

2026 LIAC Workshop Descriptions:

Workshops are \$15 if paid by June 8 or \$20 at Leavenworth

#1 Czech Music and Culture

With Jan Marhoul & Student (Marek Matuška) from Czechoslovakia

Time: Fri 9:30–10:30am Grange/Upper

Czech Music Education: We'll start by talking about the world specialty ZUŠ (Základní umělecká škola) in the Czech Republic and Slovakia—unique art schools financed by the state that nurture young talents from an early age.

Journey through Czech Folk Music: From children's songs to popular folk and entertainment tunes. We'll demonstrate several live on accordion (bringing sheet music to hand out!).

Contemporary Czech Composers: We'll focus on modern talents like Markéta Lastovickova. We'll play excerpts of her compositions and share stories about them to showcase the contemporary Czech scene.

Regarding accordions for attendees: Bringing your accordion is optional. I plan to perform all the demos ourselves, but for the Czech folk section, I'll prepare 1–2 simple lead sheets (melody + chords). There should be time towards the end of the workshop to play these pieces.

#2 20 For 20 - Stretches for Accordionists

With Lori Beth Brooke

Time: Fri 1:30-2:30pm Grange/Upper

All of us who play accordion are engaging in physical activity when we perform. Lori Beth Brooke has developed a series of stretches designed to help accordionists avoid pain and discomfort while playing. This workshop is an introduction to the “20 For 20” program developed to help counteract or prevent physical challenges for accordionists by exercising twenty minutes a day. Participants do not need to bring their accordions to the workshop but a towel will be useful.

#3 Playing Like A Bass Player

With Toby Hanson

Time: Sat 9:30–10:30am Grange/Upper

The accordion is a complex and beautiful instrument which demands a lot of attention to play it well. It's left hand is a complex collection of buttons that can seem daunting to the uninitiated. By applying a few simple ideas from the world of playing the bass, however, the complexity can be turned into sophistication. The workshop will talk about chord tones, passing tones, leading tones, neighbor tones, and how to combine all of those into interesting bass lines to elevate playing to the next level. Not required but attendees should bring an accordion to this workshop if at all possible.

**#4 Creating A Program That Connects With The Audience
With Gail Campanella
Time: Sat 1:30-2:30pm Grange/Upper**

How does a performer choose the right repertoire for a performance? This workshop uses a few basic ideas (playing what you like and know) to choose repertoire to build that connection with the audience that most performers seek to establish. The workshop will present strategies for different kinds of performances, from formal concert presentations to casual background music gigs. It will also give various strategies for structuring the pieces in a performance, like when to grab an audience's attention or when to play something relatively calm. Participants do not need to bring their accordions to this workshop.

Be sure to attend our FREE Sessions – all held in Grange upper level

Thurs 3:00 – 4:30pm Gazebo Ensemble Rehearsal with Paul Garavaglia – FREE
(Playing in a group; Rehearse Gazebo Ensemble music)

Friday 11:00 – 12:30pm Circle Jam Session for all accordionists;
Host: Bonnie Birch – FREE

Saturday 10:45 – 11:45am Jam Session for all accordionists; Host: Rod Miller – FREE