

## Planina - Songs of Eastern Europe

25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Concert, Dinner, and Balkan Bash Dance Party

October 26, 2013 at the Avalon Ballroom in Boulder, Colorado

\$2,500 Grant from the Alex "Tink" Wilson Legacy Fund - September 2013

Planina-Songs of Eastern Europe hosted its 25-year reunion celebration on October 26, 2013, at the Avalon Ballroom in Boulder. Planina is a Denver- and Boulder-based mixed chorus that sings folk music from Eastern Europe, including the Balkans, countries in the former Soviet Union, and countries surrounding the Black Sea. The group performs arranged choral pieces, village-style field songs, and instrumentally accompanied dance tunes from these areas.

The evening began with a 45-minute choral set in which 12 alumni singers joined 12 current Planina members on stage. Former members traveled from far and wide to attend:

Montenegro (southern Yugoslavia), California, Illinois, and other parts of Colorado. Guests sat at tables and enjoyed a light Mediterranean dinner catered by Donald Vukovic, [The Baklava Guy](#), as they listened to the vocal concert.

The main feature of the evening was a three-hour dance party in which former and current Planina instrumental musicians collaborated to play music for participatory folk dancing. Eight local musicians who have been part of Planina's performance and recording history joined Planina own instrumentalists to accompany the singers on stage. Instrumentalists came from Boulder, Denver, Wheat Ridge, and Lafayette to present a full evening of live Eastern European dance tunes.



From the opening tunes to the five grand finale numbers, the atmosphere was charged with the haunting and energetic music of Eastern Europe. The dance floor was full of old friends renewing their dance and music friendships, as well as newcomers who were quickly pulled into the circles. With dedicated help from a dozen volunteers, assistance with cooking or serving from thirteen more volunteers, and with approximately 250 paying

guests, the evening was a great success. Counting the performers, there were almost 320 people in all! The Avalon Ballroom was completely filled up with energy and happy enjoyment of the wide variety of folk music styles. Choral and dance tunes from 14 different countries were represented in the evening's festivities.

#### Testimonials:

- "You should do this every month: I'll be here!" Lloyd McCaffery, dancer
- "Heck yes, I would play for this every year." Amy Self, guest instrumentalist
- "This is so much fun, and so well organized!" Susan Smith, dancer and BIFD Secretary
- "I had a blast and didn't want it to end." Brett Bowen, guest instrumentalist
- "Planina combined lovely singing with music that compelled us all to dance." Ingvar Sodal, dancer and leader in Boulder folk dance community



The evening was made possible by a generous grant from the Alex "Tink" Wilson Legacy Fund and by logistical assistance from Boulder International Folk Dancers (BIFD).

Several Planina members are currently working on the feasibility of reviving the Boulder Balkan Bash theme from the 1990s, and hosting annual dance parties with live music at the Avalon Ballroom. For current information about all Planina-related events please visit the website at [www.planina.org](http://www.planina.org).