



IPA Newsletter

A Note From Our President

Happy New Year, Polka Fans,

We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas holiday and a happy, healthy New Year. We certainly did here at the IPA, and we want to thank all of you—our members, supporters, musicians, and fans—for helping make the past year such a success. As we look ahead, we are genuinely excited about what the future holds and the many ideas and initiatives we have planned for 2026 and beyond.

One of our most exciting ongoing projects is the development of the new Virtual IPA Hall of Fame Museum. After spending an entire weekend in Chicago carefully organizing, categorizing, and scanning decades of IPA memorabilia, we are more energized than ever to bring this project to life. This collection represents the rich history of polka music and the people who helped shape it, and we cannot wait to share these stories, photos, recordings, and artifacts with polka fans around the world. Soon, we will also be reaching out to fans, bands, and promoters to encourage them to preserve their own polka memorabilia so it can be included in the Virtual Hall of Fame. By working together, we can ensure that the legacy of polka music is protected and accessible for generations to come.

We are also continuing our efforts to find the correct location to host the 2027 IPA Polka Festival and Convention. This remains a top priority for the organization. We will soon be touring a potential site that may be a strong candidate, and we are optimistic about what it could offer. Our goal is to move beyond a traditional hotel setting and find a true destination—one that allows polka fans to enjoy great music and dancing while also experiencing something new and exciting. A destination-style location would create more opportunities for socializing, dancing, and celebrating polka throughout the entire event. As plans progress, we will share updates and details with you.

Finally, as I always say, please continue to support polka bands, musicians, promoters, and polka organizations everywhere. Many individuals and groups are working tirelessly to bring polka music to new audiences and keep it vibrant and relevant. Supporting live music, attending events, purchasing recordings, and encouraging younger generations to participate are all essential to ensuring that polka music continues to thrive. If we want this wonderful music to live on for future generations, we must support all bands, all styles, and all promoters who are dedicated to keeping polka alive.

Thank you again for your continued support of the IPA. We look forward to an exciting and memorable year ahead.



Chris Bogdon

January was

National Polka Month



It's Always Sunny in Florida...

Witamy czlonkow!

Du allen unseren Mitgliedern und ihrer Familie Gesundheit, Gluck und Wohlstand im neuen Jahr! (*Wishing all our members and their families health, happiness, and prosperity in the New Year!*)

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and had time to relax and enjoy the holiday season. Corinne and I celebrated Christmas with my in-laws (Carl and Janice Prushinski) in Vero Beach. We were blessed to share our Polish traditions. The breaking of the oplatek on Christmas Eve (my wife's **favorite** day of the year) was our most sacred tradition. Wigilia is always an emotional time, and it's the most cherished night of our family.

FL Musician Spotlight: Eddie Meyers

Eddie was born and raised in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in a neighborhood rich in Polish culture and music. With a nearby Polish Falcons and Ukrainian Hall, it wasn't surprising that his musical interest began at an early age. In fourth grade, Eddie received a clarinet from his uncle, which hooked him. After taking lessons in school and practicing religiously at home every day, he became a proud member of the Grammar School band.

His interest expanded in junior high school when his music teacher began teaching him how to read music and introduced him to the saxophone. During this time, Eddie met accordionist Pete Caruso and drummer Frank Wojtascek. They began rehearsing as a trio featuring Eddie on clarinet. The band's first gig was playing at a PTA meeting for St. Peter and Paul Church in Elizabeth.

Eddie was also recommended to play with Johnny Lenard, who needed a clarinetist. Johnny called him to come for an audition at his father's tavern. Eddie was still not a great music reader, but took the music home and mastered playing it from memory. At the age of only 15, Eddie played his first job with Johnny, earning just \$5.00. As time went on, Eddie kept practicing and improving while taking lessons at Gutowski's Music Store.

In high school, Eddie continued playing with the



Johnny Lenard Band and specialized in Bernie Witkowski tunes on the clarinet. Johnny suggested at that time that Eddie also take lessons from Wally Balicki. Eddie pursued that opportunity and took a 1-hour bus ride from Elizabeth to Irvington, New Jersey, weekly for 2 years. His dedication paid off, and Eddie also learned how to play the tenor saxophone during that time. He earned money by working as a pinsetter at a bowling alley and by returning deposit bottles, and bought his first Conn tenor saxophone for \$70.

After High School, Eddie studied at The Juilliard School for one year, but he did not have the funds to continue. That led him to become a tradesman in heavy maintenance fabrication, doing pipe welding, machine shop work, and rigging. Eddie then became an active-duty Army soldier and was released from the Army in the early 1960's.

Bobby Stavins then asked Eddie to join The Tune Toppers, playing the clarinet. He recorded a demo album with the band at Al Soyka's barn in Somers, Connecticut. Shortly after that recording, the Tune Toppers disbanded, and the Bobby Stavins band was formed, playing polkas at weddings and private parties. The band recorded the "Bonanza" album, which featured arrangements written by Eddie and accordionist Walter Sturma. One of Eddie's best-known arrangements was the "Bonanza Polka" based on the Bonanza TV show theme. Eddie performed with the Stavins band for 5 years and appeared on 2 of Stavins' albums.

During his playing career, he performed with Gene Mendalski, Bud Hundenski, Jaś Praznski, Jan Lewan, Bernie Goydish, Walt Wagner, Chuck Pendzak, and Walter Procany.

Eddie moved to Florida with his wife, Esther, in 2000, settling in Wesley Chapel (New Tampa area). Eddie and Esther began dancing at the local Polish clubs, where they met Jan Cyman. Jan asked Eddie to sit in with the Musicalaires on a few songs and hired him on the spot! In 2001, the band recorded their Christmas CD "Polkas for the Christmas Season," featuring Eddie on clarinet and saxophone.



By Brad Turk

(Continued on next page)

In late 2002, Jan Cyman and The Musicalaires broke up, and Eddie was looking for another

adventure. He joined a new band called The Northern Sounds featuring Eddie on alto, tenor sax, flute, and clarinet. Eddie has been playing with The Northern Sounds for the past 23 years. He also performs with the Florida Jazz Express, Tampa Bay Big Band, Cypress Creek Dixieland Band, Carolwood Jukebox Band, and the Blue Notes Band.

I want to thank Eddie for being a loyal IPA member and making a lifetime career playing polka music. It's an honor to share the stage with him, where he is admired for being an actual perfectionist. I hope he continues to share his musical talent for many more years to come!

Please continue to support our Clubs & Bands:

Polish American Pulaski Club of Daytona Beach is having their Dinner/Dances at the SNPJ Lodge #603, 421 North Samsula Drive, New Smyrna Beach. Jan. 11th KeyTones, Jan. 25th Polka All Stars, Feb. 8th Brewski Brothers, Feb. 22nd Frank Moravcik from Ohio, March 8th Jim Wicks, March 22nd Brewski Brothers. For dinner reservations, call Irene/Club (386) 258-7059. For additional info. Please visit their Facebook page.

General K. Pulaski Citizens Club of Belleview. *(The club is in the process of being sold.)* The club will be holding its annual dinner dances on Feb. 15th, March 15th, and Easter Sunday, April 5th, with Northern Sounds Band. Please contact Brad for more info.

Polish American Society of St. Petersburg, is having their Dinner/Dances on Jan. 4th Northern Sounds, Jan. 11th Gone Coastal, Jan. 18th Polka All Stars, Jan. 25th Jam-N-Jive, Feb. 1st Polka All Stars, Feb. 8th Frank Moravcik from Ohio, Feb. 15th Paczki Day with Gone Coastal, Feb. 22nd Polka All Stars, March 1st Northern Sounds, March 8th Frank Moravcik from Ohio, March 15th Gone Coastal, March 22nd Northern Sounds, April 6th Dyngus Day with Gone Coastal from 5-8pm, April 12th Northern Sounds. Please visit their Facebook page, or website: www.polishsociety.org, Dinner reservations call Rita (727) 347-7944, club (727) 894-9908 for more info.

Polish American Social Club of Vero Beach. The club is getting ready for their Polka season on Feb. 8th, 2026, with Eddie Forman Orch. (EFO) Dinner 1pm, Dancing 2-5pm. For all of their monthly events, please join their Facebook page, visit their website www.pacvbusa.org, or email:

pascverobeach@gmail.com. Call the club at (772) 778-0039.

SNPJ Lodge #603 in Samsula. FLORIDA'S POLKAFEST 2026 CELEBRATING 100 years on Friday, Feb. 20th, kitchen opens 4-8pm with a Jam session hosted by Kristijan Razpotnik/Vince Rigler; admission is only \$1.00 per person. On Saturday, Feb 21st, featuring Frank Moravcik Band from Ohio, the kitchen opens at 12N, Dancing 1-5pm, admission \$15.00 per person. Full Bar, Great Food, special prizes & more! For info. call the club (386)-428-3983. Join their Facebook page SNPJ Lodge 603 Official site for all their events, snpj lodge603@gmail.com. Visit their website: www.samsulasnpjlodge603.com.

2026 Polkas Events:

Jan. 15th: Molly B & Squeeze Box @ German Am. Society Friendship of Pinellas Park, 8098 66th Street North Pinellas Park. For times/ticket info. call (727) 350-6520

Feb. 5th: Polka Country Musicians @ World Famous Parrot Lounge, 911 Sunrise Lane, Ft. Lauderdale, Party starts at 8 pm. Info. call Maryrose (954) 594-6883

Feb. 6th: Polka Country Musicians/Dyna Brass @ location/time to be determined. Info. call Maryrose (954) 594-6883

Feb. 7th: Polka Party Eddie Forman Orch. (EFO) Englewood Elks Lodge 401 N. Indiana Ave. Englewood, FL. Food 4:30pm, Dance 5-9pm, Advance tickets \$18/Door \$20. Call: (941) 474-1404

Feb. 20th & 21st: SNPJ Florida Polka Festival/Samsula Polka Festival **Celebrating 100 years** - Friday featuring Jam sessions 5-8pm. Saturday **Frank Moravcik Band from Ohio** from 1pm-5pm. Homemade food, cash bar, jam sessions, raffles, call (386) 428-3983

Feb. 26th: Jimmy Sturr Band @ Florida Strawberry Festival Plant City, 303 Berryfest Place Plant City. For info. /Tickets call: (813) 754-1996, (845) 651-4266

Feb. 27th: Jimmy Sturr Band @ Polish American Society of St. Pete 1343 Beach Drive South East St. St. Petersburg FL. Dance 5-9pm. Advance tickets \$23/Door \$28. Call: (845) 651-4266

Feb. 28th: Jimmy Sturr Band @ Polish Am. Social Club, 343 Prima Vista Blvd., Port St. Lucie, Dance 12N – 4pm. Tickets/info. call: (845) 651-4266. Call the club (727) 894-9908

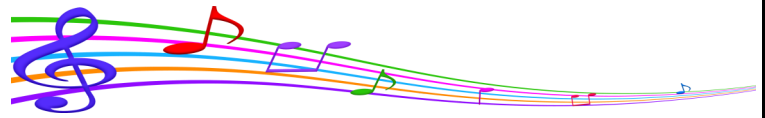
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April 6th Dyngus Day: Gone Coastal @ Polish American Society of St. Pete 1343 Beach Drive South East St. St. Petersburg FL. Dance 5-8pm. **Get your advance Tickets! Limited seating...** Call the club (727)-894-9908

April 6th Dyngus Day: Polka All Stars @ The Original Crabby Bill's, 401 Gulf Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach. **Free event!** bring your water cannons to get wet! Beach party starts at 1pm. Call (727)-595-4825

Please support Florida's Polka IJ's. Featured on the Polka Jammer Network, 2009 IPA Hall of Famer Joe Oberaitis with Slovenian Polka Blast (Thur.), and Polkas 101 (Sat.)_IPA member Ray Skorka, can be heard on Crankin' Polkas (Fri.). High on Polka's every (Sat.) on PolkaRadio.org featuring IPA members Tara, Diane, Jimmy and Billy.

If you would like any additional information about our clubs, polka dances or special events, email me at bradturk@cox.net or call the **Polka Hot Line:** (352) 875-3961. Please continue to support LIVE polka music and our clubs!



IPA Florida Director Brad Turk presented Jasiu Klocek & the Salt City Brass, a Certificate of Appreciation from the IPA for playing polka music for the past 50 years. It was given to Jasiu at the Polish American Society of St. Petersburg's Christmas Koledy Dance.



Polkamotion by the Ocean Sept 17th-19th 2026

Blue Magic Dynabrass

EFO Polka Family DVSTA

Maestro's Men

Polka Country Musicians

PUBLIC INVITED TO JOIN IN THE FUN!



FLORIDA SNPJ DAYS 2026

Samsula Polka Festival

Celebrating 100 years (Chartered 1926)

SNPJ Lodge #603, 421 North Samsula Drive
Samsula, FL. 32168

- **Friday Feb. 20th** Doors open 4–8 pm • Jam Band hosted by Kristijan Razpotnik with Vince Rigler planning to attend • Special admission only \$1.00 per person (100 cents for 100 years!)
- **Saturday Feb. 21st** Doors open at noon • Featuring Frank Moravcik Polka Band from Ohio with special guests • Music from 1–5 pm
Admission only \$15.00 per person
- Jam sessions each day, bring your instruments to play with other guest Musicians!
- Slovenian & American Foods available both days • Klobase & sauerkraut, cabbage rolls, pierogies and more • Best *Apple Strudel* in the state!!
- Full Cash Bar with Drink specials each day

Questions? Email snpjLodge603@gmail.com
Contact the Lodge at (386) 428-3983 or text Ruth Benedict at (386) 214-7332

Everyone is welcome!



Daniel Liszka, OH
Adam Socha, WI
Chester A. Pala, Jr., IN
Michael Kramar, CA
Richard Bubula, IL
Keith Gennerman, WI



Wayne Slepecky, OH
Don Hunjadi, WI
Bonnie Szabo, OH
Bryan O'Donnell, WI
Rick Piotrowski, FL
John Pilch, FL
Gary Sroka, NY
Bob Prytko, MA

Leigh Dechaine, AZ
Ed Litos, CT
Ellen Rohrbach, PA
Ted Wojcik, IL
Joe Raap, NY
Tom Conklin, NY
Charles Weslowski, NY
Jeremy Yrkoski, NE



Anthony Zupanchick, PA Thaddeus Szymanski, NY
Richie Yurkovich, WI Marianne Buzinski, MI
Andy Fenus, PA Eddie Biegaj, PA

thank you

Tadziu & Patricia Kiewicz, NV
Basia & Kevin Adams, OH

Rest in Peace

Edie Blair, FL
John Stanky, PA

On The Beat – with Michael Morris

IPA Hall of Fame Member, Alfred Vrazel, Retires Polka Show

As published in the January 2026 Texas Polka News



The year was 1955. Elvis Presley signed with RCA; Disneyland opened its doors in California; Velcro was invented; Tappan introduced the first domestic microwave oven; The first McDonald's franchise under Ray Kroč (yes, he was Czech!) opened in Des Plaines, Ill; and KMIL 1330AM hit the airwaves in Cameron, TX...launching Alfred Vrazel's incredible 70-year radio career. What began as a local 30-minute, live performance from "Studio A" by the Vrazel Playboys, became a Texas – and internationally-recognized – 2 ½ hour program enjoyed by generations of faithful listeners of all ages.

Alfred decided to retire his show on December 28, 2025, culminating with a 3-hour program co-hosted by his family. His final show featured an all-Vrazels' Polka Band playlist, stories, special memories, and a slew of congratulations and dedications to Alfred on his monumental career.

Alfred Vrážel was born on September 6, 1940, on the family farm in Yarrellton, TX. His parents were Florián and Albina (Šustek) Vrážel, who were of Czech-Moravian descent. Alfred's interest in music began at the tender age of 10, when he persuaded his parents to order him a two-row Hohner button accordion from a Sears, Roebuck and Co. catalog. Soon thereafter, Alfred – along with his brother, Antón, and their three cousins (Ladís, Louis, and Leo Vrážel), started a band they named the **Vrazel Playboys**. A few years later after some personnel

changes, they changed their name to the **Vrazels' Polka Band** – as it remained for the next 50-plus years.

In a 2003 interview with then Texas Polka News Publisher, Theresa Černoch-Parker, Alfred stated, *"In the early years, most of the Sunday polka dances were held in the evening, which allowed us to play live on the air from KMIL and still play our regular Sunday night dances. Along about 1960 the show's format changed to me using recorded music."* During our recent interview for this article, Alfred shared, *"We didn't have any vinyl records at that time, so we would setup at the Buckholts (TX) SPJST Hall near home and record ourselves onto reel-to-reel tape so that we'd have some music to play on the air."*

It still makes my head spin whenever I think that in 1955, a 15-year-old Alfred Vrážel began hosting a polka radio show that aired for 70 years! A bit of ciphering reveals that Alfred likely hosted close to 4,000 programs – which included many years of Christmas shows with co-host **Bernie Gebala**, as well as Memorial Day and Veterans' Day shows where Alfred was joined by co-hosts, **Porter Young** and **Gene Mitchan**, who earned the moniker, **"The Awesome Threesome"**.

To further break your mind, try to conjure up the number of bands or songs that Alfred played, dedications made, weather and crop reports given, stories told, commercials aired, and dances and events that were mentioned on his show throughout the years; the numbers are staggering! Speaking of dedications, in the early years Alfred received written requests on hand-written .01 postcards, along with a random assortment of letters he would find piled up at the radio station when he arrived prior to showtime. From the mid-1970's – early 1980's, Alfred's daughter, **Cindy**, assisted him by answering the KMIL telephone during the show, fielding a multitude of call-in requests. In the later years, Alfred pre-recorded his show from his home studio in their music room. During this period, the bulk of requests came via email to his wife, **Bernice**, which she compiled and organized for him to read on air. Bernice is certain that the secret to Alfred's success and longevity is because, *"...he is kind, down-to-earth, sincere, a stickler for details, and always worked hard to please his audience."*

So, what exactly drives someone to stay committed to an avocation for that length of time? As it is with Alfred and his family – and most folks of his generation – their word is their bond. You don't need a notification or reminder from your mobile device...you don't need a signed paper contract...all you need is a handshake. Alfred committed to his radio show just like he commits to living life. Alfred is **DEDICATED**: *Devoted to a purpose; having a single-minded loyalty to something or someone.* Alfred is **CONSISTENT**: *Done in the same way over time, so as to be fair and accurate.* Alfred is **DEPENDABLE**: *Trustworthy; reliable.* Alfred is **LOYAL**: *Showing a firm and constant support or allegiance to something.* Alfred is **PASSIONATE**: *Having and showing strong feelings about something; having a strong belief.* Alfred is **DEVOTED**: *Giving a large part of one's time or resources to someone or something.*

Alfred is **FAITHFUL**: *Remaining loyal and steadfast to a belief or cause, or to someone or something.* Alfred has **INTEGRITY**: *The quality of being honest; having strong moral principles.* Alfred is **GENUINE**: *real, authentic, sincere.* Alfred is **HUMBLE**: *Not arrogant or self-important; unpretentious.* Alfred Vrazel's Polka Show was **ICONIC**: *Famous or widely recognized as a representative of a particular place, era, or culture.*

Consider the monumental changes made in broadcast technology during the last 70 years: AM/FM bands; tubes, transmitters, and towers; program syndication; computers, internet, and email; streaming radio; HD (High-Definition) radio; Bluetooth connectivity; satellite radio; smart phones and apps; digital recording and broadcasting hardware and software...whew! It takes a special individual to do so, but Alfred met, accepted, and *adapted* to all those changes during his long career.

Alfred gives credit and thanks to his Grandson, **Matthew Strmiska**, for helping to usher grandpa into the digital age by getting his laptops loaded, organized, and ready to make recording his show at home as efficient as possible.

Even if you were just a casual listener to Alfred's show, you'd soon realize that it was not your run-of-the-mill polka/waltz show. He played a wide variety of music including classic country, gospel music, *Český Koledy* (Czech Christmas songs), choir/chorale music from Texas vocal groups, and a wide variety of folk music. Alfred estimates that his vast music library contains more than 5,000 songs!

Among his many accomplishments and accolades both as a bandleader and radio show host, Alfred was humbled to be inducted into the **International**

Polka Association Hall of Fame when he was given the Pioneer Award by the IPA in 2014.

Now that Alfred has put his show duties aside, what does he plan to do now and in the future? Being a life-long farmer and rancher, Alfred loves and misses those pursuits. But he's 85 years old knows his physical limitations, so he spends time doing chores in and around his home, which includes keeping a neat and tidy yard. Alfred has always enjoyed watching western shows and movies, especially Gunsmoke...as well as The Andy Griffith Show. He and Bernice still enjoy traveling, going to cultural events and dances, and listening to music. They eagerly look forward to visiting more often with family and friends – things that the music business sometimes impacted. Most of all, they give thanks to the thousands of faithful listeners and hundreds of loyal sponsors that they've had the pleasure of serving over the years.

Alfred concluded with, "I'm really blessed. God allowed me to do exactly what I loved to do all my life. When asked what's his best advice, he paused and replied, "Just be yourself. And always remember your roots and where you came from."

Written by Michael Morris – Texas Polka News
michael@texaspolkanews.com

Submitted for reprint by Danny Zapletal, IPA Trustee, Southwest Region





THANK YOU



Hey Chris, I wanted to send to you and the IPA a huge THANK YOU for thinking of me with the Certificate of Appreciation while I celebrated my 40th Anniversary on the air on WDEZ's Polka Jamboree. As we all know, we don't do this for recognition but for our love and passion of Polka's and the Industry. Things like this remind us that people do appreciate our efforts. It is greatly appreciated and again give my thanks to your board of directors and anyone who helped make this happen. See you down polka road!!



Best regards,
Jeff Heinz

Dear IPA,

Thank you for donating to the Michigan State Polka Music Hall of Fame.

Your generosity will help our organization to continue honoring deserving individuals for their years of promoting polkas.

With gratitude,
Jill M. Jona
Secretary
MSPMHOF



2026 IPA Newsletter Schedule

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline for Submissions</u>
April - May 2026	February 15, 2026
June - July 2026	April 15, 2026
August - September 2026	June 15, 2026
October - November 2026	August 15, 2026
December 2025 - January 2027	October 15, 2026

Patrick Henry Presents!

Chula Vista
Resort

Wisconsin Dells Polka Fest! & Expo!



May 8-10, 2026

Party in Chula Vista's huge Conference Center!
A Great Weekend of Family FUN!



Frank Liszka & Blue Magic

from Ohio - Friday & Saturday

Polka Family Band

from Pennsylvania - Saturday & Sunday

Live it Up! A Tribute to Lil' Wally!

from Minnesota - Friday

The Mix

from Wisconsin - Friday

Barefoot Becky & the Ivanhoe Dutchmen

from Iowa - Saturday

Ryan Kautzer Band

from Wisconsin - Saturday

The Nu Tymes

from Wisconsin - Saturday

Kevin Altenburg & Friends

from Illinois - Sunday

The Saturday Morning Monster Jam!

Hosted by: Nathan Newman

Polish/English Catholic Mass - Polka Dancing Lessons!

Weekend AMTRAK Trip Available!

Band line-up and other events subject to change without notice.

For general festival information: Call (773)889-6811

www.dellspolkafest.com

Hotel Package Available:

Only \$184 p/p Double Occupancy
Single Occupancy \$333 + tax & resort fee.

Includes:

2-Nights at Chula Vista Resort

Buffet Breakfast Saturday & Sunday in
the Market Fresh Buffet.

Breakfast Gratuity included.

Polka Fest Tickets NOT included.

*Each additional adult, \$16.50 /day + tax.

*Each additional child 3-15, \$12 /day + tax.

*Upgrades available for additional \$\$\$.

Room only prices starting at \$139/night.

Thursday or Sunday night only \$79!

Call Chula Vista Resort direct at
(608)254-8366 promo code:

L-03894 Polka Fest 2026

Discount code is not available online. Rate
Guaranteed until 04/15/26

Admission: Fri: \$25, Sat: \$30, Sun: \$20

Weekend Pass: \$60, Kids Under 18: Free!
with guardian. Plus Tax where applicable.
Huge Dance Floor By: Russ Napiwocki!

ON THE TOPIC OF SHARING POLKA MUSIC WITH YOUNG PEOPLE...

By Randy Koslosky
Sargeant-at-Arms

It is possible – and they may love it. For those who grew up in an era where polkas were stigmatized, that may no longer be the case. Here is a recent experience that demonstrates this.

The KOSMIX were recently asked to travel to Chicago to play for a group of 7-11 graders. This ended up being such a blast (for them and for the band).

This group of young people was the confirmation class and high school CCD class from a parish in western/central Pennsylvania. The pastor (Fr. Aron Maghsoudi) arranged an extraordinary pilgrimage to Chicago, South Bend, and Milwaukee, including visits to spectacular churches in those areas. The history associated with these churches is rich in conveying the faith and ethnic heritage of the people who built them.

So, where does polka music fit in? Fr. Aron (who recognizes the value of our ethnic heritage) thought that a visit to Chicago should include a polka experience. So, on the Saturday evening of the tour, he thought it would be great to have a polka band play

for the group. This was a full immersion experience which included lessons on dancing the polka (and czardasz). The polka lesson started with simply moving to the music in whatever way they wanted, then progressed to the simple 1,2,3 step, and then to the Chicago hop.

There were contests (i.e. which group – the young people or their parents – could be louder singing “oj dana” on the Oj Dana Polka, or “Oj” on a Teenager’s version of Oj, Oj, Oberek, or “Dzien Dobry” on Good Day polka, or a contest of who could do the best job playing the tuba on the Tuba Polka) and other ways for the youth (and parents) to be engaged in the evening.

This all built up to a “Bridal Dance”. I have some videos of this event that I wish I could share. It was just a fantastic scene of young people (who didn’t come in as polka fans) and their parents having a fantastic time... I hear from Fr. Aron that the kids have been talking about this time for weeks, and they are looking forward to another polka experience.

Congratulations and Thank You **IPA Certificates of Appreciation**

John J. (Happy Jack) Burnatowski - In recognition of your 40th Anniversary of promoting and broadcasting polkas on WALN. Thank you and Congratulations. (November, 2025)

Jasiu Klocek and the Salt City Brass - In recognition of over 50 years of performing. Thank you and Congratulations. (December, 2025)

Raymond “Ray Jay” Jarusinski - In recognition of your efforts in performing and promoting Polka Music for over 50 years. Thank you and Congratulations. (December, 2025)

Edziu Ogrodny, Dave Dombrowski, Matt Gregg, Ted Gibala - In recognition of your efforts and dedication in performing with Ray Jay and the Carousels and promoting Polkas. Thank you and Congratulations. (December, 2025)

Michael Costa - In recognition of your retirement from the Beat, the International Polka Association would like to thank you for your entertainment and many accomplishments. Thank you for your tireless efforts and for all you have done on and off the stage promoting polka music. Thank you and Congratulations. (January, 2026)

Steve Hayest - In recognition of the retirement of the Beat, the International Polka Association would like to thank you for your entertainment and many accomplishments. As your music has become part of us, it will never leave us. Thank you and Congratulations. (January, 2026)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY



1st – Robert Guyette; Wanda Guca;
Bryan O'Donnell

2nd – Don Hedeker; Jody Maddie;
Edward Skwiat

4th – Rena Kapka

5th – Don Haderle; David
Matuszewski;

Dan Liszka

7th - Greg Chwojdak; Eddie Biegaj

8th – Edward Kutas; Tiffany Miaso

9th – Ron Zywiciel; Al Jelinek;

10th – Patty Kuzniar

11th – Jim Stanish;

12th – Deanna Hoffman; Mike Magdon;
Dawn Pitt

13th – Gerry Kaminski

14th – Fred Kendzierski

15th – Frank Stetar

16th – Lori Lachner; Chris Zelasko

17th – Marianne Gideon

18th – Linda Hurley; Al Volek

19th – Anna Borowski; Tyler Janson;
Helen Bobeck

20th – Becky Livermore; Terry Popek;
John Sklarsky

22nd – Steve Rodgers;
Cathy Coblisch; Mark Jirikovec

23rd – Jerry Halkoski; Jan Dressler

24th – Eddie Zavaski, Jr; John
Lesniewski; Sandy Bogdon; Ka-
ren Lakota; Matt Lewandowski;
Bruce Korosa

25th – Kathleen Labuda-Zink;
Linda Swiderski; Gerry Kryk;
Ashley Mach; Eddy Meyers

26th – Ed Klancnik; Richard Gretchen;
Steve Piatkowski; Thaddeus Szymanski

27th – Dennis Mikolajewski; Charlotte Tyk;
Brenda Herz; Maryrose Guerrieri

28th – Keith Heffner

29th – Joe Dipyatic



HAPPY
Birthday
DAY



HAPPY BIRTHDAY



1st – Elaine Veverka;
Kathy Prochot; Scott Maroszek

2nd – Todd Zaganiacz; Adam Socha

3rd – Tom Mrocza; Karen Danielczuk; Frank Waltos;
Mike Marek; Mary Julia Drella; Nicholas Uram;
Mitch Gawrys

4th – Ken Yagelski; Bill Thomas

5th – Dick Pillar

6th – Joan Pyzik; Rick Rzeszutko

8th – Les Kapuscinski

9th – Eddie Siwec; Linda Malachin, Andrea Kujawa

10th – Fred Ziwich; Alice Kapuscinski

11th – Fr. Dennis Bogusz;

12th – Garry Kuchenbecker; Chase Stanczewski;
Jeff Gazdik; Thomas Wanderlich;
Sharon Dennis-Skupny

14th – Kyle Bushman

15th – Father Tom Aleksa

16th – Wojtek Kukielka; Michael Samars;
Vincent Krzyzanowski; Nicole Mrozinski

17th – Larry Walk; Thomas Altenburg;
Patrick Henry Cukierka; Patrick Biniasz

18th – Patricia Passaro

19th – John Mysliwiec

20th – Timothy Kasprzyk; Kevin Mach;
Brenda Fabian

21st – Roman Marsolek; Christine Turecek;
Annie Couch

22nd – Ted Lange; Debbie Jackinoski; Sue Krysa;
John H. Zelasko; Phyllis Checkalski; Cindy Lawton

23rd – Julie Ann Kurdys; Dianne Gora; Bob Zagozda

24th – Katie Krawisz; Jon Payne

25th – Albert Lepovsky

26th – Patricia Wojnowski; Steven Fenus;
Bonnie Szabo

27th – Dana Lindblad

28th – Antoinette Rozek; Zachary Janson

29th – Allan Maroszek

30th – Mitch Piotrowski; Mary Ann Mysliwiec;
James Glinski; Tony Rozek, Jr

31st – Judy Stringhill; Lori Lewandowski; Sue Bieniek



20th Annual

IPA Hall of Fame Benefit Dance 2026

Polish American Citizens Club • 355 East Street, Ludlow, MA 01056

SAT
MARCH
14th
7pm-11pm
ADMISSION \$20

the
DYNA
BRASS
of OF OHIO



SUN
MARCH
15th
2pm-7pm
ADMISSION \$20

Honoring the music of
Joe Zalewski



Toledo Polkamotion Reunion

Special tribute to award winning Joe Zalewski, Lifetime Musician, Grammy-Nominated Band-Leader, Polka Promoter and 2024 IPA Hall of Fame Inductee.



Lenny Gomulka



Eddie Forman Orchestra



Dennis Polisky & Maestro's Men

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Call Ernie Daigle 413-519-7014

Send Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope and Check Made Payable to Ernest Daigle to:

Ernest Daigle
12 Whitin Ave.
Chicopee, MA 01013

or call:

Ernie Daigle 413-519-7014
Peter Danielczuk 203-231-1819

For Tables of 8 or More Call:
Carol Blajda - 413-549-6997



Rooms Available

Call: 413-589-9300

321 Center Street
Ludlow, MA
Code: IPA

Special Room Rates
Deadline on Special Rates Feb. 12, 2026

3/12/26 (\$149)

3/13/26 (\$165)

3/14/26 (\$165)

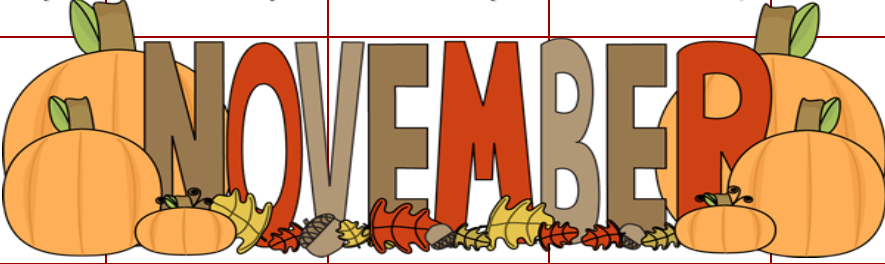

3/15/26 (\$149)

ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY • NO TICKETS HELD AT DOOR • Tickets are NOT REFUNDABLE

FUNDRAISER RAFFLE WINNERS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Jim Lewandowski IL	2 John Smagowicz PA	3 Corinne Turk FL	4 Patricia Passoco NJ
5 Lori Urbanczyk NY	6 Cheryl Furmaniak IL	7 Erik Bogdon PA	8 Patricia Daigle MA	9 Todd Gliwa IL	10 Malia Lazor PA	11 Julcia Dusseault MA
12 Tara Reimer NY	13 Audrey Szczygiel IL	14 Rebecca Anglim IL	15 Joseph Rupnik NJ	16 Cheryl Wodzisz OH	17 Karen Hudy IL	18 Andrew Krystopolski FL
19 Joe Sokol NH	20 Sally Sandra IL	21 Bob Frydryk MA	22 Richard Rzeszutko IL	23 LaVern Schiefer MI	24 Zoey Gawthorp IL	25 Kenneth Carlson PA
26 Al Meilutis NY	27 Ursula Stetz IL	28 John O'Brien TX	29 John Wojciechowski MA	30 Frankie Liszka PA	31 Peter Wojcik NY	

FUNDRAISER RAFFLE WINNERS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Bob Gorman PA
2 Mary Wolski IL	3 Justin Kosinski NJ	4 Edward Skalka IL	5 Sandy Mocek IL	6 Bruce Brzeczowski WI	7 Marie Walker NJ	8 Tanya Hagenow IL
9 Cindy Fisher OH	10 Aaron Socha WI	11 Ron Trojanowski IN	12 Basia Lynn OH	13 Christine Turecek CT	14 Ted Jedrzejewicz Canada	15 Carol Heger WI
16 Ronnie Gregg PA	17 Richard Kovalski VT	18 Nancie Eppers IL	19 Mark Trzepacz NY	20 James Moroski OH	21 Ginger Patterson PA	22 Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum TX
23 Elizabeth Rozek NY	24 Jeff Gazdik OH	25 Darlene Kender IN	26 Robert Cyronak MA	27 Peter Wendinger MN	28 John Wisneski PA	29 Patricia Kiewicz NV
30 Linda Malachin OH						

FUNDRAISER RAFFLE WINNERS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Edwin Rajewski NY	2 Theresa Pawlicki IL	3 Dolly Kozlauska MA	4 Myna Sadowski PA	5 Mike Matousek FL	6 John Moe WI
7 Arlene Talbot IL	8 Brian Urbanczyk NY	9 Andrew Krystolpolski FL	10 Fran Russo OH	11 Ron Palkowski MI	12 Lynn Kizewski WI	13 Johnny Karas FL
14 Jim Letnick IL	15 Pam Ward MA	16 Dave Morris PA	17 Frank Miki IL	18 Daniel Jonczak PA	19 Linda Swiderski OH	20 Chris Tanski NY
21 Lawrence Skowronek IL	22 Martin Dzik IN	23 Ronald Wichman, Jr. WI	24 Michael Riel MA	25 Judy Rosinski NY	26 Audrey Szczygiel IL	27 Angela Biskup Canada
28 Sue Matysiewicz MA	29 Clem Smith WI	30 Dennis Mikolajewski FL	31 Basia Adams OH			



Enter to Win!

\$1000 FREDDY K JR MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP AWARD



The **Freddy K Jr. Music Scholarship Committee** is now accepting requests for applications for the 2025 Scholarship award. Applicants must be high school seniors who have been accepted to an accredited college and play a musical instrument. Anyone interested in applying for this year's award can download an application on our website 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

2024 - Nicole Mrozinski, Hugo, Minnesota

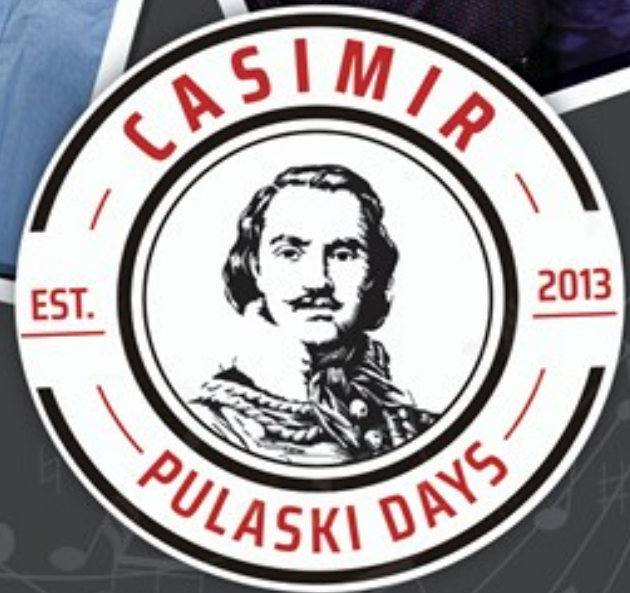
- 2023 – Holly Rose Kolodziej Scarfone, Pittsfield, Massachusetts
- 2022 – Sebastian Pucowski, Hackettstown, New Jersey
- 2021- Syrena Prytko, Millbury, Massachusetts
- 2020 – Lucas Yash, Webster, Massachusetts
- 2019 – Emma Bogdan, Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania
- 2018 – Zachary Piatkowski, Canastota, 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 Moadlo, Stevens Point, Wisconsin
- 2000 – Andrew Krystopolski, Wilmington, Delaware
- 1999 – William Lomnychuk, Reading, Pennsylvania
- 1998 – John Daigle, Chicopee, Massachusetts

The New Generation



Molly B. and SqueezeBox

Live Music



FRIDAY • MARCH 6, 2026

Calling All Musicians

POLKA JAM SESSION • 2-6 PM

Wicka's Bar

137 S. St. Augustine St.

ADMISSION FREE

Big Casimir Dance!

SATURDAY • MARCH 7, 2026

SQUEEZEBOX • 7-11 PM

\$25 ADMISSION

Scolly's Hometown

149 W. Pulaski St.

FRIDAY • MARCH 6, 2026

THE NEW GENERATION BAND • 7-11 PM

Mountain Bay Bar & Grill

104 S. Wisconsin St.

ADMISSION FREE

BOOK YOUR ROOM TODAY

Mention Casimir26 and **SAVE 15%**

920.822.0822 • Pulaski Location Only



Stay up to date on the latest news:

WWW.CASIMIRPULASKIDAYS.COM

WAY OUT WEST

Pulaski Club of Phoenix, Arizona Polka Dance Knewz Band Reunion, November 15th & 16th, 2025

WOW! What a reunion! The Knewz band from Buffalo, New York, really put on a show and didn't miss a beat. The guys were "HOT" all weekend, from "Ej Mamusiu" polka to "Looking for a Boyfriend" polka, "Saxarinet" to "Pije Kuba" polka. The dance floor was filled with polka dancers from New York, Nebraska, Michigan, Wisconsin, California, and our locals.

In for the weekend was our own IPA 1st Vice President, Jill Styczynski, Buffalo Polka Booster President, Chris Tanski, and local P.O.L.K.A. President, Sheila Johnson, who really enjoyed the Pulaski club, meeting old and making new friends. Of course, our Pulaski club Presi-

dent, Kaz Tysiak, was greeting and working the door with her husband, Larry and Mary from California.

Happy Birthday and Anniversary wishes went out to Barb and Al Bakowski, visiting from Buffalo as well.

Many memories were made this weekend, and more to follow. Look for our 2026 Pulaski club polka schedule with New Phaze, Dyna-Brass, Blue Magic, and PCM. At

www.pulaskiclubaz.com

Come join us at one of our Polka Dances; the fun never ends.



iHeart Radio announces the airing of the syndicated Jimmy Sturr Radio Show

Broadcast Overview

iHeartRadio has announced it will air the syndicated Jimmy Sturr Radio Show. Listeners can tune in to the show every Saturday and Sunday from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM (EST). To access the program, visit iHeart Radio and select 102 THE CUBE.

Additional Listening Platforms

In addition to iHeartRadio, Jimmy Sturr's show is available weekly on SiriusXM. The broadcast airs on Saturdays at 6:00 PM and again on Sundays at 1:00 PM (EST).

National Syndication

The Jimmy Sturr Radio Show is syndicated across 29 stations nationwide, including the Polka Jammer Network. On the Polka Jammer Network, the show is aired on Saturday nights at 6:00 PM (EST) and again on Sundays at 11:00 AM (EST).

Changes to the Membership Renewal Process

The International Polka Association (IPA) has updated its membership renewal process to assist in controlling costs. For members who receive the newsletter via email, all communications, including renewal notices, will now be sent electronically. Members can expect reminders in the month preceding their membership expiration, during the month of expiration, and in the month following expiration. If members do not renew during these reminder periods, their membership will expire at the end of the month following the expiration month, and they will no longer be considered an active member of the IPA.

For members who receive their newsletter through traditional mail, you will still receive your reminders as usual through traditional mail delivery.

As always, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your membership in the IPA. Your support is invaluable and enables the organization to continue its mission of supporting and promoting polka music. We truly appreciate your commitment.



WAY OUT WEST ARIZONA POLKA DANCE FEST. 2026

WHEN:

Jan. 10th, & 11th, Tony Blazonczyk 's New Phaze

Mar. 21st, & 22nd, DynaBrass

Apr. 11th, & 12th, Frankie Liszka and Blue Magic

Nov. 14th, & 15th, Polka Country Musicians

TIME:

Friday Night 6pm. FREE admission (meet & greet)

Saturday night 5 to 9pm \$15.00

Sunday afternoon 2 to 6pm \$15.00

(kids under 16 FREE all weekend)



*No B.Y.O.B. affair the Pulaski Club has a full bar menu available
and the Polish Kitchen will be open*



Hotel reservations: Holiday Inn & Suites Phoenix Airport North
1515 N. 44th, St. Phoenix, Az 85008

(p) 602-358-0909 (ask for reservation # Pulaskiclub) www.hiphoenixsuites.com

*The Pulaski Polish / American Club at 4331 E. McDowell Rd. Phoenix Arizona 85008, 602.275.9329
www.facebook.com/pulaskiclub "fun time" page www.pulaskiclubaz.com*

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

Contact us:

International Polka Association, Inc.®
PO Box 1484
Plainfield, IL 60544
1-800-TO-POLKA
(1-800-867-6552)

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

Current IPA Officers and Directors

Officers:

President: Chris Bogdon (PA)
1st Vice President: Jill Styczynski (WI)
2nd Vice President: Henry Lenard (DE)
Treasurer: Matt Olszewski (PA)
Secretary: Cindy Olszewski (PA)
Financial Secretary: Lynn Kaminski (IL)
Sergeant at Arms: Randy Koslosky (PA)

Advisors:

Advisor: Christy Krawisz (IL)
Lori Hudy-Lewandowski (IL)
Media Advisor: Keith Pietranczyk (IL)
Chaplain: Fr. Dennis Bogusz (PA)

Directors:

Andy Bojczuk (NY)
Emma Bogdon (PA)
Stephen Kaminski (IL)
Brian Kapka (IL)
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Lindsey Mateja (IL)
Christy Nowakowski (IL)
Sue Szela (MA)
Brad Turk (FL)
Brian Urbanczyk (NY)
Jeff Yash (NY)
John Zelasko (MI)

Current IPA Hall of Fame and Awards Committee

Gary Brueggen * Craig Ebel * Jackie Libera * Mike Matousek *
Jimmy Weber

Would you like your newsletter emailed to you?

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: newsletter@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
on the Polka Jammer Network on

Sundays, 11:00 a.m. - 12 noon Central Time and also available in
the Polka Jammer archives. Be sure to tune in!

Visit www.polkajammernetwork.org

Each show features IPA officers and directors.

Please call 1-800-TO-POLKA if you are interesting in advertising on
the IPA Radio Show.

WE NEED SPONSORS!



Saturday, March 14th & Sunday, March 15th -
IPA Hall of Fame Benefit Weekend
(page 14)

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
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DEADLINE FOR April 2026 NEWSLETTER: February 15

Email ad files to Lynn Kaminski using:

newsletter@ipapolkas.com

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.®
PO Box 1484; Plainfield, IL 60544
1-800-TO-POLKA (1-800-867-6552)
Website: www.ipapolkas.com

