

DAILY NEBRASKAN

Polka band preserves culture, entertains

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Polka is alive and well at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

John Sens, a senior environment-agricultural sciences and natural resources major at UNL, started Less Talk More Polka, a student polka band, last spring.

"We're a group of students who want to have fun together playing music," Sens said. "We play mostly standards with a few original songs as well."

The group consists of nine members playing wind instruments, including the clarinet, trumpet and saxophone and is open to all interested students.

"We have about 50 songs that we know," Sens said.

Doug Bogatz, a senior music education major, joined the group as a way to relax from his studies.

"Being a music major is pretty serious business," Bogatz said. "It's nice to just play for fun."

The band generally plays polka standards, and most of the music is from the library of Craig Fuller, senior lecturer at the School of Music, Bogatz said.

"John Sens was talking to [Prof. Fuller] about polka one day, and he told John that he had a lot of it lying around," Bogatz said. "The only stipulation was that we had to record some of it for him."

Less Talk More Polka has made a few recordings using Garage Band and other recording software. Bogatz said the band members use the recordings both to secure performances

and for their own entertainment. LTMP has a few gigs coming up and hopes to play more shows in the spring.

It's not just about the publicity, though. By playing polka, the band is doing its part to preserve Nebraska's heritage.

"Polka is a tradition for people here," Bogatz said. "There are a lot of students with Polish and [other eastern European] backgrounds."

LTMP is educating UNL students about a style of music rarely heard. And the band also is giving back to the community by visiting retirement homes to give holiday concerts.

"It's probably the dorkiest kind of music out there, but there's an attractive, fun quality to it," Bogatz said with a laugh.

Less Talk More Polka is playing at 7 p.m. this Sunday at the Meadowlark Coffee House, 16th and South streets.

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