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SAN DIEGO

ROUBADOOR

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



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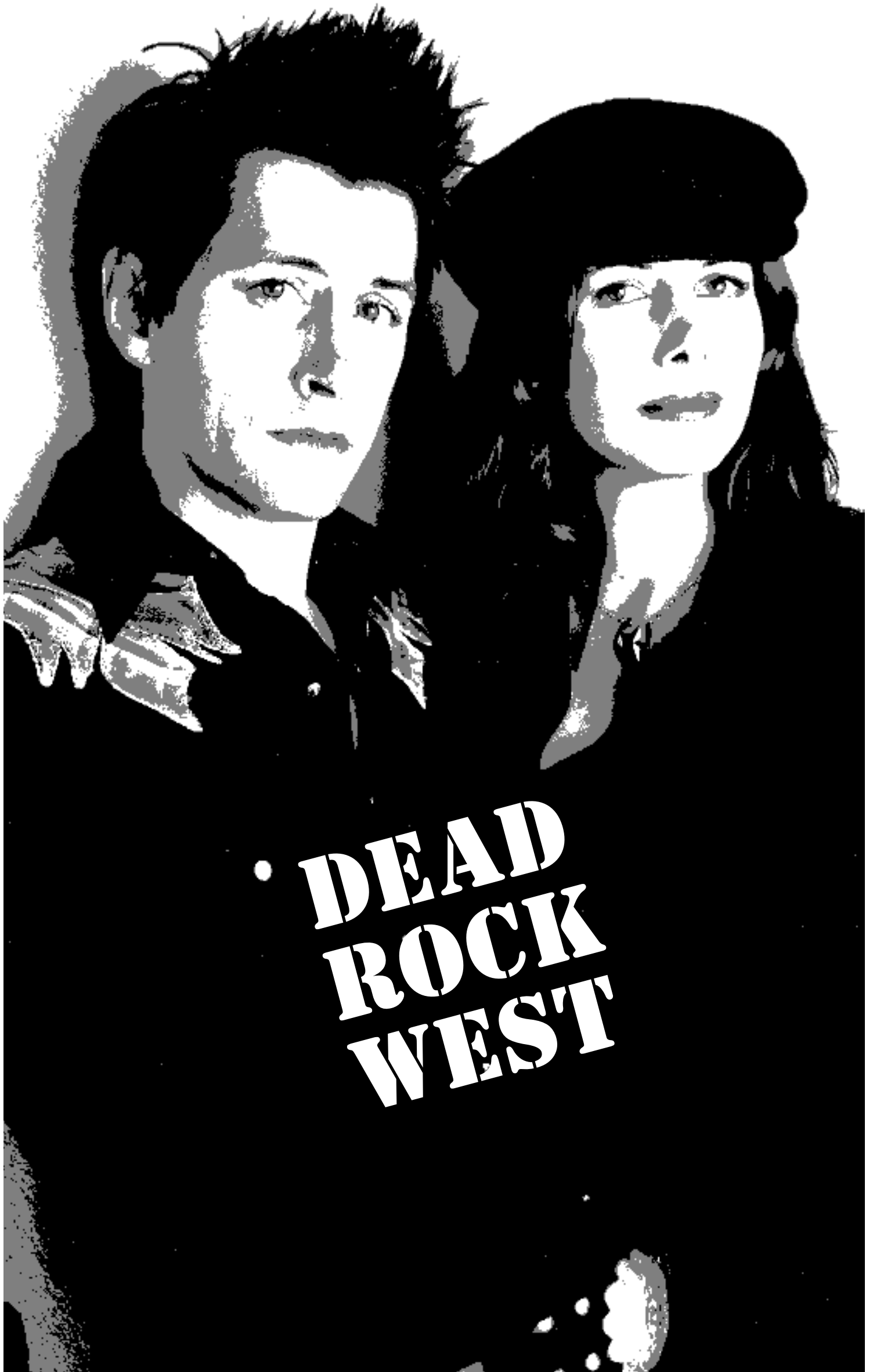
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welcome mat



MAILBOX



Dear Troubadour,

Thank you for the article on Indian Joe Stewart. It was great to see him get a little credit for all he has done in and for the local music scene. When I was in high school, I took guitar lessons from Joe. Somehow, it doesn't seem right to call them just "guitar" lessons though because he taught me much more than that: he taught me to be a musician and he helped me keep my head screwed on straight during some turbulent years.

Every week Joe would arrive at my house right on time, dressed from head to toe in leather, with hair down to his waist and his eyes still watering from the motorcycle ride from Ramona. For the next hour (or longer, if we got into something really good) we'd work on guitar, bass, singing, or songwriting. Joe would also give me hints on how to get gigs, deal with flaky band members, and how the music business worked. No matter how lazy I'd been or burned out I was before my lesson, I was always fired up by the time our hour was up.

One of the things that I can't thank Joe enough for is the encouragement to sing and write songs. He told me from our first lesson that if I was

going to play guitar I needed to be able to sing. When I showed some interest in writing my own songs, he helped me take my jumbled high school thoughts and turn them into something worth listening to. Today, singing and writing songs are such a huge part of my life that I can't imagine what I'd be doing if I hadn't had Joe's encouragement.

I'm not the only one that benefitted from Joe's instruction. In high school, most of my music-playing friends took lessons from Joe. Some of them got into songwriting like I did, and others took off on different musical tangents. A few years back, I was included on a Belly Up local music compilation album. Talking with the other musicians at the release party, we figured out that about half of us had taken lessons from Joe at one point or another.

Today, it has all come full circle. I have some young students of my own. We work on the basics of playing guitar, singing, and songwriting. Whenever I can, I try to pass on those pearls of wisdom that I got from Indian Joe.

I recently wrote a book about the lives of working musicians. In fact, it is at the printer as I am writing this letter. The dedication page reads as follows:

This book is dedicated to "Indian Joe" Stewart. You taught me to play, insisted that I sing, and encouraged me to write. you gave me the tools for a life in music and I am forever grateful.

Thanks again for sharing Joe's stories with your readers. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Steve Denyes

WRITE TO US!

We want to hear from you! Send your comments, feedback, and suggestions to: sdtroubadour@yahoo.com or to San Diego Troubadour, P.O. Box 164, La Jolla, CA 92038-0164.



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

Bart Mendoza: Keeper of the Sound

by Lyle Duplessie

Bart Mendoza is a local boy and mighty proud of it. He loves this town and is driven to tell its musical stories. His knowledge of San Diego music, both past and present, not to mention rock/pop history in general is encyclopedic. He's been writing about our local music for more than 20 years. If you've been following S.D. music for that long you're sure to have read his reviews, commentaries, observations, and recommendations in the *Union Tribune*, *Kicks*, *Slamm*, or countless other English and even Spanish publications. Mendoza has an amazing grasp of facts and details on all eras of rock/pop history. Though barely two years old when Ed Sullivan introduced the Beatles to America on February 9, 1964, he is a bona fide authority on the Fab Four and the countless groups, both American and foreign, that followed in their wake. One giant bookcase in his living room is devoted solely to the Beatles. He confesses, however, that he only first saw *A Hard Day's Night* in 1972. But being introduced to the group at this relatively late date has only given him a greater desire to go back in time and learn more about the band and its immeasurable influence.

Bart Mendoza is a very complex, accomplished, and multifaceted character. There's Mendoza the learned musical historian and musicologist; the gifted player, musician, singer, and lyricist; the phenomenally perceptive, insightful interpreter of popular musical taste; the sociologist who can see social meaning behind rock's many faces and phases. Then there is the more practical nuts and bolts Mendoza — the show promoter and publicity man; the producer/production manager; the product distribution person. He's been up to his ears in every aspect of the music business for years. Mendoza is one writer who has earned his credibility and knows of what he speaks.

Mendoza graduated from La Jolla High School in 1980. While

there he learned guitar. But his interest in music goes as far back as his memory will take him. As Mendoza recollects, he has always been surrounded by music. The radio or record player was constantly on in his boyhood home. His parents were quite fond of Bobby Darin, Sinatra (that's Frank, not José), Dean Martin, and all the pop classics of the '40s and '50s. Coming from a Spanish-speaking home and raised bilingual, he had the added benefit of listening to and learning from Latino music.

Having read his articles and heard his music I wanted to spend some time with the man. I corralled him in his hip Hillcrest flat one dreary Friday afternoon. Out front was parked his very cool Vespa, a bold statement to one and all that his sympathies still lie with the Mods. His place is adorned with musical trophies of all varieties — records, posters, pins, pictures, clothing items, toys, momentos. We're not talking clutter — rather, his home is a veritable museum of documented, catalogued, rock and pop historical artifacts. Moreover, he can relate a colorful rock 'n' roll story about each item in his collection.

Mendoza began writing in 1980 out of a sense of frustration with all the factual inaccuracies in so many of the articles he had read. He soon began his own publication, *Sound Effects*. The publication ran through ten annual issues. Factual integrity had to anchor every article that he put his pen to, and that remains the trademark of Mendoza's writing.

If he's not writing about music, Mendoza is usually busy making music happen. He was a key figure in creating the retro-'60s renaissance music scene in San Diego during the mid-'80s. Bands like the Tell Tale Hearts and Manual Scan were at the vanguard of this very hip, underground So-Cal movement. Also in '84, Mendoza initiated the New Sounds benefit concerts. Up to 35 bands would play on two stages at these happenings. When word got out about these concerts, bandmates from the Smiths, the

Bangles, Jellyfish, and other glitterati of the day would make it their business to be a part of the action. These concerts became a much anticipated yearly event right up through 1998. He too was the integral person behind the *Staring at the Sun* compilation albums and annually works with Kevin Hellman on the San Diego Music Awards. He is currently involved in an ambitious project to compile and catalog all, repeat all, music artists who ever came out of San Diego!

Touring has played a major part in Mendoza's life since entering the music fray. He proudly states that he's been a road warrior from Tijuana to London and beyond. His bands have shared the bill with such notables as the Bangles, General Public, the Romantics, and the Untouchables. His performance highlights even include a gig at London's premiere Marquee Club. Mendoza currently plays guitar, sings, and writes music with the Shambles. If you haven't had the opportunity to experience the Shambles live or on disc they're a must, particularly if you're into classic Beatlesque sounds. But true to the old adage that prophets aren't welcome in their own town, the Shambles have received much more recognition abroad than at home. In fact so popular are the Shambles in Europe that a tribute album is in the works, with songs from their four CDs, translated into languages as diverse as Spanish to Czechoslovakian.

This month Mendoza is putting together a **Tribute to San Diego Music**, featuring hit songs



Photo: Sandra Castillo

Photo: Sandra Castillo



Every square inch of Mendoza's apartment is stuffed with music memorabilia, photos, CDs, books, 45s, and music posters.



Manual Scan in 1983 (l to r): Mendoza, Brad Wilkins, Kevin Donaker, Tony Saurez.

with a local connection from the past four decades, performed by a diverse mix of local artists including José Sinatra, Gregory Page, the Royaltones, Rachael Gordon, Mark Decerbo, Derek Duplessie, Stellita Lindgren, the Shambles, Rookie Card, the Stereotypes, the Truckee Brothers, and more. Catch this atar-studded show on June 27, 8pm, at Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., San Diego.

Bart Mendoza remains an extremely busy San Diego music man. Though his interests might rest with San Diego's past and present music history, one thing is certain — his continual contributions are sure to earn him a future place among this town's music notables.

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Recordially, Lou Curtiss

We're going to dwell a little bit this time around on this ROOTS thing. I use it a lot. I do a Jazz Roots radio show. I do an Adams Avenue Roots Festival. Mostly you can surmise what ROOTS is all about if you just attend or listen, but in case you want it from the mule's mouth, here's what I answered the last time some folks asked. That was at a gathering of San Diego Rep supporters, introducing the play *Fire on the Mountain*, which is a lot about ROOTS music and thought. My answer is pretty simple because it's about all kinds of music, but mostly it's about where that music's been. For some, ROOTS is what was popular last year or five, 10, or 100 years old. I know old-time fiddlers who won't play a tune unless it's older than 1900 and they make a point of finding out. I know others who insist that the recording they learned a

tune from had to spin at 78 rpm. Ballad collectors insist that a variant of the song be in Francis James Child's collection of ballads (1840s) or Cecil Sharp's *Folksongs of the Southern Appalachians*,

people attend the Folk Heritage ROOTS music events, the bluegrass music events, and the times a ROOTS artist gets into one of the bigger clubs, it's usually pretty successful. Theaters have been successful with ROOTS music-



based plays (like San Diego Rep's *Fire on the Mountain* mentioned above and the recent play about blues singer Alberta Hunter). So why isn't there more

ROOTS music performed in San Diego clubs and bars and coffee houses? I get so tired of dumb lyrics and bad accompaniment. There's so much good music out there. A lot of ROOTS music is even in the public domain, so don't let anybody sell you on this "you've got to do your own stuff" crap. Now, don't get me wrong. Locally, a lot of people write and perform really good stuff, but so many who seem to work regularly are really mediocre, while some of the really good musicians only work occasionally. I guess that's because some are really pushy and know how to get gigs (maybe that's their God-given talent) while so many others care more about the music they play than where they play it. Several fine

ROOTS artists play regularly at the Adams Avenue Roots Festival, but there isn't a club in the Adams Avenue area that features a ROOTS music night or books regular ROOTS artists. Why in hell not? Why doesn't someone open a club called ROOTS that features all kinds of ROOTS music (cajun, blues, old-timey, Irish, bluegrass, western swing, honky-tonk country, Tejaño, Norteño, Native American, traditional folk, old-time jazz, vaudeville, ethnic world music, and lots more). At least some of the Roots Festival attendees would support it, I'm sure. Come on, high rollers, give ROOTS a chance!



Photo: Bill Richardson

Lou Curtiss

Recordially,
Lou Curtiss

A Note from Old Brother Lou Curtiss!

For 30-odd years, I've kept a tape record and, more recently, a video record of the Adams Avenue Roots Festival. I have almost everything

except for three years. If you appreciate what I do in putting the festivals together, I'd sure appreciate your help in getting the record of those three festivals for our archives. From the festival in 2000 I need Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Alice Stuart, Paul Geremia, D.L. Menard, Big Jim Griffith, and anything else you might have. For 2001 I need most anything and likewise for 2003 (especially Mark Spoelstra, John Adams, Faith Petric, and Mike Seeger). Please help if you can (on VHS).

Thanks,
Lou Curtiss



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front porch

Owen Burke Takes Bass Evolution a Giant Step Backward

by Lyle Duplessie

At Java Joe's old Ocean Beach digs on Bacon Street hung some drop-dead gorgeous bass guitars adorning the walls adjacent to the stage. If you were there, you would have seen them. To the casual eye they were very attractive wall hangings. But these instruments were more than mere decoration. They represent functional art at its finest. These basses are the work of Owen Burke (a.k.a. Buddy Pastel, Junior) the steady, sardonic drummer in Troy Dante's *Inferno*. Besides being a craftsman behind the skins, Burke is also a craftsman behind the workbench.

At first glance Burke's basses are reminiscent of the famous Hofner violin-bodied "Beatle" bass guitar. That is where the similarity ends. Burke isn't copying that classic design. Rather he is trying to capture that sense of old-world craftsmanship in each of his wonderful creations. The man has done his homework, having researched the techniques used by Europe's legendary violin

and stringed-instrument makers of the past 500 years. Using many of the same time-tested methods, as well as some tools of over a century old, Burke is crafting the finest, distinctive, and playable instruments around.

Burke credits his passion for making his bass guitars to his parents. Though interior decorators, not instrument builders, they nevertheless instilled in him a love for fine old-styled wood working design and building techniques. Maybe it was because there were always piles of furniture-design magazines all over the house. This same love has transferred over into his instrument building.

These basses have to be examined up close and handled to be fully savored. From afar they appear as delicate creations. In reality they are very sturdy and built well enough to become a treasured family heirloom for generations to come. Hand-carved scrolling around beautifully designed headstocks, graceful bodies, and aged finishes give each bass an antique appeal. In fact, a compliment paid to the design and quality of these instru-

ments is when recently someone unwittingly remarked, "I didn't know they made instruments like this two hundred years ago!"

All basses appear to be on the short-scale side but are designed to use readily available long-scale, flat-wound strings. They are made fretless, semi-fretted (fretted to the fifth fret), and fully fretted. Moreover, they are "bowable" if you want that classic string ensemble sound. The basses he works on currently are constructed from exotic tropical hardwoods, but a more affordable model built from north American hardwood is in the works. All instruments can be quickly converted for left-handed players. In time Burke envisions producing instruments for the most discriminating customers while designing a line that's accessible to kids in junior high school. Burke's violin-

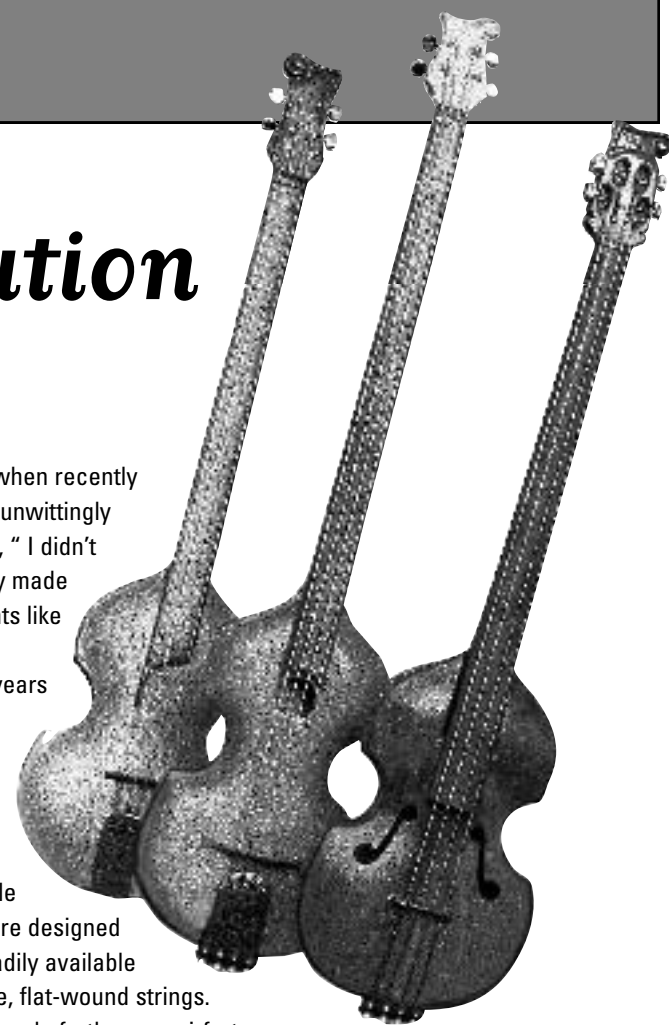
shaped basses are referred to as *Stradavincis* or *Strads* for short, while all other shapes are part of the La Jolla series.

Burke describes himself as a "compulsive re-designer." He searches the marketplace for what's not there and then attempts to fill the void. Indeed, nothing like Burke's basses currently exist, while their hand-built quality and one-of-a-kind uniqueness is downright captivating. As Burke puts it, "The musical instrument is such a great product to redesign since you can go up and down the evolutionary scale."

Burke has had one of his beauties accepted for judging, and hopefully for display, at the upcoming Del Mar Fair. He's also in the process of finding a new shop that can accommodate walk-in customers. He is currently narrowing down dozens of designs to end up with four standard production models.

Burke wants his basses to have a magical quality all their own. As Burke puts it, "I want my instruments to trigger in the musician's mind a new pocket of inspiration for hearing and doing things musically that had never occurred to them before."

If you'd like to check out Burke's basses a few prototypes are on display at Muzik Muzik in El Cajon. You can also visit his web site (<http://owenburke.tripod.com/burkestingedinstruments.html>) or e-mail him for an appointment at owenburke@hotmail.com.



Los Alacranes Mission Spawns New CD

by John Philip Wylie

Back in 1976 when Ramon "Chunky" Sanchez and his brother Ricardo broke away from the band they had been a part of to form Los Alacranes, neither of them had any idea they might still be performing together some 27 years later. But like a majestic river, Los Alacranes keeps flowing along.

"Los Alacranes (which released its fourth album *In Good Company* last month) has always been based on music directed at our (Barrio Logan) community and the things that were happening around us," said the band's lead singer and principal songwriter, "Chunky" Sanchez. "Cesar Chavez was active at that time and so was the MEChA student movement. There were a variety of different political activities going on then and they all influenced our music."

Chavez, of course, is no longer with us and Sanchez is many years removed from his adolescence when he lived in Blythe and toiled as a farm worker. His heart, however, still burns for the causes that he has always held dear and for the people who have

labored to gain respect in this country. Sanchez channels his feelings into his music.

"It has been a struggle [to stay together for 27 years]," Sanchez explained. "People have their everyday lives and their families. We have given people breaks over the years, but they eventually come back. This is a part of their lives and something they feel they have to do. It's like our mission," he added.

Sanchez's brother Ricardo (guitar, accordion, and backing vocals) and bandmates Don Guero Knapp (guitar and backing vocals), and Miguel Lopez (harp) keep coming back for the same reason that many of the band's local fans have remained supportive: the music.

"I prefer playing live," Sanchez said. "That way you are dealing directly with the people, but recording is important because you need to document what you do. When the audience is into it, they feed energy back to you. It makes you perform more vibrantly."

Vibrantly is exactly how Los Alacranes performed at the Adams Avenue Roots Festival in April. Singing in both Spanish and English, the band



Miguel Lopez, "Chunky" Sanchez, Ricardo Sanchez, and Don Guero Knapp

drew a large crowd and held its attention with a combination of skillful musicianship, soothing vocal harmonies, and an amusing stage presence. Los Alacranes entertained the crowd with cuts from their new CD as well as selections from their previous three.

Sanchez feels fortunate to have spent the majority of his life living in bilingual and bicultural San Diego.

"There was a time when we couldn't speak good English and we mixed up some of the words, but low and behold those ("Spanglish") words are still used today in the barrio as a means of communication. People will often begin a phrase in Spanish and

finish it in English without even thinking." To Sanchez's way of thinking, it is like having the best of both worlds.

"There is nothing like having choices and the beauty in living here on the border is the advantage in being bilingual and bicultural. You can express yourself in more ways than one and you can understand people's suffering in more ways than one. You take that, put it into a song and shout it back to the people and they can see themselves in the music. Hopefully, it will give them some inspiration to continue the struggle to better their lives." For additional information visit www.losalacranes.com.





Deborah Liv Johnson Runs Her Own Show

by Paul Hormick

As she sits among the boxes, labels, and envelopes of her one-woman enterprise, Deborah Liv Johnson rues the work needed for her independence. "I spend 90 percent of my time on the business end of it," she says, regretting that she can't spend more time on her music. She heads her own business, handling production, distribution, and marketing of her music, because large record companies are uninterested. They can't fit her into a prepackaged, homogenized, "safe" product for sales.

"When I perform a concert, it's really eclectic. I like to do originals. I like to do jazz standards. I might throw in a hymn or two. I mix it up so it's interesting for me and the audience," says Johnson. Her recordings reflect this eclectic mix. Among the originals on her second disk, *The Cowboys of Baja Have Stolen My Heart*, is a soulful cover of Hoagie Carmichael's "Georgia on my Mind." The Beatles' "Let It Be" closes her most recent disk, *The Good and Bad of It*.

Johnson says that people enjoy her mix of music, but "the record promoters hate it; the record labels hate it." Record companies have knocked on her door, but "they only wanted my voice," she says. She is unwilling to be pigeonholed into a product, so she goes to her office, opens the mail, sends out the packages, and makes a living.

As a songwriter, Johnson has no definite composing process. She says, "There are songs where it all comes at once, and there might be other times where I may work on a piece of music for some time." She develops her own arrangements by ear. "I don't think about it; it just comes," she says. And it comes from her roots, which go back to the fifteenth century. Her father was a Lutheran minister, and she spent her youth listening to the hymns of the church, some of which echo Bach, Handel, and their contemporaries. She is not surprised when people tell her that they hear the melodies and harmonies of hymns and church music in her songs.

She recorded an entire CD of hymns, titled *Softly and Tenderly*. Johnson says, "It was the most vocally challenging thing I've ever recorded. I did

sparse arrangements, so I'm completely exposed. There is nowhere to hide." She thought that a small audience, maybe only her parents, would be interested in this disk, but it has become her most successful to date. "There is a great source of comfort in these songs," she says. Fans buy this recording by the handful at her concerts because it makes an appealing gift.

For *The Good and Bad of It*, Johnson says, "I wanted to have something with more of a blues flavor." She asked Robin Henkel, local blues legend, to co-produce the disk, and much of it has a gritty, funky flavor. The sweet ballads

are there, but hold on to your seat during the barnburner "Chickenbone." As with her other disks, she chose some of San Diego's top musicians to join her. Henkel plays all the funky slide guitar, Duncan Moore is on drums, and Kevin Hennessy is on bass. Dennis Caplinger plays a number of instruments, Peggy Watson sings harmony, and Dave Curtis adds piano and guitar.

As far as the future is concerned, Johnson sees herself branching out to include more international sales and performances. The disk of hymns sells well in Taiwan. Johnson says the Taiwanese appreciate the hymns' beautiful melodies.



She sees herself working in Europe, where, she says, "they are more inclined to listen to and appreciate singer-songwriter material."

America is listening, even Europe and Taiwan. Why not the record labels?



Scene from Cotton Patch Gospel

by D. Dwight Worden

From June 4 through July 20, San Diego acoustic music fans will have the opportunity to experience a great, toe-tapping musical play presented by the Lambs Players Theatre. The show is a riveting Southern-style retelling of gospel stories set in rural Georgia, spiced with unforgettable songs and music by the late, great Harry Chapin. It's an upbeat, down-home country good time that rocks with acoustic drive.

The music is delivered with infectious energy by San Diego's 7th Day Buskers, comprised of bandleader Shawn Rohlf on vocals, banjo, harmonica, and acoustic guitar; Don Hickox on fiddle and vocals; Ken Dow on vocals and upright bass; Robin Henkel on dobro and vocals; and Steve Peavey on guitar, mandolin, and vocals. The critically acclaimed Buskers, who have two successful CD releases under their belt, are known for their innovative and compelling brand of acoustic music. These seasoned, talented musicians have developed into a tight, well-oiled group that lights

up the room with energy, outstanding instrumentation, and compelling vocals.

Those who attend the show will be treated to some fine three- and four-part harmony singing in addition to their usual outstanding instrumentation. Many *San Diego Troubadour* readers know the members of the Buskers as some of the region's finest musical talents.

Ken Dow has played both the upright and electric bass for more than 20 years, having graduated from UCSD's music program where he studied with world-renowned bassist Bert Turetsky. Dow has toured all over Europe and the U.S., playing jazz, classical, funk, folk, hip-hop, soul, blues, bluegrass, rock, and music that defies conventional classification, working with a vast array of distinguished artists that include Brian May and Roger Taylor (Queen), Peter Sprague (Chick Corea, Al Jareau), two-time Tony Award-winner Des McAnuff, and other

Robin Henkel has been a San Diego blues and dobro legend for years. Last year he played with the San Diego Symphony, presenting classic delta blues and one of his

Cotton Patch Gospel: A RIP-SNORTIN' VISUAL AND MUSICAL FEAST

original compositions. He has opened shows for Dizzie Gillespie, John McLaughlin, Bonnie Raitt, Dr. John, Roy Rogers, Arlo Guthrie, and a host of others.

Don Hickox is considered by many to be one of the area's top bluegrass fiddlers, having played with San Diego's foremost bluegrass bands. His innovative phrasing and hard-driving bluegrass approach to the instrument are sure to get your toe-tapping, while his singing stands out with the Buskers and in the play. As the only veteran of a prior Lambs Players performance of *Cotton Patch Gospel*, Hickox brings a depth of experience that adds solidity to the musical portion of the show.

Steve Peavey, the youngest band member at 24, is the Buskers *wunderkind*, whose talent is prodigious. Peavey placed in the finals of a national guitar competition, playing finger-style guitar and his own fretless guitar, and with equal virtuosity he plays mandolin, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, key boards, and anything else with strings. Peavey is also a talented flamenco and Irish music player. In *Cotton Patch Gospel* he proves he can sing as well as play. Keep your eye on this young man!

A veteran of many prior musical plays, including among others the Lambs Players production of *Smoke on the Mountain*, Shawn Rohlf's talents include songwriting as well as acting and performing (he is an award-winning vocalist), with a variety of musical endeavors under his belt. He leads the Buskers, supplying much original material for the group, and plays an excellent guitar, banjo, and harmonica. For Rohlf, the play is a challenge and

great fun for the Buskers as it provides a chance to really hone their singing skills within a different context. In addition, they faced the challenge of creating a dobro score for Robin Henkel, since the original Harry Chapin music had no dobro.

The show is directed by Deborah Gilmour Smyth, with musical direction by Vanda Eggington. These two have the chops and experience to weave together a production that allows the actors and the music to soar and really grip the audience. Mike Buckley's set design is authentic as are costumes designed by Jeanne Reith, with lighting by Nate Peirson completing the package for an experience that draws the audience into the spirit of the times.

Cotton Patch Gospel features some of San Diego's top acting talent, including Ryan Drummond, Mark Christopher Lawrence, and Rick Meads, veterans who deliver top-of-their-game performances. If you like great acoustic music, you will love the way this play and these actors and musicians bring these timeless stories to life.

Cotton Patch Gospel
June 4-July 26
Lamb's Players Theatre
1142 Orange Ave., Coronado
619/437-0600
www.lambplayers.org



The 7th Day Buskers



parlor showcase

by Robert Woerheide

Listening to Dead Rock West's first self-titled EP, it's hard to believe that the songs on it were little more than experimentation "to see," as Frank Drennen put it, "if we dug what we heard." It's pretty hard not to dig what you hear when you listen to their music. Technically the EP is only a demo, but in reality, it's an album in its own right: it glows with unpretentious emotion and superb musicianship. Even on a first listen, it's easy to see that Dead Rock West has a lot to offer



music today. There's absolutely no doubt about it.

"Dead Rock West is all about good songs and good singing," Frank tells me as we make our way down Adams Avenue for an evening interview. Still, there's a lot more to their story than just that. Together, Frank Lee Drennen and Cindy Wasserman have managed to create something altogether unique in Dead Rock West. What's more, they've managed to do it while maintaining the kind of artistic integrity that is so difficult to sustain these days. And yes, in the end it is about good songs and good singing.

They were each members of their own groups when they met one another—a chance singing



encounter that had implications beyond what either could guess. Frank recalls, "I heard Cindy's voice and . . . there's just something about it. It's feminine and masculine at the same time: it's strong, yet feminine." They only had to sing together once to realize their united potential. This genuine musical moment makes me think of the first time

Crosby, Stills and Nash sang together in the kitchen of Mama Cass' Laurel Canyon home one sunny southern California day. Some singers are meant to be together it seems. Cindy and Frank are no exception.

For their own part, each is an accomplished musician, trained by experience as much as theory. Cindy was a member of Starbelly, and Frank a member of the Troubled Sleepers, Loam, and the Hatchet Brothers (the latter of which he is still a member) when the two singers combined ranks. Cindy is an accomplished session singer: performing on Rickie Lee Jones' upcoming album, as well as on Tom Brosseau's; recording vocals for popular television

shows on the Warner Brothers network; and working regularly with Gregory Page. Although they alone are Dead Rock West, they are proud to work often with

bassist David Carpenter, drummer Evan Stone, and musician Gregory Page. They adapt, performing comfortably as an acoustic duo or as part of a full rock ensemble. "We're doing everything we can," Frank tells me as the early summer light begins to fade from the sky. Our group has the outdoor patio to ourselves—a little corner of Karma—and I barely notice the change in light.

"Tell me about the name, Dead Rock West. What's that all about?" I ask.

Frank grins. "There's an interesting story," he says "and I'm going to tell you the truth. A number of years back I read . . .



an article [whose] title was 'Dead Rock West,' and the whole article was slugging the whole West Coast music scene. And just saying how miserable it is. In the back of my mind I went, that's a really cool name. But let's face it, the West Coast is the birthplace of bands like the Buffalo Springfield and Neil Young and the Byrds and X. There are so many bands that come from here. And you know, Cindy and I are both California natives—and we're proud to be."

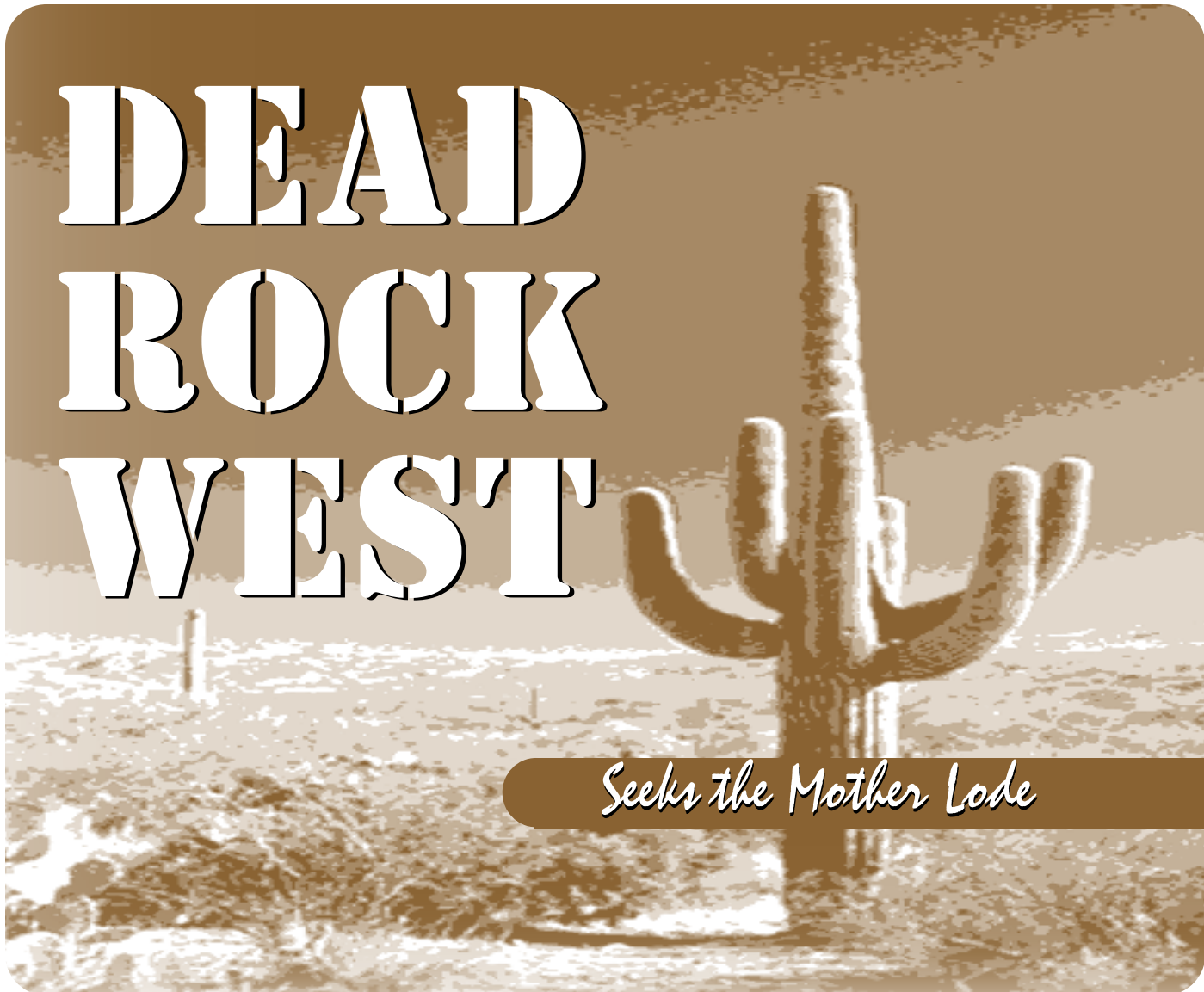
At times, California even serves as inspiration for them, and the western theme—while not forced—is often part of their music. "The music has references to the desert and to the west coast . . . about living out here."

So what is it that makes Dead Rock West stand out from the crowded music scene today? "Our songs have real blood and guts to them," Frank says, and it's hard not to believe him. "You can sing along [to our songs], but if you sit

and listen to the words and what we're talking about—we're talking about real struggle with daily living. We're not bullshitting you; we're not trying to pull the wool over your eyes. We're just trying to talk about real emotions." Their vocals aren't bad either. In fact, listening to their demos, the vocals seem flawless, which is not an easy thing to accomplish when you have two lead singers. "It's a difficult thing to do," Frank admits. Yet they manage to do it, to combine harmonies that are in



parlor showcase



away as New York City. "We're not going to wait around for a record company to say, 'Okay, make some music.'"

Dead Rock West is doing something worthy of attention. "We just put [the music] out there and let the listener decide. We're not reinventing the wheel," Frank says. Perhaps not, but they certainly are reexamining it. In the process, they've managed to grow from roots of punk, rock 'n' roll, folk, and classic country—to take those roots and to make music that transcends all such categories. In the end it is about good songwriting and good singing. Their music does more to communicate on a personal level than most polished, record-label music today. Maybe it's the quality of their music, or maybe it's the warm spirit they bring to that music. Whatever it is, Dead Rock West has got it right—amazingly right.



and of themselves melodies. It's a talent that adds unexpected dimension to their music, complimenting their style without dominating it. Somehow, nothing sounds contrived.

For two people who have been involved in performing music for so many years, and who still consider themselves struggling musicians, I was curious about what kept them coming

around. What was it that made performing worthwhile to them? "For me, it's about the camaraderie of music," Cindy says. "I love all the people that I meet. There's that feeling that you can't describe . . . when you touch someone, connect with someone and have someone [respond to that]. It becomes bigger than yourself, you're connecting to something and it's a boomerang effect: it goes to the audience and kind of comes back to you."



"It's the same for me," Frank agrees. "The camaraderie is a really great thing—especially when you're a struggling

musician, just struggling to get by. At a certain point, when the 'sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll' thing wears off, you know, if there's not something deeper in you that's satisfied by making the music and playing live, you're going to stop. And a lot of people do. But for me it's hugely satisfying to do what people that I looked up to [did], how they made me feel, to make other peo-



ple feel that way. It used to be about saving the world because that's what I wanted to do," Frank continues. "Now I know that the world's going to hell in a handbasket, so I might as well just deal within my own sphere." It's a bold statement in a world where it's easy to get caught up—and even get bogged down—by politics. But Dead Rock West isn't unsympathetic to the political realm and the impact it has on people today. Frank explains, "I don't want to say that politics aren't important. They just haven't found their way into our songs. We certainly feel for the world and what's going on, but [we're about] changing the

world one person at a time as opposed to making broad statements."

When I ask about future albums in the works, Franks explains, "We're looking for a record deal, and in the meantime, we're doing it all ourselves." It seems to me the record deal should be looking for them. For now, they play shows whenever they can: in San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and as far





ramblin'

Bluegrass Corner

by D. Dwight Worden

BLUEGRASS MUSIC

Bluegrass music is characterized by "high lonesome" singing, usually with a strong lead voice singing the melody, complemented by a high tenor (third above the lead) and a baritone (third below the lead), or perhaps by a "high baritone" (the third below the lead, boosted up an octave to be higher than the lead), and sometimes by a bass voice (singing root notes an octave lower than the lead). This combination of voices creates a driving, lonesome sound filled with depth and tension. Bluegrass instruments accompanying the singing are traditionally guitar, five-string banjo, mandolin, fiddle, and bass, played with great speed and virtuosity. Songs of love, work, and life are the main themes, typically alternating between sung verses and instrument solos.

Often regarded as "old" music, bluegrass is actually fairly young compared to folk music, the blues, and other genres of acoustic music. Bluegrass as a separate musical form is generally considered to have been originated by **Bill Monroe and his Bluegrass Boys**, who played it for the first time in the 1940s. The acknowledged father of bluegrass, Monroe was influenced by the Delta blues sound and Appalachian mountain music growing up in Kentucky; however Monroe and his band were the first to forge them together to create the true "bluegrass sound." While many of the players came and went over the years, the configuration generally considered to be the "gold standard of bluegrass" was the 1940's combination of Bill Monroe on mandolin, Chubby Wise on fiddle, Earl Scruggs on banjo, and Lester Flatt on guitar. Pick up a CD or two of their music—you won't regret it!

Next month we'll learn more about this great music called bluegrass.

BLUEGRASS HAPPENINGS

Get ready for a great bluegrass and acoustic summer! Here are a few great activities:

June 29, 3pm: **David Grier** solo guitar concert, Museum of Making Music, Carlsbad. Acclaimed as the greatest and most innovative flat picker since Clarence White, *Flatpicking Guitar* magazine says "David Grier is the best player out there today. His variations and improvisations are endless." Tickets are \$15 at the door, \$12 in advance, and \$10 for museum and SDBS members. Call the museum at 760/438-5996 or Betty Wheeler at 858/481-2609.

June 4-July 20: **Cotton Patch Gospel**, Lambs Players Theater, featuring the music of the **7th Day Buskers**. For information and tickets, go to: <http://www.lambplayers.org/whatsplaying/cotton/cotton.html>.

May 3-June 8: **Fire on The Mountain**,

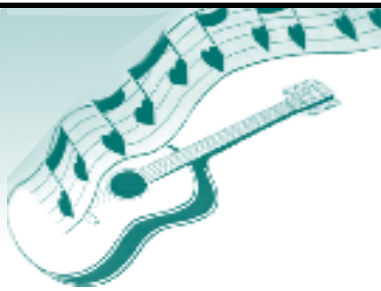
San Diego Repertory Theater, Horton Plaza. This great play from America's heartland presents great acting and acoustic music while telling the story of Appalachian coal miners. For tickets and information, go to: <http://www.sandiegorep.com/>.

August 22-24: **Summergrass San Diego: Pickin' in Paradise** bluegrass festival, Antique Gas and Steam Engine Park, Vista. This will be San Diego's first real bluegrass festival, complete with camping, vendors, workshops, and great bands, including the reunion of **California, Bluegrass Etc., Ron Spears and Within Tradition, Cliff Wagner and Old #7, The 7th Day Buskers, Bluegrass Redliners, Virtual Strangers**, and more. For info and tickets go to: www.summergrass.net.

And all the regular monthly events: first Tuesdays at Round Table Pizza in Escondido, second Tuesdays at Fuddruckers in La Mesa, third Tuesdays at Fuddruckers in Chula Vista, and fourth Tuesdays at Shirley's in La Mesa. For more information, go to the Bluegrass Central Web site at: www.worldmusicwebcast.com/programs/bluegrass/bgsandiego.htm or The InTune web site at: <http://members.aol.com/intunenevents/eventsr.html>.

TRAVEL WITH YOUR INSTRUMENT

Some good news for a change on the travel front. The Transportation Security Agency has negotiated an agreement with the American Federation of Musicians, resulting from a TSA directive to all airlines that allows musicians to carry their instruments on all flights in addition to the number of carry-on bags otherwise allowed. If you travel by air with your instrument, go to



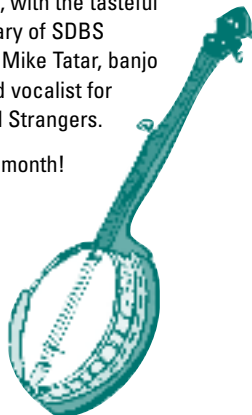
www.local1000.com/pdf/carryon.pdf and download a copy of the TSA directive, put it in your case, and show it to the next airline person who tries to insist that you must check your instrument. While the TSA does not say which instruments can be carried on, presumably guitars, fiddles, banjos, mandolins, and the like qualify, while upright basses do not. My interpretation is that if it fits in the overhead bin, it qualifies as a carry on.

BLUEGRASS RADIO

Want to hear bluegrass on the radio? Try KSON's (97.3 FM) **Bluegrass Special with Wayne Rice** every Sunday night, 10pm-midnight, a great show that presents an outstanding selection of classic, modern, and local bluegrass, hosted by the dean of local bluegrass and banjo-playing leader of Lighthouse.

And, try Bluegrass on the web at **World Radio Bluegrass Central** <http://www.worldmusicwebcast.com/programs/bluegrass/main.htm>. Hosted by SDBS's **Mike Tatar** every Sunday, 11am-1 pm, this show presents some of the best bluegrass you will hear anywhere, with the tasteful commentary of SDBS President Mike Tatar, banjo player and vocalist for the Virtual Strangers.

Until next month!



Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey
- The Waves We Left Behind -
 new CD available at:
 House of Strings
 CD Baby
 CD Street
www.billandconniemusic.com

RADIO DAZE

by Jim McInnes

ONE NIGHT AT AN ARKANSAS ROADHOUSE



Jim McInnes

My wife, Sandi, is a native San Diegan, but most of her relatives are Southerners, primarily from Arkansas.

A dozen years ago we went down to Fayetteville, Arkansas, so I could meet the family . . . and they were MUSICIANS! Sandi's dad, Warren, could croon with the best of them. Cousin Dave, who had a big old Gretsch hollow-body electric guitar, knew jazz and how to swing it. Her Uncle Steve was a sax player who could honk at least as well as then-Governor Clinton. I felt right at home with my new in-laws as we jammed into the wee hours, fortified with Jim Beam and beer.

The next day, Warren took us all up to the Ozark Mountains. We paid a visit to Toad Suck, Arkansas (I am not making this up!), a town seemingly made up of discarded automobiles. We went down to the levee where some youngsters were playing and saw the banjo-playing kid from the movie *Deliverance* (I am still not making this up!). I was wearing (what else?) one of my LOUD Hawaiian shirts and a KGB Skyshow hat (*this is where the RADIO part of this column comes in*). We stopped at a roadside fireworks stand, and the proprietor looked at my hat and exclaimed, "Wow! KGB! You guys have a great fireworks show out there in San Diego!" I agreed. He had been stationed here while in the Navy. We then drove to a real southern roadhouse called Laurie's. Laurie's was a cement box, way the hell out in the Ozarks, miles from anything resembling a town. The only beverage they served was Busch beer in cans, or in six-packs, but just about everyone who went to Laurie's kept a fifth of "Old Sweatsock" in their trucks, anyway. One corner of Laurie's had a cement stage, upon which four good ol' boys with good ol' bellies cranked out good ol' country and western tunes. Warren knew these cats and had set it up so that I, and my new band of in-laws, could sit in for a couple of tunes. They asked what we'd play and I suggested the musician's common denominator, "Johnny B. Goode." They said okay. One of the guitar players handed me his Strat and went to grab a beer and a seat for what was obviously an

extremely rare jam session. I brought up Cousin Dave, age 70, with his guitar, and Uncle Steve, 60, who'd brought along his sax. Picture the scene . . . Saturday night at Laurie's — three big ol' boys with beer guts and ten-gallon hats; one San Diego radio deejay wearing a Hawaiian shirt, shorts, and a hat; and two senior citizen old-school jazz aficionados, all squeezed onto a tiny stage in the corner of a cement roadhouse, miles from nowhere, in the Ozark mountains. It was like a scene from *The Blues Brothers* minus the chicken-wire fence in front of the stage. BUT . . . when I lurched into the opening notes of Chuck Berry's signature song, the place came alive! Two hefty ladies a couple of rows from the stage stood up, kicked back their chairs, got up on the pool table, and started whoopin' and a-hollerin' like they were at a revival meeting! We sounded like a radio tuned somewhere in between two different stations. The three guys from the country band were right on, but after several beers, I was having trouble focusing on the fretboard, while Cousin Dave played his Gretsch just like Barney Kessel doing "Mood Indigo," and Uncle Steve sounded like he was doing "The Girl from Ipanema" on the sax. Despite the cacophony, we were all smiles and chuckles, because we were a hit! Which just goes to show you:

1. Everyone in Laurie's was shit-faced
2. Everyone in Laurie's witnessed the birth of a new style of music
3. Bad music plus humor is better than good music with none
4. All of the above
 Damn, I love the Ozarks. Good people and beautiful scenery. Y'all come back now, ya hear?



Hee Haw in Arkansas



Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

A word of warning: this month I shall touch upon matters of personal decorum that are essential stepping stones on the path that must be trod if you, moist reader, strive for celebrity. While conscientiously avoiding a journalistically fatal free-fall, I shan't mince words that are better served skewered on a petulant pike. As always, if my candid truths of human functions are distasteful to you, read no further. Instead, just stare at my unretouched portrait to the right for 10 or 12 minutes and be content to finally have encountered the true meaning of love.

Recently a date of mine explained that her late arrival to our clandestine encounter was due to her maid's inability to properly heat and scent her "daily bath." This was a *major* star; I'll protect her privacy here by calling her Refinnej Zepol. The anticipation of our well-planned first meeting had, quite honestly, caused me to actually pant and drool. While I was prudently doing what I could to collect my precious lip water in little vials for future sales on e-bay, wondering where in the world she was, I began to feel less like a Casanova and more like a rabid animal. A striking, terribly attractive one, but beastly nonetheless. I became scared. How could a true artist — role model for millions of young boys throughout the world — have his dignity defiled by this shortness of breath, this carpet-spotting, this uncontrollable salivating?

A bit of important history: I have been an active animalist (I think that's what they call it) since a fateful incident that occurred when I was a three-and-a-half-year-old child. My family had discovered Balboa Park; I wandered into the Children's Zoo where I inadvertently slaughtered and partially devoured a young goat. A stranger who witnessed this accident pulled me away and, while wiping off my face and fingers, explained to me the definition, etymology, and importance of the word "decorum."

That stranger's name was Bob Barker.

"Decorum" derives from the Greek *decoru*, meaning, approximately, "you rock head" if read backwards with a Cockney accent, and *m*, a diminution of the mantra-like sounds females are wont to make after a pleasurable coupling.

Anyway, before even my fourth birthday, I was banned from the zoo for life. Satisfaction of future animal urges would require inventiveness and decorum.

Oh yes, back to my tardy "starlet." (I swear there's a point



The inimitable Mr. Sinatra

to this, even if I can't grasp it.) Suddenly she was anything but a superstar to me. She was more awkward and unseemly than I could ever be; her own lips had betrayed her as a liar! "Daily bath"?! Even pigs know that true stars rarely have a need to bathe, having attained natural cleanliness along with their fame. Whadda loser! Totally ashamed now, Ms. Zepol sprinted out of our suite at the Tubs, saving me the indignity of having to toss her out myself by her hooves.

D.H. Lawrence insisted that nothing that comes from the passionate soul is or can be bad. I, for example, need feel no shame for my urge at this very moment to suck the tongue of Kelly Ripa. And I don't, since I want to groom that urge with dignity. Lawrence overlooked passion's essential requirement of decorum — an atypical, haunting mistake that perhaps explains why he hasn't written anything new in decades.

Proper conduct, if not Passion's very heart, is at least its gall bladder. Without it, for example, many male celebrities (as well as *all* average, straight men) would be in trouble were they to act upon their natural instincts when encountering an attractive female. Chronically chafed nose, social ostracism, jail time . . . yuck. It's already hard enough dealing with all the nasty reminders of our animalistic nature in the popular arts. A well-read book's *dog* ears. Clay Aiken's *cow*licks. Songs by Sheryl Crow. Elaina and her *camel*/toe. The list is ending. Now.

What remains, then, is the eternal challenge: to successfully integrate one's primal passions with a grace that can only stem from the Divine. The challenge can (and must) be met. Just be sure your bridle is strong and your wings anointed before you charge toward the cliffs. Salivation is but a prayer away.

Sooo-eee for now.



Do-It-YourSELF CONSIDERATIONS

by Paul Abbott

As the cost of home-based recording continues to decline, "traditional" recording studios have to become more creative to keep clientele. Or do they? Just as it takes more than a stethoscope to be a doctor, many musicians find there's more to making great recordings than just purchasing the latest gear. With that in mind, I contacted Fred Helm from San Diego's Armageddon Studio with a few questions.



Control room at Armageddon Studios.

P.A. Given the proliferation of hard disk-based recording equipment, why would a musician still go to a "traditional" recording studio to make an album?

F.H. Nine-nine percent of us have no need for tape-based recording anymore — although I will argue with anyone, anywhere that hard-disk fidelity is far worse than even low-grade two-inch tape machines. Even Pro Tools HD at 192 kHz is sterile and dimensionless when com-

pared to mixes coming from tape machines. That being said, the hard-disk generation really doesn't have a reason — other than personal preference — to use analog tape or "traditional studios" due to extreme costs and severe editing limitations, and the new generation of listener is slowly but surely being "conditioned" to accept digitally compressed audio formats as the "standard." The one percent has big checkbooks and a desire to have tape saturation and analog signal paths for their tones.

Armageddon's platform is Pro Tools. We have an installed 888/24 system, a mobile HD system with all the break outs custom fitted on the outside of the rack, and dedicated analog preamps for front-end tones and a 32/8 analog board for mix down. Our mix-downs are hybrid in that we keep all vocals, keyboards, and sterile tracks in PT and send drums, guitars, and bass out to the analog board for some added phasing. The entire mix is then sent to Focusrite mastering units and either pre-mastered to CD or final mastered to CD. Sometimes a pre-master is used to dump back into Pro Tools uncompressed to edit down further.

P.A. What is Armageddon's core competency?

F.H. Our claim to fame is project price. We usually don't charge by the hour. When a potential client comes to us we evaluate the needs and ability of the artist and offer a broadcast quality



Paul Abbott

project for one fee no matter how long the client takes. There are some restrictions of course, but we are finding that artists love this method of payment and so far we have not had a client leave before their project was ready for broadcast.

We try and accommodate all requests. Very few clients use San Diego studios for big dollar projects like movie post-production or final mixes for major acts. We fill the needs of the musician who has a good day gig and can spend \$3,000-\$10,000 on a project without hesitating. We don't rely that much on bands and "demo tapes." It's a losing proposition for the artist and we have done that many times as players over the years

P.A. Any advice for musicians interested in making a professional-sounding recording?

F.H. Know how to play, play good instruments, and use good microphones. When we get young players in, we usually end up over sampling pretty hard, which is time consuming. If the artist has insufficient support from a band, we have our staff track their stuff and sort of act as studio cats for them. This is expensive, though, as you can imagine, but the studio has 25-year veteran musicians on staff who can do it all.

Dark Thirty Productions Presents
Dan Connor
and his band Little Big Men

Over the past few years Dan Connor has emerged as a gifted singer-songwriter in the San Diego area. Connor and his band, **Little Big Men**, will grace the stage at **DARK-THIRTY PRODUCTIONS** in Lakeside to share songs from Connor's new CD *Writes of Passage*. Tickets: \$15.

FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION, CALL: **(619) 443-9622**

Sunday, July 6, 7:30pm
www.darkthirty.com

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zenmastering@yahoo.com



of note



Dan Connor Writes of Passage

by Phil Harmonic

I am just amazed at the amazing number of talented musicians in the San Diego area. I first heard Dan Connor, with his sidekick Dan Byrnes on harmonica, at Claire de Lune as "Dan and Dan" over a year ago and was quite impressed. Connor, also Jimmy Duke's sound man at Dark Thirty Productions, has released a 14-song CD appropriately titled *Writes of Passage*.

While listening I concluded that this guy had obviously paid his dues. The accomplished songwriter and arranger has the cream of the crop of area musicians adding their bag o' tricks to this excellent production by Connor and friend Peter Sprague: Bob Magnussen, Jeff Berkley, Dani Carroll, and Billy Thompson to name a few.

This is not just another guy singin' and playin' guitar here. Connor creates an essence and feel that words can't describe. His simple lyrics on "Eternity" transform into a profound message about our existence of unpredictability and the complexity of human emotions and how love and caring for someone can help us face the fear of living and dying. Connor is really a poet, like another San Diegan—Tom Waits. In "Family Reunion" he writes:

*But now you stalk me for the truth
and then you rage against the sound;
Embrace your old illusion
'til it takes you down*

His combinations of love songs, folk songs, people songs, and jazzy, up-beat rockers are delightful to listen to as well. I could go on mentioning every song by this multi-instrumentalist and thinking man's writer, but I want to leave the reader with some surprises. The strength of Connor's solid guitar work accompanying his crystal clear, pure voice indeed reach the epitome of what we singer-songwriters all are attempting to achieve. Look for Connor's trio called Little Big Men with Byrnes and Bob Goldsand. What a paradox Dan Connor is; just like the last song, "Good-bye to the Moon," a bouncy, light melody juxtaposed with lyrics about dying, this *little* guy is just about as *BIG* as you can get.



Sven-Erik Seaholm Upload

by Frederick Leonard

There are basically, two kinds of musicians. There are those who operate on the notion that the music is there to serve the artist. And there are those that strive, as artists, to serve the music.

Sven-Erik Seaholm's *Upload* is a case whereby this Master of so many things musical (from songwriting to recording and producing, to band leading, to designing CD art...) still chooses to serve the music.

There is something modest about this CD. It's not pretentious. It bears the quality of the matured writer who listens to the heart of his instincts rather than gives in to the ego of precocious whims. There is also something kinky about this recording. Yep. Kinky. While the writing and production often refers to the influences Sven so proudly wears on his sleeve, he also injects his innate sense of anarchy into the mix in a way that salutes his heroes while grabbing the wheel in terms of where its all careening from here.

"Shadytown" sports a vocal arrangement that would make Brian Wilson spit and try harder next time. I have yet to locate the words to express how much I dig "Modern Times," a freaky-sexy drum-loop rocker. But it has made my top-20 all-time favorite song list. "Listening" artfully beckons the Bic-flicking arena gig. "Sister Mary Jane" is appropriately trippy, but by looking at the title I already knew what it was about and how it was gonna sound, so I rolled up "Modern Times" again instead.

Upload CD Release with Sven-Erik Seaholm and friends, June 5, 7pm at Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., San Diego.



Crystal Yoakum Demo CD

by Frederick Leonard

You know, this is one hell of a demo. In a nutshell, I'd say everything about this self-titled release by Crystal Yoakum is pretty close to country perfect. It's concentrated and focused in its production. It's well balanced with the appropriate variety of material contained within that focus. From the gorgeous artwork and photography of the packaging right down to the very last deadly quarter note. It shouldn't be a "demo." It exceeds, in fact, most post-demo "releases."

The first thing I dig about this little spin through the hills is that she's "goin' for it" — with no stops, no excuses, and a complete responsibility for her place in music. Its obvious she's got the goods. She's a hottie at the age of 20. She's got a killer voice and handles it like she's been around twice as long. Her band, which in the case of this demo is, pretty much, Jewel's band. Ms. Yoakum certainly has that goin' for her (along with a lovin' shove from the Jewel woman, herself).

This CD was recorded in Nashville, so it's got that smoky and slick thing all at the same time. Way cool. The writing is terrific, with efforts from a talented team of contributing writers. I can't really say that there is a smash number one hit present here. Rather these are the kind of songs that grow on you, more so with each listen. Still, per my instincts, this young lady of a contender is down to only one thing and just that: the girl needs *the* hook. With one ripe, infectious, sassy little hook ... and this Crystal will have the last remaining bullet she needs in her pistol to hit her country chart target. And she *can* shoot.



Various Artists Kentucky Mountain Music

by Lou Curtiss

This seven-CD boxed set contains more than 150 recordings taken from both commercial recordings of the 1920s and '30s and field recording of the 1930s and '40s. Lots of emphasis here on the great variety of fiddle music that made Kentucky old-time traditions stand out. The set shines with a 32-page booklet of photos and notes by Rich Nevins and Charles Wolfe. They incorporate a great amount of research done years ago by the late Guthrie Meade.

A lot of work and a lot of years in the making, it's amazing that so many original recordings have been found and brought together in such good condition, especially when so many of them are so doggone rare. Among those represented are Taylor's Kentucky Boys, Burnett and Rutherford, the Crockett Family, Pete Steele, Shortbuckle Rourke and Family, Lonesome Luke and his Farmboys, Hack's String Band, Asa Martin, Green Bailey, J.W. Day, Jimmie Johnson, Buell Kazee, Fiddlin' Doc Roberts, and a whole lot more. If you are a fan of old-time music, especially fiddle, then you need to have this set. I can't see how you could be without it.



Clarence White Tuff & Stringy Sessions 1966-68

by Lou Curtiss

Here is a collection of 26 rarities from this brilliant and influential guitarist whose work has inspired musicians in the country, bluegrass, and rock 'n' roll fields for a long time. The collection features his session work on country and folk-rock recordings from the mid-'60s and includes very rare singles, demos, and his first recordings as a soloist. It includes performances with Gary Paxton, Wayne Moore, Dennis Payne, Jack Reeves, the Spencers, the Sanland Brothers, and others. It also includes two recently discovered demos of the Kentucky Colonels, which are probably the earliest examples of White playing electric. For Clarence White collectors, this one is a must, but for almost anyone who likes stuff from this era, it's certainly worth a listen.




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'round about



RANTHOUSE

THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE (WELL, MOSTLY)

by Gus T. Williker

IT'S ABOUT YER MOUTH

Hey, **94.9** . . . we're all really proud that yer deejays don't talk over the music, but howz about shutting up that whiney promo guy, eh?! I'd rather hear **Harvey Fierstein** sing "Frère Jacques" over an intro than yer cooler-than-thou craptalk.

Our corporate execs leave us the hell alone. L.A. wouldn't get this station, but that's okay, it's for San Diego! Maybe we're the sanest people you know.

Maybe you and a bartender were the only ones to see **Sonic Youth** play the **Live Wire** in '86. Maybe you convinced **Stephen Malkmus** to name his band "Pavement" instead of his first choice "Assfault." Maybe you possess the only surviving copy of the Three Mile Pilot/Eve Selis split 7-inch.

I don't care.

Yes, I understand marketing strategies, but it's more annoying than the mouth smackin' **Carl's Jr.** ads. I don't want to hear Jim Bob slobberin' all

over his Western bacon cheese-burger, and I don't want to hear you brag about how much better you are than **91X**, when the truth is yer playlist ain't much different.

Yes, **94.9** is the best alternative station in San Diego, but it can git a LOT better. This was painfully obvious to me one day when you segued from **311's** "Come Original" (amazing that a crappy reggae rip-off band would write such a horribly ironic tune, but anywho), to **Jeff Buckley's** "Last Goodbye" (a brilliant song that should NOT share the same air-waves with such asscrack).

If *it's about the music*, then show me, don't tell me (over and over and over and over and over again). But I don't know, that's just me talking.

KAPUT CAHOOT

And here's a double "soo prize" Gomer: **Incahoots** pulled the plug on its Thursday nite rockabilly shows. Gee, what with that aggressive every-other-week advertising and all, how could this happen? Oh yes, I've got a personal bias here . . . they agreed to pay me \$50 a week to help book bands, promote shows, and

deejay each Thursday. To me, it was almost like volunteering, but I wanted to get back to the deejay booth. The very first nite I got them **Deke Dickerson and the Ecco-Fonics**, and a live shot on the **KUSI News at Ten** (free TV exposure on your first nite!!! Hello?!!!). I was working on getting media from the **Union-Tribune**, **City Beat**, and **Fox Rox**, but it was determined that my consultation fee was a bit too pricey, and I was let go. Oh well, the rockabillys were probably wonderin' where **Incahoots** was hiding the free chips 'n' salsa. **Tio Leo's** still reigns rockabilly supreme!

RANDUM RANT

We all want clever names fer our businesses, but haircut salons are way out of control. Sure, I can choose to not read yer sign, but why do you hafta make a vomitus word-play on hair? I can't have a nice walk around Pacific Beach without stumblin' into *Head or Nails* or *A Cut Above*. Okay, maybe that doesn't make yer bile creep, but what about *The Hairem*, *Head Quarters*, or *Shear Paradise*? No? *Hairisma*,

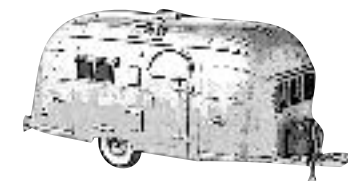


Gus and his trucker hat. (Look closely. You can see a signed nudie girl photo in the background. What a frickin' perve!)

Hairitage, or *Hairphnailia Salon*? I don't even know what the hell they're talking about now. How does the name *Hairitage* have ANYTHING to do with cutting hair?!!! Are all words beginning with "H" fair game . . . hair game? Please tell them to stop. Thank you.

(And finally, the crème de la chuck, *Wish You Were Hair*)

xoxo,
Gus T. Williker



La Jolla's Hot New Music Venue

by Dave Ish

Located in the middle of the vicinity populated by La Jolla's trendy restaurants and glitzy boutiques is the Firehouse. Built in the mid-1930s, the building was home to San Diego's Engine Company 13. It also housed a police substation and had a jail. The jail, which is still evident in the lobby, was most noted as a pick-up point for parents whose "wild" youngsters were rounded up by the local constable for curfew violations.

Now, thanks to the La Jolla YMCA, music lovers of all ages can hear some of the best and brightest regional and nationally touring musical acts in an atmosphere that is surprisingly well suited to both artists and audiences.

Converted in the late '80's to house a teen nightclub, the high-ceilinged engine room was outfitted with a powerful sound system, lights, and professionally installed sound baffles.

"The set up is great for a listening room type of venue," said Peter Ballantyne, the new director of the Firehouse Community Center.

Ballantyne, a musician himself, envisions turning the entire facility into a community arts and entertainment center

that offers a wide variety of art, music, dance, and theater classes as well as a performance venue sought out by artists and audiences alike.

The concert series kicked off in May with performances by the Duo-Tones who are Paul Johnson and Gil Orr, two founding fathers of the instrumental surf guitar genre; one-man blues band Steve White; and traditional country western singer Cowboy Jack.

The initial response has been enthusiastic from both audiences and musicians. The line-up for June, July and August is shaping up to ensure that downtown La Jolla's only live music venue could very quickly become a popular location for performing and listening to some great music.

Artists interested in being considered for booking at the Firehouse can send a press packet with photo, bio, current performance schedule, and CD to: The Firehouse, c/o Dave Ish, 7877 Herschel Avenue, La Jolla, CA 92037.

For a current schedule of music, call the Firehouse at (858)459-1640 or visit www.daveishpresents.com. This month's performance schedule is listed in the calendar, page 14.



A Rip-Roarin', Foot-Stompin' Musical Treat

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By Tom Key and Russell Treyz

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'round about

JUNE MUSIC CALENDAR

sunday • 1

Chris Isaak, Coors Amphitheatre, Chula Vista.

Alasdair Fraser/Natalie Haas, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

Shadowdogs, Lestats, 8pm.

Bayou Brothers, Patricks II, 428 F St., 9pm.

Moody Blues, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 9:15pm.

monday • 2

Mark Jackson Band, Bailey's Barbecue & Roadhouse, Julian, 8pm.

Moody Blues, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 9:15pm.

wednesday • 4

Lucinda Williams, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 7pm.

thursday • 5

Sven-Erik Seaholm CD release w/ **Chuck Schiele**, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 7pm.

Moody Blues, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 9:15pm.

Berkley Hart/Patrice Pike, Humphreys Backstage Lounge, 9:30pm.

friday • 6

Sanderling School Benefit w/ All-Star Guitar Concert/Silent Auction/Dinner, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 334 14th St., Del Mar. Call 760/635-3747 for info.

Tony Lasley, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Rugburns/Any Marina, Casbah, 8:30pm.

Lisa Sanders, Current Affairs Bookstore, 2536 University Ave., North Park, 9pm.

Carlos Olmeda, Lestats, 9pm.

saturday • 7

City Heights International Village Celebration, University Ave. at Fairmount, 10am-5pm.

San Diego Blues Festival, Embarcadero Marina Park, 11am-9pm.

Taylor Street, Cafe Elysa, 3076 Carlsbad Blvd., Carlsbad. Call 760/434-4100 for info.

OMBAC Coming Out Party w/ Modern Rhythm/Paul Revere & the Raiders & more, Mariner's Point, Mission Beach, 1-10pm.

Billy Midnight/Toria/Saba, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Berkley Hart, Wesley House Concert, Rancho Bernardo. Call for info.

sunday • 8

Fiesta del Sol, Solana Beach, 3:30-4:40pm.

Berkley Hart, Cannibal Bar outside on the Bay, Mission Beach, 2-6pm.

Mose Allison/Gunnar Biggs, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 7 & 9pm. \$20 cover for each show.

Mark Jackson Band, Golden Goose Coffeehouse, 10001 Maine St., Lakeside, 8pm.

tuesday • 10

Les & Lou Anne Preston, Bluegrass Society meeting, Fuddrucker's, La Mesa, 7-10pm.

wednesday • 11

Lisa Sanders, Lou's Records, 434 N. Coast Hwy, Encinitas, 4:30pm.

Angela Correa, M-Theory, 3004 Juniper St., South Park, 8pm.

Mean Nothings/This Project Called Anyway/Angela Patua, Lestats, 9pm.

thursday • 12

Baja Blues Boys, Firehouse, 7877 Herschel Ave., La Jolla, 8pm.

friday • 13

Jack Tempchin/Jerry McCann/Peter Bolland/Shadowdogs, Bob Burton Ctr. for Performing Arts, 2400 S. Stagecoach Lane, Fallbrook, 8pm.

Sue Palmer & Friends, Bookworks/Pannikin, Flower Hill Mall, Del Mar, 8pm.

Peter Sprague & Bob Magnussen Ki's, 2591 S. Hwy 101, Cardiff, 8pm.

Rob Corona, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Lee Rocker/Buddy Blue, Tio Leos. Call for info.

Bayou Brothers, Patricks II, 428 F St., 9pm.

saturday • 14

Taylor Street, Sipz Cafe, 5501 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. Call 858/279-3747 for info.

Bayou Brothers, Galley in the Marina, J St. Marina, Chula Vista, 6pm.

Deborah Liv Johnson, First Lutheran Church, 1420 Third Ave., 7:30pm. Call 619/595-1620 for info.

Dan Connor & Little Big Men, Old Poway Park, 7:30pm.

Sci-Fi/Horror Movie Festival, Metaphor Cafe, 258 E. 2nd Ave., Escondido, 8pm.

Peter Sprague, Dizzy's 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Kelly/Josh Hall, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Chris Klich Jazz Quintet, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 8:30pm.

sunday • 15

John Stewart, Dark Thirty Productions, 11132 Pinehurst Dr., Lakeside, 7:30pm.

Adam Gimbel, Whistle Stop, 2236 Fern St., 9pm.

wednesday • 18

Lighthouse, Golden Goose Coffeehouse, 10001 Maine Ave., Lakeside, 7pm.

Vince Gill, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 7:30pm.

thursday • 19

Sage Gentle Wing, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 8pm.

Peter Sprague w/ Jennifer Lee/Bob Magnussen/Tripp Sprague, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

friday • 20

Bayou Brothers, Zydeco Dance/Concert, Mission Hills Park, 6-7:30pm.

Chris LeDoux, Del Mar Fair, 7:30pm.

Sue Palmer & her Motel Swing Orchestra, The Firehouse, 7877 Herschel Ave., La Jolla, 8pm.

Garrett Thomas, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Big Sandy & his Fly-Rite Boys/Golden Hill Ramblers, Casbah, 8:30pm.

saturday • 21

Berkley Hart, Summer Solstice Concert, Bamboo, 127 Loma Ave., Coronado, 8pm.

Sue Palmer Trio, Martini's, 3940 Fourth Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.

Jose Sinatra/Troy Dante Inferno, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 8:30pm.

Doria Roberts, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Celticana, Patricks Irish Pub, Poway, 8:30pm.

Sage Gentle Wing, Cafe Crema, Pacific Beach, 9pm.

Bayou Brothers, Kahuna's Bar & Grill, 873 Turquoise St., P.B., 9pm.

sunday • 22

Peter Sprague Group, Coyote Bar & Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Dr., Carlsbad, 5pm.

Cecilio & Kapono/Tim Flannery, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 8:30pm.

Charlie Musselwhite, Rock On Stage, Del Mar Fair, 9:30pm.

monday • 23

Tracy Chapman, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 7:30pm.

tuesday • 24

Al Green/Average White Band, Viejas Casino Concerts in the Park, 7:30pm.

Bayou Brothers, Patricks II, 428 F St., 9pm.

wednesday • 25

James Brown, Del Mar Fair, 7:30pm.

Lou Reed, 4th & B. Call for info.

thursday • 26

Derek Duplessie/Desert Poets, Finish Line Stage, Del Mar Fair, 7:30pm.

friday • 27

Sage Gentle Wing, People's Natural Foods, Ocean Beach, 5:30-7:30pm.

Susan Tedeschi/Shemekia Copeland, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 7:30pm.

Janet Rucci Band, Metaphor Cafe, 258 E. 2nd Ave., Escondido, 8pm.

Tribute to San Diego Music w/ Jose Sinatra/Truckee Brothers/Shambles/Derek Duplessie/Mark DeCervo/Stereotypes et al., Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Ledward Kaapana, Hawaiian slack-key guitarist, Firehouse, 7877 Herschel Ave., La Jolla, 8pm.

Joe Rathburn, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Berkley Hart/Crystal Yoakum, Croce's Top Hat, 9pm.

saturday • 28

Lisa Sanders, Old Poway Park, 7:30pm.

Mark Jackson Band, Fallbrook Americana Series Concert, Hilltop Center, 331 E. Elder, Fallbrook, 7:30pm. Call 760/723-7255 for info.

Joel Rafael Band, Canyonfolk House Concert, 7:30pm. Email canyonfolk@cox.net for information.

Steve Winwood, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 8pm.

Peter Sprague & Pass the Drum, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Zoë, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Derek Duplessie/Desert Poets, Rock On Stage, Del Mar Fair, 9pm.

Modern Rhythm, Tiki House, 1152 Garnet, Pacific Beach, 9pm.

sunday • 29

Chris Klich Jazz Quintet, Coyote Bar & Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Dr., 5pm.

Lisa Sanders/Patrick Dennis, Alpine, 6pm. See atomorr.com.

Steve Winwood, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 8pm.

Sage Gentle Wing, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 8pm.

monday • 30

Taj Mahal & the Hula Band, Humphreys Concerts by the Bay, Shelter Island, 7pm.

WEEKLY

every sunday

7th Day Buskers, Hillcrest Farmer's Market/DMV parking lot, 10am-1pm.

Steve White, Elijah's, La Jolla, 11:30am.

Celtic Ensemble, Twiggs, 4pm.

Extreme Country, hosted by **Mike Vlack**, 7-10pm, KSON (97.3 FM).

Jazz Roots, hosted by **Lou Curtiss**, 9-10:30pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).

The Bluegrass Special, hosted by **Wayne Rice**, 10-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

every monday

Swing Dancing, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6-8pm.

Tango Dancing, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8pm.

Dixieland Jazz, Metaphor Cafe, 258 E. 2nd Ave., Escondido, 7pm.

Open Mic Night, Lestats. Call 619/282-0437 for info.

every tuesday

Zydeco Tuesdays, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6:30pm.

Open Mic Night, Casa Picante, 10757 Woodside Ave., Santee, 7:30-9:30pm.

Comedy Experiment, Lestats, 9pm.

every wednesday

Open Mic Night, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.

Open Mic Night, Twiggs. Sign-ups at 6:30pm.

Hatchet Brothers, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

every thursday

Will Edwards' Music Show w/ Zoë, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Bitty Bums Showcase, Lestats, 9pm.

Hot Rod Lincoln, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., Call for info.

Sue Palmer & Friends, Calypso Restaurant, Leucadia, 7:30pm.

Dixieland Jazz, Metaphor Cafe, 258 E. 2nd Ave., Escondido, 7pm.

Want to be included in our monthly calendar?

Email the dates, locations, and times your band is playing to:

mrkentman@cox.net



the local seen



Photo: Millie Moreno



Steve Poltz at P.B. Block Party



Photo: Millie Moreno

Hot Rod Lincoln at P.B., Block Party



Photo: Millie Moreno

Steve Poltz, Anya Marina in P.B.

Photo: Millie Moreno



Gregory Page and Tom Brosseau at P.B. Block Party

Photo: Millie Moreno



Bill Magee Blues Band at P.B. Block party

Photo: Millie Moreno



A.J. Croce at P.B. Block Party

Photo: Millie Moreno



Berkley Hart at P.B. Block Party



Kornflower and Dennis Lane



Photo: Millie Moreno

Bruce Dale Betz at SD Songwriter's Guild

Photo: Tim Day



Michael Fleming and Ken Graydon at Hinton Folk Festival.

Photo: Tim Day



Bill Sherman at Hinton Festival



Photo: Millie Moreno

Members of the San Diego Songwriter's Guild



Photo: Ken Johnson

Asylum Street Spankers at Encinitas' Artists Colony, Christina Marrs on saw.



Photo: Tim Day

Heloise Love and B. Caldwell at Hinton Folk Fest.



Photo: Millie Moreno

Lisa and Craig Chaddock at SD Songwriter's Guild



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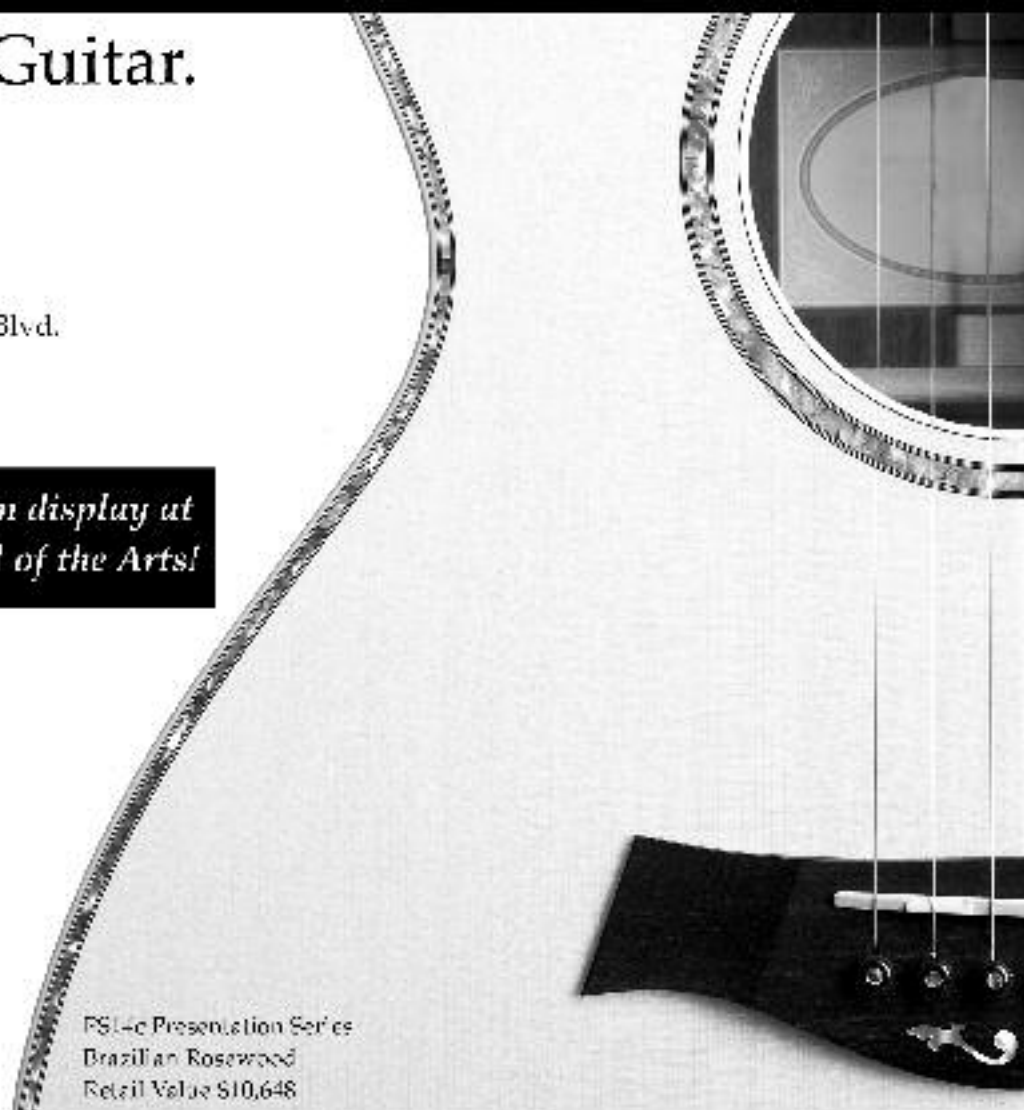
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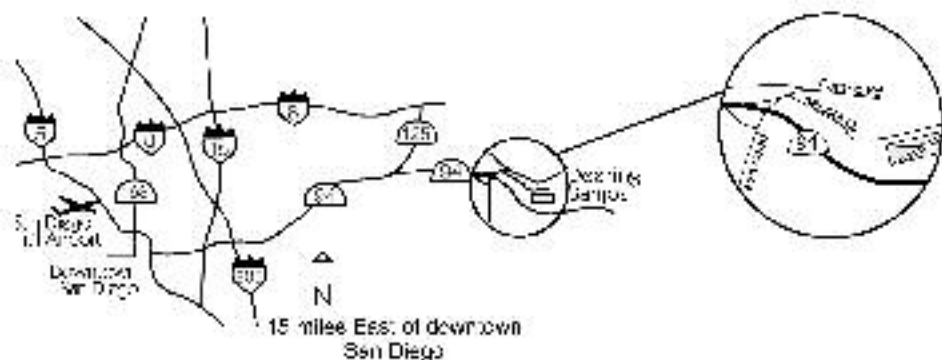
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