

## Having a ball for 80 years: Withrow Ballroom celebrates eight decades

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HUGO - The Withrow Ballroom calls itself the state's oldest, and on New Year's Eve the Hugo event center will celebrate its 80th year with, what else, an '80s party.

Located just north of Stillwater among farms and horse ranches, the ballroom was established in 1928 and owned by the Zahler family for many years, said Scott Aamodt, who now owns the ballroom with his wife, Kimberly.

"People say that they met their husband or wife here 20 or 30 years ago at a Rockin' Hollywood's concert and they're still coming back," Aamodt said this morning.



Gazette photo by Scott Ertle  
The Withrow Ballroom in Hugo held a big band dance party Saturday night, gearing up for the New Year's Eve bash that will mark the event center's 80th year in operation at midnight.

The facility is known as one of the best places for live music in the Twin Cities area, Aamodt said, and with a 3,000-square-foot hardwood dance floor, "we tend to attract the real dancers."

"And we're probably doing more country (music) than anything else right now," he said.

The ballroom hosted a dance on Saturday night, part of the winter season that includes myriad public events (summer is generally reserved for weddings). Events draw people of all ages, Aamodt said, though lately the ballroom has been attracting a younger crowd.

For those who actually met their spouse at a Rockin' Hollywood's concert and anyone else interested, the group will return for the Dec. 31 event, kicking off the Withrow Ballroom's 80th year. For more information call 651-439-5123 or visit [www.withrowballroom.com](http://www.withrowballroom.com).

The significance of owning one of the areas oldest and most notable establishments isn't lost on Aamodt.

"It's a historical building and it's part of the community," he said. "And its fun continuing the tradition of the ballroom."