

## Revelers brave cold for Oktoberfest

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Cooler weather put off the crowds early during Beloit's first Oktoberfest.

The Downtown Beloit Association along with Rivals Sports Bar and Grill and Suds O'Hanahan's Irish Pub put on the event on Grand Avenue Saturday night.

Uncle Julius' German Band kicked off the night at 5:30 p.m. with some polka music, and Suds featured a German buffet. At 8 p.m. Jamie Campbell and the Redneck Romeos rounded out the night until about 11 p.m.

Jules and Greg Strain were in Suds keeping warm. The couple just got back from visiting Germany.

"They were just starting off their Oktoberfest when we had to leave," Jules said. "We wanted to come to help support Tom (Hankins, owner of Suds). Every holiday he always does something special."

Shauna El-Amin, executive director for the DBA, said the association wanted to have an event along Grand Avenue similar to the Street Dance held on State Street every summer.

Hankins said he was into the idea from the beginning, and planned the German-themed buffet and German beer at Suds. He also had two bartenders, Patrick Ryan and Peter Scholko, dressed up in lederhosen for the occasion.

While temperatures were in the lower 50s the crowds were a little thin, but the weather didn't bother Amy Couillard and Wilma Jensen.

"It's not cold. We are in Wisconsin," Amy said. "We braved colder weather for the farmer's market this morning."

Wilma said she loved the idea of Oktoberfest, and wanted to check it out to celebrate her own German decent. She added she got married in Germany 52 years ago.

"I like that (the City of Beloit) has different festivals," Wilma said.

Victor Schoonover and Jennifer Wilz brought their son Henry to the festival. Schoonover said he also wanted to celebrate his German heritage. They were dancing to the polka music, and didn't think it was too cold for the season.

"It's not that cold for fall," he said. "We love polka."



### Dancing to Oktoberfest music

Staff photo by Shaun Zinck  
Elizabeth Currier and Roger Anderson dance to some polka music as Uncle Julius' German Band plays at Beloit's first Oktoberfest on Saturday night. The night featured music, food and dancing on Grand Avenue.

Elizabeth Currier and Roger Anderson were also dancing to the polka music. Currier said she enjoyed the music, and thought it was a great idea to have an Oktoberfest in the city.

“They did it a week too late though,” she said. “In Germany, Oktoberfest starts the last weekend of September.”