

## DANCE HALL OWNER ALICE SEFCIK SULAK, 88, TO RECEIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

(Austin, Texas) November 5, 2019 — Austin-based nonprofit Texas Dance Hall Preservation, Inc., will present a Lifetime Achievement Award to Alice Sefcik Sulak, owner of Tom Sefcik Hall, at the hall's regular Sunday evening dance on November 17, 2019.

Tom Sefcik Hall is located at 800 Seaton Road in Seaton, Texas, just east of Temple. Doors open at 4:00 p.m., with a reception from 4:00–5:00 p.m., award ceremony at 5:00 p.m., and the dance from 6:00–9:00 p.m. Free admission for the first 100 guests, as well as cake and light hors d'oeuvres, will be provided courtesy of Central Market. In addition to the Lifetime Achievement Award, Ms. Sulak will receive a proclamation from Governor Abbott; a flag flown over the Texas state capitol; and a proclamation from neighboring Temple, Texas, naming November 17 "Alice Sefcik Sulak Day" in that city. Additional speakers will include representatives from the City of Temple, Texas Music Office, Preservation Texas, and the Texas legislature, as well as Texas Dance Hall Preservation.

Ms. Sulak, a Czech vocalist and musician, previously was honored by the Texas Czech Heritage & Cultural Center in 2017, and by the International Polka Association earlier this year. Tom Sefcik Hall was recognized by the Country Music Hall of Fame as a pioneer dance hall in 1995. The hall and Ms. Sulak were the subject of a short documentary film, "Noc na Tanečku (Night at the Dance)" which premiered at the SXSW festival in Austin in 2011, was broadcast on *WBGH World*, and is now available for viewing on Vimeo (<https://vimeo.com/127833521>).

Alice Sefcik Sulak was born and still lives in the house next door to the dance hall. Her parents, Thomas and Teresa, built the house and, in 1923, Tom Sefcik Hall, with a bar on the first floor and a dance hall upstairs. Alice grew up working at the hall, and in 1970, she took over the operation, which she continues today with help from her son Kenny and his family.

Alice comes from a musical family: Tom played guitar and Teresa played accordion, and when Alice was 11 years old, she began playing in her older sister Adela's band, the Music Masters. Alice started on drums, but after a few years, she switched to tenor saxophone, which she has played ever since. One of the few female Czech vocalists in Texas, in 1966 Alice was a founding member of Otis Beck and the Melody 5, a polka band that included accordion player Bob Haisler and Bob's 10-year-old son Jerry on guitar and saxophone. In 1971, the band became Jerry Haisler and the Melody 5; in all, Alice and Jerry played together for 50 years. Alice has continued playing in the Melody 5 with Bob's grandson Robert Haisler and other Haisler family members for many years and still sits in sometimes, when she feels like it. Jerry Haisler and the Melody 5 will provide the evening's entertainment for the dance.

### **About Texas Dance Hall Preservation:**

Texas Dance Hall Preservation, Inc. (TDHP, <https://www.texasdancehall.org>) is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving historic dance halls and the authentic Texas heritage, music, and culture found in them. Founded in 2007, our mission is to celebrate historic Texas dance halls by helping them serve and strengthen their communities. TDHP has

partnered with Ray Benson and his award-winning western swing band, Asleep at the Wheel, for the past three years to showcase historic halls across the state through the Texas Dance Hall Tour (<http://www.texasdancehalltour.com/>). Benson was the first person to receive the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award, in 2017.

**About Central Market:**

Central Market's open, serpentine-flow, full view European-style layout offers a completely new food shopping experience. A bountiful produce department with unmatched quality and variety, an 80-foot seafood case with selections from throughout the world, hundreds of cheeses, 2,500 wine labels, stupendous specialty grocery aisles with delights from every continent, and a world-class cooking school featuring hands-on instruction are among the features that make the Central Market experience unique. <http://www.centralmarket.com>.