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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Chardon Polka Band Takes a Polka Adventure in New PBS Western Reserve Series

*Six-part series THE WORLD ACCORDING TO POLKA
to premiere on Friday, Oct. 13*

Kent, OH — Sept. 13, 2023 — A new weekly six-episode series, THE WORLD ACCORDING TO POLKA, will premiere on Friday, Oct. 13, at 8:30 PM on PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEAO 49.1). A passion project dedicated to the polka community, the series follows Ohio's own zany Chardon Polka Band on an exciting journey across Northeast Ohio and beyond as it explores the rich history and lively culture surrounding polka, a popular style of music and dance originating in 19th-century Bohemia, which is now part of the Czech Republic.

Hosted by Chardon Polka Band bandleader Jake Kouwe, the series embarks on a wide-ranging trip through the history books, from the origins of bowling to the purpose of the Slovenian Kurentovanje festival; hits the cookbooks with stops at The Pierogi Lady's Akron kitchen, Chardon's King Kone and more; and polkas through the pages of some of the genre's most beloved numbers and progressive new hits with several guest performances including Akron guitarist Michael Weber and Cleveland ukulele player Sara Beth Lowe. It's a look at the world — according to polka.

"We have really been able to share our passion for local people, places and events. There is so much of this to explore in our area," Kouwe said. He cited PBS programs THE LAWRENCE WELK SHOW, TRAVELS IN EUROPE WITH RICK STEVES and BILL NYE THE SCIENCE GUY as inspiration for the series' humorous and informative tone.

The series is created by Jake Kouwe and Jeff Grau, and executive produced by Gary Manke. It is a featured program in PBS Western Reserve's LuminUS collection of stories about our region. Two additional Chardon

Polka Band programs — POLKA ACROSS AMERICA and A POLKA CHRISTMAS WITH THE CHARDON POLKA BAND — are available on the [LuminUS](#) section of the PBS Western Reserve website for free viewing on demand.

For additional THE WORLD ACCORDING TO POLKA air dates and times on PBS Western Reserve and Fusion (WNEO 45.2 / WEAO 49.2), and information on free viewing on demand following the premiere, visit PBSWesternReserve.org. A trailer for the production is available at https://youtu.be/L5D1KCVgILA?si=1O_YT7c-4tiNnfuc.

About PBS Western Reserve

PBS Western Reserve is the brand name of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. A trusted community resource, PBS Western Reserve uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. It serves the largest population of Ohio's eight PBS member stations. PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEAO 49.1), a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of Northeast Ohio. It is available to 4.9 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average month, more than 1 million people tune in. The organization also operates two standard definition channels: Fusion (WNEO 45.2 / WEAO 49.2) and FNX (WNEO 45.3 / WEAO 49.3).

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