

NEWS RELEASE

ORGANIZATION: Plymouth Arts Center
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Copper Box Band, Karl & the Country Dutchmen, Jerry Schneider Orchestra, Polka Potion and Junge Kameraden are featured at the 7th Annual Plymouth Oktoberfest

PLYMOUTH, WI - Family, friends, neighbors, and having a great time at the beginning of autumn, is what Plymouth Oktoberfest is all about. Please join us for some old-fashioned Gemuetlichkeit, (good cheer,) "Plymouth Style!" In celebration of autumn and in the grand spirit of Munich, Germany's famous festival, the Plymouth Arts Center is proud to present its 7th annual Plymouth Oktoberfest, Friday and Saturday, September 17-18. Highlights of this year's festival: lively, traditional music and dancing, German and American cuisine, a biergarten, and on Saturday, the G.F.W.C. Plymouth Woman's annual *big bake sale*, a Juried Arts & Crafts Fair, clowns, facepainting, art workshops for kids by Abrakadoodle and games with prizes.

Admission for this community event *is free* thanks to our major sponsor Sartori Foods and numerous supporting sponsors and friends of the arts. We still are seeking sponsorships in any amount from community members and businesses, as well as a volunteer team to help out as servers, bartenders, and set up/clean up crew. For more information, please call (920) 892-8409, email paf@excel.net or visit the website: www.plymoutharts.org. Event will be held rain or shine in the Oktoberfest big top tent and biergarten located behind the Plymouth Center building.

On Friday afternoon from 3:00-6:00pm get ready to polka on our wooden dance floor to the sounds of the Polka Potion band, immediately followed by the ever-popular Copper Box Band featuring Danny and Michelle Jerabek & Company from 6 to 9:00pm. Saturday's fun is kicked off with special performances by Plymouth High School's Junge Kameraden (the only High School German Band in the U.S.) under the direction of Jason Sebranek at 11am, followed Karl and the Country Dutchmen and the Jerry Schneider Orchestra, who will alternate throughout the day until 7:30pm.

The menu for both days includes Spanferkel, Johnsonville brats, hamburgers, German potato salad, baked beans, sauerkraut, desserts, and more. Take outs available on all food items.

The annual "Big Bake Sale" by the **G.F.W.C. Plymouth Woman's Club** will be held inside the building beginning at 10am on Saturday and will continue until all is sold. Also on Saturday, visit the booths of regional and local artists and crafters displaying and selling their wares throughout the festival grounds at the Oktoberfest Juried Arts & Crafts Fair. Artists may apply for a booth through Sept. 4th. There'll be plenty of activities for the kids too!

This year marks the fifth appearance by **Copper Box** on the PAC Oktoberfest stage. With a slammin' button accordionist and multi-instrumentalist, Danny Jerabek, and his other half, Michelle Jerabek, on baritone and tenor sax, vocals, guitar, washboard, etc., backed by a great rhythm section, Jason Van Ryzin (drums) and Kevin Junemann (bass,) Copper Box is a force to be noticed! The talented group draws inspiration from many types of Americana, roots music and beyond, resulting in a distinctive musical melting pot that is easy on the ears and good for the soul. Performing many originals, this band has been touring through the US promoting their

highly acclaimed 5th CD release, ***“In the Summertime!”*** If you like to dance and/or listen to music that makes you feel good—and that it does, you won’t want to miss them in Plymouth. Their style is ***“like a Texas Tornado that went through New Orleans and landed in Wisconsin.”***

Danny Jerabek received his first 3-row button accordion, commonly referred to as the "button box," from his grandfather when he was 9 years of age. He was asked to learn a few Czech and German songs for his family and was later inspired by Don Cialkoszewski and the accordion legend, Steve "Esteban" Jordan to take his accordion playing to the next level and beyond. Danny is one of the few that can tastefully put the accordion into a diverse range of music from jazz to rock and everything in between. Many people have said, “I don’t care for the accordion, but I like how he plays it.” Danny shares the lead with his other half, Michelle Jerabek (saxophones, guitar, flute, vocals). Michelle's vocals can be sultry one moment like a Norah Jones, but she can also belt out something like, Chaka Khan’s “Tell Me Something Good.” Danny and Michelle formed Copper Box (‘copper’-referring to a *natural element*, like *music* to them, and ‘box’ refers to the button box.) Shortly after they were married, they took all their wedding money to buy an old, used, gutted-out, granny-smith apple color, utility van for their band so they could get to their gigs with all their equipment.

Performing over 140 shows a year, Copper Box has been racking up the miles and gaining momentum and fans. They have shared the main stage at festivals across the nation with artists like, The Little River Band, Buckwheat Zydeco, Little Feat, Little Big Town, Little Texas, Peter Frampton, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Lou Gramm, Marcia Ball, C.J. Chenier, and W.C. Clark. Copper Box received several WAMI (Wisconsin Area Music Industry) awards (“Americana Artist of the Year” and “People’s Choice Award”) and other nominations to date. Copper Box’s music video was selected to be shown at the NAB (National Association for Broadcasting) worldwide. In 2007, a video clip of Copper Box was selected for an American Band commercial from the producers of American Idol. Copper Box was also selected to represent American Traditions at The Southern Arts Conference in Atlanta, GA and the following year in Louisville, KY. They have received several awards--“Horizon Artist of the Year”, “Artist of the Year”, and Michelle was the first female to receive the award for “Side person of the Year” from the WPHF (WI Polka Hall of Fame). Danny Jerabek of CBx was featured on national television on “The Early Show” and was a featured performer at the National Accordion Convention in Dallas, TX in 2008 and also performed with Grammy-winning artists, such as Terrance Simien and Brave Combo. Wisconsin Blues Society describes Copper Box as *“...one of the favorites of the Fox Valley Blues Festival 2004. This hot Zydeco Swamp/Blues Rock outfit with a great baritone and tenor sax gal and a hot accordion man. This group cooks and swings with some of the best Zydeco-influenced groups I’ve seen anywhere in the country.”*

Karl Hartwich is a concertina player and singer who leads one of the most popular bands, the Country Dutchmen, based in the La Crosse area. With the recent boom in polka music, he has been touring all over the central United States, from Wisconsin and Illinois down to the Southwest, filling dance floors wherever he goes. As the dancers, many of whom spend the whole summer traveling from festival to festival, twirl and circle the floor, Hartwich leads his band through a rollicking selection of traditional and original polkas, Dixieland, ragtime and old time pop and country standards—played as you’ve never heard them before. The group plays for dancers from coast to coast, on cruises and European tours, has been featured on Garrison Keillor’s “Prairie Home Companion” and at the National Folk Festival in Lowell, Massachusetts.

Hartwich was a child prodigy on concertina, playing at dances between sets by his mentor, Syl Liebl, a legend in Dutchman music. He has some of the nimblest fingers in the field and is recognized as an outstanding Dutchman concertinist of his generation. On his Chemnitzer

concertina, Hartwich started his band, The Country Dutchmen, in 1973 at age 13. His instrumental innovations have won him devoted followers and stimulated a revival of Dutchman-style polka. *The "Dutchman" style of polka is good-time dance music, developed by German immigrants in rural Minnesota and Wisconsin (the name is derived from "Deutsch," or German). Sometimes called "oompah," it is distinguished by the thumping bass sound of the tuba, and by its use of a distinctive member of the "free reed" family of instruments, the German concertina*

Hartwich has won the band of the year for the Wisconsin Polka Hall of Fame twice, once in 2001 and once in 2007, and has performed in about 30 states. River of Song filmed both Hartwich and Syl Liebl at a polka festival at the Hilltop Lounge, a dancehall high on the bluffs above the Mississippi River. Linda, Karl's wife, is an excellent polka dancer who can instruct on various dances. Together they present many school programs introducing younger people to traditional music and instruments.

The Jerry Schneider Orchestra has been entertaining audiences with lively music for over thirty years, playing at summer picnics, county fairs, polka festivals, and for Milwaukee German Fest. In 1992, the group was selected to entertain at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. for "The Tribute to Germany" Festival. The Schneiders have a large library of German selections, many with German vocals in one, two and 3-way harmony, plus some German instrumentals. They also play many Big Band selections. They use a combination of trumpets, saxes, clarinets, button accordions, concertina, keyboard, drums and tuba. Jerry also hosts his own radio show every Saturday morning from 8 am to 12 noon on AM 1530 WMBE in Chilton, plus a syndicated show aired on six radio stations.

The original Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany is the one of the largest celebrations in all of Europe. Millions of people from all over the globe attend it and there's no end to the merriment. The first Oktoberfest was actually part of a marriage celebration when, in October of 1810, Bavarian King Max Joseph gave a huge wedding reception for Crown Prince Ludwig, later to become King Ludwig I, with the Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. It culminated with a series of horse races and gave rise to the tradition of the October festival, and in the following year, became an annual affair commemorating this grand wedding forevermore. The Oktoberfest we know today, evolved over time and incorporated a number of different traditions. The Munich Oktoberfest is now celebrated in September, because the chilly Bavarian October winds blowing from the Alps, can surprise with an early cold and snow.

The proceeds of this 7th annual event will benefit the Plymouth Arts Center, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to its mission of... *enlivening the spirit of the community and enriching the lives of all by presenting diverse experiences in the arts* and also the Plymouth Center which continues to serve as a community center and hall available for private parties such as bridal and baby showers, birthday or anniversary parties, business meetings and seminars, etc.