

# The Big Joe Polka Show

## Joseph Siedlik AKA “Big Joe”

**J**oseph Siedlik is better known as “Big Joe,” or “Polka Joe,” in Omaha, Nebraska, and surrounding areas. Big Joe’s interest in polka music of all kinds really stems from his Polish roots and from growing up in the ethnic neighborhoods of South Omaha.

While “Big Joe” has always had an interest in Polka music, his professional interest began in Columbus, Nebraska, on radio station KTTT in 1965 with his inaugural 90 minute polka show: The Big Joe Polka Show hit the air and was an immediate hit. Within five weeks, he was airing five hours each Sunday, with a full load of sponsors. So popular was his program, radio stations in neighboring markets fought to get the Big Joe Polka Show on their air – radio stations in Ord, Nebraska, and Omaha-Council Bluffs, Iowa were soon added to the line-up.

Big Joe has always played an equal mix of Polish, Czech and German Polkas – a little something for everyone. When his show aired in Omaha, the demand for diversity increased. Offut Air Force Base, home to 45,000 polka lovers from all over the United States, produced requests for the music of many New York and New Jersey area polka bands with stars like Frank Wojnaroski, and the Connecticut twins, Stash and Jash, Big band. Polish Cleveland wanted Lou Trebar, Johnny Pecon and the Frankie Yankovic style of polka music, Minnesota wanted a more conservative sound with Erwin Sues. South Dakota wanted Johnny Matusek and the Tabor Czech Brass



Band, and on, and on it went.

With a wider variety of polka music, the Big Joe Polka Show grew in popularity, and length, going from five hours to nine hours each week. The Big Joe Polka Show was always number one in its time period in the Omaha Market as well as in Columbus and Ord, Nebraska.

After 25 years, and only 12 Sundays off in that time, Big Joe retired from live radio and the rigors of 18 hours of

weekly shows.

With the advent of RFD-TV, Big Joe moved to television and a new audience in rural America. A perennial viewer favorite, the Big Joe Polka Show can be seen 12 times each week on RFD-TV.

Over the years, “Big Joe” has become the largest owner of polka music master tapes in the United States with over 550 masters in his collection. Joe and his wife Marty own and operate Polka Cassettes of Nebraska. They feature over 700 cassettes, 300 cds and 100 videos in their warehouse. In addition, Marty and Joe have contact with over 200 polka bands across the United States and Canada wanting to be on the Big Joe Polka Show.

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### **For a free catalogue write to:**

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