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SAN DIEGO  
**ROUBADOOR**



Alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, gospel, and bluegrass music news

November 2003

Vol. 3, No. 2

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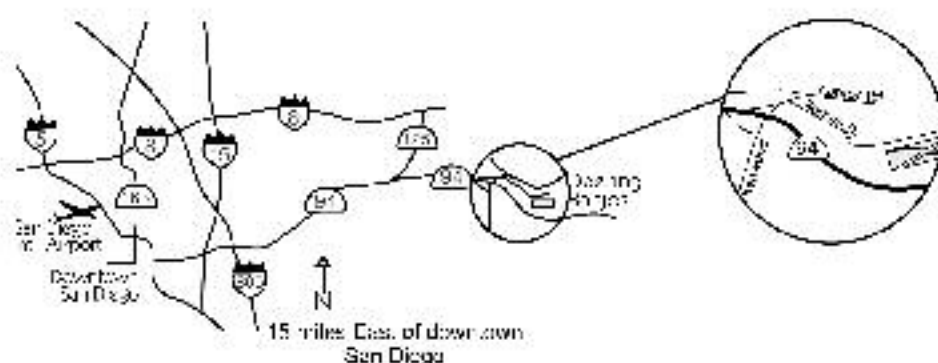
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# welcome mat



# MAILBOX



Dear Troubadour,

I just moved here from Austin, Texas. I really love your paper and appreciate you helping out Americana musicians. I have many friends in Austin that I will pass the word to about it. Thanks for all you're doing for the music and keep up the good work.

Peace,  
Aliah Selah



Dear Troubadour,

I want to say thanks for printing such a wonderful article on Bart Mendoza in your June issue of the Troubadour! I really dug deep into the roots, the nuance of a very talented man . . .

Sincerely,  
Sandra Castillo

Dear Troubadour,

Your paper is magnificent and loaded with information for performers. I read it from cover to cover.

Thanks,  
BJ Camp

Dear Troubadour,

I will soon be moving to the San Diego area and am completely out of touch with the San Diego music scene. I'm from Champaign, Illinois, once home to Jay Bennet, Allison Kraus, Jeff Austin, and Dave Johnson.

I did a search for San Diego Americana, came up with your publication, and was thrilled! I have been to Belly Up for Mother Hips and heard of a few other clubs, but was unable to get a good handle on the music scene. Considering good music is what keeps the blood running through my veins, it's a very important element of my happiness and well-being.

I'm relieved to see that Americana music has a presence in San Diego. If you can point me in the direction of some good local acts and venues to check out, I would definitely appreciate it!

Thank you!

Meg Wolf

*Ed. note: The S.D. Troubadour is not on line yet, but information about us is linked to the Adams Avenue Business Association at GoThere.com.*



## MISSION

To promote, encourage, and provide an alternative voice for the great local music that is generally overlooked by the mass media; namely the genres of folk, country, roots, Americana, gospel, and bluegrass. To entertain, educate, and bring together players, writers, and lovers of these forms; to explore their foundations; and to expand the audience for these types of music.

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## full circle

by Lyle Duplessie

### THE WORLD MOURNS A MUSIC PIONEER

If rock 'n' roll's paternal father is Elvis Presley, then its obstetrician had to be Sam Phillips. Phillips, age 80, passed away on July 31 of respiratory failure at Saint Francis Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. With his death, America lost both a musical visionary and an unwitting cultural revolutionary.

Phillips was proprietor of the tiny, but legendary, Sun Records studio in Memphis or rock 'n' roll's "maternity ward," if you will. Though Elvis was arguably the biggest name to be birthed at Sun Records, by no means was he the only one. It was Phillips who introduced white hillbilly music to black blues and brought forth rock 'n' roll. During the '50s Phillips delivered to the world a stunning array of stars, both black and white, that included Elvis, Ike Turner, Johnny Cash, Howlin' Wolf, Roy Orbison, Rufus Thomas, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Milton, Carl Perkins, and even Charlie Rich.

Born January 5, 1923 in Florence, Alabama, to impoverished tenant farmers, he recalled how, as a boy, he first heard the music of the southern working class. Though blacks sang the blues and whites sang "hillbilly music," both styles struck a common chord as they chronicled the abject poverty and hopes of the rural poor. Even as a youth he grew up with the sense that the South's greatest resource was the music of its poor, both black and white.

Phillips had early dreams of becoming a criminal defense lawyer, but fate had other plans in store. By 1945 he took a job at WREC in the musically pregnant city of Memphis. In a 1996 documentary for Arts & Entertainment television, Phillips recounted, "I had this feeling on Beale Street, this sounds like [to] me that this is something that the nation and the world possibly should hear." He discerned a market for the raw music that swirled around him. Soon he had built his own recording studio using the money from his daytime



Phillips in the studio with Elvis

radio job to fund the project. With a young family to support, it was a tough time for him, but that didn't stop his drive to record the hillbilly music, blues, and both black and white gospel music rife in the city.

With each new record Phillips listened for something that, "...might break the mold a little bit." He soon heard the sound he had hoped for in his very early pre-Sun recordings of B.B. King and Howlin' Wolf. This led to his recording of "Rocket 88" with singer Jackie Brenston backed by Ike Turner's band. Some music historians hold this as the first ever rock 'n' roll record. The sound that Phillips heard was the sound of hot-rodged African-American blues and R&B. In the context of the early '50s, this kind of music was called "race music." There was a small but enthusiastic audience for race music in Memphis, but in the segregated South of the day it was nigh to impossible to get white youth in large numbers to openly support black music as either radio listeners or record buyers. In short, this kind of music was culturally taboo for the vast majority of young white southerners. To bridge the gap Phillips knew what he had to do. In a 1997 interview with National Public Radio, Phillips stated, "If we got a white person, and people knew that he was a white person, then there was a good possibility we could broaden the base for both black and white people that had talent."

That "white person" came in the form of Elvis Presley, who arrived at Sun Records in July 1953 to record a song for his mother's birthday. Phillips immediately knew Presley had the voice and raw talent, but it wasn't until a year later, when he teamed him with guitarist Scotty Moore and bassist Bill Black, that he heard what he wanted in Presley's rendition of "That's All Right." Between July 1954 and July 1955 Sun only



# 1923-2003

released five Presley singles. But that's all it took to launch a musical and cultural revolution whose tremors were felt and still are today. Unprepared to handle Presley's meteoric and unprecedented rise to fame, and needing the cash to develop and promote a stable of future stars and legends, he sold the singer's contract to RCA for \$35,000. In time, his other finds — Perkins, Lewis, Cash, Orbison, Rich — would also outgrow Sun Records and move on. Unable to compete with the big record labels, and fiercely independent and unwilling to align or answer to a major label, Phillips sold Sun Records in 1969 and got out of the record-making business.

In 1986 Phillips, along with Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis, were the first inductees into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He was likewise inducted into the Blues and Country Music Halls of Fame, making him the first person ever so honored by all three American music genres. Though he never invented anything new, he was instrumental in reformatting the great American music that was already there and introducing it to new segments of the population.

Phillips' genius was in his ability to analyze and understand the culture and society of the time. Although he recognized and recorded music that to him had "feeling" and realized that there was a market for that music, he nevertheless underestimated the power and influence that rock 'n' roll would have on country as a whole. He had targeted a young white southern audience, but the music quickly spilled over regional borders and became national in its impact, cutting across racial, social, and economic classes. Because the new music was conceived in rural black and white poverty, it was racially mixed. It was an integrated music with mass appeal that



The legendary Sun Studio building in Memphis

arguably helped undermine segregation and serendipitously dovetailed with the birth of the civil rights movement. Moreover, he understood the music would have a natural appeal to a restless youth, but how could he have anticipated its use both for peaceful, radical, and even destructive political and social change over the next 50 years?

During its half century of life, Phillips saw rock 'n' roll go through a myriad developmental changes, and undoubtedly there are more in store. As he stood back and witnessed the effects of the music he brought into this world, his emotions probably ranged from joy to regret. But one thing is certain: he intended his music to stir up and release human feeling. And that it did.



Left to right: Elvis, Bill Black, Scotty Moore, and Phillips in the studio.

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# full circle



Photo: Bill Richardson



## San Diego Gems that Are Past and Gone

This city and its environs have a bad habit of ignoring our Roots — particularly our musical roots and places where music has been heard. I could name many venues — dance halls, clubs, theaters, coffeehouses — that have contributed in a large part to our musical history, but few of them stand out, notably because the buildings still stand. Something should have been done to restore their musical importance a long time ago.

Let's begin with the **Bostonia Ballroom**, which is located in the city of El Cajon, although when it opened in the early '30s, it was out in the country between El Cajon and Lakeside. I mostly remember the ballroom as a showcase for the best in country music, both local and national. Acts ranging from Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys, Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Lefty Frizzell, Johnny Cash, Hank Thompson, the Maddox Brothers and Rose, Merle Travis, Spade Cooley, and Hank Williams as well as our own Smokey Rogers (who was owner of the Bostonia Ballroom for a while), Roy Hogsed, and Buck Wayne. During the early 1930s Bostonia was a showcase for big bands like Tommy Dorsey and Glen Gray. Today the building houses a restaurant and most of the people who eat there don't even know what a great place it once was. Occasionally someone asks about its history and the waiters show them the old dance hall in the back, which they rent out for business meetings. I have a tape of Bob Wills and Spade Cooley playing together on stage there and I've always thought someone should put together a CD of live material from some of the old Bostonia shows. I wonder if anyone out there has any tapes of those

# Recordially, Lou Curtiss

shows. If so, they should make them available sooner rather than later while good musical memories still linger.

Another showcase still standing is the old **Pacific Ballroom** at 12th St. and Broadway, downtown. It too started as a showcase for big bands some-time in the '20s I'm told. The original name of the second floor dance hall was the **Palladium** and I remember the Palladium Record City record shop, where you could see a radio deejay doing a live broadcast in the window (Was that KCBQ? I don't remember.) at street level. There was a big, wide staircase from the street in the middle of the block on Broadway between 11th and 12th. Sometime in the mid-'50s it became the Pacific Ballroom. Many different kinds of acts played there, including jazz, rock 'n' roll, and rockabilly, but mostly rhythm & blues. I remember Bobby Blue Bland, B.B. King, Jimmie Reed, the Dominoes, the Five Keys, Big Joe Turner, Ruth Brown, Bo Diddley, Little Richard, Johnny Otis, LaVerne Baker, and so many others. Carl Perkins headlined a rockabilly show, and jazz artists like Jimmie Smith and Sonny Stitt and Cal Tjader played there. Sometimes the show would be a mixed bag, with R&B and jazz on the same bill. Later on, the building was turned over to Ward's Jazzville, who tried to move from a smaller club-type situation into a larger showcase venue. They were only open a short time. By the early to mid-'60s, the place was closed up. I understand that the old ballroom is still there and used as a warehouse. Again, I wonder whether tapes of live shows exist and about the possibility

of a memorial CD. I'd be more than happy to contribute what I have as well as some time and effort to make it happen. Anyone interested in doing some research and helping to compile some of

taped, they would be bootleg, and people might get angry. Now it's a matter of keeping memories alive and showing people (like those folks who run the San Diego Music Awards) that there has been

good music in the area a lot longer than the late '60s. Hell, Jelly Roll Morton and Kid Ory were playing in San Diego dance halls as early as 1917. Blind Lemon Jefferson played in the streets of San Diego during the early '20s. Tex Ivy and the Texas Ranch Boys were on the radio here during the '30s. Jimmy Durante told me once that he per-



Bostonia Ballroom interior, 1932.

formed on a local vaudeville stage during the late '20s. The Maddox Brothers and Rose owned a couple of country night spots here in the area during the '40s. Woody Guthrie and Lefty Lou played on the radio and made personal appearances here in the '30s (with Woody's cousin Jack). During the Swing Era, bands led by locals (Jack McLean, Russ Plummer, and others) in addition to all the nationally known bands played at both the Bostonia Ballroom and at the Pacific Ballroom as well as at Pacific

this stuff should call me at Folk Arts Rare Records, 619/282-7833 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. daily. You'll be doing your city and area a musical favor.

Now, understand that these are just two of San Diego's landmarks of music history. Recordings might exist from places like the old Sportsman Club (at 30th and Imperial), the Crossroads (at 5th and Market), the Westerner (in National City), the Clock (in Imperial Beach), the 21 Club (in National City), the Buckaroo Club, the College Inn or one of the 11 other clubs that Jimmy Kennedy owned, which were mostly in the downtown area. There are also the area's early coffeehouses, such as Circe's Cup near SDSU, the Upper Cellar out on El Cajon Blvd. east of College Avenue, the Ballad Man in La Jolla, the Heritage in Mission Beach, and many other places I'm leaving out. Tapes were even made at shows that took place at the old San Diego Arena or Swiss Park in Chula Vista.

If these kind of recordings were made available at the time they were



Spade Cooley's band



Bostonia Ballroom exterior, 1932.



The old Bostonia Ballroom today.

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## front porch

# What Becomes of a Troubadour? Songs in the Key of Andrew

by Sandra Castillo

One would be hard pressed not to find an escape, mainly in the retreat of an inviting coffeehouse, from the rigors of life in downtown San Diego. Within the city's bustling Gaslamp district convenes a coterie of those kinds of businesses catering to the masses that engage in the fine art of latte, espresso fetishes, and cordial conversation.

And so it was in the summer of 2003 I found that sublime combination of perfect Southern California weather, brew, and interview to catch up with Andrew Beacock, San Diego musician-troubadour-artist and frequent visitor to vintage clothing shops. My first question for him was contemplative.

"What is life?" (inquiry and immediate reference to George Harrison's 1970 mainstay of the same title).

"Aah, it takes me back to...well, what year was that out? In 1970, I think. It's exciting now. Whatever it is, it's exciting! I've always got things I'm working toward. Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans, as John [Lennon] would always say," he chimed.

Andrew Beacock began making plans, musical ones, many years ago. His humble beginnings can be traced to a

small village in Lincolnshire, England. It was there that storytelling in the celebrated tradition of time-honored English-Irish-Scottish folk music influenced the young one. As an adolescent, Andrew would frequent the local record shops to buy 45s and 78s; playing these discovered treasures at friends' homes helped cultivate his appreciation for music. Early Elvis, Buddy Holly, and Jerry Lee Lewis piqued his curiosity and assembled the foundation for what was to become the cornerstone of his musical career. When his middle brother went away to school, he later returned with the very first Bob Dylan album in tow. Listening to this masterpiece proceeded to shift the dynamics of Andrew's imagination and, ultimately, ambitions.

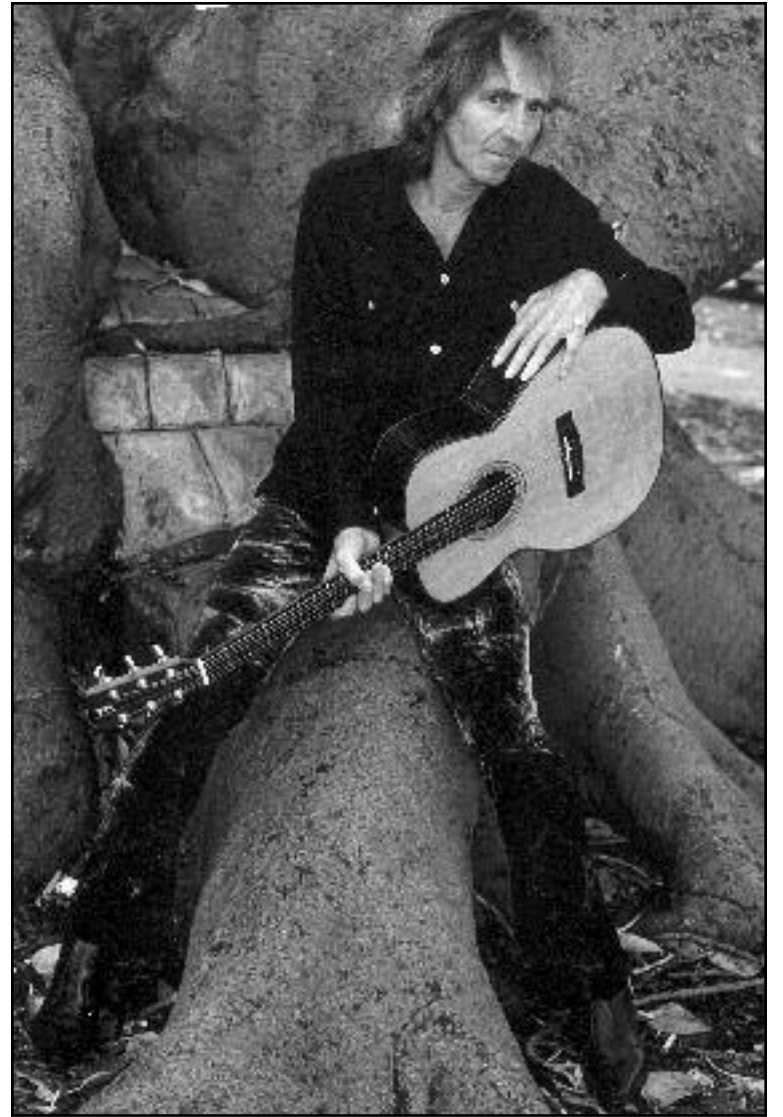
"It became the next big change in what I was listening to," he mused. Soon afterward, he procured a six string and devoted his energies to this newfound *inamorata*.

Andrew's talent and determination, without being presumptuous, took him on a dulcet journey, which found him sojourns in several rock bands. His musical heroes, including the likes of John Martyn and Bert Jansch, were viable requisites to the rising folk-rock scene. In the mid-to-late sixties, the decade saw promise with Jimi Hendrix, Fairport

Convention, and Donovan. He began to attend and play festivals throughout England. As fortune would have it, Andrew and company were able to have a go at prominence and, eventually, the band opened for the Jeff Beck Group (Rod Stewart, Mick Waller, Ron Wood, and Jeff Beck) in 1968.

America soon reached for Andrew's attention. With the coming-of-age movement galvanizing the poignancy and truth of some of this country's finest musical pioneers—the Byrds, Buffalo Springfield, Jefferson Airplane—it was just a matter of time before Andrew would call this country his home. In 1974, he came to the United States and stayed.

These days, Andrew Beacock's music is best described as traditional and left open to individual interpretation. It hails from the 17th and 18th centuries and is captivating, profound in its gist. His eclectic style, along with his groovy penchant for sixties culture, is striking with individuality and personalized flair. He often performs acoustic sets at local San Diego coffeehouses, including Lestat's (Normal Heights), Gelato Vero Caffe (Mission Hills), and Javanican in Pacific Beach. Andrew's original compositions, "That's What John Said," "Old Holland Blues," and "Ivich," a most lovely instrumental, amassed sufficient



Andrew Beacock

acclaim to land him a guest spot on "San Diego Live" and 2002's Gramfest, the annual two-day concert event in Joshua Tree, California, commemorating the untimely death of the late, great Gram Parsons.

This talent in motion has also entertained vast audiences, hungry for folklore, at the Adams Avenue Roots Festival and most recently at Huell Howser's day-long gala in Twentynine Palms. Most will recognize Howser from the KPBS series *California's Gold*, which follows the perennial host on his quest to bring the best of the Golden State to television viewers. Along with performing, Andrew has also bestowed harmonies and sage

on the Shambles' *Chelsea Smiles* album, in which he shares vocal duties alongside fellow rocker Bart Mendoza on the standout track, "Hide and Seek."

Andrew's musical odyssey has been and continues to be the one others will sing about centuries from now. That is what becomes of a troubadour.



## Sheb Wooley Rides into the Sunset

by Lyle Duplessie

On the same week that saw the death of Johnny Cash, Shelby F. Wooley, better known as Sheb Wooley, also died. He was 82. Whereas Cash had long been an American icon, the much lesser known Wooley also contributed substantially to the American cultural fabric. You might just say that he was too busy to become a super star.

If you are a senior or a baby boomer, you probably have experienced him as a singer, songwriter, actor, and comedian, even unknowingly. In the world of entertainment he was universal. Under different circumstances, who knows, perhaps he had what it took to be another Will Rogers.

As a singer, Wooley is probably best known for his comedy songs,

the most famous of which was "Purple People Eater." This multi-million selling pop and country hit was written and released hot on the heels of the Soviet Union's successful probe into outer space with Sputnik. Like a folksy version of Weird Al, Wooley also wrote parody versions of well known songs of the day. When Rex Allen scored a major hit with "Don't Go Near the Indians," Wooley answered back with his Ben Colder alter ego version, "Don't Go Near the Eskimos." Political correctness be damned. Wooley/Ben Colder went on to write a career's worth of parody songs, most of which were in the country vein. In 1968 the Country Music Association gave Wooley its Comedian of the Year Award. A year later he became an original cast member of *Hee Haw* and even wrote the show's theme song.

When not in Nashville, Wooley could usually be found in Hollywood. He arrived there from his native Oklahoma to try his hand as a singing cowboy. He soon learned that this movie genre was out. His acting talent did not go unnoticed, however, and he would work in more than 60 movies. He played a villain/outlaw to Gary Cooper's hero/marshall character in the Western classic *High Noon*. He also played in Clint

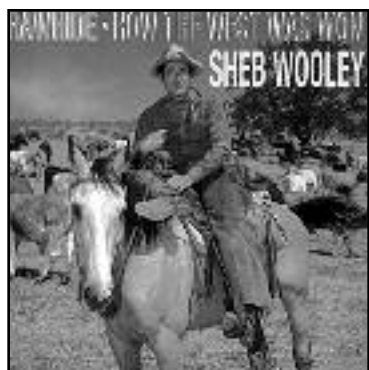


Wooley in his later years

Eastwood's *The Outlaw Josey Wales* and with John Wayne and Kirk Douglas in *The War Wagon*.

Wooley appeared in television as well, ranging from episodes of *The Lone Ranger* to roles in *Murder She Wrote*. Many may remember him as cattle drive trail scout, Pete Nolan, in the long-running Western series, *Rawhide*, which also starred a young Clint Eastwood. Wooley wrote several episodes for the show.

Wooley's seven-decade career in entertainment was comprehensive. Whether he basked in the spotlight or played second fiddle to bigger names, it didn't seem to matter. He was an extremely talented man who could fill a niche, whenever and wherever needed in true troubadour fashion.



One of Wooley's many albums

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# front porch



## Peggy Watson: A Great Talent Stays Close to Home

by Paul Hornick



Even in the big city of San Diego the term "local talent" can carry the connotation of second best. We'll spend the big bucks and stand in long lines for Jewel now that the rest of the world knows her name but won't feel like making that much of an effort for the musicians who are singing and strumming on the stages where Jewel used to perform when she lived here.

It is not always talent that separates the local from the national acts. Luck, ambition, and personal choices also make the difference between the big record deal and playing for tips at the local coffee shop. "Local" does not mean second best, as proven by singer songwriter Peggy Watson.

With a beautiful soprano voice, comparable to the young Joan Baez, there is no doubt that the strength of her talents could have given her the life of a full-time singer-songwriter, with recording contracts and a calendar filled with tour dates. Watson chose not to pursue that career path. She has worked as a full-time middle school teacher and as a mother to her now full-grown daughters. And as of this writing, she has just completed her master's degree in counseling.

She does not regret the choice she has made. Watson was never interested in the touring and other obligations required of a professional musician because she wanted to be near her two daughters as they grew up. And she likes her independence from the big music industry. "Even if I were offered a deal, I don't think I could handle being under the thumb of a record company," she says.

Two singer-songwriters that come up when Watson talks about her influences are John Prine and Joni Mitchell. She admires them for their ability to create stunning images in only a few words. She says of Prine in particular, "He can take a topic so personal, and the way he writes allows the listener to own the song."

She emulates that sparse style by

taking a "slash and burn" approach to her own songwriting. If she feels a line or verse is redundant or doesn't help the song along, she takes it out. "I've learned that I don't need every detail. I don't need to explain everything," she says. "I'll write ten verses and pick three that I like." At first she was reluctant to trim a line or verse, but as she has worked in critiquing sessions with other singer songwriters, particularly Dave Beldock and Joy Eden Harrison, she found that paring her songs down improved them.

The students in her classroom, the life of a prostitute, or a romance in a shipyard — all these are subjects for Watson's songs. "Nothing is off limits for me," she says. "My focus is to write whatever feels right to me." It is important to her that her songs are melodic, so she listens to a wide variety of music, from experimental to Latin. She believes that her wide-ranging tastes help inspire her compositions.

Besides performing, teaching, raising a family, and completing a master's degree, she has recorded five CDs. "I have a high level of energy," she says as she explains her accomplishments. She adds that her family has been supportive of her as she has worked to achieve her goals.

Committed to social causes, Watson performs often for the Peace Resource Center and other organizations that promote peace, education, and environmental concerns. She donates a percentage of the profits from her CD sales to organizations with these goals.

Watson will be joined by singer Robin Adler and bassist Dave Curits on November 8 for a performance at the United Methodist Church in Encinitas. Call the S.D. Folk Heritage (858/566-4040) or visit [peggywatsonsongs.com](http://peggywatsonsongs.com) for more information.



by John Philip Wyllie

The Beatles were without a doubt the most influential rock band of the 1960s. Beginning in the mid-sixties and throughout the seventies, eighties, and nineties, they have remained incredibly popular. Bands continue to copy their style and credit their musicianship as a major source of inspiration. With their enormous impact still being felt nearly 40 years after they first burst upon the American music scene, a market has developed for bands that can faithfully reproduce their music. Tribute bands have sprung up just about everywhere, including several in San Diego. Among the most unique is a quartet of South Bay musicians known collectively as the Baja Bugs, who focus on the band's early sound and on the music that inspired the Beatles.

The latest incarnation of the Bugs features founding members Hector Penalosa (lead vocals and bass) and Xavier Anaya (lead guitar, backing vocals), along with Fernando Alarcon (lead and backing vocals, rhythm guitar) and Ricky Serrano (drums).

While most Beatles tribute bands focus on the Beatles' best-known material, the Baja Bugs almost ignore it. Instead, they play their much more obscure pre-1964 music. Performing



Baja Bugs at Beatle Fair's "Liverpool Days" last December in Pasadena.

## Are Better than Ever



Baja Bugs at this year's Adams Avenue Street Fair, left to right: Hector Penalosa, Xavier Araya, Ricky Serrano, and Fernando Alarcon.

songs from the Beatles' Cavern Club period, the Bugs have found their niche. Their repertoire consists largely of songs that were unknown to most Beatles fans prior to the 1994 release of the *Beatles Live at the BBC* along with some better known tunes from their first few albums.

"When I started playing at the age of 10, the Beatles were the band that I listened to," explained drummer Ricky Serrano. "I also listened to a lot of R&B and the Motown stuff too, but I listened to the Beatles a lot. They were it. Their music gave me a good start."

"What people forget about the Beatles, is that they were originally just a rock 'n' roll band," said Alarcon, the Bugs' newest member. "We try to follow those same pure rock 'n' roll roots."

"Their songs are very well crafted, have a lot of energy and have a positive message," Penalosa said. "They are fun to listen to and fun to play."

The Baja Bugs often perform Friday nights at the Hot Monkey Love Café near SDSU. Most Saturday nights will find them at Tivoli's, located at Sixth and Island Avenues in downtown San Diego.

Despite the fact that the current lineup has worked together for only a short time, they have managed to suc-

cessfully capture the raw sound and essence of the early Beatles. The Bugs, in one form or another, have been entertaining audiences since 1998.

"We used to go to [Beatles] conventions as spectators, but being musicians ourselves, we always tended to criticize the other musicians," Penalosa explained. "We started to realize that there are some good bands playing there, but also some really bad ones. We thought to ourselves that we could do better and as a challenge, we decided to get something going and get involved. Having performed at San Diego's annual July Beatlefair on several occasions and at Beatleests in Los Angeles and Pasadena, the Baja Bugs are looking to build on their success as they continue to grow as a band."

"A few years ago, a friend of mine was getting married and like me, he was a huge Beatles fan," Penalosa explained. "He really wanted a Beatles tribute band to play at his wedding, so he called around." Penalosa's friend found out that the going rate for such a band was way out of his price range. Learning about his dilemma, a light went on in Penalosa's head. "We told him we would do it for whatever he could afford." And thus, the Baja Bugs were formed. Several years and more than a few lineup changes later, the Baja Bugs are sounding better than ever.

"It's been an evolutionary process," said Penalosa. "With Fernando, we now have two [primary] vocalists and on some of the songs you really need two. He can also play the harmonica, which comes in handy on songs like "Little Child." I think it sounds much better now [with the two primary vocalists]. Singing the lead in every song can put a strain on your voice. Now I can take a break and when we sing together, it gives us more punch."

For additional information, contact Penalosa at: (619) 206-9058.

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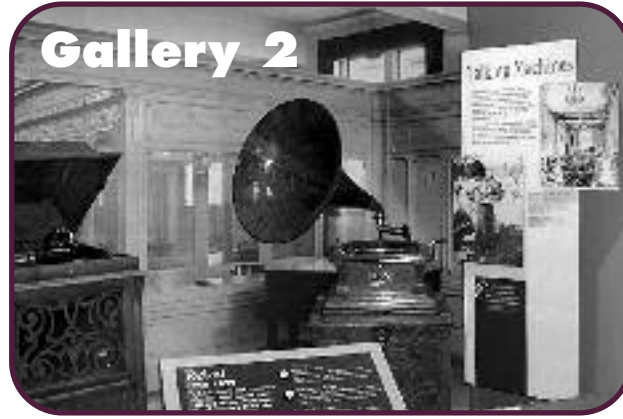
## parlor showcase

by Lyle Duplessie

# The Museum of Making Music



Gallery 1



Gallery 2



Gallery 3

Not much, if anything, gets past Phil Harmonic, the Troubadour's own man-about-town. Recently he steered me to the "must see" Museum of Making Music in Carlsbad, heretofore unbeknownst to me. In a nutshell, this museum displays the sights and sounds of 100 years plus of music in America. Hey, we're talking about the mother lode of Americana music history, and it's just a stone's throw away from any point in the county!

The museum is divided into five galleries, each representing a specific era in American music making. Each gallery pays homage to the music, innovations, as well as the manufacturing and business end of its particular era.

The first gallery is titled **America's Music Industry Comes of Age: 1890-1909**. It provides a sight and sound sampling of a period when America began establishing its own unique musical identity. This was a time when much of the music in this country was being played on instruments purchased from a Sears/Roebuck catalogue. It was homemade and regional music in its purest form.

The second gallery, **A Long Boom Before the Bust: 1910-1929**, highlights the huge strides made in American music, which coincided with an ever-growing population and a robust economy. This era may have started out with the quaint sounds of the parlor piano, but those sounds evolved into ragtime and matured into decadent jazz by the time of the October 29th stock market crash.

Gallery three is named, interestingly, **We'll Try Anything Years: 1930-1949**. Exhibits in this gallery cover the cultural, political, economic, and social upheavals fostered by the Great Depression, World War II, and the war's immediate aftermath. With the depression came an end to the American piano industry and home-made musical entertainment. Parlor pianos would soon be replaced with parlor radios. The radio, talking motion pictures, air travel, and other new-fangled contrivances, saw the country's musical tastes transition from home-spun folksiness and regional trends to the birth of a national pop culture.

Gallery four, **The Baby Boom Sparks Dynamic Growth: 1950-1969**, further traces the cultural revolutions of the '50s and '60s. Though radio remained important for a nation on the move, the preferred mode of entertainment now came by way of television.

It was one thing to hear Elvis, but it was altogether different both hearing him and seeing him. Parlor pianos were long gone, but home made music was back again. This time, however, the source of the sound was the garage. Guitars, drum kits, amps, and everything else an aspiring rock band needed were in high demand. Civil rights, JFK's assassination, the Beatles, the Vietnam War, the space race — the best of America's music echoed both the triumphs and tragedies of this era.

Gallery five, **The World Turned Upside Down: 1970-1989**, emphasizes the electronic-

digital technological revolution. If you're interested in the development of Moog synthesizers and MIDI software, this is your spot. On display and of particular interest is LEO, short for Live Electronic Orchestra. This one-of-a-kind mother of all keyboards was built in 1974 and is credited with inspiring today's MIDI technology.

Museums are meant to be experienced and this is particularly true of the Museum of Making Music. With its vast array of musical instruments and audio and video clips, it's the next best thing to actually reliving the times it chronicles. It often features temporary displays of significant interest as well. Last summer there was an exhaustive display of Martin guitars. Since September and through the month of November the museum's exhibit, appropriately named "Eclectic Electric" has scores of historic electric guitars on view. This display includes the priceless Rickenbacher "Frying Pan," the first ever electric guitar. There is also an interactive stage where visitors are allowed to get their hands on some of the instruments to play. Guest speakers and performers have been scheduled throughout the exhibit.

The Museum of Making Music is located at 5790 Armada Drive in Carlsbad. Days and hours are Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m.--5 p.m.. General admission is \$5, seniors and students are \$3, and children under 3 are admitted free. For additional information call 760/438-5997.

## Taylor Guitars and the Museum of Making Music Celebrate 30 Years of Guitar-Building Innovation

Bob Taylor built his first guitar in his 11th grade wood shop class. An impressive effort, it features a back and sides of Indian rosewood, a Sitka spruce top, and maple neck. For the inlays on the fingerboard and soundhole rosette, Taylor hand-cut the mother-of-pearl from abalone shells he harvested while diving off the coast of La Jolla. That was in 1972. Since then, hundreds of models have come out of Bob Taylor's shop, many of which are on display now at the Museum of Making Music.

### TAYLOR GUITARS ON DISPLAY

#### Taylor Dreadnought (ca. 1974-75)

One of the earliest guitars to come out of the original Lemon Grove shop.

#### Bob Taylor's 810 (ca. 1975)

First official Taylor model built after much design experimentation.

#### Pallet Guitar (1995)

Built from a rain-soaked, oak shopping pallet to demonstrate that good sound comes from design.

#### LKSM (ca. 1988)

The Leo Kottke Signature Model

#### Cujo Guitar (1983)

Built from the wood of a giant black walnut tree, which was featured in the film, *Cujo*, the namesake of a rabid Saint Bernard in a novel by Steven King.

#### Baby Taylor

A three-quarter size "travel" guitar, used by many.

#### Liberty Tree Guitar (1999)

Named after the designated tree in each of the 13 Colonies where Americans could conspire to gain independence. This model was made from the wood of the last remaining Liberty Tree, located in Annapolis, and decorated with inlaid patriotic designs.



# parlor showcase



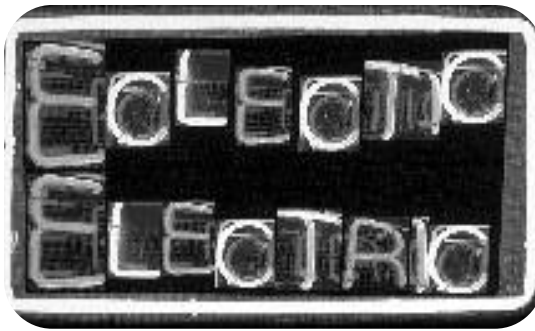
## AMERICANA MUSIC ON DISPLAY



**Gallery 4**



**Gallery 5**



### THE FRYING PAN AND THE ELECTRIC GUITAR

The history of the electric guitar starts, as any kid could understand, from the desire of guitar players to make the instrument louder. This was attempted by increasing the size of the guitars' soundboxes, and by adding megaphone-like amplifying horns to guitars. If you played guitar, you just knew it would feel better if the sound could be louder (and you wanted to be heard more clearly in ensemble situations, wanted to have more power to move dancers and listeners when playing to crowds).

George Beauchamp (pronounced Beech-um) was a guitar player himself, and a man on a quest. In the mid-1920s he saw a guitar with an amplifying horn added to it and went looking for someone to build one for him. He found John Dopyera, a violin repairman whose shop was close to Beauchamp's Los Angeles home. Dopyera and his brother Rudy reluctantly built him a guitar with a Victrola phonograph horn attached to the bottom. Beauchamp played the thing on the vaudeville circuit; he got a good response to the weirdness of the instrument's appearance . . . but it sounded terrible. Phonographs at that time were non-electric and worked thanks to a pickup head that transmitted sound from the stylus to a small mica disc, which amplified the sound like a banjo skin or the paper in a kazoo. The sound was then transmitted to the listener via the horn. Beauchamp asked John Dopyera to make another guitar, this time using the mica disc principle. Dopyera tried various materials and ended up with a guitar using three conical-shaped aluminum resonators inside an all-metal body. Beauchamp was pleased, found an investor, and the result was the founding in 1927 of the National String Instrument Company, which started out making the tricone guitars for Hawaiian guitar and jazz players, but the pleasingly loud and resonant National guitar was soon discovered by and became a favorite of blues players. In 1928 Tampa Red was the first country blues artist to record with a National steel resonator-type guitar, followed soon by the likes of Son House, Bukka White and Bumble Bee Slim.

National Resophonic Guitars, Inc. still exists today, now based in San Luis Obispo and still turning out great-sounding metal guitars, but American entrepreneurship being what it is, by 1930 John Dopyera had quit (he then formed the Dobro Corporation and went on making fine resonator guitars)

and new management at National had fired founder and former general manager George Beauchamp.



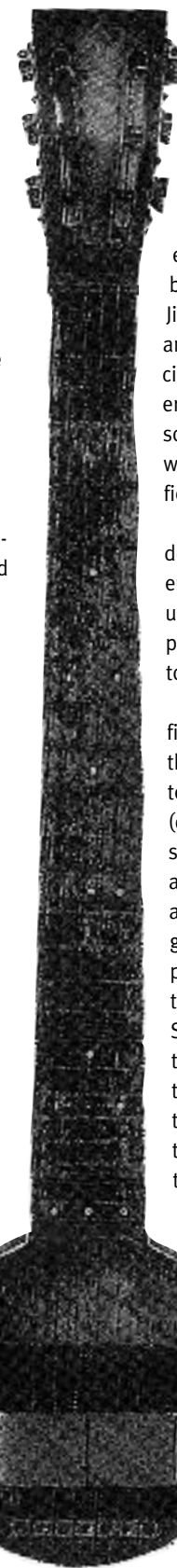
George Beauchamp

Beauchamp was still looking for ways to increase the volume of the guitar. He'd been experimenting with a single-string electric guitar as early as 1925, believing a device could be developed that would pick up the vibrations of a guitar string and convert them into proportional variation in electrical current which in turn could be amplified by the sort of tube amplifier then used in radios.

This month, the Museum of Making Music wraps up the series **String Fever: A Century of Guitar Fascination**, a hundred year retrospective on hollow-body, acoustic, and electric guitars.

**Eclectic Electric** focuses on the prototype of the world's first commercially successful electric guitar, dubbed the Rickenbacker "Frying Pan." On loan from the Smithsonian Institute, it is only the second time that this unusual guitar has been on public display. The following was excerpted from an essay written by Paul Williams for the Museum of Making Music.

In 1930, Beauchamp, working with a collaborator, Paul Barth, developed a working pickup out of two horseshoe-shaped magnets. Guitar strings passed through pole pieces



located so as to concentrate an independent magnetic field over each string. The real triumph of Beauchamp and Barth's invention, Museum of Making Music curator Dan Del Fiorentino points out, was their decision to enclose the pickup within the coil, so that the magneto-electric field over each string was isolated, making the amplification of that string's sound very directed, making possible a volume and power far beyond anything available at the time. The music of Jimi Hendrix and Howlin' Wolf and Pete Townshend and Kurt Cobain and a hundred million other beneficiaries of Beauchamp's determined quest for a louder guitar originated at the moment in Beauchamp's south Los Angeles home when he and Barth found a way to construct such well-barricaded independent fields over each string in their new instrument.

When Beauchamp felt satisfied with the pickup design, he asked Harry Watson, plant superintendent at National, to make a guitar to mount the pickup on. Watson carved the Frying Pan out of a single piece of maple in a few hours, working with hand tools at Beauchamp's kitchen table.

What gives the Frying Pan its distinction as the first true or modern electric guitar, are these factors: that "its electromagnetic pickup is essentially the technology used on all electric guitars today" (quote from the 1996 Smithsonian electric guitar show), whereas the electrified-by-amplifier-attached-to-the-soundboard acoustic guitars such as the one offered by Stromberg-Voisinet failed to gain acceptance largely because of feedback noise produced by the guitars' f-holes. A related factor is that the cast-aluminum Frying Pan the Electro String Corp made based on Watson's wooden prototype was, certainly, the first solid body electric guitar, although Les Paul's 1941 "log" was the breakthrough, partly because of its looks (once Paul cut the body off a Spanish-style guitar and glued it to the original four-by-four), in getting guitar players and makers to accept the "solid body" concept.

Another factor in the Frying Pan's claim to a place in history is its commercial success in 1932 and 1933 (giving the electric guitar some

credibility with the music industry and with musicians and the public).

Beauchamp's entrepreneurial instincts were not discouraged by his experi-

ence at National. Eager to manufacture the new guitar, Beauchamp convinced his friend Adolph Rickenbacker, owner and operator of a tool and die plant that made metal bodies for the National guitars, to join him in starting a new business to make and sell the Frying Pan. The business was first called Ro-Pat-In, then Electro String, but the guitars themselves were called



Adolph Rickenbacker

*continued on page 11*



## ramblin'

## Bluegrass Corner

by Dwight Worden

The **International Bluegrass Music Awards (IBMA)** took place in October in Louisville, Kentucky. This is the bluegrass equivalent of the Oscar or Grammy awards, complete with a five-day trade show, seminars, an awards banquet, and a three-day festival called Fan Fest. This year may have been the best ever. The awards show was hosted by **Alison Krauss** and **Dan Tyminski** of Alison Krauss and Union Station and produced by San Diego's own **Wayne Rice** of KSON radio's "Bluegrass Show" together with the able assistance of local talent **Tom Cunningham**. Highlights of the event included the induction of **J.D. Crowe** into the Bluegrass Hall of Honor, emceed by his long time pal **Sonny Osborn**, with an on-stage announcement by Sonny and **Ricky Skaggs** that J.D. will be joining the Grand Ole Opry as a member.

There were many awards given; **Rhonda Vincent** took home top honors for Female Vocalist of the year, **Dan Tyminski** won as Top Male Vocalist, the **Del McCoury Band** was named Entertainer of the Year, **Ricky Skaggs** and **Kentucky Thunder** claimed Instrumental Group of the Year, **Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver** bagged Vocal Group of the Year, "Blue Train" by **Doyle Lawson** won as Song of the Year, **Alison Krauss and Union Station Live** was awarded Album of the Year, **Kenny and Amanda Smith** took the award for Emerging Artist of the Year, **Doyle Lawson** won Gospel Performance of the Year for "The Hand Made Cross," **Aubrey Haynie's The Bluegrass Fiddle Album** took Instrumental Album of the Year, and **Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Vol. III** was awarded Recorded Event of the Year.

**Bryan Sutton** was honored as Guitar Player of the Year, **Jason Carter** took Fiddle Player of the Year, **Adam Steffey** walked off with the mandolin award, **Rob Ickes** won Dobro Player of the Year, **Jim Mills** claimed the banjo player award, and **Mike Bub** snagged the bass player award.

The IBMA week included a literal *Who's Who* of bluegrass performers: **Illrd Tyme Out**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Del McCoury**, **Alison Krauss**, **Blue Highway**, **Lonesome River Band**, **Doyle Lawson**, **J.D. Crowe**, **Mountain Heart**, and on and on, including San Diego's own **Chris Stuart** who performed with **Janet Beezley** at the songwriters showcase. Performing artists donate their services for these concerts and all the proceeds go to the IBMA Emergency fund, which helps artists with health crises or other emergencies, so ticket purchasers' dollars go to a great cause. A highlight of the week for me was seeing our own **Gary Kennedy** (who emceeds SDDBS events) get the first hug from **Rhonda Vincent** when she won female vocalist of the year—she darn near drug him up on stage with her!

The IBMA awards week will be held in Louisville again next year, but will move to Nashville in 2005. If you've ever considered attending this event, why not go next year to feel, hear, smell, and enjoy the special ambience of this Louisville event, set in the heartland of bluegrass and coal country.

On the local scene, the San Diego Bluegrass Society hosted a great concert in October by **David Parmley and Continental Divide** at the First Baptist Church of Pacific Beach. The crowd also enjoyed an opening set by hot new local group **Gone Tomorrow**. Continental Divide boasts two members from the



**Bluegrass Cardinals**, one of the great bluegrass bands of all time, which put out 15 successful CDs, did many Grand Ole Opry and **Ralph Emry** shows, played for the president on the White House lawn, and won the IBMA Recorded Event of the Year together with the McCoury family.

Want to know where you can see, hear, and play bluegrass music locally on a regular basis? Join us for one of the following regular events:

First Tuesday of the month: **North County Bluegrass/Folk Club** Round Table Pizza Ash and Washington Streets Escondido, 7-10pm.

Second Tuesday of the month: **San Diego Bluegrass Society** Fuddrucker's Grossmont Shopping Ctr., La Mesa, 7-10pm.

Third Tuesday of the month: **San Diego Bluegrass Society** (features open mike and jam) Fuddrucker's 340 Third Ave., Chula Vista 7-10pm.

Fourth Tuesday of the month: **San Diego Bluegrass Society** (bluegrass jam) Shirley's Kitchen El Cajon Blvd. at Baltimore Dr., La Mesa, 6-9pm.

Third Wednesday of the month: **Lighthouse** performs at the Golden Goose Coffee House, 10001 Maine St., Lakeside, 7-9pm. Visit [www.waynerice.com/lighthse.htm](http://www.waynerice.com/lighthse.htm) for more information. See you soon!

## RADIO DAZE

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by Jim McInnes

## MIXED MEDIA

**M**y wife works in the television business, while I work in radio (although I've worked in television and my wife spent 14 years in radio ... our daughter spent six years in the radio biz before moving to television two months ago, and our son has been on the tube quite a lot, mostly overseas, but he's not in either racket!).

Huh?

We're a "mixed media" family.

My wife is the beautiful and talented Sandi Banister, who, since the last century, has been Promotions Manager/Media Buyer for KSWB-TV 5/69, San Diego's WB station. back in 1978 she and I locked eyes across a crowded room at a Sea World media party (Yes...it was just like "Some Enchanted Evening"! I thought, "Rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr (the sound of a lion in heat), what a dish!" (1940's slang is timeless.) Someone told me that she was not only the assistant program director and music director for my radio competition, (the original) KPRI-FM 106.5, but also that she was married to one of their deejays!

"What a lucky guy he is," I thought.

One evening in early 1979 I stopped at an associate's house to purchase some, er, "party favors." Out of the corner of my eye I noticed a blonde woman in an adjacent room. When she joined my friend and me, a jolt of electricity shot down my spine!



Jim McInnes

It was Sandi! "Now's my chance to charm her," I thought. As we shuffled through a pile of LPs, I cleverly commented to her, "I suppose you only like that Barbra Streisand kinda shit, huh?" (What a charming thing to say to the second-in-command at the rock radio competition. ...you'll get some action tonight, Jimbo!) She replied, "Actually, I'm a big fan of Led Zeppelin. I also love The Police and a bunch of other stuff YOU'VE probably never heard of [jerk]!" Thus began a long discussion about music and the radio business.

It was the beginning of what was to become a minor scandal.

*Continued in the December issue of the San Diego Troubadour.*



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# Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

We continue to mourn the loss of America's First Prince, whose airborne throne crashed tragically into a sea of darkness. Though he is gone, he left us much, and we still, on occasion, sip from the unfilled cup of his creative wad.

Thank you, John Denver. Thank you.

John Denver unknowingly helped educate me about the value of the Apology nearly three decades ago. Suddenly, "love means never having to say you're sorry" became even more fatuous than "rape means never having to say 'I love you'" (a parody of mine for which I am often quite honestly sorry).

It was during the mid-'70s. Phil Harmonic (my elder by a few years and several lifetimes of experience) impressed me with his wrenching hatred of a line from a John Denver song. Phil's voice was turned up to 11, his eyes shooting fire as he stood and willed his legs not to propel him through the nearest wall of his cozy Ocean Beach house.

"I'm sorry for the ways things are in China?" he screamed, as if for the benefit of those in China who might not have been paying attention. "What B.S.! What the (gosh-darn-heck) does he know about China? What (fornicating) right does *he* have to talk about the situation in China?"

It took me more than a moment to see Phil's point; I had been naively assuming that the popular singer who had been "born in the summer of his 22nd year" had mysteriously done something to undermine the infrastructure, perhaps, of China. But Phil, as usual, saw the truth. The "I'm sorry" wasn't an apology at all, just a bit of lit-

erary sympathy for something the artist himself couldn't fully understand, sung through a veil of absurd self-aggrandizement.

Nearly 30 years later I am again at Phil Harmonic's house, now located in University Heights. I am on my knees (for effect, of course, but with honest humility) apologizing to Phil for having been so wrong about an aspect of our musical rehearsal the day before. "It was entirely my fault," I offer, struggling to mask my nervousness. "I was completely wrong and I apologize. I don't know why I was so incredibly stupid." (Phil probably does.)

Phil smiles, nods, says it's okay, and immediately moves on to other matters. My shame turns into relief and we engage in a productive rehearsal.

Never underestimate the value of cleansing the soul.

And never overlook the continuing need for that cleansing, as news reports reveal the blinding dirt our souls are bathing in.

At his sentencing for robbery, assault, and attempted murder, the 18-year-old defendant addresses the injured family: "I'm sorry for what happened."

And people are buying that horse (feces). Why? Because we've been carefully manipulated to eat Spin for breakfast.

He's not sorry that he *did* those crimes. No, he was just there when they "happened." (And he's sorry he was caught.)

I want to run through Phil's wall myself.

I could have bodily drilled through the Great Wall of China, actually, when I opened my *Union-Tribune* to page A2 on September 14. The headline was intriguing: "Shot security officers

Photo: Toots von Weston



The debonaire Mr. Sinatra

buried; U.S. offers apology for deaths."

I couldn't believe it. I actually trembled. Our country is really apologizing for gunning down a bunch of innocents? Our arrogant, imperial nation is owning up to some misdeed? Will I now be able to bond with a fellow on-the-record penitent, a country, no less? Are the Hose and the U.S. finally to become one? Will my celebrity seed now flow into her amber waves of granola?

One may still dream.

No, reading further, Lt. Col. George Krivo's "apology" consisted of this truly humiliating soul-cleansing:

"We wish to express our deep regret for this incident to the families that have lost loved ones, and express our sincerest condolences."

So. We're sorry the incident "happened." Yeah. Isn't everybody? But, hey, who was responsible? John Denver?

Our country certainly needs a soul-cleansing, consoling hug now, just as surely as I might need a slap upside my superb face for getting all political now. I trust I'll be forgiven. At least by my daughter Elaina.

You see, it just happened.



# RANTHOUSE

## THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE (WELL, MOSTLY)

by Gus T. Williker

### Takin' yer Lumps at Lestat's

Normally, the folks behind the counter at a cute coffeehouse are extra folksy nice. Kinda like the hippie chick that offers you free hummus at Henry's — they're sweet cuz it's in their nature. But, normally don't play in Normal Heights, nor Lestat's coffeehouse on Adams Ave.

Now yeah, I'll qualify my angry rant with this: I've only been to Lestat's one time, but that was 'bout enough.

My problem? The petulant poseur punks acting like pieholes behind the counter. What... is this place trying to be Dick's Last Resort East?

It went down like this. I dragged into the place on a Sunday evening, hopin' to hear plucky folk tunes and maybe some bad-but-earnest poetry. I'd just finished helping a buddy paint his house, and I was sportin' a bespangled green t-shirt and a green mesh hat (that features an American flag patch). The café has indoor seating, outdoor seating, and a performance room next door. Now I don't know if the pissant behind the counter figured I was a war monger, just cuz I dared wear an item of clothing with the stars 'n stripes, or he's just regularly ill-natured, but he wernt welcoming one bit.

Gus: "Could I have a medium hot choco-

late please?"

PPP: "For here or to go?"

Gus: "Well, I'm going next door, so I uh..."

PPP: "Do yooooo want a styrofoam cup or a porcelain mug?" (delivered with an audible huffy sigh and condescension galore)

Now here's where it gets sad. A Gus with guts woulda said something ballsy or sarcastic, like "Ya know, I was listening to punk rock while you were still crappin' mochas into yer plastic Pampers," but I didn't. I stammered and blubbered 'bout how I didn't know if you could take a porcelain mug over to the performance room or not, and so I wasn't sure if I could choose a mug, blah, blah. He was unimpressed by my excuses, and went into ignore mode. I quietly waited for my drink.

Now here's where it gets sadder... I tipped that lil' bastard a buck-fifty! He's a [bleep], but I'M THE SCHMUCK!

### SSN

Everybody Hurts when they're exposed to R.E.M.'s music. It's the End of the World as We Know It? No, but I am worried 'bout losing my lunch, let alone my religion. So, as rapid eye movement is to music, and acronyms are for causes, I've formed an important group to stem the tide of turdy tunes: SSN (STOP STIPE

Photo courtesy of Heidi Calvert (www.budgetproductions.com)



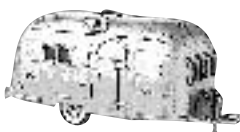
Our man for all seasons, Gus Williker

### NOW!

I know, this club shoulda bin formed back in 1991, when the world first heard "Shiny Happy People," but it's not like we're Out of Time. There's still an opportunity to put an end to this madness, and I Believe we can Stand up and be counted. Call yer state representative, steam-roll a stack of Monster CDs, but please Get Up and do something. Take my Good Advices; it's the right thing to do. So, until Stipe stops undoing eight years worth of good albums, you can find me hiding Underneath the Bunker with earmuffs.

xoxo,  
Gus

Wanna e-torch Gus?  
Gus@WhiteHotTrash.com



continued from page 9.

Rickenbackers because Adolph's cousin Eddie Rickenbacker had been a war hero and made the family name famous (also, it was easier to pronounce than Beauchamp).

Beauchamp left the company and the music business in 1940. In the 1960s, the public would again become familiar with the name Rickenbacker, though World War One was long forgotten, because several of the Beatles played Rickenbackers very publicly and lovingly, and because the distinctive sound of the Byrds' hit records "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Turn, Turn, Turn" was known to be based around Roger McGuinn's 12-string Rickenbacker electric guitar.

George Beauchamp filed a patent application for the Frying Pan in 1932. The patent was not granted until 1937, by which time other inventors had developed and marketed electric guitars of their own.

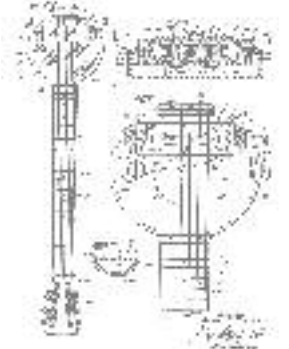
In many ways the modern era of the electric guitar seems to have begun in 1948 when Leo Fender, a former radio repairman, started manufacturing (in Southern California) a Spanish-style solid-body electric guitar called the Broadcaster (soon to be renamed the Telecaster), which was an immediate success in the marketplace. "The mass production of these and other new models of highly desirable electrics," as the Smithsonian show aptly put it, "allowed teenagers across the country to reinvent themselves in terms of a vision of musical rebellion and independence." The electric guitar was here to stay and, only a few years later, so was rock and roll. In 1954 Fender introduced the next step in the electric guitar's evolution, the Stratocaster, which would become the guitar-of-choice of Buddy Holly, Carl Perkins, and, a decade later, Jimi Hendrix. The "Strat" was the first solid-body electric fitted with three pickups, which were wired to a three-way switch allowing the player to select one at a time.

Chicago bluesman and band-leader Muddy Waters was another Stratocaster user. Waters had begun playing electric guitar in 1944, reportedly so he could be heard over the crowd noise in the bars where he performed. The instrumentation in Waters's blues band—lead electric guitar, rhythm electric guitar, electric bass guitar, occasional keyboard,

occasional harmonica, and drum kit—became the model for the Rolling Stones and thus for most rock and roll bands from the mid-1960s to the present.

The Hawaiian guitar player who in 1931 invented the Frying Pan and thus the electric guitar didn't know what was coming, but he knew what he had to do. The rest is history...and a lot of very attractive, and sometimes very meaningful, noise.

Excerpted from "The Frying Pan and the Electric Guitar" by Paul Williams.



Paul Abbott, regretfully, will not be with us any more due to the growing demands of his business. The *San Diego Troubadour* wishes to acknowledge Paul's contribution to this paper with his informative column, which covered a wide variety of topics relating to the technical aspects of recording. Good luck, Paul. We will miss you!

San Diego Troubadour Staff

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## of note



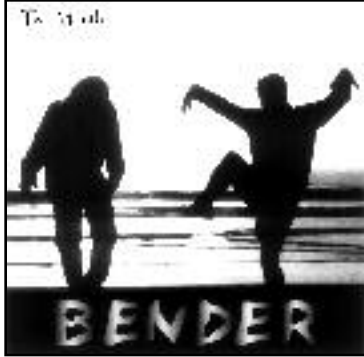
### Steve White Brand New World

by Paul Hormick

With his new disk, *Brand New World*, Steve White continues his one-man maelstrom of funk and burn guitar, wailing harmonica, and polyrhythmic percussion extravaganza. Of all his recordings, *Brand New World* comes the closest to capturing the heat and light of White in concert. Listen closely. All songs on this disk are one take, no overdub live performances — with no sweeteners, artificial flavors, or colors added.

This recording verite spotlights the lively and spontaneous interplay among White's orchestra of one. Keen harmonica lines follow tight guitar licks, with more harp following; all the while White's feet stomp, bang, and chime out a panoply of percussion. It all flows seamlessly, achieving ram-bunctious grace and elegance. Transitions, particularly travel and movement, serve as thematic springboards for most of *Brand New World*. In "Long Way Home" White's restless refrain asks, "Let's fall in love with the open road" and celebrate the exhilaration of shooting across the horizon with the only destination being the promise of possibilities. "Night Train" and its driving funk illustrate the enigma and power of movement, with the central point of clarity being movement itself. And White's humor takes us on the road with the rocker "Chicken Bone Express" and "Ladies Mud Wrestling Team." Both songs made me laugh and dance around the room like a sailor on Second.

White explores a wide range of mood in *Brand New World*. The Tin Pan Alley-inspired "Uke Le Le" indulges in sweet, almost whimsical, nostalgia, while "Tears Are All You Own" is a dark and brooding meditation on life under the constant state of war needed for the military-industrial complex. Regret, longing, excitement, and joy fill the songs on this disk. Whatever the mood, White's lyrical haiku-like simplicity prompts the listener's imagination to take the song as his (or her) own, making each listening a new experience.



### Bender Two Months

by Morris Jones

This 10-song CD, featuring the vocals, guitar, and percussion of Clay Colton; and the vocals, piano, guitars, and bass of Matt Bongiovanni, whips up a modern swirl of rock-poppish tracks. The effort is produced, recorded, mixed, and mastered by Bort Schrader and features a small army of support with the help of Jeff Black on drums and Matt Lloyd on bass. Bort Schrader is credited with "everything else," and someone characterized as "Woodle" is credited as "Mr. Ranger." Interesting.

"All the Same" is the CD's best track. In this take they've managed to capture succinctly a beautiful rock-ballad sound, with also what turns out to be among the CD's finest lyrics, arrangements, and production. Clay Colton charismatically delivers a convincing urgency in this take. (This chap, in my opinion, with the right support is one contender of a singer.) The guitar parts are excellent, matured, and extremely well orchestrated. And while the electric guitars are seemingly represented by probably the same ax, through the same amp, throughout the CD, it is most appropriately fitting here.

"Wasted" is also a killer little tune that sports a nifty little time change, making it the most elegant delivery on the CD. "The Bear Song," a tongue-and-cheek ditty, is suited up in a production that isn't far off from Santana's "Turn Your Lights On."

And "Thinking of You" most definitely competes for the CD's finest moment in that it offers the finest set of changes and a very radio-friendly production. Mr. Bongiovanni's talent is showcased exquisitely here in excellent lyrics, changes, and production. The more I listen to this song, the more I like it.

Altogether, it's a good CD with a lot of things going for it. But I deeply suspect that with a more appropriate handling in production, the talent would shine much more brightly. It's great talent. And such talent deserves such an opportunity.



### The North Star Session Music Under a Flight Path

by Phil Harmonic

This Massachusetts transplant is one of the many singer-songwriters who have come to San Diego to pursue their musical careers. Matt Szlachetka, who bills himself as The North Star Session, is an incredibly talented musician with a college degree in music composition (from a small college in Maine) and a background in a variety of musical genres. He developed an intense passion for music while growing up in a musical family. His driving jazzy, bluesy guitar work is impressive and worth the price of admission alone. His vocal style and lyrics complement the guitar work. The only complaint I have about this CD is that there are only six songs. I want to hear more.

After starting to dabble on the cello in elementary school, by the time he was 13 he started to play guitar. His songwriting skills are good but it's the guitar (acoustic, I might add) that's the head-turner.

I had a chance to see Matt live at Lestats not too long ago and was impressed with the nuance and polish he produces with a warm, comfortable style. While playing an acoustic bottle-neck slide on a tribute to Muddy Waters, a vision of Leadbelly runs across my mind's built-in movie screen. Many a songwriter who records with only voice and guitar will have a tendency to produce a style that starts to sound the same. Not with Szlachetka. Even if these songs might sound the same to someone, they certainly don't feel the same. His sense of nuance and detail, if I likened or compared him to someone, is more like the "master of nuance," Mr. Gregory Page. With songs "Come into Your Own," which he wrote for his brother and "Last Forever," you see that he can create a mood and take you with him. Isn't that the reason we listen to music in the first place? Check the music calendar for future performances of the North Star Session.



### Meghan LaRoque

by Phil Harmonic

Meghan LaRoque's 15-song CD is basically guitar and voice. But what a voice. Her vocal style creates a *big* sound for one voice. "Starship 27" is intense and powerful. "Reality Hoes" is topical and funny and very cleverly knocks today's television absurdity shows with lines like, "Where the hell is the real world? Ask Anna Nicole, that big fat ho. Do you think she knows?" Her performances are dramatic and passionate through which she creates a *presence* that is dynamic and captivating. Even though it was recorded live, in her case I'd still rather see her in concert over the CD any day.

Her bachelor's degree in theater arts and communications give her a foundation for writing intelligent, good original songs. She reveals herself in "Nothing but a Waitress," which draws on her experience as a former waitress at Java Joe's. I remember another former Java Joe waitress but her name escapes me. Oh, yeah, it's Jewel. And isn't that Jason Mraz sleeping in that back booth. Pretty good company, eh?

LaRoque's CD is raw and basic and with a good producer, it could be embellished into a hit. She is gutsy and takes risks, and that makes people sit up and listen. She is a unique songwriter with a special vocal delivery that should help her climb up the ladder of success, following in the footsteps of peers Jason and Jewel.

I highly recommend a live performance. See (and hear) for yourself at her CD release at Twiggs on Friday, November 28, at 9 p.m. Her CD is available at Tower Records in San Diego and L.A. For further information, go to her website: [www.meghan.tv](http://www.meghan.tv).



### The Cables

by Phil Harmonic

When I received the Cables four-song CD, I was surprised to receive, along with it, the same four songs on seven-inch vinyl. I played both simultaneously, then switched the amp back and forth between CD and phonograph to see which I preferred to listen to. Although the CD had a crisper, clearer sound, I liked the sound of a real record much better. I can't really explain why. It just felt better.

The new self-titled seven-inch vinyl may only have four songs, but they are very good songs that showcase the band's range. The Cables, who now reside in the San Francisco Bay Area, were formed in 1996 in San Diego. Band members include Mike Flinn, songwriter, vocals, guitar, and keyboards; Eben Henner, guitar, bass, and vocals; Billy Lovci, bass, guitar, and vocals; and Trevor Wenci on drums.

Flinn's compositions go from manic, riff-heavy on "The Wounded Man" to sparse and sorrowful on "South Pity." I hear tinges of Ric Ocasek of the Cars on "Starsick" and the influence of David Bowie on "Driftwood."

Flinn recorded most of the tracks in the Bay Area but did the final touches in San Diego with coproducer Mike Kamoo of the Stereotypes at his San Diego studio. Coming back to one's home town can bring out feelings that add guts and substance and result in a raw, natural performance. For more info, visit their their website:

[www.thecablesmusic.com](http://www.thecablesmusic.com).

File under "Indie Rawk."



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# 'round about



## NOVEMBER CALENDAR

### saturday • 1

**Avocado Moon**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.  
**Black Rose w/ Kris Colt**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.  
**Asylum Street Spankers/Aliah Selah**, 101 Artists Colony, Encinitas, 8pm.  
**Marie Haddad**, Bamboo Yoga, 1127 Loma Ave., Coronado, 8pm.  
**Uncle Jesus/South Bound/Simon Flick**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8:30pm.  
**Rookie Card/Sensations/Towne Dandies**, Kensington Club, 9:15pm.

### sunday • 2

**Chuck Pyle**, Normal Heights Comm. Ctr. 4649 Hawley Blvd., 7pm. Call 619/303-8176 for tickets and info.

### wednesday • 5

**Sue Palmer w/ Deeja Marie/Sharon Shufelt**, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., North Park, 6pm.

### thursday • 6

**Lisa Sanders/Carlos Olmeda/Will Edwards/Sven-Erik Seaholm/Peter Bolland**, Music Mart, 122 S. Solana Hills Dr., Solana Beach, 8pm.

### friday • 7

**Shemm**, Caffeinds Lounge, 634 Broadway, San Diego, 7pm.  
**Leigh Taylor Band**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.

**Sue Palmer Trio**, Bookwords, Flower Hill Mall, Del Mar, 8pm.

**Jimmy Atto/Tristan Prettyman/Jack the Original/Jim Bianco/Juan Acosta**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Lisa Sanders**, Lestats, 9pm.

### saturday • 8

**Peggy Watson & Friends**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

**Peter Sprague & Pass the Drum**, Dizzy's, 8pm.

**Jim Bianco/The North Star Session/Tim & Dale/Jimmy Atto/Taylor Street**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Baja Blues Boys**, Patrick's Irish Pub, Poway, 8:30pm.

**Jump Jones' Swing Show**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8:30pm.

**Harmonic Concor-Dance w/ Aliah Selah/Tonehenge**, House Party, 522 Santa Monica Blvd., 8:30pm. Info: www.aliahselah.com.

**Shemm CD Release**, Flicks, 1017 University Ave., 9pm.

**Young Dubliners**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9:15pm.

### sunday • 9

**Eliza Gilkyson**, Dark Thirty Productions House Concert, Lakeside. Call 619/443-9622 for info and reservations.

### monday • 10

**D.R. Auten/Christopher Dean**, Guitar Workshop & Concert, Hot Java Cafe, Barnes & Noble, 11738 Carmel Mtn. Rd., Ste. 182, 7:30pm. Info: 858/673-7111.

### wednesday • 12

**Neil Young Birthday Fest w/ Berkley Hart/Dave Howard/Chuck Schiele/Gregory Page/Cindy Lee Berryhill/Sven-Erik Seaholm/Peter Bolland**, Dizzy's, 8pm.

**Anya Marina**, Lestats, 10pm.

### thursday • 13

**Sue Palmer w/ Deeja Marie/Sharon Shufelt**, Calypso Restaurant, Hwy 101, Leucadia, 7:30pm.

**Gato Papacitos/Teflon/Annie Bethancourt/John & Jessica/Josiah**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### friday • 14

**Indie by Design w/ Danielle LoPresti/Cat Mary/Berkley Hart/Danny Peck/Makeda**, Dizzy's, 7:30pm.

**Ted Wright**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.

### saturday • 15

**Simon & Garfunkel**, Cox Arena, SDSU. Call for info.

**The Hank Show**, Pine Hills Lodge/Dinner Theater, Julian, 6:30pm. Call 760/765-1100 for info.

**Mark Erelli**, Normal Heights Comm. Ctr. 4649 Hawley Blvd., 7pm. Call 619/303-8176 for tickets and info.

**D'vora Gittleson & Chicken Soup**, Old Poway Park, Poway, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

**Diane Waters Band**, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 7:30pm.

**Peter Bolland/3 Simple Words/Sara Bancroft/Leigh Taylor Band/Collin Elliott**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### sunday • 16

**Aliah Selah & Friends**, 101 Artists Colony, Encinitas, 7pm.

### wednesday • 19

**Sue Palmer w/ Deeja Marie/Sharon Shufelt**, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., North Park, 6pm.

**Indian Joe Benefit Show w/ Steve Denyes, Eclipse, Hoo Doo Blues Band, Rich Land Blues, Mystery Train, Indian Joe & the Chiefs**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 7:30pm.

### thursday • 20

**GoGirls Music Festival w/ 17 groups**, Humphreys Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 5:30pm.

Island, 5:30pm.

**Sue Palmer w/ Deeja Marie/Sharon Shufelt**, Calypso Restaurant, Hwy 101, Leucadia, 7:30pm.

**Trina Hamlin/Gato Papacitos/Cary Pierce/3 Ember**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Taylor Street/The North Star Session**, Caffe Crema, Pacific Beach, 9pm.

### friday • 21

**Big Daddy Orchestra**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8:30pm.

**Trina Hamlin/Autun/Jill Cohn**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### saturday • 22

**U. Utah Phillips**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Info: 858/566-4040.

**Steve Poltz**, Bamboo Yoga, 1127 Loma Ave., Coronado, 8pm.

**Trina Hamlin/Josh Hall**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### sunday • 23

**Celtic Holiday Music**, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 2083 Sunset Cliffs Blvd., 7:30pm.

### tuesday • 25

**Bela Fleck & Flecktones**, Spreckels Theatre, downtown San Diego, 8pm.

### wednesday • 26

**Sue Palmer w/ Deeja Marie/Sharon Shufelt**, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., North Park, 6pm.

### friday • 28

**Meghan LaRoque CD Release**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**The Fremonts**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8:30pm.

**Los Lobos**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9pm.

### saturday • 29

**John McEuen**, Normal Heights Comm. Ctr. 4649 Hawley Blvd., 7pm. Call 619/303-8176 for tickets and info.

**Candy Cane**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8:30pm.



## WEEKLY

### every sunday

**7th Day Buskers**, Hillcrest Farmer's Market/DMV parking lot, 10am-1pm.  
**Irish Dance**, 3pm/**Michael McMahon**, 7pm, Dublin Square, 554 Fifth Ave.  
**Traditional Irish Music**, Tom Giblin's Pub, 640 Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 3pm.  
**Celtic Ensemble**, Twiggs, 4pm.  
**Cobblestone** (Irish Music & Dance), The Field, 544 Fifth Ave., 5-6:30pm.  
**Jazz Roots w/ Lou Curtiss**, 9-10:30pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).  
**The Bluegrass Special w/ Wayne Rice**, 10-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

### every monday

**Open Mic Night**, Lestats. Call 619/282-0437 for info.  
**Open Mic Night**, Rosie O'Grady's, Normal Heights, 7pm.  
**Jenn Grinels** (Irish music), Blarney Stone, Clairemont.  
**Comedy Night**, Hot Monkey Love Cafe, 5960 El Cajon Blvd., 8pm.

### every tuesday

**Open Mic Night**, Casa Picante, 10757 Woodside Ave., Santee, 7:30-9:30pm.  
**Traditional Irish Music**, Blarney Stone, Clairemont, 8:30pm.  
**Traditional Irish Music**, The Ould Sod, Normal Heights, 8:30pm.

### every wednesday

**Open Mic Night**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.  
**Open Mic Night**, Twiggs, 6:30pm.  
**Open Mic Night**, Adams Ave. Studio of the Arts, 2804 Adams Ave, 8pm.  
**Skelpin**, Dublin Square, 554 Fifth Ave., 8:30pm (also on Saturday night).  
**Brehon Law**, Tom Giblin's Pub, 640 Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 9pm (also Wed. & Sat. nights).  
**Hatchet Brothers**, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

### every thursday

**Rockabilly Thursdays w/ Hot Rod Lincoln**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., Call for info.  
**Celticana**, Dublin's Town Square, Gaslamp, 9pm.  
**Aliah Selah**, Miracles Cafe, Cardiff, 8pm.

### every saturday

**Open Mic Night**, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, 9015 Mira Mesa Blvd., 8pm.

## Phil Harmonic Sez:



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### NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Friday, Nov. 7 ROCK TRIO  
 Friday Nov. 14 TROPHY WIFE  
 Saturday Nov. 15 TUBBY  
 Saturday, Nov. 22 BERKLEY HART

Check website for complete entertainment listings.

# the local seen

## San Diego Music Awards



Photo: Millie Moreno  
AJ Croce accepting award



Photo: Ellen Duplessie  
Earl Thomas and singers



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Ilya



Photo: Ellen Duplessie  
Adam Gimbel & Tim Foley



Photo: Ellen Duplessie  
Kevin Hellman & Lafayette



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Eve Selis



Photo: Ellen Duplessie  
The Troy sisters w/ friends



Photo: Millie Moreno  
SDMA Lifetime Achievement Award-winner Joe Marillo



Photo: Millie Moreno  
SD Troubadour columnist Jim McInnes



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Sue Palmer & Candy Cane at SDMA



Photo: Ellen Duplessie  
Derek Duplessie at SDMA Showcase



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Joe Rathburn at SDMA Showcase

## Elsewhere



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Vertibird w/ Patrick Denniw



Photo: Ellen Duplessie  
Joe Mendoza



Photo: Janice Ross  
Darryl Purpose at AcousticMusic.com/SanDiego



Photo: Paul Grupp  
Marshall Crenshaw at the Casbah



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Steve Poltz at his CD release



Photo: Millie Moreno  
Steve Poltz w/ Tim Flannery, Jeff Berkley at Poltz' CD release



Gary Rachek, Ed Douglas & Phil Harmonic at the Double Eagle



Photo: Janice Ross  
Geoff Muldaur at AcousticMusic.com/SanDiego

# the local seen



San Diego Street Scene: \$40 per day • San Diego Music Awards: \$15 and up  
Adams Avenue Street Fair: PRICELESS

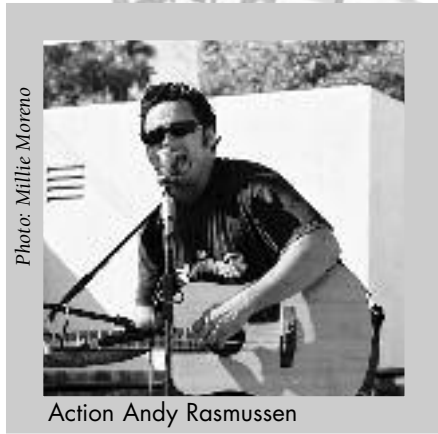


Photo: Millie Moreno

Action Andy Rasmussen



Photo: Paul Grupp

Andy Summers



Photo: Paul Grupp

Theresa Gunn



Photo: Millie Moreno

Berkley Hart



Photo: Paul Grupp

Quinto Sol



Photo: Millie Moreno

Big Rig Deluxe



Photo: Millie Moreno

Gregory Page and Tom Brosseau



Photo: Ellen Duplessie

Ryan Blue



Photo: Paul Grupp

Bayou Brothers fiddler



Photo: Millie Moreno

Patrick Dennis of the Truckee Brothers



Photo: Millie Moreno

Jack Tempchin



Photo: Millie Moreno

Lou & Virginia Curtiss



Photo: Ellen Duplessie

Chuck Schiele & Sven-Erik Seaholm



Photo: Millie Moreno

Joel Rafael



Photo: Millie Moreno

Tomcat Courtney



Photo: Millie Moreno

Jose Sinatra w/ the Troy sisters



Photo: Millie Moreno

Saba



Photo: Ellen Duples

The Shambles



Photo: Steve Covault

Fowl Play



Photo: Millie Moreno

Street fiddler



"The Gandhi Method, featuring guitarists  
Chuck Schiele, Scott Wilson and  
musician-producer Sven Erik-Seaholm,  
[are a] union formed just last month,  
specializing in sterling three-part harmonies  
and tunes that veer from folk to pop."  
-Will K. Schilling

the  
gandhi  
method

December 4th, 8pm: Humphreys By the Bay  
December 12th, 9pm: Tio Leo's

www.theqandhimethod.com

visit

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