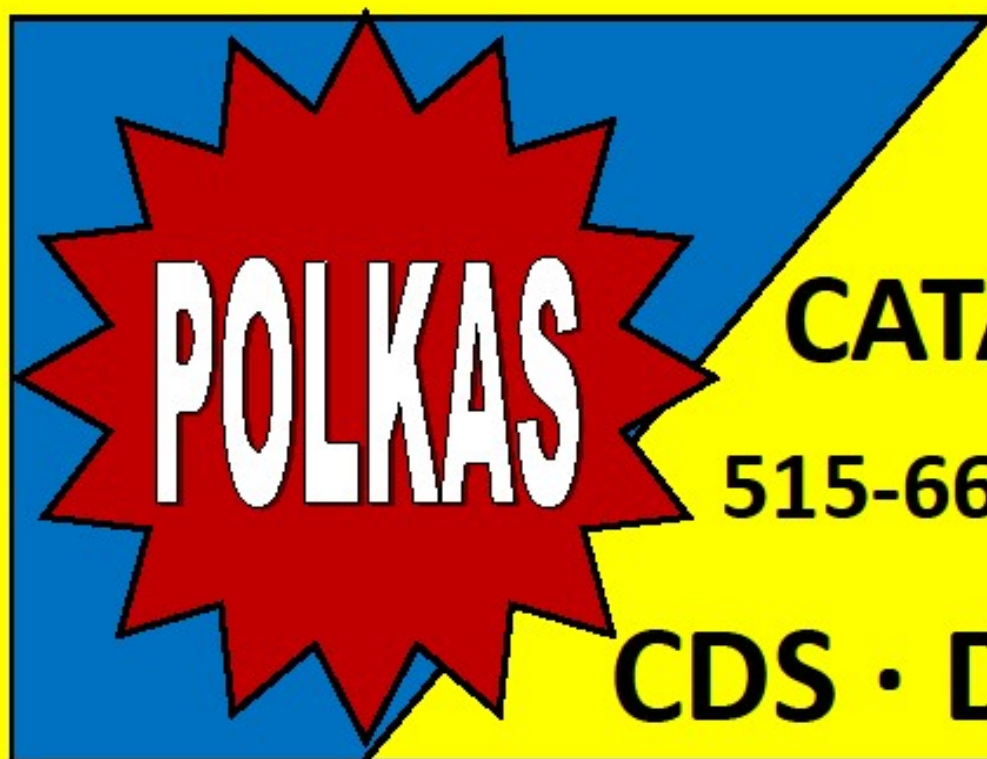
Renaissance Toledo Downtown Hotel

444 North Summit Street, Toledo, Ohio

The DynaBrass, Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push,
Michael Costa & The Beat, Polka Country Musicians,
The Knewz, Polish Connection, John Gora & Gorale,
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www.holytoledopolkadays.com

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IPA is Virtually Flawless in Labor Day Presentation

Suppose they gave a polka festival and nobody came.

That rhetorical situation became reality over the Labor Day weekend as the International Polka Association® (IPA), forced, like most of the polka world, to cancel their annual convention and awards banquet, tried their hand at a virtual festival. Broadcast via Facebook, YouTube and the Polka Jammer Network, the weekend-long venture turned what could have been an exercise in futility into a fun, informative and truly enjoyable event.

At this point in our “new” existence, there is no one who isn’t frustrated at the situation in which we find ourselves *vis a vis* COVID 19. So, it was refreshing to see the IPA, which could have just chosen to throw up their hands and focus on next year’s event, instead take this bowl of 2020 lemons and deal up a sweet-tasting lemonade.

Perhaps sensing the degree to which we are all live-music-deprived, the virtual fest offered in-studio performances courtesy of Tony Blazonczyk’s New Phase, The Steve Meisner Band, The IPA Tribute Band, and The DynaBrass. That, however, proved to be just a jumping-off point. The organization peppered the weekend with additional video clips of performances from other groups, many of which were originally scheduled for the actual festival; interviews with past and present IPA Hall of Famers; game shows; a tour of the IPA Hall of Fame; faux news broadcasts; and more. Full disclosure: I am not one to sit at a laptop, TV, or tablet for any length of time without said device showing *The Princess Bride* or *Parks and Rec* reruns. Yet I found myself doing just that and being continually impressed with the amount of effort put into both the visuals and the content. Expecting a bare-bones presentation, I was pleasantly surprised by the slick transition graphics; the tacky — but spot-on — “news” set (loved the half-dozen pairs of glasses scattered about); even the stacked pallets that provided a nice, industrial look

for the live band performances.

Every quality program needs a solid emcee and the IPA had two at their disposal for its virtual festival. Minnesota’s quintessential DJ/IJ/musician Craig Ebel did most of the heavy lifting, handling band intros, chat room announcements, promotions, small talk, etc., and did a great job, appearing casual yet professional. For the game show segments (“Name that Polka” and a Jeopardy-like “Polka Trivia”) that provided a nice break from standard polka festival fare, the IPA went to the bullpen for Chicago’s Keith Stras. Channeling the vibe of ‘70s TV hosts Chuck Woolery, Bob Ewbanks, Gene Rayburn and the like, Stras, obviously in his comfort zone, kept the segments interesting, funny and flowing.

Were there glitches? Of course, there were. This was, after all, a first-ever attempt at such a massive undertaking. So, it was easy to overlook things like the occasional dead microphone or the horrible lighting during the first night’s live performances that looked, at times, like either a bad acid flashback or the performers were suffering from third-degree burns. It was all resolved by the second night, however, and no one was the worse for wear.

After watching the three-day affair, it became evident that one of the real advantages an event like this offers over even an actual polka festival is its ability to communicate one-on-one with its audience. And when the message being offered is Polka Hall of Famers (both newly-inducted and Hall veterans) imparting their career highlights, likes, anecdotes and recollections via video, this particular medium was ideal. For young, aspiring musicians in particular, the video presentations were an invaluable opportunity



By Larry Trojak

*as published in the
Polish American Journal
October 2020*

to gain firsthand knowledge and advice from those who have risen to the top in their respective fields. Chances are slim that such an opportunity would present itself in a hall crowded with 500+ polka fans. So, if there was anything of a silver lining to this COVID-driven approach, perhaps it was in its ability to enrich the knowledge of those upcoming musicians. In a sense, it was a real fulfillment of one of the organization's charters: *To promote, maintain and advance polka entertainment; and to advance the mutual interest and encourage greater cooperation among its members who are engaged in polka entertainment.* To that, I say: "Mission Accomplished."

And there were shots! Seemingly everywhere the camera turned during the three-day event, people were toasting. If there was a drinking game for every time someone on screen took a shot, I'd still be

comatose. But it was fun and, given the forced separation to which we have been subjected, it was more than appropriate.

It is hoped that this is the last time something like this will be necessary and exciting to believe that we may soon be experiencing a return to normalcy. But it's nice to know that, should bubonic plague or leprosy ever rear their ugly heads again, we will not be lacking for good polka programming. Kudos to Christy Krawisz and her entire "Plan B" team at the IPA for giving us a fleeting feeling of being together again.

I'd say that deserves a shot!

Editor's note: Readers who missed the fest (or would like to re-visit any or all of it) can simply go to YouTube and enter "IPA Virtual Festival 2020" in the search bar. The full weekend's shows are available.

"Fantastic to be spending this evening

with you all!!" - Alice Kapuscinski 9/4/2020 during the Virtual Festival

"What a great IPA festival! Thank you to all the people who worked to put this together."

- Renda Huber Pietrkiewicz 9/5/2020 during the Virtual

"Enjoying all the Awesome Music!!! Keep it coming!!! This is my 1st IPA Convention"

- Kathleen Stancombe 9/6/2020 during the Virtual Festival



Christopher Ebel named IPA's Youth Advisor

Christopher Ebel is proud to be named the IPA's Youth Adviser by Christy Krawisz. Chris started playing drums at the age of three, which is no surprise as his parents are well known in the polka music scene. Craig Ebel, Chris's dad & IPA Inductee, is the host of "It's Polka Time!" radio shows and the leader of "DyVersaCo." Lori Lachner, Chris's mom, is the daughter of Marv & Carol Nissel and part of "The Marv Nissel Band." Marv taught Chris how to play the concertina. Chris also plays piano, accordion, and clarinet.

Chris loves polka music, which is seen by his infectious smile when he is on stage. He has been featured

on WCCO TV, the Minneapolis/St. Paul CBS affiliate, where he was labeled the "Amazing 6-Year-Old Polka Drummer" in 2011. This segment was due to a passerby's upload to YouTube that has close to a half million views. At the age of 7, Chris also appeared in a segment entitled, "Land of 10,000 Stories," on KARE 11, the Minneapolis/St. Paul NBC affiliate, where he was given the title, "Polka Phenom."

Currently, Chris plays accordion with DyVersaCo and drums with The Marv Nissel Band. He also joins Craig on the radio over AM 1340 & FM 98.7 WJYI in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on "Polka Parade." Chris wants to follow in his parents' footsteps and promote polka music to ensure this genre of music can be enjoyed by generations to come.



2020 Freddy K Jr. Scholarship Award Winner

Lucas Yash

Lucas Yash of Band and travelled from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Webster, Massachusetts and Rhode Island to Buffalo and Frankenmuth, Michigan.

chusetts, was the recipient of the Freddy K. Jr. Scholarship Award for 2020. He accepted his check of \$1,000 doing a virtual interview with Fred and Linda Kendzierski which was featured during the IPA Virtual Convention this past September. Lucas was on the Dean's list in High School and played varsity soccer and co-captained the basketball team and was a Knight's of Columbus volunteer in his off time. He grew up going to the polka dances and road trips to polka festivals. Lucas plays concertina and along with three of his cousins and three very close friends they formed the Polka Method Polka

Lucas was accepted to four universities and decided on Springfield College in Massachusetts and will be majoring in Sports Management. So, as you can see, Lucas was a great choice for this award!

The Freddy K. Jr. Music Scholarship Committee is now accepting requests for applications for the 2021 Scholarship award. Applicants must be high school seniors who have been accepted to an accredited college and play a musical instrument. The award is presented at a Polka Festival of their choice each summer.

IPA GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, October 21st

8pm est/7pm cst

Thank you to all the members who attended the IPA General Meeting in July. We will be hosting the next General Meeting on Wednesday, October 21st, at 8:00est/7:00cst. The IPA Board would like to invite all members to this event, which will be broadcasted virtually using WebEx.

All members can dial in using their computers, mobile devices, or telephones. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for members to hear the future direction of the IPA and provide the opportunity to ask the board of directors questions.

Once you enter your information, the IPA Board will approve your registration, and you will receive detailed information about the board meeting. **If you are unable to attend the meeting or would like to submit a question for us to ask before the general meeting, please send an email to: info@ipapolkas.com.**

\$1000 FREDDY K JR

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP AWARD



The **Freddy K Jr. Music Scholarship Committee** is now accepting requests for applications for the 2019 Scholarship award. Applicants must be high school seniors who have been accepted to an accredited college and play a musical instrument. Anyone who is interested in applying for this year's award can download an application on our web-site at www.freddykjrmusicscholarship.com or contact the Scholarship Committee at the following address:

The Freddy K Jr. Scholarship Fund
23850 Via Italia Circle, Apt #1104
Bonita Springs, Florida 34134

Freddy K Jr. played trumpet in his father's band, **The Freddy K Band**, when he died in an automobile accident in July of 1997. Music, especially Polka Music, was Fred's life and passion. His personality, sense of humor and love of Polka Music affected all who knew him. The Music Scholarship Fund was set up to carry on where Fred left off by promoting polka music through the gift of a \$1,000 Scholarship to a deserving student every year. Each award will be given at one of the polka Festivals during the summer.

WINNERS OF \$1000 SCHOLARSHIPS

2020 – Lucas Yash, Webster, MA

2019 - Emma Bogdon, Pittsburgh, PA
 2018 - Zachary Piatkowski, Canastota, New York
 2017 – Veronica Prytko, Millbury, Massachusetts
 Joseph Blackburn, Troy, New York
 2016 – Olivia Piatkowski, Canastota, New York
 2015 – Adam Winiarz, Norton, Massachusetts
 2014 – Jenna Libera, Charlton, Massachusetts
 2013 – Eva Snyder, South Hadley, Massachusetts
 2012 – Justin Kohan, Orchard Park, New York
 2011 – Stephen Piatkowski, Canastota, New York
 2010 - Kassandre Dardzinski, Saugus, Massachusetts and
 Anita Marie Thomas, Balto, Maryland

2009 – David Raccis, Wilbreham, Massachusetts
 2008 – Christopher Wanyo, Shillington, Pennsylvania
 2007 – Kevin Martin, Hudson, New Hampshire
 2006 – Lanelle Raccis, Wilbreham, Massachusetts
 2005 – Nick Koryluk, Hicksville, New York
 2004 – Michael D. Riel, II, Chicopee, Massachusetts
 2003 – Ryan Ogradny, White Oak, Pennsylvania
 2002 – Brian Romianik, Millville, New Jersey
 2001 – Melissa Mocadlo, Stevens Point, Wisconsin
 2000 – Andrew Krystopolski, Wilmington, Delaware
 1999 – William Lomnychuk, Reading, Pennsylvania
 1998 – John Daigle, Chicopee, Massachusetts



October 1 – John Heger;
Donna Pociask; Lori Pizarek

October 2 – Jim Kilian;
Phil Kozlak

October 3 – Mike Rozegnal; Bill Malinowski;
Camille Stras

October 4 - Karen Hudy; Jean Pala;
Ray Rzeszutko

October 5 – Dr. Robert Dutka; Bruno Mikos;
John Gembka

October 6 – Richard Kula; Bob Borowski; Alan
Andrascik; Thomas Nadolski; Sandra Pratas

October 7 – Lindsey Mateja; Dave Raccis

October 8 – Brian Lesiewicz; Joe Kalinowski;
Edgar Skolaut

October 9 – Craig Ebel; Barb Benkowski; Dave
Morris; Andy Fenus; Keith Stras; Carole Kryk;
David Kolar; Dan Moroski; Dave Zychowski;
Andrew Kozlowski

October 10 – Trudy Patek; Gretchen Gotz

October 11 – Marie Jagiella;
Mike DeArruda

October 13 – Marian Betley

October 14 – Gene Swick

October 15 – Michael Ziemski;
Lawrence Kutas

October 16 – Dawn Mikrut Bartolini; Andrew
Makarewicz

October 17 – Christy Krawisz; Dennis Trina;
Alice Szczur

October 19 – Tish Blazonczyk; Floyd Grochol-
ski; Carolyn Machelski; Eugene Murawski;
Ed Tylka; Catherine Chubik

October 20 – John Punola;
Jarrod Vrazel

October 21 – Alan Pala

October 22 – Bernice Baniewicz

October 23 – Patricia Walker;
Arnold Checkalski

October 24 – Joe Brozowski;
Charles Robinson

October 25 – Denise Skorik; Randy Koslosky

October 26 – Brent Iskra; Jim Pacholski

October 27 – Linda Lee Brown

October 28 – Dale Cribbins; Michael Pucowski;
Richard Kovalski

October 29 – David Walter; Paul Raczkowski

October 30 - Zach Piatkowski;
Michele Wojtowicz

October 31 - Kaila Blaskowski





November 1 –

Kevin Adams; Wally Stanczyk;
Charles Curtin

November 2 – Matt Prochot;
Walter Rognerud

November 3 – Mark Trzepacz;
Ray "Ray Jay" Jarusinski

November 4 – Jane Honn; Cindy Koretsky

November 5 – Gennie Okrzesik

November 6 – Jim Polaski

November 7 – Linda Jelinek; Arlene Krzeminski; Stan Simms

November 8 – Jill Styczynski; Bill Ellis;
Walter Goralczyk

November 9 – Frank Styfurak;
Anthony Szczur; Shari Olszewski,

November 10 – Thomas Zimnowski;
Joe Sokol

November 11 – Joan Griffin

November 12 – Kathy Cernosek

November 13 – Ray Jurusinski;
Pete Wojcik

November 14 – June Sherry Ingram; Dennis
Ostopowicz; Robert Kujawa;
John Struziak; Janice Dipyatic

November 15 – Sue Szela; Irene Lizzio; Carl
Lucas; Kathie Warco; Bob Lube

November 16 – Kenny Ruitenber

November 17 –
Chris Tanski; Paul Futa, Jr.

November 18 – Marty Dzik

November 19 – Pat Maduzia;
Angela Biskup

November 20 – Barry Juhasz;
Joey Blackburn; Barbara Bakowski;
Whitey Ryniec

November 21 – Renda Pietrkiewicz;
Joanne Laporte

November 22 – Sally Sendra;
Myna Sadowski; Sylvia Skowronek;
Annie Faucher

November 23 – Sandy Simunek;
Robert Wojnowski; Mary Komurek

November 24 – Diane Hamlin;
Anita Herrmann; Charlie Tansek

November 25 – Mitch Moskal; Mary Wolski;
Lynn Thull; Peter Danielczyk

November 26 – Andrew Dziagwa

November 27 – Carol Stasila;
Sandra Lewandowski

November 28 – Kathy Weglicki;
David Bezdziecki

November 29 – Angela Biskup; Mark
Grochowski; Carl Finch; Nick DiSebastiano;
Frana Yakima

November 30 – Ray Barsukiewicz





IPA Virtual Festival Watch Parties



Plan B Committee Called into Action

Typically, over Labor Day Weekend, the IPA Board is making plans and preparing to descend upon the city of Buffalo, NY for our annual Convention and Festival. However, the virus known as Covid-19 put a halt to our plans...for Buffalo.

A Plan B Committee was put together by our president, Christy Krawisz, to come up with a plan for a virtual festival. Myself along with Chris Bogdan, Lindsey Mateja, Stephen Kaminski, Keith Pie-tranczyk, and John Krawisz wracked our brains for weeks and threw a bunch of ideas at the wall. We managed to pull all of the content ideas together with recording game shows, Hall of Fame® and award interviews, the gathering of live band recordings, and the recording comedy commercials and newscasts, all over a two-month period. After a lot of virtual meetings, planning sessions, and scheduling with our producer Zernul "Z" Shackelford of Darque Syde of D'Lyte Productions, the weekend was nearly upon us and it was time to put all this work into action.

On Thursday we arrived at "the House of Wood", Graphic Pallet, or as some of us called "The Garage", to build the pallet set making sure they were all straight...not to mention the band and sound equipment, lights, cameras, network connection, Polka Jammer feed, etc. There were so many wires the back of that stage looked like a bowl of spaghetti!!

Friday afternoon down to the final hours...I felt nervous jitters like getting on stage in front of a large crowd. Sound checks with the bands on site and making any final adjustments to lights and camera positions. Working with our awesome host Craig Ebel on content along with things to mention, where to stand.

Then came the words....

We're Live!!

There were many smiles as well as several tears shed as many of us couldn't believe we pulled this off. Watching the in-house TV and seeing the Hall of Fame® slide show for the first time introduce the first day of the event, and then seeing the live music by Steve Meisner and Tony Blazonczyk; it was an amazing feeling for all of us that were involved in putting the weekend together. I recall Chris Bogdan and I looking at each other saying "We actually did this".

Saturday brought day two with the IPA Tribute Band. We got through day one without a hitch but when we start day two, about 30 minutes into programming, our worst fear happened. The internet service went out. Thank goodness for a six-year-old "hotspot" Rick Rzeszutko had and we were back online with the rest of the day going smoothly.

By Sunday evening when Dynabass played their final note and Keith saying "That's a Wrap" there was a sense of accomplishment by all of us. Reading all the compliments and personal text messages as well as seeing pictures of people at watch parties made this weekend feel like a true success story.

The Plan B Team along with the other board members who assisted throughout the weekend were proud that we were able to put this presentation together for all of our polka fans. We hope that we brought some happiness and put smiles on your faces with this difficult year. We look forward to seeing all of you in person soon!!



Brian Kapka
Director, Illinois

IPA announced Winners of the first ever Young Songwriter's Contest

Live during Virtual Festival



1st Place - Nathan Neuman

"Pass It On"

2nd Place - Jenna Libera

"Sunshine"



"Great job. The polka mass was beautiful and I Loved Father Dennis. Loved Tony B. Friday night and Dyna Brass today. Dziekuje."

- Gail Wojtowicz 9/6/2020 during the Virtual Festival

"Great day again today listening to the IPA virtual... thank you to all who put so much work into making this happen for all of us to enjoy.." – Carolyn Machelski 9/5/2020 during the Virtual Festival

"IPA Thank you. This whole evening was awesome. I love how you made the best of a challenging situation. Thank you Thank you" - Brian Szumigalski 9/4 during the Virtual Festival

Joseph "Joe" Jozwiak Special Achievement Award

It's that time of year again to get your nominations in for the annual Joe Jozwiak Special Achievement Award. How did this award get started? Who does this award honor?

Many years ago, the late Joseph Jozwiak, a director of the IPA, made a suggestion that an award be bestowed upon an individual or group of individuals who have made a significant contribution or endeavor to enhance the promotion of polka music. After much discussion, the International Polka Association voted to honor those worthy individuals with the establishment of the Special Achievement Award. To pay tribute to Joe Jozwiak, following his passing, this award was renamed the Joe Jozwiak Special Achievement Award.

Members of the IPA are invited to send in their nominations to recognize polka personalities who might not otherwise be acknowledged for their dauntless contributions. Nominees can include DJs, IJ's, polka writers, promoters, ballroom operators, etc. **Bands and musicians are excluded.**

To submit a nomination, simply copy and paste this URL <https://www.ipapolkas.com/joe-jozwiak-nomination/> and fill out the submission form. You may also mail in a short biography of the nominee's accomplishments that qualify the nominee for this award along with the form below.

Nominations **MUST** be received **NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31**. The IPA Board of Officers and Directors will then determine a winner.

Honoree Name: _____

Signature of Member: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Nominations **MUST** be received
NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31.

Mail this form to: **International Polka Association**
PO Box 1484
Plainfield, Illinois 60544

Signature, email and phone number of member is required to verify current membership. Please include a short biography of the nominee's accomplishments to qualify him or her for this award.



IPA is Introduced to Many in Wisconsin

The IPA Virtual Festival reached many polka and non-polka people in Wisconsin who celebrated with the IPA, some for the first time, by attending the online event. Thanks to the shares on Facebook, they found the event and started to watch on Friday night and continued all weekend. They enjoyed the many different styles of music; the game shows gave them knowledge and laughs; and they were able to get to know more about the organization and some of the Hall of Fame® members through the interviews. The polka mass was a nice added change to their normal Sunday virtual routine, with the upbeat music provided by the youthful talent of The Kosmix Band.

Many of the viewers are limited in getting out,

so the weekend was a refreshing change for them. They got a little extra bounce back in their step. The times are difficult now and it was nice to see an association come together to bring some joy and happiness to many. I was told Thank You for all the hard work and dedication that went into creating this weekend. Hats off to the IPA. Wisconsin Fans truly enjoyed the weekend. You can re-watch or catch any part you may have missed on our website site at www.ipapolkas.com



By Jill Styczynski

IPA Director from Wisconsin

9-7-20
Hi,
I wanted to send a note and thank all of you who put on the fabulous, fantastic, enjoyable IPA Convention this Labor Day Weekend. I was planning on going and, of course, had to cancel my hotel reservation. So sad and disappointing for all of us. I danced in my living/dining room and enjoyed the contest and lots of laughs. Hope and pray to see all next year and look forward to good health for our nation and the world.
Hugs -
Elsie Libert

To: THE OFFICERS, DIRECTORS & "PLAN B" COMMITTEE,
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 2020 VIRTUAL CONVENTION. IT WAS FABULOUS! OBVIOUSLY A LOT OF WORK WENT INTO THE PLANNING AND PREPARATION, AND IT ALL PAID OFF. WE WILL BE MAKING A DONATION TO THE ORGANIZATION TO SHOW OUR APPRECIATION! ONCE AGAIN, CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!
KEVIN E BASIA

To IPA President, Christy Krawisz
Officers, Directors, Plan B Committee
and all support staff

KUDOS!!! for a virtual 2020 IPA Festival very, very well done! The overall presentation, setup and programming were extremely creative. The visual background look and special content segments were awesome – they were interesting, informative, and fun to watch and play along with! The talents and skills of the Plan B Committee were a win-win for the IPA!

Rich and I enjoyed all three days and look forward to viewing what we missed on YouTube. We challenged each other playing Polka Trivia and the brave contestants made it so much fun!

We look forward to the 2021 IPA Festival in Cranberry, PA.

Congratulations on a job very well done.

Rich & Sally Sendra

"What a production thank you IPA or the hard work and effort that went into this virtual polka weekend your truly the best. And the sound mix is spectacular"

—Jim Miller 9/6/2020 during the IPA Virtual Festival



Polka Hall of Famer, Randy Kozlosky's thoughts of the Virtual Festival

Hi Christy and all the IPA team,

Impossible! Well, if someone was to propose 6 months ago what you guys ended up pulling off with the IPA Virtual Festival, I suspected that 99 percent of the people would say that it was impossible. That would be a reasonable answer and there are a millions reasons that would be so.

But, for those who were willing to consider possibilities, dive in, and formulate a plan, let that grown and evolve, work together, draw upon the skills that are available and address a million questions and issues—yes, we all saw what was possible. The effort and collaboration and use the peoples' skills was monumental.

There was so much to love about the virtual festival. I am sincerely glad to have been part of it and to contribute in some ways. Actually, when people see an organization doing great things, it attracts the “do-ers” to be part of the action. You guys have some great momentum in that regard. I hope that continues to snowball.

The variety of quality content was a big key. That kept things interesting and created a mindset of needing to keep tuned in so that I wouldn't miss something. I could go on and on about the positive things. There is a lot of glory to bask in. Enjoy that for a time—savor it.

If the question now was how to improve things, there could be various tweaks or improvements that could be made to a virtual festival. But, to me, that would be the wrong question. Hopefully this “virtual festival” never has to happen again. But, I'd suggest that the question should be something more like “what now”? Or “how can the sorts of things that we developed be used?” This year's virtual festival showed that many things are possible. It kind of forced everyone to dive into the world of technology that can be used to preserve and promote polkas in a whole new way. There is much that could be said. I'll throw out just a few thoughts/comments.

You can obviously do live-streaming events. I don't need to tell you that. The extent to which you'd choose to do that at festivals or dances is a different question. But, I'd encourage you all to think beyond things like live-streaming events. You can do that too, but there is more to consider. And there is probably a need to keep some level of momentum going (even though everybody probably needs a break)

I loved the interviews. And, as an organization that has preservation as a key component of its mission, there is an opportunity to capture interviews with polka heroes and for those to be made available to the general public. I could see this as a component of a “virtual hall of fame”. You guys are probably already thinking of that as well.

On a different note... an amazing number of people watch re-run after re-run of polka shows on t.v. The numbers are so much higher than the number of people who would ever cross the threshold of a polka dance or festival. You have shown that it is possible to create content that would be suitable for a t.v. show or at least something of that format. A show that is actually on broadcast t.v. is several steps (and years) away. But, creating something that can be on-line with that sort of long-term vision would be really cool. The variety that was part of the IPA Virtual Festival is kind of like a good old variety show: live performances, recorded videos, interviews, awards, games, comic relief, competitions, and sharing info about the IPA's efforts. I could see all of these being part of content for such a show.

In the interest of brevity, I'll stop at that. But, I remain up for helping out in whatever ways I can. (Oh, I didn't mention the one thing that I'd like to do - short 5 minute or so interview videos where polka songwriters tell about the back story to their songs.)

Again, huge congratulations to you all!

Randy Koslosky
Polka Hall of Fame® Inductee





53rd Annual International Polka Association Festival & Convention



Make your plans now to attend the 53rd Annual
IPA Festival and Convention

**September 3 – September 5, 2021
Labor Day Weekend
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry**

The IPA has secured discounted room rates by going to the following link:

<https://www.ipapolkas.com/go/hotel-reservations/>

Both King Rooms and Queen/Queen double bedrooms are currently available at the discounted rate of \$115 per night. You must use the above link to reserve your rooms. Like all festivals, we anticipate a sell out and we recommend all polka fans to book rooms as early as possible.

If you prefer to call to make their reservations, you can do so by calling: 1-800-222-8733 and reference the Group Name: International Polka Association.

3 Fun-filled days of Polka Entertainment

Band will be announced shortly

Welcome Party, Hall of Fame and Music Awards Banquet, Pool Parties, Polka Mass, Election of Officers and Directors plus much, much more!

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Visit our website: www.ipapolkas.com

For more information: info@ipapolkas.com

Be sure to listen to the IPA Radio Shows:

Polka Jammer Network
Saturday's 4-5 PM (CT)

Chicago WPNA1490 AM or radiowpna.com
Sunday's from 11 am to Noon (CT)





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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.

Editor:

Lynn Kaminski

newsletter@ipapolkas.com (**NOTE: NEW ADDRESS**)

Contact us:

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Website: www.ipapolkas.com

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Membership

Dues 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:

Lynn Kaminski, Financial Secretary

International Polka Association

PO Box 1484

Plainfield, IL 60544

Email: membership@ipapolkas.com

Renew your membership online!

Visit: www.ipapolkas.com/store**2020 IPA Officers and Directors****Officers:**

President: Christy Krawisz (IL)
 1st Vice President: Lori Lewandowski (IL)
 2nd Vice President: Fred Kendzierski (NJ)
 Treasurer: Dan Mateja (IL)
 Secretary: Cheryl Furmaniak (IL)
 Financial Secretary: Lynn Kaminski (IL)
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 Sue Szela (MA)
 Mark Trzepasz (NY)
 Brad Turk (FL)

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The IPA would like to go green! Help us save money on printing costs and postage.

If you would like your newsletter emailed to you, please send an email to **news-letter@ipapolkas.com**.

Please put in the subject line:
PLEASE EMAIL MY NEWSLETTER.

**IPA RADIO SHOW**

Don't forget to listen to the IPA Radio Show on Sundays, 11:00 a.m.—12 noon Central Time on WPNA (1490 AM) in Chicago or via the internet at www.radiowpna.com.

Each show features IPA officers and directors.

The IPA Radio Show is also broadcast on the Polka Jammer Network on Saturdays from 4-5 p.m. Central Time and also available in the Polka Jammer archives. Be sure to tune in! Visit www.polkajammernetwork.org

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

IPA Dates to Remember**Advertise in the IPA Newsletter**

October 21st	IPA General Meeting 8pm est/7pm cst
January 16th	January Warm-up Dance (more information to follow)
January 17th	Chicago's Festival of Bands (more information to follow)

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Email ad files to Lynn Kaminski: newsletter@ipapolkas.com

****DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER ISSUE IS: November 23, 2020****

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.**

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Website: www.ipapolkas.com

