

31st CZECH HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Features Czech Wine and Accordion, Dancing and Tarok lessons and more!

The 31st Annual Victoria Czech Heritage Festival is big celebration on Sunday, September 25, 2016, at the Victoria Community Center, 2905 E. North St. The festival sponsored by the Victoria County Czech Heritage Society (VCCHS) has drawn about a thousand people consistently for more than three decades now.

Events begin with four musical performances held throughout the day. Internationally know Accordionist, Arranger, Composer and Teacher from Galveston, Texas, Shelia Lee, will perform first engaging the crowd in traditional Czech entertainment promptly at 10 am. The Shiner Hobo Band takes over at 11 a.m. and entertains all until 1 p.m. followed by Fritz Hodde and the Fabulous Six Polka band from Hutto, Texas. Then the Red Ravens Band will join Fritz Hodde at 4:00 p.m. for a one-half hour Jam Session. The Red Ravens follow solo continuing with good dancing music for all until 7:30 p.m.

Czechs are long in tradition and as a result have again added several cultural demonstrations/lessons to this year's festival. Attendees will learn the art of dancing, playing the accordion and playing the Tarok card game. In fact, for the first time ever, admission is free to the entire festival to anyone less than 35 years old that pre-registers for one of the lessons by Sept. 23rd.

Shelia Lee, accordionist who teaches accordion lessons throughout the world via the internet and has literally hundreds of students at any one time will teach piano and diatonic or button accordion lessons free at the festival... plus you get into the festival free if you are less than 35 years young. Shelia say's "Bring your accordion or we'll have a few extra and we'll learn to play Julida, A Ja Sam, Doudlebska Polka and more. This class is for all levels – beginner to TIMID!!! Even intermediate players will learn a few tricks! Reserve Now – seats limited. Ages 8 to 100! Accordion lessons are from 11:15 am till 3 pm.

Oh and the free dance lessons? Dance enthusiast and partners Elaine Rosquist from Colorado and Louis Stewart from Moulton, Texas will be teaching one hour classes of Polka, Waltz and 2-step dancing from 10:15 am – 3 pm in the Annex. Specially held again for the younger generation; if you pre-register for this you get into the festival free if you are less than 35 years young. Come-on teens to 35, let's learn to dance a polka! Free! Then you can dance to the festival bands till 7:30 pm practicing what you learned. Get your partner (if you want) and sign up!

Joe Pustka of Victoria is one of the founding members of this Czech Festival and he will be teaching how to play the Czech card game known as Tarok or Taroky at the festival. In fact this festival was founded with the intent to teach fun game of Taroky and promote this heritage. It too is free and you get into the festival free if you are less than 35 years young. Two playing classes will be held: 10:30 am and 1:30 pm.

And there is wine being served! For the first time, the festival is serving wine; specially imported Czech wine. Czechs traditionally have made and served wine and in fact even though the Czech Republic is only one-third the size of Texas, there are over 80,000 wineries there. The import ban was recently lifted and the festival will have available both red and white wines by the glass from the Czech Republic. Of course, there is plenty of pivo (beer) at the festival too! Come by for a refreshing glass of wine or a cold pivo.

The Czech Heritage Museum will again be available at the festival. Come see numerous old Czech items your Great-Grandparents used in their daily lives. Also coming this year for your personal family research is the State Czech Heritage Traveling Genealogy Library with loads of books and research files to trace your genealogy.

The festival will continue to serve its famous Czech Stew and Sausage lunch plate for \$10.00 each from 11 am – 1 pm. And the famous Czech fruit filled kolaches and Klobasniky or “Pig in a Blanket” along with homemade chicken noodle soup will also be available throughout the day. Sausage wraps are available after lunch.

Other activities include children games, pastry wheel, arts & crafts, country store, live and silent auction, raffle and numerous exhibit booths for all to enjoy.

Come join in the fun! There is something for everyone! And, you don't have to be Czech to attend!

Admission is only \$8.00 per person for all three bands and all activities - with youth under 15 years old always free and free admission to those 35 or less if they pre-register for one of the lessons. For information or pre-registering call the following: Accordion and Dance lessons – Joe Janak 361-649-2243; Tarok Lessons – Joe Pustka 361- 648-7465, Exhibit Booths – Donald Dusek 361-571-4777 or email him at d-dusek@suddenlink.net.

For a full information schedule, see us at: <http://victoriaczechs.org> or [facebook.com/victoriaczechsociety](https://www.facebook.com/victoriaczechsociety).

PSA's for radio:

77 words: about 35 seconds

Sunday, September 25th is the 31st Annual Victoria County Czech Heritage Festival at the Victoria Community Center. Enjoy Czech wine, stew and sausage lunch, museum, crafts, and free dance, accordion and Tarok lessons. General admission is \$8; under 35 is free if pre-registered for lessons; call 361-571-4777. Dance music 10 am - 7:30 pm featuring Accordionist Shelia Lee; Fritz Hodde and the Fabulous Six; Shiner Hobo Band and Red Ravens. For info, go to www.victoriaczechs.org or [facebook.com/victoriaczechsociety](https://www.facebook.com/victoriaczechsociety).