

VESELKA

UKRAINIAN DANCE ASSOCIATION

Welcome! Ласкаво просимо!

On behalf of everyone at Veselka Ukrainian Dance Association (Veselka), we would like to extend a warm welcome to our new dancers and their families! We are excited to share with you all that Ukrainian dance has to offer. To our returning Veselka members, we are excited to see you again this year! Your continued support and trust in our mission is what keeps us driving forward.

Since 1971, Veselka has been striving to advance, educate, and preserve the art of Ukrainian dance and music. In addition to learning Ukrainian folk traditions, dancers have opportunities to participate in ballet. Adults... you are not to be left out! We offer a range of opportunities to enjoy classes with roots in Ukrainian traditions. We are an inclusive studio where everyone is welcome to join!

Each year, through the dedicated and talented instruction of our Artistic Director and instructors, our award-winning dancers look forward to showcasing their hard work in-house, at local festivals and performances, and at the BC Ukrainian Cultural Festival in Mission, BC to name but a few possibilities!

Veselka operates as a non-profit, family-oriented organization which is committed to providing exceptional experiences and opportunities for its dancers. This is achieved, in large part, through Veselka families participating in FUNdraising, administrative and other supportive functions. Working together helps build a strong community in which our dancers thrive. As always, your continued support is vitally important and greatly appreciated! Who knows... this might be the year you become a master perogy (вареник (varenyk)) pincher!

In this handbook you will find important information about being a participating member of Veselka, including such topics as our vision, mission and values, important information about fees, dance and costume policies, volunteer requirements, and board of director information.

Once again, welcome! We look forward to continuing our traditions with you all this year!

All the best,
Veselka Volunteer Board

VISION: To be a vibrant part of Victoria's arts and ethnic community.

MISSION: To be a sustainable, non-profit family and community-oriented organization that offers quality Ukrainian dance instruction.

VALUE STATEMENTS:

- 1. Veselka provides quality dance instruction.** The professional quality of Veselka dance instruction is important to its members so that their children feel challenged and have a positive dance experience. This direction as well as the professional quality of dance instruction is important to the organization as a whole, to attract and retain dancers in Veselka. It is important for Ukrainian dance to be innovative and creative in its future direction to maintain interest from both the audience and dancer perspectives.
- 2. Veselka is an active member of the Victoria dance community.** Veselka is recognized in the Victoria arts community and participates in various events throughout the city. Veselka proactively looks for opportunities to showcase Ukrainian dance with other cultural events and organizations in the city. Members have an appreciation for not only maintaining the connection to the broader Ukrainian community but also, to extend into the general arts community for both performance and promotional opportunities.
- 3. Veselka is a sustainable non-profit family driven community organization.** Veselka is not profit driven; it is run by members who have an appreciation for the community and seek opportunities to keep Veselka accessible to anyone who wants to be a member. Families and dancers of all ages come together for fundraising and social activities which builds a strong community. Veselka is guided by a dedicated group of volunteers who share their time and talents for the broader community.

Fees and Schedules

For class schedules and fees, please go to: <http://veselkadancers.com>, under Dance Classes.

Dancer Liability Insurance

All fees include the mandatory \$35 liability insurance per child per year (Western Financial Group).

Important Information About Fees

- A. In order to participate in dance instruction, dancers' fees must be paid in full. Currently, we accept e-transfers and cash. You can pay in full for the full year tuition, or monthly in 10 equal payments. Families will be informed if other payment options become available.
- B. Non-payment, late payment or non-sufficient funds:
- Please ensure that you pay the monthly fees promptly.
 - If you anticipate that you will be late in paying, please reach out to the Treasurer as soon as possible to make arrangements to pay.
 - Non-sufficient fund items will be charged \$45. This represents a cost recovery payment to Veselka.

Non-payment of fees may result in the removal of the dancer from certain activities.

Bursary and Funding Programs

The Veselka Board of Directors have, from time to time, allocated limited, discretionary funds to support parents in financial need, enabling their child(ren) to dance at Veselka. Funds for this assistance are provided only as they are available on a year-by-year basis. Bursary application forms are available on our website.

For more information and to apply, please go to: <http://veselkadancers.com>, under Registration > Bursary Programs.

Refund Policy

Dancers may withdraw from the dance program at any time before December 31st of the dance year. Any unused portion of paid dance fees, at the time, will be refunded. A non-refundable policy is in effect for Dancers who wish to withdraw after December 31st. The Board will make exceptions in specific circumstances such as injury or family moving to another city. Dancers who are dismissed from the program will be refunded any unused portion of paid dance fees, if dismissal occurs prior to December 31st of the dance year.

Dance Faculty

Veselka is proud to offer Ukrainian folk and complimentary dance classes under the direction and instruction of our Artistic Director, Lisa Hall.

In addition, Veselka is proud to have Larissa Edmondson, a current pre-professional Veselka dancer with the Skunkworks, as an instructor.

Through the Junior Instructor Program, Lisa has trained a number of Senior dancers to provide quality instruction, some of whom still teach select classes at Veselka today.

Occasionally, guest instructors are invited to teach workshops or be involved in Summer or Spring Break camps.

To learn more about Lisa Hall and Larissa Edmondson, please view the Instructors page under Our Team on our website.

Contact information: Office Number: 250-475-1174 or info@veselkadancers.com.

Class Attendance

Dancers need to arrive dressed in class attire and ready to practice at the stated time. Out of courtesy, parents should call the studio at 250-475-1174 or email info@veselkadancers.com to let them know if their child is unable to attend a practice.

Parents/Guardians are welcome to stay in the Library while their children are in class. However, if the parent/guardian leaves they must return immediately upon the end of dance class to collect their dancer. If an emergency arises and you are not able to return at this time, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Purchasing Class Attire

[Toes 'N' Taps Dance Shoppe](#) on Cook Street can order the red slippers and character shoes required for Veselka dancers. In addition, they typically have an annual "20% off" sale just before the dance year begins, so if you need to purchase a new pair, this can be a good time to do so. The staff at Toes 'N' Taps Dance Shoppe are wonderfully accommodating with fittings and ordering requests.

[Ellswear Dance and Activewear](#) on Harriet Rd (off Burnside West) can also order the red slippers for Veselka dancers. They provide professional fitting services.

**Please note that these shops do not have red slippers in stock. Rather, they will fit you properly and order them in for you. Please allow for 7-10 business days for shipping/

Veselka has a number of new red slippers for sale. Please contact the Costume Director.

Many families will resell or donate dance shoes or attire their children no longer fit into. Typically, families will place what they wish to sell or donate in a bag in the dance studio hallway. If for sale, the seller's contact information, the price, and the method of payment should be listed on the bag. If you wish to purchase an item, follow the instructions for payment on the item. For our community to enjoy this honour system of selling their items, please be respectful of the items (if trying on) and pay as directed as soon as possible.

There is also a facebook group for this used dance items:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1698551453951397> (Veselka Ukrainian Dance swap & shop)

Class Attire

Beginner and Junior 1 Dancers

<p>Girls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodysuit – any style or colour • Pink tights • Red full sole leather ballet slippers with red elastic • Hair off the face and in tight bun for all classes • Optional – Pull on ballet skirt. No sequins 	<p>Boys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White T-shirt • Black Dance Shorts • Black full sole leather ballet slippers with black elastic
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Junior 2 Dancers

<p>Girls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodysuit – any style or colour • Nude colour bodysuit for performances • Pink convertible tights for all classes • Tan fully footed tights for performances • Pink ballet slippers with elastic • Low heel black character shoes for performances • Hair off the face and in a tight bun for all classes • Optional – wrap or pull on ballet skirt. No sequins 	<p>Boys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White T-shirt • Black Dance Shorts • Black socks • Black Leather jazz shoes
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Junior 3 Dancers

<p>Girls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodysuit – any style or colour • Nude colour bodysuit for performances • Pink convertible tights for all classes • Tan fully footed tights for performances • Pink ballet slippers with elastic for all classes • Hair off the face and in a tight bun for all classes • Optional – wrap or pull on ballet skirt. No sequins 	<p>Boys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White T-Shirt • Black Dance Shorts • Black socks • Black Leather jazz shoes
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Intermediate Dancers

<p>Girls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodysuit – any style or colour • Nude colour bodysuit for performances • Nude Colour under garments for performances • Pink convertible tights for all classes • Tan convertible tights for performances • Pink ballet slippers with elastic for all classes • Hair off the face and in a tight bun for all classes • Red Leather characters shoes • Red Leather Boots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please consult with Costume Director before purchasing • Optional – wrap or pull on ballet skirt. No sequins 	<p>Boys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White T-shirt • Black dance shorts for all classes • Black Ankle socks for all performances • Black knee-length socks for all performances • Black leather jazz shoes • Red leather boots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please consult with Costume Director before purchasing
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Senior Dancers

<p>Girls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodysuit – any style or colour • Nude colour bodysuit for performances • Nude Colour under garments for performances • Pink convertible tights for all classes • Tan convertible tights for performances • Pink ballet slippers with elastic for all classes • Hair off the face and in a tight bun for all classes • Red Leather characters shoes • Red Leather Boots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please consult with Costume Director before purchasing • Optional – wrap or pull on ballet skirt. No sequins 	<p>Boys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White T-shirt • Black dance shorts for all classes • Black Ankle socks for all performances • Black knee-length socks for all performances • Black leather jazz shoes • Red leather boots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please consult with Costume Director before purchasing •
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Adult Dancers

- Comfortable, form-fitting clothing
- Ballet slippers or jazz shoes
- Red Leather Boots for performances
 - Please consult with Costume Director before purchasing

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND

- **Shoes:** NO growing room. Shoes must not have extra length or bagginess, but please ensure that shoes are not too narrow across the metatarsal.
- **Hair:** Off the face and in a tight bun secured in place with a hair elastic and bobby pins. Hair that is too short for a bun, should be neatly groomed and styled off the face and neck so that the head and neckline are not obscured.
- **Water bottle** with water-only are allowed. Some instructors will have their own rules, but water breaks will typically be taken at the behest of the instructor. Water bottle are to be left outside the studio.
- **No jewelry** - this includes all dangling earrings, necklaces, wrist bands, watches, smart watches, Fitbit, etc. The exception to the guideline would be for dancers with newly pieced ears and cannot remove earrings. No earrings for performances.
- No sequins on skirts or bodysuits.

Important Costume Notes

Veselka is very fortunate to have an extensive collection of costumes from various regions of Ukraine. It is important that costumes are treated with care and labelled with the dancer's name with removable tape. Once you receive your costume(s) they should be stored in a garment bag and a hat box should hold larger headpieces and accessories.

It is expected that costumes will be clean and ironed/steamed before each performance. Veselka does have a steamer available if needed. Please talk to the Costume Director for cleaning instructions prior to washing. There is absolutely no eating or drinking while in costume, water excluded.

Families will be responsible for supplying all footwear, tights and socks. For females at the Junior 2 level and beyond, dancers will need a white or nude bodysuit as well (for quick backstage changes). Males and females also need to remember nude or white undergarments as several of our costumes are white and colours show through.

Though Veselka tries to cover the cost of most costumes, dancers are expected to supply their own Poltava blouse/shirt from Junior 2 onwards. Patterns are available to borrow and supplier information is also available if you need to make one. If your child has a solo, costume costs are usually the family's responsibility.

A costume fee will be charged to each dancer based on their dance level to help with costume care and maintenance. As the dancer's level increases toward Senior, more costumes are issued and often the cost of each costume has increased as well. For your dancer's costume fee visit the Veselka website. Please note these fees are subject to change from time to time.

At the end of the dance year, costume return dates will be distributed. If you know you will miss a costume return date, contact the Costume Director to arrange an alternative drop off date. Dancers in the higher levels may be instructed to keep their costumes until September registration as they sometimes have performances throughout the summer.

Code of Conduct

To ensure dancers and their families uphold Veselka's values, members committed upon registration to the Code of Conduct. It is included here for reference:

Dancers:

1. Dancers are expected to pay attention to and follow the Dance Teacher's instructions and should not disrupt the class.
2. Dancers should not touch other dancers, or any members of Veselka Staff for any reason, except by consent, or in the dance performance choreography and in a dance routine.
3. Dancers are expected to attend classes regularly.
4. Dancers are expected to be punctual to avoid class interruptions.
5. Dancers are expected to wear appropriate dance attire.
6. Dancers must treat the studios, the premises, and the possessions of all other dancers with respect, care, and consideration.
7. Dancers understand that there is a zero tolerance behavior policy at Veselka. Dancers behaving inappropriately will be removed from the dance class and parents/legal guardians will be involved in resolving the dancer's behavior problem.

Dancers and Parents/Legal Guardians:

1. Veselka Dancers and parents/legal guardians are expected to demonstrate respect for all Veselka staff and other dancers, visitors and parents/legal guardians at all times.
2. Dancers and parents/legal guardians observing a dance class are expected to be quiet and courteous to the practicing Dancers and the Dance Teacher.
3. Dancers and parents/legal guardians are expected to clean up after themselves, tidy the furniture, do the dishes, and clean up any mess that they create in the premise including the lounge area.
4. Dancers and their parents/legal guardians may raise any issues or concerns with the Dance Teacher. If there is no positive solution, they may raise their issues or concerns with Veselka staff or the Board of Directors.
5. Parents/Legal Guardians shall ensure that Veselka fees are paid.
6. Parents/Legal Guardians shall inform the Dance Teacher promptly about absences or late arrivals, especially for a show.
7. Veselka is not responsible for supervision of dancers outside of the class time. Dancers should remain in the waiting areas with their parents/legal guardians until it is time for their class. Parents/Legal Guardians must ensure pick up of dancers promptly after class ends.
8. Parents/Legal Guardians are expected to assist their Dancer(s) to follow the Dancers' Code of Conduct.
9. Parents/Legal Guardians shall help school staff deal with disciplinary issues involving their Dancer(s).
10. Veselka is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please ensure safety of your valuables.

Performances and Performance Etiquette

Performances are a great experience for the dancers. Attendance is expected at all performances and competitions. Performances are where we showcase our hard work, choreography, and traditions – it's our chance to show our joy of dance and by doing so, motivate others to join!

Students are expected to be polite to adjudicators, other dancers and instructors, and to show good dance etiquette. Every attempt is made to keep things running on time. Due to circumstances beyond our control, festivals and large performances can run late. It is a good idea to make sure your child is well rested before a performance and to bring along plenty of water, healthy snacks, and lots of patience.

Performance Etiquette: Arrival Time, Performance Time and the Time In Between

Our dance performance starts before we are on stage, and a focused state of mind is highly encouraged. Dancers are expected to:

1. arrive at least 30 minutes BEFORE performance time
2. complete hair and makeup PRIOR to arrival.
3. ensure that all costuming is complete before you leave home. Seek direction from your Instructor on details including whether you should arrive at your performance location 'in costume' or dress when you get there.

Please note, that dancers not abiding by stated expectations may slow down performance start times, which may result in not performing.

Your strict adherence to these expectations is greatly appreciated.

It is expected that parents will supervise their children before all performances unless indicated otherwise. This includes the time from arrival until going on stage and immediately after dancers come off stage.

Detailed information will be provided to all dancers by the Business Manager in preparation for all performances.

Important: Parents should contact the instructor immediately if the dancer is unable to attend a performance.

We also appreciate you staying for the other performances that do not feature your child and supporting Veselka dancers of all levels. Some performances require a small admission fee for non-dancers.

The Library

The Library, also called the Lounge, is a space shared with other tenants of the UCC. Therefore, it is very important that we respect the space and leave the room clean and tidy at all times. Please dispose of any garbage, return any tables or chairs you might have moved, and if necessary, wipe down the tables you have used. Also, please be aware that there may be times when the Library has been booked by other groups and may not be available to Veselka.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors consists of family members or guardians of dancers <19 years, or dancers >19 years, who have been elected at Veselka's Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM and elections are held in the spring each year.

The Board works to honour and support the body, mind, and spirit of all members of the Veselka family. The Board believes that every dancer, instructor, board member, committee member, and parent is a valued member of our community and all are vitally important to the success of our dancers and our dance school.

The Board holds monthly director meetings to provide governance and oversight for Veselka. During these meetings, important decisions are made in accordance with our vision, mission, values and goals. If you wish to become involved in this important work, please attend our annual general meeting and put your name forward. Additionally, there may be a vacant position on the board at any given time that can be filled immediately. We'd love to hear from you!

Throughout the dance season, if you have any concerns, questions, or wish to make a proposal to the Board please reach out to the President.

Board of Directors for 2024/2025 (volunteer run)

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>e-mail</i>
President	Michelle Duplessis	president@veselkadancers.com
Vice President	vacant	
Treasurer	Meghan Nicklin	
Secretary	vacant	
Director at Large (Costume Director)	vacant	costumes@veselkadancers.com
Director at Large (Acting Business Manager)	Vacant	info@veselkadancers.com
Director at Large (Registrar)	Rebecca Sorensen	registrar@veselkadancers.com
Director at Large	Michael Nyquist	
Director at Large	vacant	
Director at Large	vacant	
Director at Large	vacant	

Volunteering

The heart and soul of Veselka are based on parent and dancer participation, who lend their time and energy to our dance community. Volunteering is the backbone of our non-profit association. Volunteers contribute to projects that benefit all areas of Veselka dance, including but not limited to, rent, costumes, and low dance fees.

Without volunteers, Veselka would not be possible, which is why everyone's participation is so vitally important for the survival of our association. With that said, we require that at least one representative from the dancer's family (parent, dancer, grandparent etc) volunteer on average at least 4 hours per month. However, some months may not have any volunteer opportunities, with the bulk of the volunteering being concentrated in the months Veselka hosts the Ukrainian supper (twice a year) and at the end of the year for performances.

Below is a list of some key volunteer positions. To get involved, please speak with one of the Board of Directors. We look forward to having fun together!

Position	Description
Ukrainian Supper Coordinator(s)	Coordinates and leads the two Veselka Ukrainian Suppers. Works closely with the UCC and Veselka to ensure the success of each Supper. Organizes volunteers to make perogies, cabbage rolls, and borscht for two Veselka Ukrainian Suppers. Coordinates volunteer sign-ups/emails to dance families, alumni, and friends of Veselka through updated email lists kept by the Registrar.
Newsletter Producer	Produces quarterly Veselka Newsletters sent to Members and Friends of Veselka.
Social Coordinators	Organizes social events and Zabavas throughout the dance year. Coordinates senior dancer involvement in activities/themes.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

Veselka is always looking for members to share their skills in the following areas:

1. Marketing– Develop, deploy and/or support promotional plans and activities; including, but not limited to, locating sources of free advertising, developing brand recognition, create graphic designs for social media, brochures, posters etc.
2. Fundraising – organize fundraising opportunities, such as 50/50 at Ukrainian suppers and other raffle events with Board approval.
3. Grant Writing - with the input of the Treasurer or other board member(s), source and write grant proposals to advance Veselka goals.
4. Website caretaker – updating and development of website improvements.
5. Photographer/Videographer – film and photograph Veselka events for Newsletter and for other promotional opportunities.
6. Alumni and Friends of Veselka Liaison – utilizes email lists held by the Registrar to do ongoing outreach to former dancers, and past family and friends of Veselka.
7. November Craft Fair – Securing dessert donations to sell at the Craft Fair and coordinating volunteers to run the table. UCC hosts event
8. Easter Traditions – Organize volunteers to work at event (event is every 2 years). UCC hosts event.
9. Spring Craft Fair – Securing dessert donations to sell at the Craft Fair and coordinating volunteers to run the table. organize Veselka kitchen volunteers (set up, serving, cleanup of lunch) – UCC provides lunch we provide labour.

Communications

Communicating well is critical to our community! While we use several channels to communicate with members over the dance year, email is our preference when communicating important information to share. Please send any email/contact information changes through the year to the Registrar who maintains accurate files on each dancer. We do ask that if a response is requested in an email message, you endeavour to do so in a timely way. That helps us all!

Veselka Communicators:

Throughout the dance year, expect to see the following communication items from members of Veselka:

Artistic Director: will communicate with dancers and their families about rehearsals and other studio-related items.

Business Manager: prepares and distributes important instructions prior to performances for the preparation of all dancers and families involved.

Ukrainian Supper Coordinator: coordinates communications about volunteer opportunities and important information about the supper.

Treasurer: will communicate with families about fees related to being a Veselka member.

Other Communications: From time to time you may receive communications from other members of the Board or volunteers on topics such as: registrations, volunteer opportunities, updates on processes or policies etc.

Please feel free to reach out to any of our Board members if you'd like to connect!

Social Media

Veselka also communicates via Facebook (veselka dance) and Instagram (veselkadancers). The Artistic Director, Lisa Hall, handles the social media updates for Veselka.

If you are posting about Veselka Dance on your own socials don't forget to tag @veselkadance.

Newsletter

Veselka strives to have quarterly Newsletters each year, and they are full of useful information you will want to take note of. In addition, we celebrate aspects of Ukrainian culture and language and the accomplishments of our dancers!

Calendar of Events

Veselka's calendar is kept up to date on the Veselka website (www.veselkadancers.com).

Snow Days

Veselka follows the snow closure policy of School District (SD) 61: if SD 61 closes schools, then Veselka is closed for all classes on that day/evening(s) also. Decisions about 'snow days' are typically made by SD 61 in the early morning. If snow starts to fall later in the day, please use your judgement about whether your child(ren) should attempt to come to dance class - the safety of our dancers is always paramount! If Veselka classes are cancelled separate from a 'snow day' decision made by SD 61, we will attempt to reach all affected families to let them know. Usually email is the best communication method for this.

Check your email, Veselka Dance on Facebook or Instagram, the Veselka website calendar, and possibly phone messages – these are the most likely ways we will try to communicate with dancers and/or their families. Keep your contact details up to date.

Ukrainian Supper Fundraisers

The Ukrainian Cultural Centre is home to the hugely popular Ukrainian Supper, where hundreds of Victorians line up to enjoy perogies, cabbage rolls, kielbasa, and borscht, live music or other entertainment, and some delicious desserts. These suppers are hosted by members and member organizations of the UCC, and each month the 'lead organization' organizes the work parties and, in return, receives the profit for that supper.

Suppers are generally held on the last Friday of the month between September and June. Veselka is the host for two suppers each year. The success of these suppers is thanks in large part to the Veselka families and dancers who volunteer. Volunteering provides an amazing opportunity not only for parents to get to know each other but also for dancers to work alongside the elders in our community.

The Ukrainian Supper Volunteer Coordinator will notify volunteers for these two major Veselka fundraisers. Please give your support to help. Work parties are typically organized throughout the month we host the supper. watch your email for details on how your family can help!

Ukrainian Supper #1: October TBA

Ukrainian Supper #2: Jan or Feb TBA

Veselka Social Events and Zabava (Party)!

Coming together to celebrate Ukrainian culture and dance provides great opportunities for families and dancers to spend time together in building strong lasting relationships. These events are one of the highlights of the year and are not to be missed!

Here is a little taste of what you can expect at the social events and Zabavas:

Prior to Covid restrictions, Veselka would host 3 or 4 social events (usually potluck) during the dance season. In past years, Veselka hosted a social event in October to, introduce new families to Veselka and welcome back our returning families. In February, we would host a large Zabava (potluck dinner and dance), invitations to this party were extended to family and friends! This was often an opportunity for our young dancers to perform for the first time. At the end of the dance season, we would celebrate with a final social in June. Occasionally, Veselka would also host a Christmas holiday party in December.

While these events are usually held at the Ukrainian Cultural Center (Veselka dance studio or the hall), we have been known to hit up a park and BBQ!

We hope to return to our regular scheduled events. Stay tuned for more information on upcoming social events and Zabavas!