

Just Make It Happen

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CD release celebrates 10th Anniversary "Let's Dance" July 17-19

Release of a special new CD will highlight the 10th anniversary of the popular "Let's Dance" Big Band Weekend in DeKalb July 17-19, in the Duke Ellington Ballroom at NIU's Student Center, 340 Carroll Ave., DeKalb.

On Saturday, July 18, DeKalb's own John Smith and the Shananigans Big Band will release "It's Saturday Night - Let's Dance." The CD was recorded live in May at a special event featuring local ballroom dancers.

"In honor of the 10th Anniversary of Let's Dance Big Band Weekend, the band is dedicating this CD to dancers and anyone who aspires to build a personal healthy lifestyle through the natural phenomenon that is ballroom dance," said Smith, Just Make It Happen (JMIH) president and leader of the Shananigans Big Band.

The CD includes swing, foxtrot, waltz, Latin dances such as salsa, Cha Cha, samba and mambo, as well as Big Band hits.



JMIH, producers of Let's Dance, invites everyone to participate in "Let's Dance" activities all weekend.

The main event is Saturday, July 18: At 7:30 p.m., there will be a presentation by JMIH about the CD release, honoring partners and collaborators. At 7:55 p.m., there will be a patriotic salute, and at 8 p.m., the Grand Ball performance begins with host band John Smith and the Shananigans Dance Band. Selections from the new CD will be included throughout the evening. The CD can be purchased that night for \$15.

Since 2006, JMIH, 501 3 c non-profit, has included dancing as one of its community mission goals. That year, JMIH introduced local talent winners selected from a Shananigan Egyptian Theatre

Show production "One Night of Fame" to the annual "Let's Dance" event.

Let's Dance Big Band Weekend's schedule also includes guests bands: On Friday, July 17, at 8 p.m., Alicia Hamilton Orchestra. Three levels of dance lessons are available Saturday morning. A shoe vendor and "Tips Only" Cabaret Dance happens Saturday, 2-4 p.m., at which Zachary Harris, one of the winners, has agreed to 'sit-in' with the Shananigans Combo. Other "Fame" participants have been invited to the release celebration. On Sunday, July 19, at 10 a.m., Dick Elliott Orchestra will perform.

Three package deals are available for the event. Food orders are due Thursday, July 9. At-door sales open 30 minutes prior to any dance or instruction. Cash or check is accepted. DeKalb County residents can apply/receive a KishHealth System "Dancing for Health Scholarship" valued at



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\$10.00 for one time use at any dance. Visit www.justmakeithappen-dekalb.com for event schedule, package details, registration and scholarship forms.

Smith said, “The idea for ‘It’s Saturday Night - Let’s Dance’ began from guest requests for an anniversary CD. Since JMIH has no assets or operational funds, we rely on grants or break-even community events.

An anonymous donor honored JMIH earlier this year to produce the new CD for dancers of all levels to use.”

He added that the CD is perfect for beginning-advanced classes and ballroom dancers can use the live recording to practice dancing skills. “Seasoned ballroom dancers can be motivated to create their own private dance, while others will enjoy the excitement of Big Band hits in the privacy of their cars,” he said.

“Area announcers like Mike Williamson, Denny Farrell and John Gillcrist plan to use CD for their Big Band radio programming. We also are offering non-profits and business partners the opportunity to earn 50-25% on sales.

Contact me at john@justmakeithappen-dekalb.com for details,” said Smith.



With the CD funding honor, JMIH can use the proceeds to benefit Let’s Dance partner projects with schools, KishHealth System, USA Dance clubs, and others to expand access to the benefits of ballroom dance in our community and country, Smith said.

“I am excited and amazed that the break even business plan continues to resonate with social ballroom dancers. JMIH’s partners include NIU, musicians, and dancers. All are to be congratulated for the past 10 years.”

