

FREE ACCORDION LESSON AT FESTIVAL

For the first time, free accordion lessons will be taught at the 31st Annual Victoria Czech Heritage Festival. Held Sunday, September 25, 2016, at the Victoria Community Center, 2905 E. North St., the festival is sponsored by the Victoria County Czech Heritage Society and has drawn about a thousand people consistently for more than three decades now.

Accordion lessons is something new added this year and will be taught by a well accomplished accordionist, arranger, composer and teacher from Galveston, Texas, Shelia Lee. She will perform first, engaging the crowd in traditional Czech accordion entertainment at 10 am. After that, her free lessons will be from 11:15 am till 3 pm in the Annex.

Shelia is a dynamic accordion performer. Well versed in multiple styles and with a large repertoire, she performs at countless festivals and events and is accomplished at numerous other styles including: Italian, German, Tex-Mex, Country, Standards, and Party Songs.

Playing the accordion since she was 5 years old, she studied with Bill Palmer and was a member of the Palmer and Hughes Accordion Symphony at the University of Houston until 1965. Shelia then started her solo professional career at age 16 and by age 21 opened **Shelia's Conservatory of Music** in Dayton, Ohio teaching over 300 accordion students with her most advanced 20 (ages 13 to 18) performing in a group called the **Spitfires**. They won many national titles for Showband, Classical, and Open Pop Band and even made a record!

Returning to Texas in 1992, Shelia's current project is her LIVE, ON-LINE broadcast 1 hour lessons. Beside in person or groups lessons, through this she teaches lessons throughout the world to all people and cultures via the internet and has literally hundreds of students at any one time teaching piano and diatonic or button accordion lessons.

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! She says "Open to ages 8 to 100!" Even intermediate players will learn a few tricks! Reserve your place now – seats are limited. Plus, anyone registering that is less than 35 years old will also get into the festival free!

The Czech Heritage Festival is open from 10 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. and features numerous entertainers including Shelia Lee, the Shiner Hobo Band, Fritz Hodde and the Fabulous Six Polka band and the Red Ravens Band. General admission is \$8 per person.

For information or pre-registering for the free accordion lessons call Joe Janak at 361-649-2243. For a full information schedule, see: <http://victoriaczechs.org> or <facebook.com/victoriaczechsociety>.