

National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum
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For immediate release:

50th Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend at the Cleveland Downtown Marriott, November 28, 29 and 30, Polka Hall of Fame Awards Show Gala, Saturday, November 30, 2013

Enjoy the golden anniversary of America's greatest polka event in Cleveland, the Polka Capital of the World. The National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum presents the 50th annual Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend at the Cleveland Marriott Hotel and the 25th Awards Show spectacular, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, November 28, 29 and 30, 2013.

Celebrate fifty years of polka fun at one of the country's biggest polka festivals. The National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum invites you to this renowned three-day polka marathon featuring the finest Cleveland-Style Polka and Slovenian performers from the U. S. and Canada. The Polka Hall of Fame Awards Show celebrates annual and lifetime achievers on the Cleveland-Style Polka music scene with a gala stage production at Euclid Auditorium on Saturday, November 30.

Sixteen dance bands are featured in the Marriott Grand Ballroom. This year's featured performers include Canada's Polka King Walter Ostanek, the Joey Tomsick Orchestra (2012 Band of the Year), the George Staiduhar Orchestra (2012 Album of the Year) and RFD-TV's popular Squeezebox with Mollie B. Darling Mollie and the boys pack them in across the Polka Belt with their up-tempo takes on old-time polkas and waltzes.

The spacious Marriott Grand Ballroom is the main music venue with non-stop entertainment from 3:00 p.m. to midnight, Thursday and Friday. On Saturday, the traditional Polka Mass begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by dancing until midnight. The Superior Room hosts additional polka ensembles every evening, plus jam sessions. The Marriott Lobby is the site for smaller music groups and impromptu play-alongs. The hotel's catering department prepares a menu of favorite nationality dishes for sale. You can order sausages made by Azman Quality Meats of Euclid, Ohio, the winner of the Slovenian Sausage Festival.

Thrill to a stage full of polka stars in tuneful production numbers at the Polka Hall of Fame Awards Show gala at Euclid Auditorium, just down the street from the Hall of Fame. Celebrity presenters add to the surprises, with WELW's Ray Somich as Master of Ceremonies. The All-Star Show Band, led by Tom Mrocicka, accompanies the presentation of awards, such as Band of the Year and Album of the Year, as well as Lifetime Achievement. This year's theme, "A Polka for Every Season," features polka and waltz tributes to spring, summer, winter and fall. Guests receive a souvenir program book to remind them of this special day.

The Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend was established in 1963 by radio personality Tony Petkovsek and has grown into the country's longest-running polka music tradition. Nearly every legend in polka music has performed at this event. The Downtown Cleveland Marriott has been the site of the Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend since the hotel opened in 1992. The Polka Hall of Fame has hosted the Awards Show since 1987, rolling out the red carpet for top talents. The Awards Show is supported in part through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

Reserve rooms at the Downtown Marriott Hotel through Kollander Travel at a special rate, \$105 per room, per night, single or double, including tax and free indoor hotel parking. The Horseshoe Casino, shopping, and restaurants are only steps away on and around Public Square. Reach Kollander Travel at (216) 692-1000, toll-free (800) 800-5981, or kwt@kollander.com.

Dance admission each day is only \$15 per person, including free indoor parking. 18 and under free. Awards Show tickets are \$15 each. Save with a twin Saturday ticket – the Awards Show and the Saturday dance for only \$25 per person. For dance and show tickets, call the Polka Hall of Fame, (216) 261-FAME, toll-free (866) 66-POLKA, or polkashop@aol.com.

The National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum was founded in 1987 by musicians and leaders of Slovenian and ethnic organizations. The Cleveland style of polka has roots in Slovenian folk music with influences from country and western, jazz, show tunes, and other nationality sounds. The lively music was especially popular in the decade following World War II when artists like America's Polka King Frank Yankovic scored million-selling hits.

The museum features audio exhibits, photographs and original instruments tracing the Cleveland-style polka from its origins in the city's Slovenian neighborhoods in the 1890s to national renown. The Hall of Fame gallery honors significant musicians and individuals. The archive preserves 5,000 Slovenian and Cleveland-style recordings, dating back a century. Each year members nominate and vote for top polka musicians and achievers.

The Polka Hall of Fame is located at 605 East 222nd Street in Euclid, Ohio, in the historic former Euclid City Hall. Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, noon to 5:00, and Saturdays, 10:00 to 3:00. Admission is free. New and vintage polka recordings are available in the museum store. For details, contact (216) 261-FAME or polkashop@aol.com. ###

Photo Caption:

Canada's Polka King Walter Ostanek, the three-time Grammy winner, takes center stage at the 50th annual Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend and Awards Show presented by the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum at the Downtown Marriott Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio, November 28, 29 and 30, 2013.