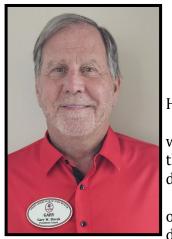


P. O. Box 72 La Grange, Texas 78945 PLCTM.COM

Volume 19—Issue 4	4th Quarter 2024	
BOARD OF DIRECTORS		
OFFICERS	DIRECTORS	
Immediate Past President – Willie Bohuslav President Coach – Gary Bucek Vice President – Jan Koehn Secretary Treasurer—Carol Artz-Bucek Member Outreach Officer - Joyce Bohuslav	Connie Rice-Ames Evelyn Maresh Jane Freis Larry Maresh Mildred Hollas Wellie K. Harris, Jr.	



A message from 2024 President & "Coach" - Gary Bucek HOWDY (AHOJ) PLCTM Members!!!

This Fourth Quarter Newsletter—"Out with 2024 & In with 2025!"

Howdy All,

I take this opportunity to share some end of 2024 PLCTM leadership inner workings with you all. Leadership in this organization is paramount in completing the mission to provide a facility to preserve, promote and educate polka music and dance.

Leaders take time from work, family, friends and fun to ensure the success of the museum; and, for that we are grateful. We were fortunate to add two new directors, Connie Rice Ames and current VP, Jan Koehn early in the year. After

their arrival, we unfortunately had to say goodbye to long time board member and then Vice President, Charlie Hoelscher and Director, Mark McFarland. In late July, we lost board member Sheryl Pavlas-Harris to leukemia but gained her knowledge and the continuation of the legacy of her father, Willie Pavlas, by adding her husband Wellie Harris to the board.

Sadly, in addition, we lost a number of our museum members who moved on to the Polka Party in Heaven; their memories will be in our hearts and souls forever. We appreciate their membership, involvement, contribution and the footprint they left on the Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum. I want to also take time to cherish the memories of our non-member loved one's who left us in 2024; let's celebrate the accomplishments of all!

Considerable capital improvements were made to the interior and exterior of the Museum such as walkways, new signage, and new exhibits! We've held wine tastings, dances, dance lessons, and entertained visitors from all over the world. . . including the Czech Republic President, Petr Pavel, and his staff with great success and fun; all while promoting the Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum!

I'm not one to live in the past. but one who plans for the future.

THIS YEAR, we will continue our "Virtual/Marketing" program via new technology with videos and stories of all the exhibits with the expertise of VP Jan Koehn's Staff! I said continue because we may never finish with the many stories that have built this Museum and all of its exhibits. I encourage ALL members to visit us this year at one or all of our events and relive the moments with pictures, instruments, videos and memories of those who have helped keep the Polka Music traditions alive.

HAPPY 2025...See you soon!!!

NOTICE: TO ALL VISITORS

Admission is "free" and wheelchair accessible! **Donations are Welcome** To schedule a visit in advance contact: Gary Bucek at 713/252-2162 or email info@plctm.com

2025 CZECH & PLCTM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Dates & Times Are Subject To Change)

Be prepared for more events throughout the year.

JAN 24 & 25 — Blacksmith Expo & Antique Engine Show FEB 8 — 1st Quarter PLCTM Board Meeting

TCHCC Valentine Dinner & Concert

 Band from Czech Republic **23**

- 2nd Quarter PLCTM Board Meeting **MAY 10**

— Slavnost 'May Fest" **17**

AUG 9 — 3rd Quarter PLCTM Board Meeting OCT 17 & 18 — Heritage Fest & Muzicky

— 4th Quarter PLCTM Board Meeting NOV 8

— Donor Appreciation Annual Dance 9 (TBC)

DEC 6 — Christmas Open House

ANNUAL SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIPS (ASM) @ \$20 PER PERSON/YEAR

4TH Quarter 2024



NOVEMBER Suzanne C. Wakeman

Bernard J. & Earline Okruhlik

John Dujka



DONOR APPRECIATION NEW MEMBERS

Debra Stewart **Louis Stewart** Paula Amsler







our members are lifesavers





Lifetime Membership Program

The enthusiasm of the 2023 Board of Directors, led to the development of one of the most prestigious and helpful programs in which any *Museum Member* or *Want To Be Member* may engage. This Membership Program began accepting applications October 1, 2023. The program is designed to provide funding for the continued development of The Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum (PLCTM) to provide a facility for preserving, promoting and educating polka music and dance. While serving as an honor to those who either choose to invest in a Lifetime Membership or for whom others wish to make an investment, out of respect and recognition for another person, this program will be significant to achieve that goal .

Presented below are the 2024 Lifetime Members of the Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum!



Brent Douglas Wiltshire—2421	Stacy Bohuslav Wiltshire —2422
Brittany Wiltshire Jennings—2423	Jack Thomas Jennings —2424
Bayley Alexis Wiltshire —2425	Nicholas "Nick" Bennett —2426
Bo Douglas Wiltshire —2427	Beck Douglas Wiltshire —2428
Terri Bohuslav —2429	Stephen "Mark" McFarland—2430
Jessica Christine McFarland —2431	Kevin McFarland —2432 †
Connie Rice Ames — 2433	Willie J. Kopecky, Jr. —2434
C. W. "Chris" Benson —2435	Doris Benson —2436
Larry G. Maresh—2437	Evelyn A. Maresh—2438
Wellie K. Harris, Jr.—2439	Virginia Leech—2440
Josephine Marie "Jo" Jennings—2441	Wilbert J. Cernosek—2442

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

A **LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP** is entered in the name of an Individual, Organization or Business. The membership is "NOT" transferable.

A Lifetime Membership is considered a full membership in the museum until no longer living or doing business. It is not to be confused with goodwill Donations, The Endowment Fund, Charter Member Status or Memorials honoring loved ones, associates or friends.

Any existing Museum Member, Person, Organization or Business may enroll as a Lifetime Member in the PLCTM. It may be purchased as an award or an honor for an individual or another museum member; it may also be purchased by a spouse or family as a gift.

Upon completion of the one time full payment of \$1,000.00, the registrant...

- Becomes a Lifetime Member, No Annual Dues
- Permanent recognition on The Museum's Lifetime Member Display
- Presented a Lifetime Membership Name Badge
- Presented with Lifetime Membership Certificate
- Presented a Magnetic Lifetime Membership Cling
- Recognized in each Quarterly Newsletter
- Complimentary Passes to All Member Events
- Recognized by Event Master of Ceremonies
- Recognition in Event Programs



Jane C. Freis—2301

Debbie Hoelscher Jennings—2302

Charles H. Hoelscher—2303

Christina Hoelscher—2304

Carl F. Freis-2305

E. J. Bayer—2306 **†**

Gary W. Bucek—2307

Carol Artz-Bucek—2308

Willie V. Bohuslav—2309

Joyce C. Bohuslav—2310

Derek Hoelscher—2311

Cynthia A. Hoelscher—2312

Patricia Hoelscher McKirahan—2313

Jan Koehn—2314

Father Jared Cooke—2315

Sheryl Pavlas-Harris—2316 T

Mildred Hollas—2317

Tim Koehn-2318

Mark Hoelscher—2319

Althea B. Hoelscher-2320





As part of the new "Virtual Docent Program", we are upgrading technology to acquire more visibility.

Scan this QR Code with your camera to boost the museum's on line presence.



A total of \$45. was received in the 4th Quarter from those of you who honor and value the life your honoree who lived on this earth. Their love, their leadership, their community involvement made a difference and our world is better due to their loving care. We treasure your generosity ensuring the preservation of polka dance & music to live on.

Your gift ensures Polka Music and Dance will live on!

Bernard J. "Bennie" Okruhlik Po. L. K. of A. Loretta Freytag



IN LOVING MEMORY:
"FOREVER REMEMBERED - FOREVER MISSED"

Bernard "Bennie" Okruhlik April 5, 1939—November 20, 2024



Bernard J. "Benny" Okruhlik, born April 5, 1939 in Praha, Texas to Mary and John Okruhlik, died peacefully on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 in Houston, Texas.

A viewing and visitation was at 4:00 p.m. with recitation of the Holy Rosary at 6:30 p.m., on Sunday, November 24, 2024 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 607 East Whitney Street in Houston, Texas.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, November 26, 2024 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Praha, Texas. The Rite of Committal immediately followed in the St. Mary's cemetery also in Praha, Texas.



Kevin Michael McFarland September 11, 1993 - November 24, 2024

Kevin Michael McFarland was born on September 11, 1993 in Austin, Texas to Mark McFarland and Kerry McFarland, later joined by his younger sister, Jessica.

As an 8th generation Texan and a true Austinite, his life was full of family, friends and fun. He liked to say that he was born and raised in the shadows of the

UT tower, which resulted in his lifelong dedication to the Texas Longhorn football team. He was highly energetic and intelligent with an incredible sense of humor. He was an avid reader with a wide range of interests, especially history. He had a true gift of storytelling and always enjoyed an audience with whom he could share his infinite knowledge.

His friend Cyril wrote of him "He was strongly principled, a bibliophile, and a lover of nature and adventure". He was also fiercely loyal to those he loved.

Kevin, beloved by all of his family, passed away on Saturday November 23. 2024. He is survived by his Dad and Stepmom: Mark McFarland and Terri Bohuslav; Mother, Kerry McFarland; Sister, Jessica McFarland; as well as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and members of his large extended families that loved him. He is also survived by a vast network of friends and "chosen family members" that enriched his life. Too many to mention but his lifelong friend Jackson, Thomas, Cyril, Chelsea and so many many others. Special gratitude for Razzy and Stephanie for their unwavering devotion but especially to Zoe D.

The hearts of the family are broken as they process the shock of losing their son, Kevin. They are thankful for all of the prayers, comforting support and love extended by so many during their time of bereavement.

Gloria Jean Koehn October 23, 1936 - June 16, 2024

Gloria Jean (Borman) Koehn, 87, of Weimar, Texas went to be with the Lord on June 16, 2024 in Schulenburg, Texas. She was born on October 23, 1936 in Brenham, Texas, the daughter of Alfred and Paula (Duerr) Borman.

An Endowment was received in her memory from Jan Koehn.

Gloria grew up on a farm near the community of Welcome, Texas. She is a 1955 graduate of Bellville High School and in 1957 graduated from Blinn Jr. College.

Early on she worked for American General Life then soon after she met the love of her life Elton Dale Koehn and they were united in marriage on May 20, 1961 in Welcome, Texas. They lived in Houston for several years, raised their family in Katy, and have lived in Weimar for the past 30 years. During this time they traveled to many places all over the world.

Dancing was one of Gloria's favorite past-times. She always said she would rather dance than eat. She loved gardening and keeping a tidy yard filled with beautiful flowers. She loved her chickens and they loved her. You would often find one sitting on her lap. Most of all she loved spending quality time with her family; Christmas time was her favorite. Gloria was very active in her community throughout her life, especially with Trinity Church in New Bielau where she served tirelessly.

She was preceded in death by her parents Alfred and Paula Borman, brothers Robert (Buddy) Borman of San Antonio and Roger Borman of Welcome, grandson Ethan Dean Koehn, and daughter-in-law Patricia Koehn both of Weimar. She is survived by her husband Elton Dale Koehn, sons Rory Koehn of Weimar and Troy Koehn (Rhonda) of Katy, grandchildren Jordan Koehn of Alvin, Hunter Koehn (Lana) of San Marcos, Garrison Koehn of Weimar, and Kennedy Koehn of Weimar, great-granddaughter Olivia Koehn of San Marcos, and one nephew Stuart Borman of San Antonio.





Irene Ernestine (Lichey) Banse October 26, 1927— August 28, 2024

Irene Banse peacefully passed to eternal life on August 28, 2024, at the age of 96. She was born October 26, 1927 to Ernest and Erna (Schroeder) Lichey in Columbus, Texas.

An Endowment was received in her memory from Jan Koehn.

She began her education at the school in the New Bielau community and later attended Weimar High School, graduating in 1945. On June 10, 1951, she as at St. Michael's Church in Weimar. They lived in Houston where their two

married Henry H. Banse at St. Michael's Church in Weimar. They lived in Houston where their two daughters were born. In 1963, they moved to Rosenberg and in 1971 they moved back to their hometown of Weimar.

Sewing and gardening were activities she enjoyed. Her pantry and freezer were always stocked with lots of home-grown vegetables and fruits. She had a green thumb for vegetables as well as for flowers and her home was surrounded by beautiful plants. She was a member of St. Michael's Parish, the Catholic Daughters of America, the VFW Auxiliary, and the Polka Lovers Club of America.

She worked at various places, including Stanzel's in Schulenburg and Rubin's Grocery in Weimar, retiring in 1996 to take care of Henry during his illness. Later, she worked part-time in the office of Dr. Gordon..

Irene was preceded in death by her parents, brother Elroy, her husband, and numerous other relatives. She leaves behind her two daughters, Joyce (Denis) Muras and Karen Golsch. Grandchildren Curtis (Elizabeth) Golsch, Jeffrey Golsch, Theresa (Patrick) Conners and Andrew (Katie) Muras. Nine great-grandchildren survive. Also, very special friends Annette Coerver and Daria Emmel.

A Holy Rosary and Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, September 3rd at St. Michael's Catholic Church with burial in the St. Michael's Cemetery.

Sheryl Jane Pavlas-Harris November 14,1954—July 28, 2024

A full obituary is printed in the 3rd Quarter Newsletter

An Endowment was received in her memory from Jan Koehn.



Endowment
In Loving Memory
From
Jan Koehn
Tim & Dana Koehn
For Their
Parents

Wilbert Koehn
5.11.1923
12.25.2005
&
Lorene C. Koehn
2.26.1930
4.27.1997



**ENDOWMENT FUND DONATIONS—THANK YOU!! \$15,000 Endowment Fund Donations Received From | Jan Koehn and Tim & Dana Koehn IN LOVING MEMORY

Jan Koehn — Lorene & Wilbert Koehn	\$ 2,500.00
Jan Koehn — Gloria Koehn	\$ 2,500.00
Jan Koehn — Irene Banse	\$ 2,500.00
Jan Koehn — Sheryl Pavlas-Harris	\$ 2,500.00
Tim & Dana Koehn—Lorene & Wilbert Koehn	\$ 5,000.00

Virtual Marketing Program Nearing Completion

We continue to make videos of our special exhibits and have completed the purchase of the equipment to display these videos. To date, members contributing video segments include Joyce & Willie Bohuslav, Alfred Vrazel, Doris & C.W. Benson, Betty Patalik and Virginia Leech just to name a few.

Visitors Love The Exhibits













IN OUR PRAYERS FOR CONTINUED SPEEDY RECOVERIES

Lorine Christ, Lorine Michalsky, Loretta Freytag, Mary Ann Fishbeck, Charlie Hoelscher, Weldon & Delores Schulte, Carolyn & Bob Heinsohn, Ben Bohuslav and Woody Halpin

Positive energy going your way !!!



IMPORTANT NOTICE: Dear Members, in order for those who search Polka on the internet, we ask that you click on this link. It will take you to our Website. Please visit, and "Like" us! We will soon be adding the newsletters, director pictures and calendar updates for all to stay in touch.

ADDITIONALLY, you can help boost the museum's presence on Google by scanning the QR Code located at the top of page 5 with your phone. Follow the directions by clicking on the google page and follow prompts.

FALL & WINTER EVENTS

All of these events came to fruition.
The public was invited to all three events.
Dance instructions were offered at each event.
Those who came had a great time.
If you did not attend you missed a fun time.
Photos related to each event are noted.



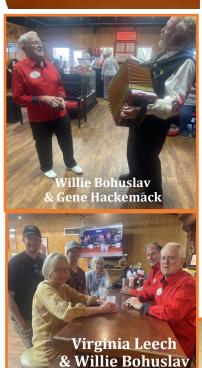




Music
Dance Instructions
for all ages.
Refreshments
Fun



















The Polka Lovers Club of hosted its annual "Donor Appre-November 17th. Museum Waltz dance instructions for all dance experience from general twirls. It was a laughing good Plus, happy music for happy



Texas Museum (PLCTM) ciation Dance" on Sunday, organizers offered Polka and ages and all elements of steps to twists, turns and time for all who participated. people was bountiful.

The Museum features this Donor Appreciation event in honor of individuals, families, businesses, organizations, grant providers, and public officials instrumental in the Museum's success. It is a celebration for which the public is always invited to attend.

This dance was held in the Fairgrounds Pavillion. The event began at 2 PM with dance instructions led by Louis Stewart, of the Mollie B Polka Party, Paula Amsler and Debra Stewart, all three are members of the Po. L. K. of A. dance organization. They were assisted by museum talented dancers Willie & Joyce Bohuslav, C. W. "Chris" & Doris Benson, and Gary & Carol Bucek.





(Left) Paula Amsler & Louis Stewart—Dance Instructors

(Above) Debra Stewart, Louis & Paula—Instructing

(Right) Debra & Louis instructing Chris & Doris Benson



Mark Halata & Texavia

The happy music was performed by Mark Halata & Texavia; attendees had a great time dancing to the happy music and those who were not dancing had plenty of listening enjoyment.





Chris and Doris Benson, 2024 King and Queen of Po. L. K. of A. remarked; "Louis, Paula, and Deb did a great job with the dance lessons. We even learned how to do "the window". It was a fun time, the hall decorations were great as well as the hall set-up. The choice of raffle items was appropriate. The snacks were phenomenal. Those who didn't attend missed a well planned donor appreciation dance! It truly was their loss, since Mark Halata and Texavia were at the top of their game even though it was hotter than one of the outside summer picnics."



Trevon Brooks, New Braunfels, had a great time with Connie Rice Ames welcoming guests and getting them registered for the event.

Charles Genzer & Angelina Kretzschmar. San Antonio. Texas expressed; "this is an excellent polka band, plenty of good tasting food, friendly people and lots of dancers. Well organized with people coming from all over Texas. The PLCTM Board members and volunteers are hard dedicated workers for the museum. One lady asked us when the next dance at the fair grounds would be because she had a good time and wanted to come back again."



(L-R Doris Benson, Connie Rice Ames & Angelina Kretzschmar

Virginia Leech, La Grange stated, "The energy of the music at the Donor Appreciation Dance, the precision of the polka step, step, step and the arm movements unraveling into twirls reminded me of the dances that I, as a child in the 40's, attended with my folks. As a teenager in the '50's, I danced those same moves in many country halls so popular in the area at that time."

Ted LaPesh, Houston, Texas expressed "museum organizers and volunteers prepared a very well organized event, and as a result, it was well attended by an enthusiastic group of people that, continued to dance until the last polka was played. Drinks and refreshments were provided for the attendees, which added to the festive atmosphere.

A short program took place during the band's break at 4:20. This year's event was dedicated to the memory of Sheryl Pavlas-Harris, a board member whose untimely death took place in July. President, Gary Bucek, gave annual report. A 2024 Program was distributed with the 2024 progress report.















Pictured above Volunteers & Directors (L-R)
Joyce Bohuslav, Weldon Schulte,
Willie Bohuslav and
Raffle Chair, Stacy Bohuslav Wiltshire

A fun portion of the event were three raffle games; 1) Raffle for five items inclusive of two sets of Poetry Books by Author, Sheryl Pavlas-Harris were won by Wilbert Cernosek and **Jerry** Pavlicek. Sheryl was a Board Member of the Museum since 2018 and passed away in July with leukemia. sets, of 5 each, Texas Women's League Drive-Thru only Dinner Tickets for Thursday, December 12 from 4:30 to 6:30 PM at La Grange KC Hall, were won by Teresa Miller and Dr. Deb Stewart; a \$50 Gift Certificate to Majek Vineyard and C. W. "Chris" Winery, won by Benson; a 50/50 Cash Drawing won by Diane Moltz.

WAIT, There's More!!!

Lastly...

Wilbert J. Cernosek
shown with
President, Gary Bucek
was
the lucky winner of the
\$1,000 Lifetime Membership Raffle
Sponsored by the Museum





To Brian Artz
for the
Photography
& Posting
to Facebook
during the
event.







Gary Bucek, President of The Museum and his wife, Carol, Secretary of the organization visited the Wieliczka Salt Mine in Krakow, Poland, 1000' underground. There are 205 miles of galleries on nine levels. The immense salt deposit was first mined around 1290. The Bucek's were on a five country European Tour hosted by Edita & Chris Rybak. The weather was extremely cold. Forty-three regional people participated in the eleven-day tour. Rybak's are in the process of organizing a May 2025, 16-day adventure to six European Countries.

MEANWHILE...BACK AT THE MUSEUM... VOLUNTEERS EXPERIENCED FRIGID WEATHER FOR THE CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE VERY FEW VISITORS ATTENDED DUE TO RAIN & COLD TEMPERATURE



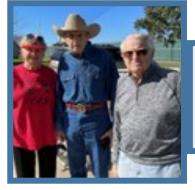
How many engineers does it take?
(L-R) Chris Benson &
Willie Bohuslav
Attempting to get heat from the
kitchen stove.



(L-R)Willie Bohuslav, Chris Benson, Joyce Bohuslav & Doris Benson trying to stay warm in the kitchen



Jan Koehn, Vice President and Volunteer, Doris Benson waiting for Reeder's A/C and Heating to turn on the heat to warm the facility for them and potential guests.



On a warmer day in December, Willie & Joyce Bohuslav welcomed, Allan Novak, San Antonio by giving him a tour of the museum. He spoke fluent Czech; therefore, he and Willie had a bang up time.



PLCTM DONATES TO AMEN FOOD PANTRY

The Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum (PLCTM) located in the Czech Village within the LaGrange Fairgrounds made it just in time for Christmas Holiday Giving with a financial donation and 50 pounds of non-perishable items for the Amen Food Pantry.

Representing the Amen Food Pantry, located in the City of La Grange, are volunteers (L-R) Mary Lou McElroy and Susan Schultz, Vice President. Representing the PLCTM are (L-R) Gary Bucek, President and his wife, Carol, Secretary Treasurer.

Cash donations and food items were collected during fall events hosted by the Museum. Polka Museum officials realize the need to share the wealth and blessings for those less fortunate; not only during the holiday season but throughout the year.

Amen Food Pantry is open Monday from 8:30 to 11:45 AM to receive donations as well as provide services and again from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM on Thursdays for donations. The Amen Food Pantry is supported financially and volunteers by various churches in La Grange.



We are grateful to Jan Koehn, PLCTM Vice President and owner of JK, Inc. in Houston for a gift donation of two -100 rolls of First Class Postage Stamps.





PLCTM DONATES TO DEPUTY SANTA PROGRAM

The Polka Lovers Club of Texas Museum (PLCTM) located in the Czech Village within the LaGrange Fairgrounds made it just in time for the finalization of the Fayette County Deputy Santa Program with a financial donation, a Radio Flyer Wagon and additional children's items.

Representing The Fayette County Sheriff's Office were (L-R) Sgt Mark Zimmerman and Deputy Rick Bohlmann. Representing the PLCTM are (L-R) Gary Bucek, President and his wife, Carol, Secretary|Treasurer.

Cash donations and children's items were collected during fall events hosted by the Museum. Polka Museum officials are appreciative of the employees of the Sheriff's Office for organizing this program to share wealth, joy and blessings for those less fortunate during the annual holiday season.



POLKA LOVERS CLUB OF TEXAS MUSEUM



Gary W. Bucek President|Coach



Immediate Past-President



Vice-President



Carol Artz-Bucek Secretary|Treasurer



Member Outreach Officer





Connie Rice Ames—Director



Evelyn A. Maresh-Director



Jane Freis-Director



Larry Maresh, Director





Mildred Hollas, Director Wellie K. Harris, Jr., Director



POLKA LOVERS CLUB OF TEXAS MUSEUM
POLKA LOVERS CLUB OF TEXAS MUSEUM
La Grange, Texas 78945 PLCTM.COM

Mission: To provide a facility for Preserving, Promoting and Educating Polka Music and Dance.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT THE MUSEUM

(Complete the form of your choice and return with payment.)

- Lifetime Membership (\$1,000/Person)
- Annual Membership (\$20/Person)
- In Memory of _
- In Honor of

•	Endowment Fund	
•	Monetary Contribution to the PLCTM	

Date:	Amount Enclosed:	Check No.
Member/Donor Name(s)		
Address:	(City, State, Zip Code)	
Email Addresss:	Phone:	