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Concordia Ballroom News 11 June 2021

1 message

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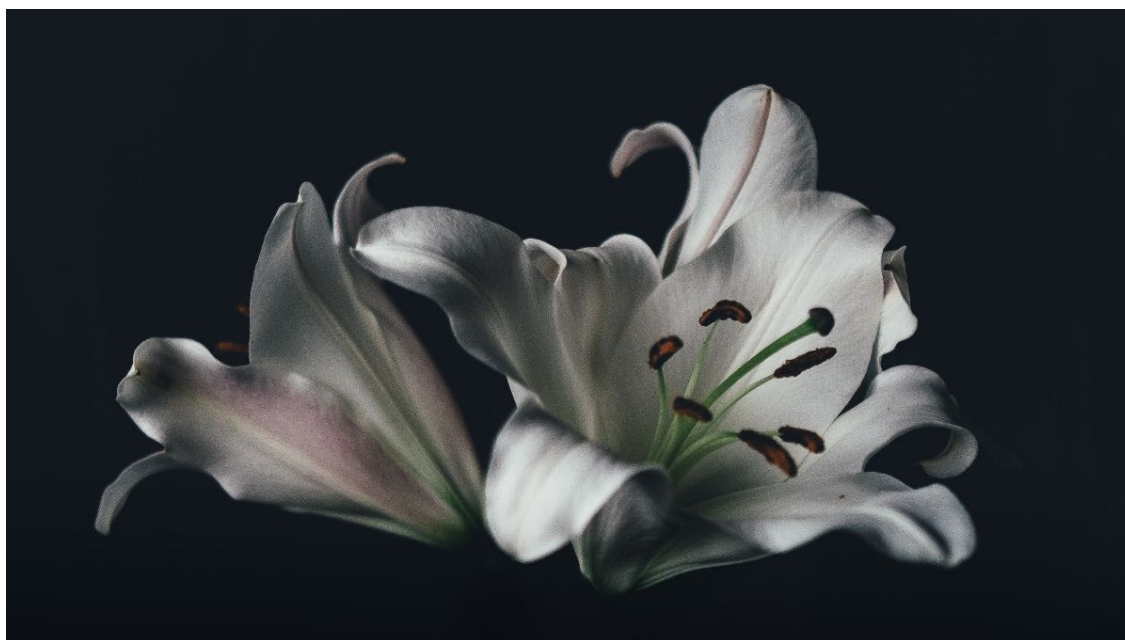
Fri, Jun 11, 2021 at 4:36 PM



Concordia Ballroom eNews

June 11, 2021

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In memory of John Schmaltz, Ron Hammond, and Harlan Hansen

For 54 years of combined service to the Concordia Aid Society, we thank these gentlemen, who have passed on to that great Dance Hall in the sky. They helped with organizing dances, hosting parties, and undertaking building repairs too numerous to mention. Without their dedication, the ballroom wouldn't be what it is today.

John once said, "The Concordia is the best-kept secret in La Crosse!" John was a member since 1999 and started our tradition of the July Polkafest. He served on the Board of Directors, and was Board President until his passing in 2020.

The Concordia was a second home for Ron Hammond, who joined in 2006. Ron was dedicated to helping people enjoy their time there. As Board Member and Bar Manager, Ron always had a smile to share, and in his earlier years, he loved to dance.

Harlan Hansen joined in 2004 and volunteered for anything that needed to be done. He is remembered for his pleasant disposition, sense of humor, and his warm welcome to Concordia visitors. Harlan loved the Concordia.

Joni Mitchell wrote "You don't always know what you've got 'til it's gone." So true and we miss them all. The Concordia was not just a place, but a home away from home for John, Ron, and Harlan.



Thanks to everyone who donated their time, treasure (or both) to the Concordia! Your generosity will keep the Concordia operating as a dance, exercise, and event space in the La Crosse community!

A special thanks to Keith Spaag, Lewiston, MN for doing an excellent job on the wood floor repair and refinish! It looks fabulous.

We're looking for someone to help post notices of upcoming events to various online listings. This work can all be done from the comfort of your home via the internet. If you have reasonably good computer skills and want to help, contact Melinda Knutson at 608.615.8692.

Upcoming Events at the Concordia



Rhythm Playboys

Sunday, June 13, 2021, 1-5 pm

Tickets \$10 at the door

The Rhythm Playboys have been playing together for more than 60 years and they still generate energy and excitement everywhere they perform. Band members Denny Marion, Ryan Herman and Karl Hartwich play polkas, waltzes, two-steps, schottisches, and other popular music. Music is a family tradition for Ryan; multiple generations have grown up with accordion music. Although band members have changed over the years, the spirit of the band and the music remains the same. The Rhythm Playboys received three Wisconsin Polka Music Awards in 2009: Band of the Year, Exceptional Achievement, and their recording of 'Ralph Herman - Through the Years' was awarded Recording of the Year.



Pop-Up Ballroom Dance

Saturday, June 19, 2021, 7-10 pm

Tickets \$10 at the door

Dust off those dancin' shoes and join us for a refresher ballroom dance lesson and dancing! Can't remember how to rumba? No worries! We'll go over the basic steps to several standard ballroom dances during the lesson.



Daddy's Girls

Sunday, June 20, 2021, 1-5 pm

Tickets \$10 at the door

This lively band plays music filled with a blend of unique harmonies, featuring Amy Louise Magnuson on guitar and concertina, Sara Jones on flute and vocals, Jeffrey Langen on drums, Lisa Meyer on fiddle and button box, and Dan Backhaus on bass. They play 1980s, '90s and classic country along with old time polkas, waltzes and some toe tappin' fiddle hoedown. A great variety of music for everyone.



Barefoot Becky

Sunday, June 27, 2021, 1-5 pm

Tickets \$10 at the door

Mix three cups of German-style polka music with one cup of Czech music, and a half-cup each of country, big band, and party favorites, and you've got a recipe for fun with a band that's really cookin'! That's what you get when you see a live performance featuring Barefoot Becky & the Ivanhoe Dutchmen, a group based out of Mount Vernon, Iowa. The band, featuring Becky Livermore on accordion and vocals, has been performing throughout the United States since 1988. In addition to performing in ballrooms throughout the US, Barefoot Becky & the Ivanhoe Dutchmen perform in a wide range of venues including: house parties, nightclubs, in tents, for town festivals, RV conventions, and parades. In 1996, they performed for the Smithsonian Institution's Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C.



Concordia Annual Polkafest featuring the Leon Olsen Show

Saturday, July 10, 2021, 1-5 pm

Tickets \$10 at the door

Mark your calendar for the Concordia's annual Polkafest! We'll be serving brats and fixings, with a cash bar.

Leon is an accomplished concertina musician, playing classic concertina music: old time, polka, waltz, and country. Leon and his band, The Leon Olsen Show, have been honored multiple times for their high quality entertainment. The Minnesota Ballroom Operators Association named the Leon Olsen Show as Band of the Year in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010. Leon was inducted into the World Concertina Congress Hall of Fame in 2012 and the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame in 2013. He has multiple recordings and he has passed on his skills to dozens of students who have learned to play the concertina.





The Concordia is a chimney swift landlord!

The Concordia building has a chimney that is used by [chimney swifts](#), a small bird that looks like a flying cigar. You will hear them twittering as they fly over La Crosse, which has a lot of chimneys! The swifts fly all day, eating half their weight in insects, and they fly into the chimneys at night to roost and raise their young; only one nesting pair per chimney! They migrate to South America for the winter. During migration or after the young have fledged, they congregate together in large flocks and roost together at night in large chimneys. If you

have ever witnessed a large flock dropping into the chimney for the night, you won't forget it! Unfortunately, chimney swift populations are in decline, perhaps because fewer chimneys are uncapped and available for use. Also, they face many hazards on their long migration. Dave Ford investigated our chimney with the help of a drone operator and verified that it is in relatively good condition and is open and available for the swifts.

COVID Guidance

The US Centers for Disease Control is still encouraging people to wear face masks if they are not fully vaccinated or have a severely weakened immune system. Here are our guidelines:

- Please wear a mask if you are not fully vaccinated (at least 7 days since your last dose of the vaccine) or have a severely weakened immune system (immunocompromised).
- Don't attend if you're not feeling well, have tested positive, or been exposed to someone with COVID in the last 7 days.
- Dance with partners that you trust to follow these guidelines.



**The Concordia is open for rental for private events.
Bookings for 2021 and 2022 are going fast!**

HISTORIC COMMUNITY HALL FEATURES

- Capacity is 240 people (Wisconsin COVID guidance will be followed)
 - Space is 40' x 71', wood dance floor
 - A full-service bar and large kitchen
 - Stage for music or entertainment
 - Lots of parking, plus handicap ramp
-

What can you do to support the Concordia?

- **Become a member!** Join us and stay informed by becoming a member of the Concordia Aid Society. Memberships are \$30/yr. Approval occurs at the following monthly membership meeting. Send us a membership check or join via our [website](#).
- **Volunteer!** We welcome volunteers, both members and friends. Because there is a lot to do, we need your help! Tasks include cutting the lawn, weed whipping, taking cans to recycle center, interior tasks like cleaning, counting inventory, doing audits, and assisting with marketing. If you have electrical skills (certified), expertise in carpentry, or website management, we'd love to have your help.
- **Become a bartender.** Bartending is a great way to meet new people and enjoy events at the Concordia. Get your license and let's talk!
- **Donate!** Consider a donation to the Concordia to help us maintain the historic ballroom and sustain dancing in the La Crosse area. Donate by check or on our website. Memorial donations are a wonderful way to celebrate a someone's life, especially someone who enjoyed dancing, attended

Concordia events, or had a special place in their hearts for the Concordia Ballroom. Maybe you, your parents, grandparents, or great grandparents met at the Concordia or were married here? Maybe your loved one was a regular attendee at the Sunday dances?

- **Book the Concordia** for your upcoming personal and family events. We have a large facility with plenty of space to spread out. If you know someone who could use just this kind of space, please encourage them to contact the Concordia.

Donations by check can be sent to the Concordia Aid Society, [1129 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, WI 54601](#), or make an online donation via our [website](#). If you are interested in volunteering, contact Jenny Heth, President 2020-2021, at 507-313-9430. All other inquiries can be made via our website or call the hall at 608.782.7049.

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Concordia Ballroom La Crosse



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8/23/2021

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