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How Polish Folk Dancing Changed My Life - A Love Story Born at the Portland Polish Festival

Portland, OR - April 5, 2024 - Amidst the vibrant colors and lively music of the Portland Polish Festival, love found its way into the hearts of one immigrant from a small town in Poland and one American festival volunteer from Oregon.

Anna, who had emigrated from a small northeastern town in Poland, was a member of POLONEZ, a Polish Folk Dancing group from Vancouver, BC. During a break from a performance at the festival in September 2004, Anna met Chad Barker, an Oregonian who was volunteering at the potato pancake stand.

Their chance encounter led to a lasting relationship, and they now celebrate 20 years of love and companionship, attending the festival annually with their three daughters.

Portland's Polish Festival, the oldest in the western United States, will once again celebrate Polish culture on September 14th and 15th, 2024, at 3900 N Interstate Ave. The event features authentic Polish food, live music, dance performances, exhibits, polka contests, a vendor marketplace, and a beer garden. Admission is free, welcoming all.

Oregon's first Polish families immigrated primarily from the Carpathian Mountain region of southeastern Poland, establishing St. Stanislaus Church in 1907 and the Polish Hall in 1911. Over the years, waves of immigrants organized cultural events and eventually established the Portland Polish Festival in 1993, now the largest of its kind in the western United States.

For Anna and Chad Barker, the festival holds a special significance as the place where their love story began. For Anna, the festival is not just a celebration of Polish culture but a reminder of the importance of honoring one's roots. She instills Polish food, customs, and traditions into her family's daily life, ensuring her daughters understand and appreciate their heritage.

As the Portland Polish Festival approaches, Anna and Chad eagerly anticipate another year of celebration, love, and memories. For them, the festival is more than just an event - it's a testament to the enduring beauty of cultural heritage and the power of love.

"We take our girls to the festival in September every year and tell them "this is where mommy and daddy met," says Anna. "They enjoy watching the performances, listening to the music and eating Polish delicacies."

Mark your calendars and join them on September 14th from 11am -10pm and 15th from 12pm - 6pm at 3900 N Interstate Ave in Portland, OR, for a weekend filled with Polish culture and community.

For more information about the Portland Polish Festival, visit www.polishfestpdx.org or follow them on Facebook at Portland Polish Festival.

Contact information for the Portland Polish Festival

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