

T SAN DIEGO ROUBADOOR

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



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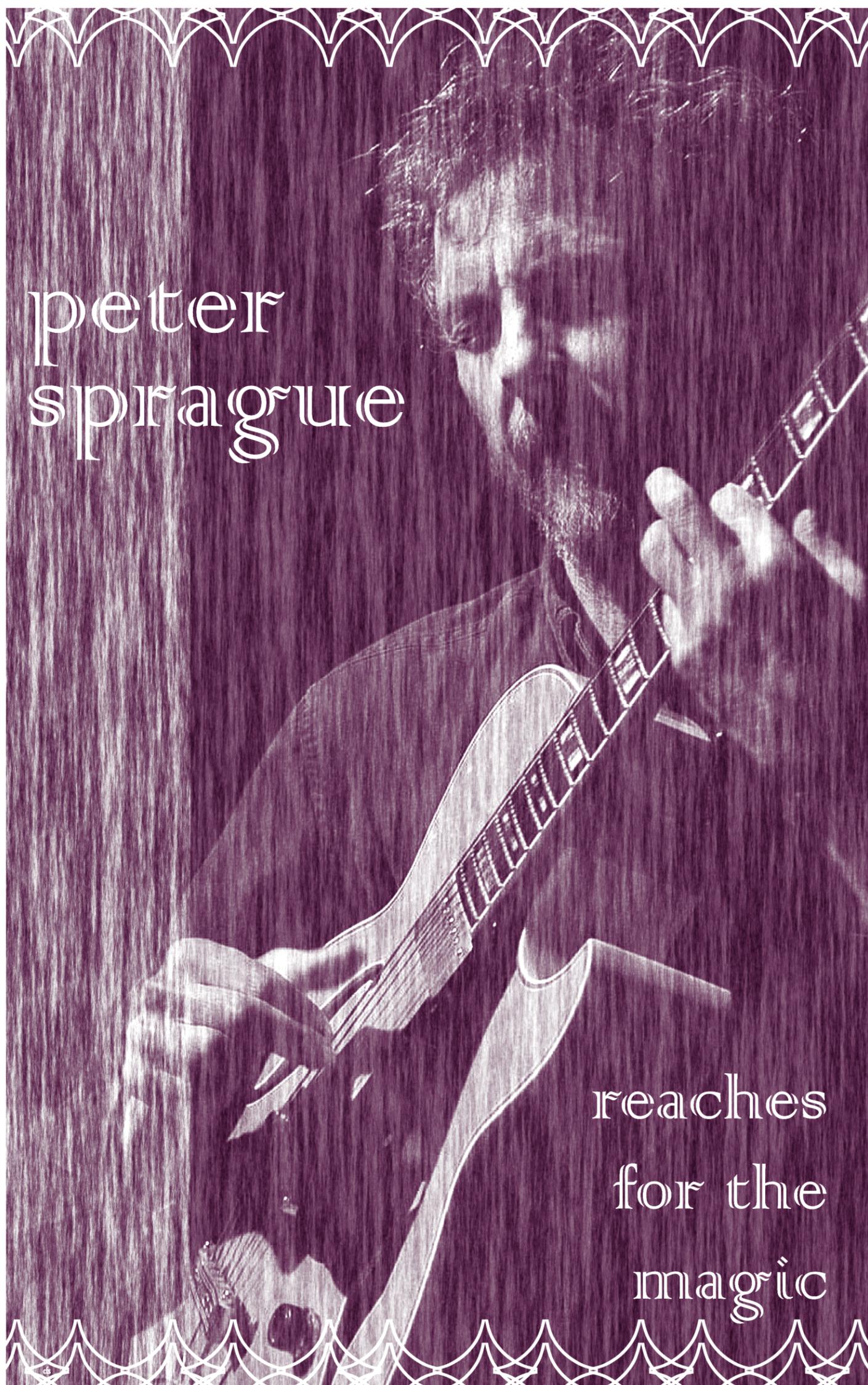
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Featuring the photography of John Baldi, Steve Covault, Gail Donnelly, Tim Flack, David Matt Green, and Tom Walko
Live music throughout the day
Saturday, May 13, noon-8pm

San Diego Folk Song Society Meeting
Sunday, May 14, 2-6pm

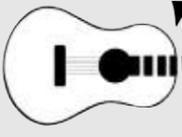
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Alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, blues, gospel, jazz, and bluegrass music news

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 alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, blues, gospel, jazz, 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.

SAN DIEGO TROUBADOUR, the local source for alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, blues, gospel, jazz, and bluegrass music news, is published monthly and is free of charge. Letters to the editor must be signed and may be edited for content. It is not, however, guaranteed that they will appear.

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The **San Diego Troubadour** is dedicated to the memory of **Ellen and Lyle Duplessie**, whose vision inspired the creation of this newspaper.

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by Liz Abbott

There is a handful of photographers in this town who you'll find at just about every music event. They're there for two simple reasons: they love music and they love shooting live performance. Many of them don't get paid and don't expect to; it is their passion and a grateful "thank you" from a performer whose essence they've captured on camera is enough. While musicians are the ones to get the glory, we forget, sometimes, that they owe it to the people behind the camera.

On Saturday, May 13, six San Diego music photographers will step out from behind the camera and into the limelight to show their works in a gallery setting while 18 local musicians, featured in the photography, will perform 30 minute sets throughout the day.

The show, titled **Anything for the Shot! Images and Sounds of San Diego**, is the brainchild of Tim Flack, one of the participating photographers and owner of Idynomite Media, who is cohosting the exhibit with Listen Local San Diego. The *San Diego Troubadour* is proud to be one of its sponsors, along with Acoustic Expressions and George's Camera and Video Exchange, Inc.

Participating photographers include Steve Covault, Gail Donnelly, John Baldi, Tim Flack, David Matt Green (aka Shy Cloud), and Tom Walko. Although these photographers, who are talented artists in their own right, come from diverse and expansive backgrounds, they all share one thing in common: they are all avid fans and supporters of local music.

Troubadour staff photographer Steve Covault has been



on the team for the past few years and has provided the bulk of the photos that appear on the Local Seen page. We are very lucky to have him! Gail Donnelly and John Baldi have also submitted many wonderful photos to the *Troubadour* over the years.

Celebrating the gallery opening will be many of the singer-songwriters who are featured in the works on display. Performers range from local legends to up and comers.

noon	Robin Henkel
12:30pm	Audrey Surface
1pm	Sven-Erik Seaholm
1:30pm	Victoria Robertson
2pm	Derren Raser
2:30pm	Barbara Nesbitt
3pm	Bart Mendoza
3:30pm	Joe Rathburn
4pm	Pete Thurston
4:30pm	Michael Tiernan
5pm	Lisa Sanders
5:30pm	Christopher Dale
6pm	Berkley Hart
6:30pm	Peter Bolland
7pm	Lindsey Yung
7:30pm	Simeon Flick
8pm	Jane Lui
8:30pm	Gregory Page

Anything for the Shot! Images and Sounds of San Diego
Saturday, May 13, noon-9pm
Acoustic Expressions, 2852 University Ave. in North Park
Admission: \$8
Information: cathryn@listenlocalsd.com

DIVA NOVA – A CELEBRATION OF WOMEN WHO ROCK YOUR WORLD

by William Johns

di-va n. A principal female singer. (from Italian, *goddess*; from Latin, feminine of *divus*, divine, god)

no-va n. A star that suddenly increases dramatically in brightness then fades to its original luminosity over a period of months or years. (from new Latin, feminine of Latin *novus*, new)

For quite sometime, San Diego has been a beacon for some of the best musicians and singer-songwriters in the country — specifically female musicians and singer-songwriters. There must be something in the air or maybe it's the benevolent music scene that nurtures the artists' soul and begets that fine blend of talent, style, beauty, and grace.

On May 17 San Diegans will have a chance to hear 17 of these special women in concert at Winston's in Ocean Beach. Presented by Beach Music Mafia, this is an event not to be missed. Show time is 8 p.m.

Podunk Now here has been steadily going somewhere since their inception in 2003. The husband and wife duo features Johnny Janiga (king of the perfectly understated guitar lick) and Heather Marie whose luminous beauty is equaled only by her dynamic vocals. The twosome's sound is a blend of alt country, indie rock, and folk but make

no mistake Podunk's sound is distinctly their own. Their star is on the rise and with their debut CD in the works you'll be hearing a LOT more from this young couple.

Hard working Kim Divincenzo has been touring like mad, recording, and honing her skills while building a loyal following.

Danielle LoPresti, a scene unto herself, is known for her highly energetic, theatrical performances. She's also the catalyst for the San Diego Indie Music Fest.

Sweet Elise is the exotic beauty from the Grams who reinvents classical violin by way of experimentation and signal processing. Elise's violin, along with her husband Craig's guitar playing, creates an intricate dance of interwoven melody. With a new self-titled CD that has been receiving airplay, the Grams have been playing locally and as far away as New York City.

Lisa Sanders is a veteran of the San Diego music scene. Her rich voice and impeccable songwriting are evident on her various CDs and she continues to delight audiences near and far. With the pending release of her latest CD Lisa proves that like fine wine, time is only making her better.

At the age of 22, Anna Troy has already turned her back on a major label and is calling her own shots.

Whether longtime troubadours or new to the arena, these ladies pack

serious heat. Several are on the verge of discovery. A number of them are award winners and nominees; the Grams, Steph Johnson, Danielle LoPresti, Lisa Sanders, Barbara Nesbitt...there's a buzz of excitement associated with their names. You can read the wildly enthusiastic comments that are posted on their MySpace pages. Mark your calendar to hear the following divas perform:

- Paige Aufhammer
- Kim Divincenzo
- Drop Joy
- Chelsea Flor
- Sweet Elise (The Grams)
- Marie Haddad
- Steph Johnson
- Laura Kuebel
- Danielle LoPresti & the Masses
- Jane Lui
- Julie Mack
- Barbara Nesbitt
- Heather Marie (Podunk Now here)
- Kim Rogers
- Lisa Sanders
- Anna Troy
- Renata Youngblood



Danielle LoPresti



Photo: Schiele

Sweet Elise



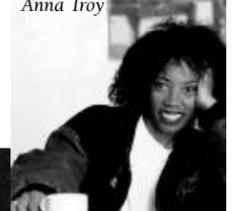
Renata Youngblood



Anna Troy



Paige Aufhammer



Lisa Sanders



Jane Lui



Phil Harmonic Sez:

“Without forgiveness life is governed by... an endless cycle of resentment and retaliation.”

— Roberto Assagioli



SOMETIMES WE SEE DEAD PEOPLE: FLATPICKING INTO THE PAST AT VALLEY MUSIC

by Raul Sandelin

"Hello walls..."
As sung by Faron Young
and written by Willie Nelson

Picture this: The wagon train of Cadillacs and DeSotos pulls out of downtown San Diego and drives eastward. For nearly 20 miles, it winds along a road that hugs both mesas and riverbeds. Oaks sprout out like lines of Civil War pickets. Chapparal and scrub brush prod the roadside like tombstones in an old cowboy "talkie." Finally, this mid-century wagon train descends into a hidden valley crossed with some promisingly wide streets but mostly scattered fields and family farm houses. Now, in the middle of this dusty, quiet place, they park along one of the only streets with sidewalks. Everybody jumps out, guitars, fiddles, banjos, and cowboy hats in hand. And they float through a door, following the one dressed in white. Collectively, they look around the blank walls. One of them mutters a line from the book he's been reading: John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*.

S

Looking back now, the year 1952, when Valley Music opened its doors, would seem like some long ago beginning, given that Valley Music will be celebrating its 55th year in 2007. Yet, at the time, it was actually the end of the trail in a way for two long-time traveling musicians who decided to finally hang their hats and settle down.

Smokey Rogers and Cactus Soldi had already built careers touring the country in the 1930s and 1940s as part of the emerging country western and western swing circuits. They had played in bands headed by Spade Cooley and Tex Williams before Smokey himself stepped forward as a band leader in his own right and took over Tex's Western Caravan. Their songs provided soundtracks to various Westerns and they even appeared as singing cowboys in a number of Hollywood projects. And, their reputations as crack musicians opened the ears of a *Who's Who* list on both coasts as well as in Nashville.

In 1950 Rogers and Soldi, along with another bandmate Pedro DePaul, decided to pull their reigns away from the road and open up their own venue — the Bostonia Ballroom — located near the corner of Broadway and Second Avenue in El Cajon. (The building is still standing.) Soon afterward, Valley Music opened its doors partly in response to the needs of the many musicians who wanted to re-supply while passing through town for a show at the Ballroom. Singer Ginger Snow (Rita Soldi) and Cactus were already married. Rita would be an unofficial partner in the venture until her death decades later.

The Bostonia Ballroom became a top showcase for national acts. Big names like Eddie Cochran, Jim Reeves, Patsy Cline, Tex Ritter, Carl Perkins, Hank Snow, Gene Vincent, and Bobby Riddell were frequently booked throughout the 1950s. (However, despite popular rumor, Elvis never did perform there.) By day, the musicians could hit the music store for strings, equipment, and any quick repairs they needed before heading out of town.

With Smokey on guitar and vocals and Cactus on fiddle, both the Ballroom and the store had their resident pros ready to perform an impromptu show or hand out advice. As a result, Valley Music became a local mecca for musicians wanting to talk shop and learn licks from the journey-men. Rogers continued to promote himself as a local personality and even had live radio and television shows at KFMB in San Diego that took him into the

1960s. It was around this time that the business partnership split up, with Rogers taking the Ballroom and Soldi taking Valley Music.

Since so many national acts played the Bostonia Ballroom, it's difficult to say exactly who stopped by the store. But it wasn't uncommon for the party to simply move from the Ballroom to the store in the wee hours of the morning.

On one such occasion Audie Murphy decided to buy a guitar he had pulled down off the wall during an after-hours jam session. Likewise, Johnny Cash woke Soldi up one night when everyone had retired early and insisted on getting into the store at 3:30 a.m. in order to try out some new guitars before hitting the road. Soldi, for the trouble, made sure that Cash bought one, a sale Cash would remember with a smile years later when Cactus Jim, Soldi's son, became Johnny's guitarist in the 1980s.

Given all of this celebrity activity, the store, along with the Ballroom, would certainly appear to be natural stars on any country music walk of fame. But what is equally interesting is the role that Valley Music played in the development of rock 'n' roll and its mythology.

It is well documented that Frank Zappa spent a good portion of his early teens living in the East County. La Mesa civic boosters have been quick to steer the attention to their fair city, probably because Zappa was enrolled for a time at Grossmont High, which is located in La Mesa. But the family actually lived in El Cajon. And, as noted in Barry Miles' *Zappa: A Biography*, young Frank bought his first Decca record player at Valley Music, identified as Smokey Rogers Music Store, in 1954.

A decade later, members of a Mount Helix garage band that were soon to morph into the iconic Iron Butterfly purchased their first guitars at Valley Music, really the only music outlet east of downtown San Diego. Soon afterward, Valley Music would be immortalized in popular literature when the great gonzo journalist Lester Bangs included it in his Vietnam-era chronicles of benzedrine sojourns throughout the East County that included trips to "Grossmont Junior College" and "San Diego State College."

And, in the album notes to the first *KGB Homegrown*, released in 1973, Lester Bangs' protégé Cameron Crowe would mention Valley Music while reviewing the young Cactus Jim's band, Montezuma's Revenge.

But, as the decades wore on, El Cajon's lazy pepper trees and willows and streets lined with elm were bulldozed in favor of apartments and ever-wider streets to accommodate the East County's unmitigated population growth that tore the small town feel out of El Cajon's heart. Instead of rolling fields, orange groves, and the occasional rider on horseback, El Cajon grew from a humble cow town to a clamoring city of 100,000 today.

As El Cajon transformed so did the music industry, especially in the areas of music equipment and retail. While Cactus and Rita minded the store (the Ballroom was long gone by the 1970s), newer stores specializing in everything from records, stereos, and band instruments to electric guitars with a rock 'n' roll attitude popped up and began to draw customers away from the one-stop-shop that Valley Music had offered the East County for so long. In addition, the new stores grew bigger and bigger into the "big box" outlets we know today.



Cactus Soldi



The Western Caravan



Smokey Rogers



Jim Soldi and Johnny Cash

These larger stores were better able to handle the expanded product lines of the name-brand guitar manufacturers such as Gibson and Fender. So, within all this growth and transformation, Valley Music had to carve out a very small niche in the East County market that had once been its exclusive domain.

About this same time, the Soldi kids — Cactus Jim and his sister Andrea — began stretching out on their own. Andrea, in fact, joined the carnival and left town altogether until shortly before her father's death in 1990. Cactus Jim, on the other hand, followed in his father's early footsteps and hit the road, recording with some of country music's finest, including Waylon Jennings and Johnny Paycheck, not to mention two years of touring with Ricky Skaggs and four years with Johnny Cash. Of Cactus Jim, Cash once called him "the best player in the business." Perhaps he was remembering that morning at 3:30 when he and Jim's father and a carload of Cash's band set about trying out all the instruments in the store during that long-ago jam session and guitar-buying spree.

Preceded shortly before by Rita, Cactus' death brought the two kids back home. And, after this long journey, they are both keeping the store running much like it did in 1952. Its small town feel is immediately apparent upon entering. Andrea is there most days and helps customers find anything from a vast collection of books and sheet music. A healthy selection of guitar parts, strings, and accessories hang behind the counter. Jim offers full-service repairs also. There are CDs for sale although the albums and Decca record players are long gone. Also included in the modest showroom are a number of fine instruments, mostly guitars, both new and used, along with an equally impressive stock of amplifiers and assorted gear. There are even a few resident pros who offer lessons in the back.

But, what is so impressive about Valley Music is the sense that one is stepping back in time. To walk in the front door you must realize that you are standing in room where some of the biggest names in American popular music have also stood over the last 50 years or so. If these walls could only talk, and talk about what they've heard, they'd talk about the shiny Cadillacs and DeSotos parked outside and the guys with names like Hank and Eddie and Tex and Johnny who sauntered out of the hot, dusty sun or warm moonlight for a song or two and

maybe even a nip off a flask usually kept hidden in someone's coat pocket. These walls would talk about the young kids with dreams of rock operas floating through their heads who found solace in the squeaky sounds of spinning records. These walls would talk about psychedelic teenagers and teenagers soon bound for Vietnam, teenagers who rolled out of the apartments and trailer parks searching for the music that would lift them away from the blue-collar booby prize that El Cajon dangles in front of those who grew up just a little too far east of Paradise and the postcard promis-

es of cosmopolitan San Diego. "Sometimes we see dead people floating through here," Jim laughs. "Sometimes they even come out and sing late at night after everybody has gone home." Well, if they did, these walls would've heard them.

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Lou Curtiss

Photo: Bill Richardson

Recordially, Lou Curtiss

REMEMBERING BUDDY BLUE

Buddy Blue came into my store and my life as a reporter for the Grossmont College newspaper and I think I may have marked him that day with the urge to become a collector of 78s. He may have already been there but I remember being in an effusive mood that day, particularly about those old blues and jazz 78s and the music on them and I can usually tell when someone's gettin' the bug. Buddy either already had it or caught it on my doorstep. I like to think it was the latter.

Around that time the Beat Farmers were getting together and Virginia and I saw them play them a few times during those early days. They played at the 18th annual San Diego Folk Festival, which was held at Balboa Park on the Old Globe Theatre's outside stage. I think it was the only Folk Festival that band ever played and I'm not sure how the folkies took it, particularly some of the older ones. I remember that some festival regulars like Jim Ringer, Utah Phillips, and Glenn Ohrlin were impressed and quietly amused by the fans' reaction. Such is the argument about what folk music is. It's stuff sung and played by folk. Buddy and the rest of the Farmers were certainly some of the most interesting folk I've ever met. A few years later the Folk Festival was on the skids (before it started up again as the Adams Avenue Roots Festival) and a bunch of the folk elite in San Diego were having a meeting to see whether we could organize a few fundraisers to get it going again. I asked Buddy to come to one of those meetings and he came, direct from a

gig, dressed in an outfit Marlon Brando would have worn in *The Wild One*. Sitting on the couch at Ed Cormier's house, Buddy laid out to these people a set of reasons why they ought to support me, my ideas, and the need for a festival that was my concept, one that brought the the kinds of music that I wanted to have. I think Buddy made some converts to my side that remain in my camp today.

During those folk meetings we talked about holding a benefit to raise money. Buddy went out and organized one with his then group the Jacks, the Forbidden Pigs, and others. There never was a folk music benefit but San Diego's rock music scene always came through for me mostly thanks to Buddy paving the way. The festivals resumed in 1994 on Adams Avenue and Buddy played at the first one (or the 21st, depending on how you're counting). That same year I also took over the booking for the Adams Avenue Street Fair. Now, I had never booked a concert that featured essentially rock music before so the first guy I went to was Buddy. He made me a detailed list of about 30 local rock bands, what they did, what kind of draw they could expect, how I as a booker would get along with them, how much I should offer them, and even which bands were more outside, family friendly. I booked about 25 of those

groups and, over the years, Buddy would add to the list and many bands would come again and again (including Buddy) as the groups reassembled themselves. Even after Buddy had a falling out with the money doers and shakers on Adams Avenue, which brought an end to his active participation, he'd still drop me suggestions about artists I should try to go after, right up until last year. When Folk Arts was forced to move last year, Buddy was the first one on the phone to organize a benefit. The money that came through from

Buddy's event as well as the one organized by Bart Mendoza kept me and Virginia afloat during a tough time and helped to stabilize ourselves at our new location. I'll always be grateful to Buddy and the other musicians who participated for allowing me to continue to keep all my stuff and continue to play it. I'd be lost without it Damnit, Buddy, you join a list of people who I'm going to want around to ask questions but won't be able to, including my dad, Sam Chatmon, Jim Ringer, Merle Travis, Kate Wolf, Thomas Shaw, and a whole lot more. Now that list includes Buddy Blue. Buddy, you were supposed to be writing your column about me a long time down the road.

Recordially,
Lou Curtiss



Photo: Gail Donnelly Scatohlm

PS. After the *San Diego Troubadour* published my first suggested song list, Buddy was the first on the phone to let me know that he had nearly two thirds of them in his collection. This was a guy who wrote record reviews of Frankie "Half Pint" Jaxon records for the *Union-Tribune* and, in his final column, trumpeted Dock Boggs. This guy knew his music, his likes and dislikes, and he wasn't afraid to tell you about them.

TRUE TALES FROM RECORD COLLECTING

(heard from a German collector visiting Folk Arts Rare Records)
A German pre-war record collector was in India hunting 78s. In an antique shop he found quite a pile of records, many of which were broken. As a favor to the shop owner, the collector carefully sorted out the broken pieces from the nonbroken. When he was finished, he watched the owner carefully scoop up all the pieces and place them neatly in a box. "Aren't you going to throw those away?" asked the collector. "Certainly not," replied the shopkeeper. "I'm going to sell them." "Who buys broken records?" asked the collector. "Lots of people around here," continued the man. "In this country we mix the pieces with mutton fat and eat it. It is a wonderful cure for hemorrhoids."

SOME EXTRA THOUGHTS

It's been a little over 38 years since I walked into KPRI with a handful of rare records to play on OB Jetty's late night underground radio program. I got hooked on radio that night and it wasn't long before I was doing a Sunday night blues program on KPRI. That lasted for awhile and then I did a short stint at KDEO before moving to KGB, where I did *The Lou Curtiss Folk Arts Radio Program* for seven years (kind of a Dr. Demento type of program but a little more folkie). I also did a Sunday morning old-time gospel bluegrass show for KGB. In 1986 I started *Jazz Roots* on KSDS first for an hour, then for an hour and a half, and finally for two hours (8-10pm). On July 12 I'll celebrate my 20th year at KSDS with a special *Jazz Live* concert featuring legendary

blues pianist and singer Floyd Dixon. It's been a good run at KSDS and one I hope I can continue for a long time. Hope you all can be there.

FUNDING FOR THE ADAMS AVENUE STREET FAIR TO BE CUT!

The T.O.T. (Transient Occupancy Tax) allotment for the Adams Avenue Business Association events (particularly the Street Fair in September) has been a major part of the reason that high quality events take place on Adams Avenue. Two years ago the people on the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture decided to cut funding for the Adams Avenue Roots Festival, making it virtually dependent on the Adams Avenue Street Fair (you may have noticed the cut-backs at the Roots Festival this year). A few weeks ago we learned that the Street Fair won't be receiving any funding either. In fact, those all-knowing arts gurus on the Commission referred to us as a "glorified swap meet." I understand they have also cut funding for Mardi Gras in the Gaslamp District as well as for the Hillcrest Street Fair. Those of you who attend and enjoy our events on Adams Avenue should consider sending an email to either City Councilwoman Toni Atkins' office or to mayor Jerry Sanders. This is a \$25,000 hit to the people's music. We can't allow this to happen.



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Rebecca's Coffeehouse

A Welcoming Environment for Musicians and Audiences Alike

by Amy Granite Eddo

South Park is in the midst of a collective rebirth. Independent businesses are thriving, the night life has a flavor unique from the downtown experience, and the strong sense of community pride and support gives this area a down-home, small-town feel in the heart of San Diego. Diversity energizes this neighborhood, inspiring local artists of every genre, but it's South Park's growing music scene that has both musicians and enthusiasts buzzing. Surrounded by live music venues M-Theory Music and the Whistlestop bar just across the street, Rebecca's Coffeehouse is the latest spot to regularly feature local music acts. On any given day at the coffeehouse, musicians are a visible fixture, whether it's a guitarist in an oversized, comfy chair strumming away, a writer scribbling lyrics at a table, or someone playing the community piano. Since artists seem to consider the coffeehouse a home, it comes natural for owner Rebecca Zearing to welcome musicians of every genre into her living room for a weekly Open Mic night. With a large stage, brand new sound system, and warm candle-lit ambiance, word is spreading that Rebecca's has a cozy, unpretentious atmosphere where one can enjoy a night of free music and reasonably priced homemade creations concocted by Rebecca

Rebecca's Coffeehouse

FACTS AND FIGURES

WHERE: 3015 Juniper St. in South Park
HOURS: 6am-10pm Sunday thru Wednesday; Open 24 hours Thursday, Friday, Saturday
MUSIC: Acoustic/all genres. Open mic night/family jam Thursdays, beginning at 8pm. Jazz on Fridays. Featured artists on various days of the week
LEVEL: Local singer-songwriters
PRICE: Music is free; tips are welcome
INFO: 619/284-F00D
www.rebeccascoffeehouse.com
RATING: Comfortable, friendly place; free wireless Internet access; good food.

herself. Besides the hot-out-of-the-oven, best scones in San Diego, what is it that sets Rebecca's apart from other open mic nights in the greater San Diego area? Rheanna Downey, host of the Open Mic and singer/songwriter, explains, "It's common in San Diego to see artists perform at an Open Mic and leave right after their set. Here, we

want musicians to stick around for the whole night, support one another, and create an environment where we can collaborate as artists." This idea materialized into the Family Jam, a chance for participants and spectators alike to enjoy all the night's artists fusing their individual styles into one collaborative production.

By word of mouth alone, an array of performers comes out each week. New and returning acts provide for an ever-changing, exciting atmosphere to be a part of. Since the Open Mic's debut, Downey has been captivating audiences each week. With her soulful voice and strong stage presence, it's no wonder the audience's ears perk up when she takes the stage. Downey herself is a master of collaboration. During her set she is likely to request that one of the evening's performers join her onstage for an impromptu jam. Adding to her musical versatility besides her acoustic guitar, Downey plays a variety of instruments including the accordion, lap steel, and piano. Aside from touring the country three times, Downey has released a five-song EP and continues to play at local venues on a regular basis.

In addition to Downey, several other regulars grace the stage at Rebecca's Open Mic every



Rebecca's Coffeehouse in South Park

week. Rocky Green is a unique rock 'n' roll guitar player whose set features ragtime tunes from the 1930s. Nino is an island rhythms band specializing in laid back surf music that transports audiences to tropical, sandy beaches. Rodney Hubbard is a jazz guitarist who is also an amazing vocalist, a soulful comparison to the sounds of Marvin Gaye and Nick Drake. Stay tuned for more on these artists as each is involved in future projects and tours. Despite the fact that certain acts do return each week, it is the first-timers who keep this event consistently exciting.

Sign ups are on a first-come basis starting at 8 p.m. every Thursday. Each artist is assigned a 15 minute time slot and, with the Family Jam beginning at 10:30, there are usually 10 spots available. Since this Open Mic is intended to be a welcoming environment for all, including children, there is a policy in place prohibiting the use of profanity or vulgarity of any kind.

Because the show is free and the increasing popularity of returning and anticipated acts, those interested in attending are encouraged to arrive early in order to find parking and settle into one of many areas of the coffeehouse to enjoy. While many guests read, chat, and surf free wireless Internet while the Open Mic is in progress, depending on the volume of the performance, respectful voices are appreciated.

Now that Rebecca's offers live music, it is a perfect time to become a part of an expanding family of regular acts. The current schedule includes Open Mic night on Thursdays and jazz every Friday night from 7-10 p.m. These are the only regularly scheduled events at Rebecca's, although the Speak Easy Quartet frequently shows up to slap out some classic swing tunes. Community artists are catching on that Rebecca's is a venue that welcomes all genres of art. In addition to the music, there have been poetry readings and a satire night is in the planning stages.

The independent arts scene in South Park is gaining momentum largely because of the support of surrounding businesses and welcoming hang out spots. Rebecca's truly is an environment where musicians can meet and collaborate on a creative level, resulting in fun, free evenings of live entertainment for all ages. The intimate nature of this venue makes guests feel as if they are seated in the living room of a close friend, and the friendly staff treats everyone as family, serving up an endless variety of hot or iced drinks and freshly baked goods to beat all others in the area. To book an event or check the current schedule, visit www.rebeccascoffeehouse.com.



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Big Rig Deluxe (l. to r.): Michael P. Hunter, Hal "Junior" Smith, Johnny G. d'Artenay, Robin Henkel, Jon Harford

by John Philip Wyllie

For more than a dozen years, Hot Rod Lincoln co-founder, Johnny G. d'Artenay was content to share the lead vocals in that superb rockabilly/'50s band with the velvet-throated Buzz Campbell. Now, several years removed from that partnership, d'Artenay has lent his distinctive rain barrel baritone to Big Rig Deluxe. Always in demand, he also plays a regular supporting role in two other fine local bands: Jump Jones and Blue Largo. The *San Diego Troubadour* recently chatted with d'Artenay between sets of their monthly gig at Tio Leo's near USD in Linda Vista.

"Hot Rod Lincoln had more of a rock 'n' roll approach. We started out wanting to be an oldies band and then evolved into a rockabilly or rock 'n' roll rockabilly band. Big Rig Deluxe decided to be more of a country band with music based more on people like Johnny Cash, Buck Owens, Hank Williams, George Jones, Dwight Yoakam, and the Mavericks. We

do trucker songs and novelty songs along with some rockabilly. The sonic flavor of this band is very different."

Directing Big Rig Deluxe has been a very different experience from either his Hot Rod Lincoln stint or his involvement with two additional pending projects. For one thing, d'Artenay handles the lead vocals on almost every song. He has also stepped away from his comfort zone behind his leopard-skinned upright bass and is playing rhythm guitar most of the time. It has been both a challenge and a learning experience, but one that d'Artenay has embraced.

"I had to almost start over from square one," d'Artenay admitted. "We did quite a bit of rehearsing before we played any gigs. Rhythm guitar is a different instrument. When you are used to having one role in a band playing a particular instrument, learning a new one gives you a totally new perspective — that, and a respect for the other instruments. Bass players typically don't know a lot about chords and how different chords fit into

Big Rig Deluxe Is Ready to Roll

[various] song structures. I have learned a little about that through playing the guitar." This opportunity for growth is not the only thing d'Artenay is enjoying about Big Rig Deluxe. The chemistry that has developed among the band's five members has made the whole experience a joy rather than a job.

"Even though we practice in a garage, this is not like a kid's garage band. We are all adults and everyone has a good level of maturity. Everyone is excited about the band and that makes it easy to nudge in one direction or another and to help facilitate and organize. Things just seem to be coming together. We all really like each other," he added.

Each of the five musicians brings a wealth of experience and a unique background to Big Rig Deluxe.

"We have Robin Henkel on lap steel guitar, dobro, and resonator guitar. He trades off on those instruments depending upon the song," d'Artenay explained. "He has a primal Delta background and some jazz/swing influence, so that gives us more of a western swing flavor. We have five instruments as opposed to three [in Hot Rod Lincoln] so texturally our music is a lot thicker or fuller."

Longtime friend Mike Hunter plays bass for Big Rig Deluxe. He shares d'Artenay's enthusiasm for roots music and was instrumental in establishing the band back in 2000. Drummer Hal Smith comes from more of a traditional jazz background, but he's a quick study and has picked up BRD's western swing tempos as if he has been playing them all of his life. Hunter and Smith combine to form a very solid rhythm section. Lead guitarist Jon Harford, with whom d'Artenay also performs in Jump Jones, rounds out the band with his crisp guitar work. On occasion, he is also prevailed upon for harmony vocals.

At present, d'Artenay has composed about 10 BRD originals, seven of which are part of the band's regular repertoire. More are on the way, but progress in that direction is slow since each band member has various other commitments. Time only permits one practice per week. The juxtaposition of covers with originals seems to work well, however. Tio Leo's dance floor was filled with swing dancers on this night at least, from the first note until the last.

"We like to have a lot of fun and we don't take ourselves too seriously,"

d'Artenay said. "There is also a crying in your beer aspect to country music. People come out to dance away their troubles to this good diversionary music.

Underneath it all there is some truth in these songs and we hope that people can identify with the honesty, truth, and simplicity of this music."

On the horizon for BRD is a new CD slotted for summer release. It will consist mainly of originals with perhaps a Johnny Cash number thrown in here or there. They have also been invited to perform at the San Diego County Fair in Del Mar and the North Park Community Concert Series in Bird Park in August. Their regular monthly Thursday night gig at Tio Leo's will continue and they expect to perform at several other clubs as well. For additional Big Rig Deluxe information, song samples, photos, and bios go to: myspace.com/bigrigdeluxe.



On the Scene with Local Music

by Laura Kuebel

San Diego's thriving music scene holds a vast realm of possibility for artists and those who support them. We live in a town saturated with talent — where great live music can easily (and affordably) be enjoyed any night of the week and where, musically, anything goes, and anyone with a voice, a rhythm, or just something to get off their chest seems to find an outlet.

As a musician from Ohio, my story is similar to many others: relocating from (insert Midwestern city here) with little plan other than to explore the sunny land of musical opportunity that is San Diego. Upon arrival, I was taken aback by the amount of talented artists I encountered, each passionately pursuing their unique goals. But before long, I realized that music has a way of making this big, transient city feel like home.

The first step for most musicians is performing at Open Mic nights, a natural forum to connect with like-minded artists, experiment musically, and catch a 15-minute glimpse behind each of those familiar faces.

After a few months of playing Open Mics, I landed a gig hosting at Blind Melon's in Pacific Beach. Over the past year many musicians have crossed my path — from wide-eyed singer/songwriters jumping at every chance to play, to veterans tired of free shows in half-empty coffee shops, and everyone in between. Each of these artists offers a unique perspective on the joys and frustrations of being a musician. With my co-host Tommy Edwards, I have spent countless Mondays pondering our individual and collective musical goals over pints of honey blond ale.

Tommy, an ambitious songwriter with down-home roots and big dreams, shares common ground with many aspiring artists in San Diego. Noticing the decentralization in local music, his goal is to pool existing resources and help local artists take their music to the next level. Drawing from his background as a professional musician, Tommy created the San Diego Music Scene, a collective designed to support and promote local artists as well as build solidar-

ity among all genres of music.

Supported by a growing network of resources, San Diego Music Scene has quickly gained momentum in just a few months. Throughout February and March, SDMS sponsored Cream of the Crop, a multi-genre music competition featuring over 100 artists in four categories.

As a feature of Open Mic night, Tommy and I hosted the singer/songwriter portion of the contest at Blind Melons. Over the course of six weeks, 30 artists performed original acoustic sets. From new faces to seasoned veterans, the contest brought a diverse mix of talent to the stage and created a new energy for the venue.

With such a talented pool of performers, the competition was close — winners were often decided by just a few points. The grand prize winner was Barbara Nesbitt, a new arrival from Virginia. With a stop-in-your-tracks voice and captivating style, Barbara is already on her way to becoming a local favorite. On the final week of the contest, Barbara snagged a last minute opening and ultimately won first place. Her prize package included studio recording time, professional photography, CD duplication, and, of course, the glory of being part of San Diego's Cream of the Crop. Be sure to check her out at www.myspace.com/barbaranesbitt and catch her live at an upcoming show.

Thanks to a positive response from performers, sponsors, and the local community, the competition was a huge success. The credible panel of judges, which included singer/songwriters Tim Mudd, Aaron Bowen, Chris Decatur, and Carlos Olmeda, helped make Cream of the Crop more than just a popularity contest. Their insight provided artists with constructive feedback about their performances, a valuable tool for songwriters to improve their craft.

The event was also instrumental in expanding the Open Mic night at Blind Melon's. As a venue typically known for hosting rock bands, we are often challenged by an acoustic aversion to the P.B. bar scene. Hosting a songwriter contest was a step toward making this venue more approachable for acoustic players and reminding coffeehouse artists that musical integrity can, in fact, be enjoyed with a



Tommy Edwards with Cream of the Crop winner Barbara Nesbitt

cold beer.

The Cream of the Crop contest is only the beginning of all that San Diego Music Scene has in store later this year. Artist showcases will feature all genres of music at venues that include Blind Melon's, Winston's, Twigg's, O'Connell's, and more. SDMS is also planning to release a compilation CD featuring contest winners and favorites as well as harvest another round of the Cream of the Crop in the fall.

Another focus of San Diego Music Scene is empowering artists through education. A series of monthly workshops beginning May 13 offers information on do it yourself marketing and promotion. SDMS plans to publish a comprehensive resource guide, providing contacts for recording, photography, marketing, and other useful tools for musicians.

SDMS looks forward to operating from a new office headquarters, shared with the San Diego Musicians' Collective, featuring adjacent meeting rooms, practice rooms, and recording studios, available to members at an affordable rate.

For more information about San Diego Music Scene programs, events, and shows, please visit www.sandiegomusicscene.org.

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by Craig Yerkes

Peter Sprague is somewhat of an enigma, a jazz guy making his living in sunny San Diego where a thousand escapist pleasures distract even well intentioned listeners away from more weighty artistic expressions. Mr. Sprague has put down deep roots here in what most working musicians would agree is a challenging setting for someone who is primarily focused on jazz. For those of you not familiar with Sprague's resume, check the bio section at www.petersprague.com and prepare to be floored (if you're not that familiar with who's who in jazz, find someone who is and they'll break it down for you). More career details will follow later in the story, but suffice it to say that Sprague is a musical heavy hitter of absolutely world-class stature. This point was driven home to me at a recent show featuring Anthony Wilson, a modern day jazz guitar hero who, among other things, plays with Diana Krall on her world tours. I watched as Sprague approached the stage to talk with Wilson and couldn't help noticing how Wilson had that unmistakable look of profound respect that bordered on flat out reverence as they engaged in shop talk.

My first exposure to Peter Sprague was at a special Local Living Legends performance of the San Diego Symphony, which featured a mind-boggling piece of his music called "Concerto for Jazz Guitar." This music fired on all cylinders, hitting the heart and the imagination, and I became an instant fan. I find it curious and telling that this musician who enchanted that large symphony audience was observed by this writer, some months later, through the window of a somewhat low-tech eatery in Encinitas as he wowed a small group of patrons on a Saturday night. Such is life for Peter Sprague as a working musician in San Diego and, for the record, he didn't look any less thrilled to be playing music for 15 people than he did playing for the masses. So, what's the story behind this "local living legend"

who straddles the line between being a globally recognized jazz musician who has made music at the absolute highest levels and that ever smiling, ever surfing, ever accessible multi-tasking musical workhorse and recording studio owner from Del Mar? I

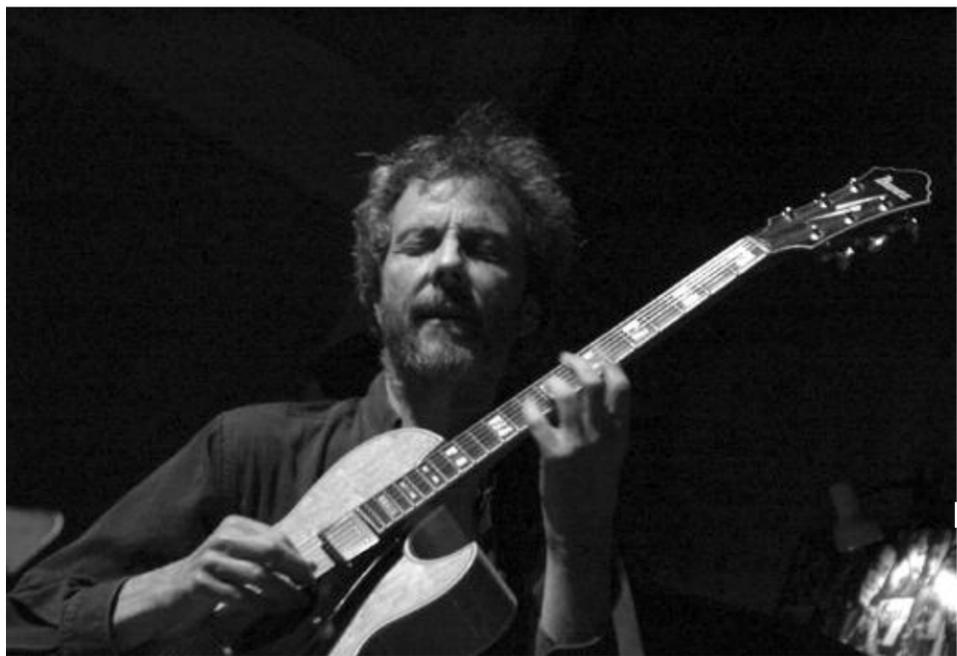
sat down with the man himself to see if I could find the answer to that intriguing question and take a closer look into the world of San Diego's most recognizable jazzier.

The Sprague compound in Encinitas is a quintessentially laid-back beach homestead, but don't be fooled by the relaxed feel — there is much work going on here just about every day of the week. The SpragueLand recording studio

resides just off the main house and this is where our subject spends countless hours producing other people's projects as well as developing his own material. As I toured the studio, I was struck by how well the place is put together and also by the level of talent on display by way of a wall of CD cases from artists that who have recorded there (Gilbert Castellanos, Mark O'Connor, and the Nickel Creek crew, to name a few). This is a studio in full swing and I am informed that, "in the last ten years, the studio has been constantly working." Spragueland studios is as booked as its operators (Sprague's wife, Stefanie, handles booking and other business tasks) want it to be. The studio is really the financial mechanism by which the switch from touring jazz musician to a more stable, locally based music career became possible, and, as Sprague points out, "the studio is, financially, how our whole trip floats, mostly." The reasons behind that career shift and how it all went down is where we start our discussion.

As you can read in his bio, Peter Sprague was right in the thick of the national/international jazz scene early in his career and could be found touring to support his own major label recordings as well as playing major venues with the likes of jazz legend Chick Corea, the immortal Sergio Mendes, Grammy nominated keyboardist David Benoit, and an impressive list of other artists. The reasons for getting off of that roller coaster of jazz stardom range from pragmatic to philosophical. "About 15 years ago, I started developing hand problems...turns out it was arthritis. I began thinking that in three years, I wouldn't be able to play guitar. It was an area that was emotionally difficult, but it was an area I knew I would have to visit at some point in my life...my focus was so narrow," Sprague professes. In addition to the pain that was ever increasing, there was a walking, talking reason to think about getting off the road. As Sprague remembers, "Kids have these 'firsts.' I was on tour when my daughter had one of her 'firsts'

peter sprague



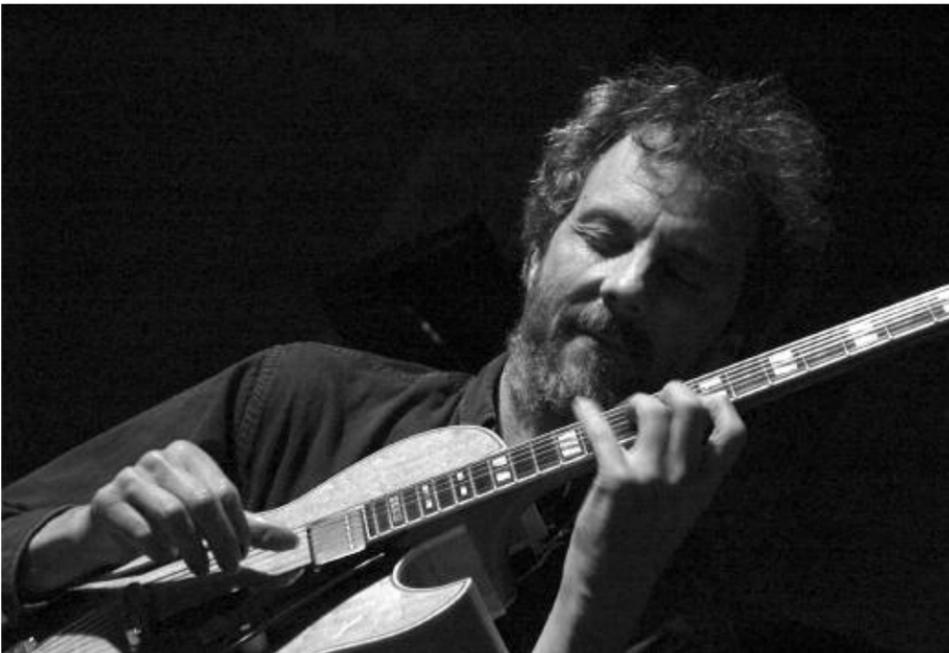
and I missed it." There came some profound "is this really worth it?" reality checks while Sprague was touring with David Benoit and found himself only really playing for "maybe an hour a day," all the while missing his family and spending most of his time "waiting for luggage." Sprague continues, "For me, that decision to take a different tack came about by...the family pull, my health...it's part of growing up, you do one thing so much and it's either great or the negative aspects start to take over."

To get to a point where someone like Chick Corea is asking you to play with him and the L.A. Times is calling you "one of the emergent great guitarists," you have to be ridiculously, obsessively single minded and focused (this is a man who used to practice guitar while driving!). As Sprague began to wind down that intense focus on guitar, his world "became wider" and the doors began opening for what would become the next phase of his career. Adjustments had to be made, on many levels, while in the process of transitioning away from climbing the ladder of success as a guitar hero and moving toward being more of a locally based "musician in the broader sense." Even the control knobs of his new Spragueland studio became instruments of expression.

With regard to this new direction and how it relates to playing the guitar, Sprague points out that there was a time when being physically able to play was a given, but the arthritis

brought a new perspective. As he explains, "I don't take it for granted anymore, it's become a gift. Before it was always the career and where it was leading, but the new meaning for me is...just to play." One foreshadowing event relating to this new way of thinking took place when Sprague played with the big daddy of all jazz guitarists, Joe Pass, back at the start of the 1980s when our subject was right in the thick of chasing his dream. The revered elder statesman, Mr. Pass, gave the ambitious young Sprague some surprising input when asked by the younger player how incredible it must feel to play a place like Carnegie Hall. Joe Pass played wise sage and expressed that "just to be playing music is the big deal." This input was met with skepticism at the time, but experience has borne out the truth in it. According to Sprague, he now sees that the large-scale gigs are "easier," more "political," and potentially less inspiring than the smaller, more intimate shows, and he tells me, "I'm in so many situations where there's not a zillion people there...but that magic thing can happen in the smallest places and that's what sustains me."

While Peter Sprague continues to find plenty of those "magic moments" here in town, the long-term view of what comes next is anything but limited in scope. I asked if there is a possibility of a return to more of a focus on the national jazz scene and I can sense that no option is off the table. Sprague explains, "I don't



“woodshed” developing the building blocks of music, another practical aspect of how the artist’s original music can continue to thrive is the carefully managed work flow that his wife, Stefanie, and he have come to get a handle on with the recording studio. Between the two of them, the Spragues are able to keep the flow of the studio from being too much of a stifling force and Sprague actually sees the producing (others’ music) role as being a liberating force that can bring fresh energy to his own work.

To the surprise of some of his more purist jazz cohorts, Peter Sprague never limits his projects to simply jazz. As he points out, “My roots were in rock and folk music. As years have gone by, I’ve explored more of the different types of music I’ve always loved.” Present in any given Sprague recording or live show is “the idea of

tribute to Stevie Wonder on May 12th at Dizzy’s in downtown San Diego (www.dizzyssandiego.com), which will feature Sprague and friends.

As we wind down our conversation, I am struck by how the life of this artist resembles music itself — such a fine balance between planned structure and improvisation. Through all of the twists and turns, the man and the methods have continued to adapt as needed in order to facilitate an uncompromised artistic expression while not ignoring the task of putting food on the table. From whichever angle you analyze Sprague and his music, a staggering number of diverse, dynamic, and complex elements all come together somehow to form a balanced, logical, soulful, and satisfying end result. Constantly reaching out for the good and

to an approach that reaches beyond San Diego more frequently is a possibility, there are plenty of projects that Sprague has on his to-do list that require no travel at all. That list of projects includes a solo guitar album, a chamber music project, another *Pass the Drum* album, and a possible collaboration with vocalist Leonard Patton featuring Pat Metheny music.

One aspect of this story that was particularly interesting to me has to do with the balancing act that our subject has to pull off on an ongoing basis. To compose and perform jazz at the level Sprague does is, arguably, the musical path that is hardest to navigate (although some classical folks might disagree). In listening to the latest Sprague recording, *Taking It All In*, I was struck by the fact that the quality of the writing and the performances stand up to anything you would hear anywhere — this is jazz at its finest. I wondered how an artist still manages to create music at that level while spending so much time as a producer of other people’s projects and maintaining a busy gig schedule. The answer I get from Sprague on this subject is surprisingly simple, somewhat Zen, as he explains that his younger days, when he practiced, studied, and played like a man possessed “served him really well.” He continues, “I have all that freedom with the music, now, having done all that work...I feel real happy and settled developing what I want to work on.” In addition to the vast amounts of time Sprague has spent in the

reaches for the magical

making the [musical] colors constantly change to keep it fresh.” I recently saw this approach in full effect at a small show in Del Mar where Sprague and his bandmates kept a very diverse audience spellbound with a wonderful variety of styles and moods. Looking at the list of past and present bands that Sprague has assembled and the varied musical styles represented in those groups is a good testimony to how far the artist’s musical touch reaches in different directions. A tangible example of this varied, all-inclusive musical approach is the upcoming

the magic in life, and in music, has brought our subject to a place where he feels “so fortunate because I have this great family, great career...there’s so much good about it.” Here’s to hoping that Peter Sprague keeps his magic flowing through our town for a good long time.

know how it will all play out, but because I’m physically feeling so well and as the whole transition with my kid happens, it could work. I just turned 50 and I feel better than when I was 30...and that could open doors.” While a return



Bluegrass CORNER

by Dwight Worden



BLUEGRASS DAY AT THE DEL MAR FAIR

This year's Bluegrass Day at the Del Mar Fair will be presented by the San Diego Bluegrass Society on Saturday, July 1, 11am-9pm. Look to see performances by the best local bluegrass bands, which will be announced in next month's column as the selection process is still underway. You'll also want to look for a band scramble that invites all musicians to participate.

If you have never participated in a band scramble, this is your chance to have some great fun! Musicians of all levels are welcome. You simply put your name and the kind of instrument you play on a slip of paper, drop the slip in a bucket, and then the organizers draw bands at random. Each band is given about 15 minutes to work



Band scramble at last year's fair

up two to three tunes that are then performed on stage. You may find yourself in a band with a beginner or two and perhaps a pro or two and everything in between. It's great fun and a nice way to meet fellow musicians. Word has it that this year's Bluegrass Day will be at a better location than last year's, which was next to a very loud carnival ride. Admission to Bluegrass Day at the Fair is free with your admission. Be sure and stop by to enjoy this great day. For more information or to sign up, contact Les and Lou Ann Preston at louann.preston@cox.net.

NEW STORES IN TOWN

There are two new music stores in town worth a visit by those interested in acoustic instruments. Hammond Ashley, a respected violin shop out of Seattle, has opened a store in Sorrento Valley off Mira Mesa Blvd.,

located at 5889 Oberlin, Suite 106, (858/623-0036, www.Hammondashley.com). Managed by Paul Ashley, son of company founder Hammond Ashley, this store has a full time luthier and a strong complement of violins, basses, violas, and cellos for sale as well as strings, bows, and accessories. The friendly and helpful staff are great at answering questions and meeting your needs. Lessons of all types are offered, and the shop boasts a nice performance space upstairs. Last month Hammond Ashley graciously hosted the successful workshops presented by the Claire Lynch Band as well as their full band workshop in the performance space.

New to Normal Heights is El Rayo GuitarWorks, located at 3043 Adams Avenue (619/280-1937, www.elrayoguitarworks.com). This small shop's friendly and knowledgeable staff includes Tom in front and Andy, the luthier, in the repair shop at the back of the store. These two make you feel right at home and are ready to meet all your needs for accessories, guitars and related equipment, and services. Stop in and say hi.



LAST TRANSIT CD RELEASE PARTY

Last Transit (Marke Foxworthy and Beth Mosko) will host a CD release party for their brand new CD titled *Treasure Chest* on Monday, May 22, at Acoustic Expressions music store, located at 2852 University Avenue (corner of University and Utah). The festivities start at 7:30 p.m. and admission is free, so stop by, meet Marke and Beth and hear some of the great music on their first CD. For more information about their music, see the CD review by yours truly on page 13.

You all keep pickin' out there, and hope to see you soon!

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The Zen of Recording

by Sven-Erik Seaholm

On the day of Buddy's memorial gathering, I found myself at odds with the standards of good taste, when trying to sum up my dear friend's sense of humor in a tone I felt he would be most comfortable with. After offering an apology to those with children in attendance and/or those "who might be afraid of words," I read the following.

BUDDY F@#*IN' BLUE

A lot of people are going to speak today on the man they knew as Buddy Blue. What will be revealed fairly quickly is that he was a great many things to us all: Musician, Songwriter, Producer, Showman, Music Journalist, Political Pundit, Intellectual, Prankster, Drunkard, Gracious Host, and all around cool F@#*ing guy.

To me, he was obviously all these things, but I would have to add to this list that he was a Mentor of Limitless Patience, a Confidant Worthy of My Deepest and Darkest Secrets, My Drinking Buddy, My Music Trivia Buddy, My Partner, My Colleague, My Harsh Critic, and an Unflinching Supporter of any wild hair that wound its way up my...and I quote, "lily white, malodorous Swedish ass."

Sitting here trying to sum up all the things that were Buddy in a brief statement is about as easy as it would have been for him to describe just how much you all meant to him, but it seems to me that the one unifying element to all things that were Buddy was that he was a FAN.

The word fan is short for FANATIC, and the man was nothing if not fanatical about pretty much ANYTHING that interested him: Boxing, Booze, Cartoons, Deadwood, The Sopranos, and of course...MUSIC. His ravenous musical appetite and amazing ability to remember pretty much EVERYTHING manifested itself in some very mysterious ways at times.

Once, while we were working in the studio, I remarked that I thought the guitar tone he had was just "a little too Rick Springfield." Buddy just let loose with one of his trademark guffaws and proceeded to play and sing the entire song "Jessie's Girl" from beginning to end...including the bridge! And that was a song he HATED. During the little breaks from recording that inevitably occur throughout a session, he would regale whomever was in attendance with similarly complete renditions of the most obscure songs from the most unlikely sources and ALWAYS with a huge, knowing grin.

Most of my favorite studio days with Buddy would be the ones where it was just the two of us working together alone. I can solemnly bear witness to the fact that the man put EVERY SUBATOMIC PARTICLE OF HIS BEING into his music. He tirelessly pursued not technical perfection, but rather the most accurate and complete manifestation of his love of music, the love he held for other like-minded music lovers and most certainly, HIS Fans. His work ethic was exemplary and contagious, and it was also taxing. I will always cherish and remember two different work days that were lost entirely because we both started laughing at nothing and couldn't stop for six hours.

One of my favorite photographs of Buddy is taken from the street in front of Folk Arts records. Lou Curtiss is standing there discussing some forgotten troubadour or another, and Buddy is only

halfway visible as he is reaching all the way down into the bottom of these huge, four-foot high bins full of 78s, his barely denim-covered ass up in the air as he digs down deeper than anyone else before him, like an archeologist whose uncovered a Neanderthal collar bone, or a kid stretching vainly for a silver dollar that's just out of reach.

Photos: Gail Domnelly Seaholm



I was privileged to talk with Buddy about a multitude of topics, some of them very personal. One event that I know haunted him and perhaps even dogged his career occurred at a memorial gathering similar to this one, where he elegized his close friend Country Dick Montana. He did so using the most vulgar, irreverent, and inappropriate prose he could muster, because he knew that that's the way his dear friend would have wanted it. The reaction to that remembrance caused shockwaves through the community that are still being felt, even today. Many got the joke and chuckled knowingly. But still others hoisted the flag of righteous indignation, crying, "Who is Buddy Blue, a former Beat Farmer, to disrespect our fallen hero?" Buddy's reaction of course was to suggest that all those ignorant cads that dare claim sole ownership to his friend's memory kindly go f*%# themselves.

Today, I find myself in a similar predicament to Buddy's on that fateful day. I have heard Buddy's gruff voice in my head constantly, with that stupid, omnipresent cigarette clenched between his teeth, saying "Swenny, you pushed



Sven-Erik Seaholm

out." The reality is that I could never hold a candle to his amazing grasp of the English lexicon, much less render it with such fluid grace and reckless abandon. If I were able, it would almost certainly contain the following words and/or phrases: FARTS, CORPULENCE, ASPARAGUS PEE, CHLORINE AND MUSHROOMS, EXCEMA, STUBBORN, BUBBLEGUM ON A BARBERSHOP FLOOR, HAW!, UGLITUDE, BUTT, VOMIT, FESTERING, STEAMING, HEAPING, BOILS, ASS FRUIT, VAGINARIFIC, PUS, CHEESE, SMEGMA, FRAGRANT BOUQUET, GENTLEMAN OF LEISURE, SPASTIC COLON, POOPY, BUMP!, PINKY, SMELL THIS, and best of all: FRIEND

The only other two words that stand out today are "Always" and "Never." Rather than recite another lengthy list, I'll simply leave you with this:

I will ALWAYS carry with me the things I learned from my sweetheart of a pal, one of which is this: NEVER take shit from anyone.



Goodbye my dear and special friend, I will always love you.

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Sven-Erik Seaholm is a very close friend of Buddy Blue. He recorded and produced Buddy's solo albums Greasy Jass, Dipsomania!, Pretend It's Okay, and Sordid Lives. He also produced the Farmers' latest album, Loaded.

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Hosing Down

by José Sinatra



Photo: Jesse Egan

The allegedly stable Mr. Sinatra at left

TIMELESSLY BLUE

One recent Saturday afternoon found that week's Future Mrs. Sinatra contestant and myself baring ourselves to the elements again — stretched out *au natural* on the pavement of a fairly secluded portion of the Sea World parking lot. As torrents of the storm's valiant rain kneaded our glowing flesh, I was completing the final chapter of my next nonfiction book, *Blueprint: The Guaranteed, Three-Month Plan to End War, Famine, and Terrorism at Nominal Cost*. I had to send Yvette back home to retrieve the entire four and a half year run of the *Troubadour*, which she immediately set about accomplishing (I was glad to see today's liberated woman can be beautiful, intelligent, and obedient while remaining useful). What I needed were a couple of important statistics that I had made up and included in two or three of the most instructive editions of *Hosing Down*.

I'll confess that it took me a bit longer to locate the needed data than I had anticipated; I became distracted and troubled by so many of my accounts of the unexpected, tragic, random-seeming deaths of wonderful friends who had been truly important to me — who still are — and for several hours I felt powerless against a very potent assault by ghostly legions of accumulated grief. Nearly everything began looking hopeless, and, had I not been encouraged by the fact that I still retain my physical beauty, I might have thrown in the towel.

The next day, Buddy Blue died. This time, there's something new and surprising added to my own incredulity, shock, and grief. This time, a true, dominant emotion, strangely, has been anger.

This incredible, brilliant human being's death haunts hell and heaven out of me, and somehow I've got to understand this tenacious anger, which appeared like an uninvited guest from Devil's Ass, Hades, and refuses to leave.

On that black Sunday, the perpetrator, stronger than water and stone and every imagination, performed his crime like a mean, stupid pussy.

What a move — seemingly based on one of the classic smash-and-grabs catalogued under some dreadful tome's entry on Insults.

Attack unexpectedly, hurt the family good and hard, steal away all of the father's fair share of remaining years. End his fellowship, curtail his art, end the joy and goodness he offered us all; leave us like helpless junkies knowing we'll never be able to slam one single new note, not one new word from his soul into ours, as we had always done so

routinely and with such ease.

This smash and grab not only was a huge haul from a wonderful family, it also ripped off unknown, precious quantities of joy from everyone.

I truly believe that Buddy Blue does not know sadness now, that he'll never know sadness again — one awkward crumb of good on such a barren plate, the strange type of occurrence we want to call him on the phone to tell him about and, all of a sudden, we can't. Never again and that's a bitch.

Those soul-strengthening telephone bitch sessions with the perfect partner. Sanctify the memory if you want, if you have the time. Every bit of his is gone.

Who among us is going to end up having had the most time of all? Life's most precious commodity must be acknowledged and used carefully, wisely. The longer we're able to hold on to it, we'll notice a languid, anesthetic effect it will someday begin to offer our wounds, though we're forever maimed by every loved one's absence. Every moment we breathe is a moment Buddy Blue was denied a moment in which we are again denied him — his self, passion, laugh, as much of his soul as he was willing to share. Now crazily macho, now startlingly tender, always honest, always so tremendously gifted.

I'm hating this anger; if I could use it up somehow, turn it around, magically grant every blessing to Annie and their daughter, comfort for everyone hurting for them, for him, for themselves...I'd be on my way to becoming insanely rich.

The art he was able to complete is, thankfully, vast and brilliant and will become even better as we learn to love him more, perhaps even know him more fully in ways we have no right to understand.

Buddy Blue was the closest thing to a Renaissance man that I've ever known.

I'm imagining him knowing how angry I am, and how angry I am at myself for being so angry. He'd say, "Hose, you're crazy." But he'd be smiling, because he'd enjoy the idea. And because he'd know, as usual, that he's right.

Damn.

Originally scheduled for this issue of the *San Diego Troubadour*, the exciting conclusion of "Rites of Spring," which began last month, will blaze back into *Hosing Down* in the June edition. Has Hose really gone nuts? (Is Bush still president?)



RADIO DAZE

by Jim McInnes

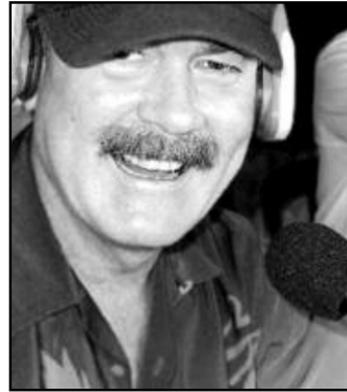
BYE-BYE BUD E. BLUE

The last time I saw Buddy Blue was during last year's Music Awards. He invited my wife, Sandi, and me up to his room for a beer. I presented the Farmers with their Lifetime Achievement Award. I didn't know, of course, that it would actually be the last time we'd meet!

We reconnected with so many old friends and acquaintances last month at Buddy's memorial that it raised the inescapable question, "Why do we only see each other under sad circumstances?" You have to ask why great talents like Buddy (age 48), Dan "Country Dick" McLain (age 40), or the late KGB deejay John Leslie (age 49) checked out early. Only the good die young, someone once said. Sometimes it can't be argued.

I met Buddy Blue in the early 1980s. I was booking local bands for my weekly KGB Tuesday showcase at My Rich Uncle's nightclub...(for you younger readers, I think that's now somewhere around the Smart and Final store in the College Area.) Anyway, Dan McLain told me about this new rockabilly band that I should book. They were called the Rockin' Roulettes. Buddy played guitar and sang. Rolle Love played stand-up bass. Mark Williams was the drummer. They were great! And they'd play for 45 minutes, without complaint, for a measly \$50! He understood that it's about the art and not about the money.

Buddy was the ONLY writer anywhere to acknowledge the existence of the Modern Rhythm Band. I was floored when he called me at home two years ago. I said "Hello?", and the first thing he said was, "Ya got any pictures of the band?" "Go to our website, Buddy, and stop calling me at the crack of



Jim McInnes

10 a.m.... and what do ya need 'em for, anyway?" Buddy said, "I'm gonna give you boys some love in the *U-T* next week." "No shite?" "No shite, Jim." Thanks, old friend.

Buddy was very passionate about his music. When Buddy was into rockabilly, he was waaaay into rockabilly! When he was into swing, every other style was nonexistent.

It was the same for his jazz period and for his roots music with the Beat Farmers. Buddy was so true to his music that he quit the Beat Farmers back in the mid-1980s because he felt they were turning into a heavy metal band!

The gatherings following Buddy's memorial were really great. Sandi and I were among the first to arrive at Parkway Bar in La Mesa, one of Buddy's hangouts and places to play. Within two hours the place was packed with Buddy's fellow musicians, family, and friends.

Literally everyone I encountered was lifting a toast to Buddy. And that was before the party moved to Pete's Place!

I think Buddy would have enjoyed his Jewish-Irish wake.

I hope to see you at one of the Buddy Blue tribute/benefit shows. The first is on May 4 at the Belly Up; the other is on June 18 at the Casbah.

NOTE: Modern Rhythm (www.modern-rhythm.com) will be daring people NOT to dance when they perform the early show (6-8 p.m.), Saturday, May 13, at Humphrey's Backstage Lounge on Shelter Island.

Photo: Steve Covault



Across the Internet and Around the World

by Richard F. Burrell

As many of you are now aware, RadioASB (American Songbook Radio) established a liaison with the San Diego Troubadour earlier this year, and the premise of that collaboration, clearly evident from the beginning, has already begun to bear fruit.

Although RadioASB and the Troubadour engage in different communications media, we share a like-minded conviction regarding the significance of the American Songbook catalog as a cultural art form as well as a grave concern related to the disturbing absence of that genre of music in today's fractured radio marketplace.

Last month the 33rd Annual Adams Avenue Roots and Folk Festival, showcasing music representation of a specific yet vast genre rarely heard on radio nowadays — traditional folk, country, blues, Appalachian, Cajun, bluegrass, and Conjunto, presented an excellent opportunity for a collaborative effort addressing our concerns.

RadioASB, in association with the San Diego Troubadour, covered the festival by interviewing the performing artists in order to produce a special RadioASB program that will not only commemorate this long-standing, time-honored musical tradition in San Diego but will also serve to promote, preserve, and provide a rare opportunity for this rich musical heritage to be broadcast across the Internet and around the world.

Our coverage of this event aims to document a priceless American cultural legacy that has influenced in so many ways much of the contemporary music that we hear today.

A special mention of merit is due Mr. Lou Curtiss, original founder of the Roots and Folk Festival back in 1967, for the gracious assistance, generous support, and incredible insight he has provided in the production of this RadioASB broadcast project. His contributions are significant and most sincerely appreciated.

The dedicated efforts of the myriad individuals who have put their hearts and passions into this project will ensure that the creative spirit of this music will continue to flourish and be enjoyed by future generations.



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Letters from the Road, Part 1

by Will Edwards

There are two activities that I have truly enjoyed throughout my life: music and traveling. Traveling is expensive so, unfortunately, I tend to do less of the latter than I do of the prior. In tribute to my love of music I've spent the last five years writing, recording, and performing in Southern California – mainly in San Diego. I like to say that I've "made it small."

When the New Year came up on me this last time, I experienced an unfamiliar and uncomfortable sensation... regret. My regret was that I hadn't taken my music on the road in 2005. I was ready, but I was complacent. I vowed that I would tour before I was 30 (I'm 29) and I only had six months to go! So begins the story of a personal rediscovery that I'll document over the course of my next three articles. It wouldn't be an overstatement to add that this was the beginning of a new way of living. Unbeknownst to me, the combined experience of traveling for music would have a profound and, most evident, important transformational impact on me. It helped me understand the connections between my origins, my manifest life, and my heart-path.

Origins

I've been working as an Internet programmer in various capacities for nearly 10 years. In the "old days" I used to get a rush from making a computer do something for me. I like to think that I recognized, on a subliminal level, that computers and the Internet represented a new and very important channel of communication among people.

Although I managed to escape the University of New Hampshire with a B.A., it was, unfortunately, a B.A. in anthropology. I don't know if any anthropologists will read this but I feel secure in saying that anthropology hardly represents a cornucopia of employment opportunities. Not like, say, computer programming! I thought that the most important thing was to make money and that is what I tried to do.



the author

Not long after graduating, I moved to Santa Barbara where I worked for various organizations and employers. I was learning all the time and that was the real thrill. I had always been "learning" in school but I regret to say that school never helped me understand what learning was all about. For me, it is in the practical application of knowledge that learning is actually done and the lesson is actually learned by realizing the final achievement (whatever it might be). Santa Barbara

taught me two important lessons. One, that half of life, as they say, is just showing up. Two, that whether or not something can be "accomplished" is never in dispute – the real question is whether or not the process of "accomplishing" it is what you want to do. I didn't yet understand what kind of connection I had to music or that it would become my greatest ally in living a contented life.

Manifest Life

After a year in Santa Barbara my girlfriend decided that she wanted to go to school in San Diego. We moved and I found a full time job programming computers. That was 1999. Not long after I arrived here, one of my co-workers discovered that I played guitar and suggested that I check out a neighborhood open mic. Eventually, I did – I had to gather up some courage first, though...

I'd been a guitar player in a college band and I'd started writing songs in earnest while I was living in Santa Barbara. My strength was that I didn't have any teachers or collaborators – my weakness was that I didn't have any teachers or collaborators. I thought that making music for myself was the most important thing and that was what I tried to do.

But back to my first open mic in San Diego ... I arrived early. I didn't know how open mics worked and I wanted to make a good impression by being diligent and punctual. I put my name on the list and then I sat down (next to the lump in my throat) to watch the night unravel in symphony with my wracked nerves. I remember I was wearing an especially itchy wool turtle-neck sweater. When my name was called I considered the fact that no one



knew who I was and that if I just remained seated they might just call the next person. The temptation to escape was... significant. But for some reason I decided to stand up and accept my fate.

I don't remember actually singing or playing my guitar. I remember sweating and I remember the irritation of my wool sweater around my neck and my sweaty fingers sliding clumsily around my fret board. When I was finished there was a dull silence. I thought that, possibly, my shortcomings as a singer-songwriter were so disconcerting that the audience was at a loss as to how to digest their disappointment. But, before the silence became uncomfortable the audience (15 or 20 strong) erupted in applause. Elation! All of the combined satisfaction that I had experienced as a computer programmer summed together couldn't hold a candle to the feeling I had at that moment.

Heart-Path

Sometimes life presents me with busy work when I don't know what to do with myself. It seems like a pain at first and then I discover that being busy gives birth to a new set of unexpected opportunities. After I released my first CD in 2003 I went about soliciting press from San Diego newspapers and magazines. I managed to get on local TV and radio stations by sending press releases and nagging people on my call list. I bought a book about how to promote yourself as an independent musician and then I followed the steps. It worked... it busy-worked.

I had a band later that same year and I immediately put out another CD to help promote them and add to our

income stream. I continued my busy work and I began working with third parties who were helping to book shows and promote my music. Over time I was overtaken by this "machine" I had created and my role as a musician lost ground to my other roles as band manager, promoter, agent, and accountant. At first it was thrilling but then it became overwhelming and I couldn't continue with it and remain sane. I thought that the most important thing was to be a musician and that is what I went back to doing.

My next step was to reclaim my art and to rediscover music. For the last two years I've been asking myself big questions about my Heart-Path. I think of my Heart-Path as a way for me to make decisions, big or small, that I can live with long term. Like many things, it is fluid. But, it is definitely grounded in a personal truth that doesn't change. My initiation as an independent musician showed me that I am willing to work very hard for music – there is an innate connection there for me. That was the first lesson. It was learned through practice and achievement. In my next article I'm going to discuss my recent tour and talk about the lessons that it taught and the questions that it raised. "Letters from the Road, Part II" will be a travelogue and a journal. I hope to see you next month on the same channel.

Will Edwards can be found online at <http://www.willedwards.net> and <http://www.tangledrecords.com>. Email him at willed@willedwards.net

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Carlos Olmeda The Other American

by Dave Sawyer

The Other American, the latest effort from Carlos Olmeda, is a collection of "acoustic alt, folk, Americana, blues, and y'alternative tracks that have not been previously released..." as quoted from Olmeda's website. I wholeheartedly agree with that description!

This newest collection of songs from San Diego's only "tri-cultural" singer/songwriter I know of, is filled with the beautiful songwriting and musicianship I've come to expect, respect, and revere from Mr. Olmeda. This CD is every bit as pleasing, although not as diverse and "tri-cultural," as his previous efforts. The big difference here is a fuller, more pop-oriented and homogenized, radio-friendly sound that still manages to let Olmeda's expressive voice shine.

He vigorously goes for a "band" sound, opening up the album with "Blue Eyed Girl" (co-written with Elijah Lee Hawken), which has a great Springsteen anthem feel coursing through it. He quickly downshifts back to the acoustic ballad on the next couple of songs — one particularly pretty one is "This One Kiss" (co-written with Dani Carroll).

Track four, "I Gotta Right," is a pretty good country blues tune but suffers from some slightly overdone background harmonies that distract me from the mood, making the whole song sound like an effort, rather than effortless.

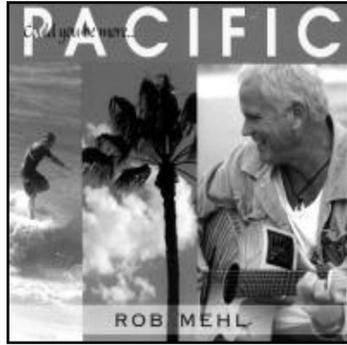
"The Other American," the title track, strives to be anthemic and intense but falls a little short for me. You'll hear Olmeda stretch his voice to the limit, but it's not enough to carry the whole song. I think it's just the soft edge to the rhythm that doesn't put me where I think the song wants me to go.

On "God Bless America" (talk about your anthem songs!), Olmeda's version of our unofficial national anthem is respectful, beautiful, tender, and even poignant. A refreshing "cover" song choice, considering today's political climate.

"Willamena," my favorite, is quite a departure from Olmeda's norm, but it's a well-done barn-burner that gets ya goin'! It's very possible he was inspired by Blue Swede's version of "Hooked on a Feeling."

On "Two Sweet Memories" Richie Blue plays some wailing harp as Olmeda displays his skill singing the blues on this one.

Overall, I still prefer my Carlos Olmeda solo and acoustic, but this album succeeds in showcasing his talents in a slightly different context. His fine songwriting, wonderful voice, and beautiful guitar playing, along with the help of his producers and guest musicians make *The Other American* a welcome addition to my CD collection.



Rob Mehl Could You Be More Pacific

by Dave Sawyer

Could You Be More Pacific is Rob Mehl's second CD; the first was the well-received *Just Give Me The Keys* (referring to the Florida Keys...not the ones to the Woody). The title refers to his love of the ocean as well as the California and Hawaiian beaches he's grown up on.

Could You Be More Pacific is described as coastal alternative...a "more eclectic island-style music..." Eclectic sounds right although not really surf music, not really island, not really Americana...maybe "isle-icana"? This is a soothing blend of these styles and more, providing a unique feel of sun, surf, sand, and the island life, comprised of 11 original songs, two classic Hawaiian covers, and one surf instrumental (track eight's "Glass") written for Rob by Gil Orr of the Duotones.

This very enjoyable album is one you can really sit down and listen to as well as just have on in the background. The overall energy is such that it invites you to listen, rather than clamor for your attention. Not as easy a balance to find as one might think.

Among the many and varied talents from California and Hawaii on this disc include Gannin Arnold, Jimmy Johnson, Tris Imboden, Grammy® and Hoku® award-winner Keli'i Kaneali'i, Hawaiian steel guitar master Kenny Emerson, and the Duotones Gil Orr and Paul Johnson.

The musicianship is impeccable; the production values give the music room to breathe without distracting clutter. There are a couple of songs, however, "Rosarito" in particular, that left me wanting to hear more of an edge to them. A purely subjective opinion, I assure you.

I also noticed that while there is nothing wrong with the vocals, many of the lead vocals sound almost recited rather than sung, while the background vocals are very smooth and emotive.

The harmonies on "Ku'u Home O Kahalu" are particularly beautiful. "Two Dreamers" is a prime example of that wonderful "isle-icana" eclecticism. "Poet's Son" might remind you of Neil Diamond; it may also tug at a heartstring or two — sentimental, but not too sappy.

I truly love music with many flavors. For me, it stays fresh much longer and there always seems to be something there I haven't heard quite that way before, even after repeated listening. Rob Mehl is a fine songwriter and an excellent musician who has brought together an equally excellent group of musicians to bring to life a sense of the idyllic lifestyle he writes about for as long as you play this CD.



Last Transit Treasure Chest

by Dwight Worden

Last Transit's first CD release, *Treasure Chest*, is a radiant gem of superb acoustic music. Marke Foxworthy (guitar, banjo, dobro, and vocals) and Beth Mosko (fiddle, mandolin, and vocals) are Last Transit and, along with solid bass and mandolin support from Lisa Burns and Richard Burkett respectively, they have put together an outstanding first CD effort. Showcasing 11 originals out of 14 cuts, the CD glows with warmth, talent, and beautifully written, arranged, and performed acoustic music. Fiddle and banjo are the primary leads, sometimes trading leads, sometimes playing solo, and sometimes playing wonderfully woven melodies in unison. If you like acoustic music anchored in tradition but with a flair for the modern you will definitely like this CD. If you are looking for electric guitar and drums, this is not for you.

The CD starts with a mood setting fiddle and bass drone behind banjo lead on a Marke Foxworthy original titled "Whistling in the Dark," which presents a beautiful and complex chord progression in a minor key setting. In fact, complex chord progressions, sophisticated rhythmic patterns, and tight arrangements are what set this CD apart. The style and music is traditional to the heart, to be sure, but the skills of Marke and Beth in successfully bringing traditional music to more than the standard three-chord progression, spiced with minor keys, some Irish flair, and judicious use of the darker modal sound, elevate this CD to a special place.

Marke and Beth each also present an original vocal tune. In Beth's case it is the upbeat "Caleb's Bluff," showcasing her songwriting skills as well as her wonderfully pure soprano voice. Marke offers his "Highway Angel," a moody groove tune telling a sad story with great vocals and instrumentation.

Among my favorites — it's hard to choose as there is not a bad tune on the CD — is Beth's original "Franklin's Waltz," which is beautifully constructed and played on the fiddle. A stand out is Marke's "My Way Home," a first class instrumental piece showcasing his writing and arranging skills as well as his considerable banjo talents. This tune has the kind of melody you find yourself humming on the way home. Let's hope we hear more from this talented duo.

Marke, Beth and Last Transit are hosting a CD release party at Acoustic Expressions, 2852 University Avenue in North Park, Monday, May 22, at 7:30 pm. The public is invited to come and meet Marke and Beth and hear them live. Admission is free.



Holiday and the Adventure Pop Collective become

by Phil Harmonic

While attending a recent show at the House of Blues, five local groups were performing, four of which I am familiar with and who are considered San Diego's cream of the crop. However it was the band I had never heard before that was the musical highlight for me that night. Listening to Holiday and the Adventure Pop Collective for the first time was a real treat. They opened the show with an incredibly high powered set that included great showmanship and musicianship, which would impress any talent scout. Led by Derric Oliver and Louis Caverly, known as the "Los Dos Bros," Holiday's live performance included only a drummer to back up Oliver's vocals, guitar, tuba, and trumpet, and Caverly's vocals, keyboard, and amazing violin. Having had the chance to hear them live as well as recorded on their CD *become*, I am struck by each of their strong vocal abilities, which are highlighted by distinctive tones and different timbres that blend into one and complement each other. The vocals are outstanding and so is their talent for playing multiple instruments. This, together with a wonderful selection of songs, written and masterfully arranged by Oliver and Caverly, who also produced the CD along with the talented Ben Moore, have resulted in a possible award-winning album. Key supporting musicians such as Steve Malone on pedal steel guitar, virtuoso Dennis Caplinger on banjo and mandolin, James East on bass, and Brian "Nucci" Cantrell on drums provide the professional instrumentation that these songs require.

The opening cut, "feel," is catchy and uplifting; wonderful phrasing with counterpoint melodies and harmonies offer a real feel that is further brightened by Malone's pedal steel. The song "40 years" has a nostalgic tone while "become" leaves you trance-like with its moodiness. "stop right there" flows and builds. "potential is a dangerous thing" showcases Caverly's skill at playing the violin.

This is a tastefully produced album in which each track takes you on a different ride. Somewhat reminiscent of Matchbox 20 or the Wallflowers, I find that the more I listen to this CD, the more I like each track. For me that is what makes a great album.



Northstar Session Little Lies

by Simeon Flick

It's been interesting to watch the return of the EP (or extended play recording, oxymoronically). Back in the day, shorter program lengths were the norm because of limited technology; music had to be succinct to maximize the available space. Then the LP arrived and our attention spans supposedly evolved with it; the tracks got longer and more complex and no one seemed to mind. Now, because of higher average recording and production costs, more acts pursuing independent (read impoverished) careers, and a decisive step backwards in the average listener's attention span, we find ourselves in a renaissance era for EPs. As it is, *Little Lies*, the Northstar Session's latest release, is an excellent listen that makes the best of this reemerging format in all its modern implications.

The Northstar Session is the brainchild of singer/songwriter/guitarist Matt Szlachetka, whose voice and music recall a more sedate version of Silverchair's Daniel Johns, a clearer and more animated version of the Goo Goo Dolls' Johnny Rzeznik, a more indie-rock version of the Gin Blossoms, and a less bombastic version of Scott Weiland's Stone Temple Pilots. The rest of the band (Todd Newman, keys and vocals; Matt Warshauer, bass; and Greg Roberts, drums), along with additional musicians Dann Friedman (tenor sax) and Mike Kiner (percussion), throw their deft musicianship into the pot and sweeten the deal with a fecund abundance of ear candy.

These five songs mix a gritty bar band approach with something a little more contemporary. The last-call vibe, four-on-the-floor beat, and lush chord groove of the title track and "Poldy and Molly" titillate the ear as Szlachetka sings lines like "You're a trainwreck/You're not a callback/ Things you ain't supposed to do come easy" and "Yes he loves her/Yes she loves him/but can't remember why" respectively. The roadtrip-evoking midtempo rockers "Fool For Now," "Wasting Time," and "Here In America" will take you on through 'til morning.

The overall result is not particularly involving (the well orchestrated instrumentation makes up for the dearth of melodic hooks), but this is an intriguing, straight-ahead rock record that's pleasing to the ears of a potentially wide demographic. In short, it's a superlative release for a changing age. Pick it up now at www.northstarsession.com or at any live show.



MAY CALENDAR

monday • 1

Carlsbad Music Festival (through May 7). Info: www.carlsbadmusicfestival.org

Sue Palmer & Boogie Noir/April West/Scott Paulson/Stan Jones, Diversionary Theatre, 4545 Park Blvd., 6pm.

Palomar Jazz Ensemble, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 7:30pm.

Lakeside, 7:30pm. Info: 619/443-9622.

Acoustic Underground, Lestat's, 9pm.

Chet & the Committee, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 9pm.

monday • 8

Blue Monday Pro/Am Jam, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 7pm.

Homegrown Music Night w/ Gregory Page/Garrison Starr/Derren Raser, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

tuesday • 9

Encinitas Drum Circle, Artists Colony, 90 A St., Encinitas, 7pm.

Phil Woods Quintet, Neurosciences Institute, 10640 Hopkins Dr., 8pm.

wednesday • 10

Citizen Band, Coyote Bar & Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Dr., 6pm.

Molly Jenson/Sarah Dashew/Christal Campbell, Lestat's, 9pm.

thursday • 11

Jeff Berkley/Jack Tempchin, Hot Monkey Love Cafe, 5960 El Cajon Blvd., 7pm.

Grossmont College Jazz Ensemble, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 7:30pm.

Tapwater w/ Peter Sprague, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 8pm.

Dave Arno/Gregory Shane/Jeff Rolka/Laura Kuebel, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

Stranger Six, Lestat's, 9pm.

friday • 12

Baja Blues Boys, Le Papagayo, 1002 N. Coast Hwy 101, Leucadia, 6:30pm.

Stevie Wonder B-Day Tribute w/ Leonard Patton/Peter Sprague & Friends, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Calima, Bookworks, Flower Hill Mall, Del Mar, 8pm.

Patty Hall, Borders Books, 1905 Calle Barcelona, Carlsbad, 8pm.

Aaron Bowen/Abbey/Ashley Matte/Oliver/Pete Goslow/Sam Jaffe, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

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

Kim DiVincenzo CD Release, Lestat's, 9pm.

saturday • 13

Gator by the Bay Zydeco & Blues Festival, Spanish Landing Park at Harbor Island, 10:30am-6pm.

Anything for the Shot: Images & Sounds of San Diego, photo exhibit & all-day concert, Acoustic Expressions, 2852 University Ave., noon-9pm. (see p. 3 for details)

Modern Rhythm, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 6pm.

Wigbillies, Artists Colony, 90 A St., Encinitas, 7pm.

North County Cowboys, Pine Hills Lodge, 2960 La Posada Way, Julian, 7pm.

Quinteto Caballero, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Berkley Hart, Canyon Folk House Concert, 8pm. Info: canyonfolk@cox.net

UNICEF Benefit for children living with HIV/AIDS w/ Lisa Sanders/Carlos Olmeda/Gregory Page/Peggy Watson & Dave Beldock/Trails & Rails/Monroe Ave. String Band, Clarke House Concert, Kensington, 8pm. Info: mcspon@gmail.com

Sue Palmer & Eve Selis, Riley's, 2901 Nimitz Blvd., 8pm.

Bass/Burnside/Kevin Klein/Kris Miller/The 3 Heads, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

Allison Scull & Victor Martin, Beaumont's, 5662 La Jolla Blvd., 8:30pm.

Safety Orange/Niki Kwik, Lestat's, 9pm.

Lee Roy Parnell/Joey Harris, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9pm.

sunday • 14

Gator by the Bay Zydeco & Blues Festival, Spanish Landing Park at Harbor Island, 10:30am-6pm.

Allison Scull & Victor Martin, Beaumont's, 5662 La Jolla Blvd., 11am.

S.D. Folk Song Society Mtg., Acoustic

Expressions, 2852 University Ave., 3:30pm.

Old Man Hands/Christopher Dale/Annie Bethancourt, Lestat's, 9pm

monday • 15

Southwestern College Jazz Ensemble, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

wednesday • 17

North County Cowboys, Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terr., Vista, 1pm.

The Great Broadcast of 1926 (a live radio variety show) w/ **the Teeny Tiny Pit Orchestra & Sue Palmer**, Auditorium, S.D. Museum of Art, Balboa Park, 7pm.

Citizen Band, Killarney's, Temecula, 8pm.

Lisa Sanders/Saba/Joey Pierce, Lestat's, 9pm.

DIVA NOVA: Women Who Rock w/ Lisa Sanders/Anna Troy/Kim DiVincenzo/Paige Aufhammer/Danielle LoPresti/Jane Lui, Winston's, 1921 Bacon St., 9pm.

thursday • 18

Joe Rathburn & Shawn Rohlf, Hot Monkey Love Cafe, 5960 El Cajon Blvd., 7pm.

Mario Escovedo/Blizzard/Shambles, House of Blues, 1055 Fifth Ave., 8pm.

Elmo Jack/Chuck Richards, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

Brewer & Chase/Marina V./Peter Hall/Josh Hall, Lestat's, 9pm.

friday • 19

Kelly Joe Phelps, Acoustic Music S.D., 4650 Mansfield, 7:30pm. Info: 619/303-8176.

Fred Benedetti/George Svoboda, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Sue Palmer, Bookworks, Flower Hill Mall, Del Mar, 8pm.

Peter Sprague Trio w/ Leonard Patton, K's, 2591 S. Coast Hwy 101, Cardiff, 8:30pm.

Brian Benham/Jon Kruger/Paige Aufhammer/Rachel/Tim Malley/Will Edwards, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

Courtney Jones/Evan Bethany/Erin McCarley/Stasia, Lestat's, 9pm.

Charlie Musselwhite, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9pm.

saturday • 20

B.B. King, Rincon Casino, Valley Center Rd. Escondido

Blackwaterslide, Templar's Hall, Old Poway Park, 7pm. Info: 858/566-4040.

Peter Sprague Trio w/ Lisa Hightower, L'Auberge, 1540 Camino Del Mar, 7:30pm.

I See Hawks in L.A./Tony Gilkison, Acoustic Music S.D., 4650 Mansfield, 7:30pm. Info: 619/303-8176.

Amy Ayres/Courtney Jones/Glancing Love/Jason Whitton, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

Allison Lonsdale/Greg Laswell, Lestat's, 9pm.

sunday • 21

Dixie Express Jazz Band, Elks Lodge, 1400 E. Washington Ave., El Cajon, 1pm.

Coastal Communities Band Spring Concert, Carlsbad Community Church, 3175 Hardin St., 2pm.

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

Chris Calloway, Dark Thirty, Lakeside, 7:30pm. Info: 619/443-9622.

Crossroads play music of the Eagles/Crosby, Stills & Nash, Dizzy's, 344 7th Ave., 8pm.

Robin Henkel, Lestat's, 9pm.

Chet & the Committee, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 9pm.

monday • 22

John Hiatt & the Mississippi Allstars, Humphrey's, Shelter Island, 7:30pm.

tuesday • 23

Rickie Lee Jones, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

wednesday • 24

W E E K L Y

every sunday

7th Day Buskers (Gully plays every other week), Farmers Market, DMV parking lot, Hillcrest, 10am.

Tom Smerk, Barrett Junction Cafe, 1020 Barrett Lake Rd., Dulzura, noon-4pm.

Connie Allen, Old Town Trolley Stage, Twigg St. & San Diego Ave., 12:30-4:30pm.

Celtic Ensemble, Twigg's, 4pm.

Traditional Irish Music & Dance, The Field, 544 5th Ave., 5:30pm.

Open Mic Night, Hot Java Cafe, 7:30pm.

Jazz Roots w/ Lou Curtiss, 8-10pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).

Hot Fudge Sunday Open Mic, O'Connell's, 1310 Morena Blvd., 9pm.

José Sinatra's OB-oke, Winston's, 1921 Bacon St., 9:30pm.

The Bluegrass Special w/ Wayne Rice, 10-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

every monday

Jack Tempchin & Special Guests, A St. Stage, Artists Colony, 90 A St. 7pm.

Open Mic Night, Lestat's, 7:30pm.

Tango Dancing, Tio Leo's, 5302 Napa St., 8pm.

Jazz 88 presents the Rebirth of Cool, Air Conditioned Lounge, 4673 30th St., 9pm.

every tuesday

Blues Jam, Blind Melons, 710 Garnet, 7pm.

Zydeco Tuesdays, Tio Leo's, 5302 Napa, 7pm.

Open Mic Night, Cosmos Cafe, 8278 La Mesa Blvd., La Mesa, 7pm.

Irish Music Jam, The Ould Sod, 7pm.

Listen Local Acoustic Showcase, Jumping Turtle, 1660 Capalina Rd., San Marcos, 8pm.

Hot Club of San Diego, Prado Restaurant, Balboa Park, 8pm.

Comedy Night w/ Mark Serritella, Lestat's, 9pm.

every wednesday

Music at Ocean Beach Farmer's Market, Newport Ave., 4-7pm.

Old Timey Night, Folk Arts Rare Records, 2881 Adams Ave., 7pm.

Ten Song Jam w/ Drew Decker, Cafe Forte, 3139 University Ave., 7pm.

High Society Jazz Band, Tio Leo's, 5302 Napa St., 7pm.

Tomcat Courtney, Turquoise Cafe Bar Europa, 873 Turquoise St., 8pm.

Listen Local Acoustic Showcase, O'Connell's, 1310 Morena Blvd., 8pm.

Open Mic Night, Twigg's, 8:30pm.

Ocean Beach Open Mic w/ Jefferson Jay, Portugalía, 4839 Newport Ave., 8:30pm.

every thursday

Silverado Bluegrass Band & Friends, Viejas Casino, 6pm.

Open Blues Jam, Downtown Cafe, 182 E. Main, El Cajon, 6pm.

Joe Rathburn, Folkey Monkey Thursdays, Hot Monkey Love Cafe, 5960 El Cajon Blvd., 7pm.

Sue Palmer, Martini's, 3940 Fourth Ave., 7pm.

Moonlight Serenade Orchestra, Lucky Star Restaurant, 3893 54th St., 7pm.

Wood 'n' Lips Open Mic, Borders Books & Music, 159 Fletcher Pkwy, El Cajon, 7pm.

Irish Seisium, Acoustic Expressions, 2852 University Ave., 7-8:15pm.

Open Mic Night, Hot Java Cafe, 7:30pm.

Listen Local Acoustic Showcase, Tiki Bar, 1152 Garnet Ave., 8pm.

Amelia Browning & David Owen (Jazz), Turquoise Cafe-Bar Europa, 873 Turquoise St., 8:30pm.

Swing Thursdays, Tio Leo's, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

every friday

California Rangers, McCabe's, Oceanside, 4:30-9pm.

Open Mic Night, Milano Coffee Company, 8685 Rio San Diego Dr., Ste. B, 7pm.

Basin Street Band, Lucky Star Restaurant, 3893 54th St., 7pm.

Open Mic Night, Egyptian Tea Room & Smoking Parlour, 4644 College Ave., 9pm.

Turiya Mareya & WorldBeat Jazz Ensemble, WorldBeat Cultural Center, 2100 Park Blvd., 9pm.

every saturday

Tom Smerk, Barrett Junction Cafe, 1020 Barrett Lake Rd., Dulzura, noon-4pm.

Connie Allen, Old Town Trolley Stage, Twigg St. & San Diego Ave., 12:30-4:30pm.

Christian/Gospel Open Mic, El Cajon. Info: J.D., 619/246-7060.

Tijuana Latin Jazz Project, Ave. Gustavo Diaz Ordaz #14109 Col. Guadalupe Victoria, Tijuana, 9pm.

Shambles/Dennis Borleck/Citizen Band, Lestat's, 9pm.

sunday • 28

Chet & the Committee, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 3pm.

Blues Jam, Coo Coo Club, 8203 Winter Gardens Blvd., Lakeside, 4pm.

Jaime Valle w/ Justo Almaro/Francisco Aquabella/Russel Blake, Athenaeum Studio, 4441 Park Blvd., 8pm.

Carlos Olmeda/Aaron Bowen/Chuck Schiele, Lestat's, 9pm.

monday • 29

Blue Monday Pro/Am Jam, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 7pm.

Manual Scan/Power Chords, Beauty Bar, 4757 University Ave., 8pm.

tuesday • 30

Sue Palmer & Blue Four, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 9pm.

wednesday • 31

New Acoustic Generation w/ Carlos Olmeda/Jane Lui/Lindsey Yung/Michael Tiernan, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

Marc Danzeisen, Lestat's, 9pm.





33rd Annual Adams Ave. Roots & Folk Festival

Photo: Lois Bach



Tanya Rose & the Buffalo Chip Kickers

Photo: Steve Covault



Jocelyn Celaya

Photo: Lois Bach



Cindy Lee Berryhill

Photo: Steve Cobanitt



Angela Patua

Photo: Steve Cobanitt



Allen Singer

Photo: Steve Covault



Ross Allman & Anne Feeney

Photo: Steve Covault



Gregory Page



Portuguese Mandolin Duo

Photo: Lois Bach



Members of Blue Creek Ramblers

Photo: Steve Covault



Carolyn Hester with her daughter

Photo: Lois Bach



Monroe Ave. String Band

Photo: Steve Covault



Photo: Steve Covault

Curt Bouterse

Acoustic Alliance 12

Photo: Steve Covault



Barbara Nesbitt

Photo: Steve Covault



Joanie Mendenhall



Phil Harmonic

Elsewhere

Photo: Lois Bach



Greg Gohde & Mike Alvarez at a downtown coffeehouse

Photo: Steve Covault



Bill Coomes

Photo: Steve Covault



Matt Molarius



Mark Goffeny

Photo: Steve Covault



Hot Rod Harris/Acoustic Roundtable

Photo: Tim Woods



Greg Campbell @ Borders Open Mic

Photo: Steve Covault



Julia Jordan

Photo: Steve Covault



Pete Thurston

Photo:



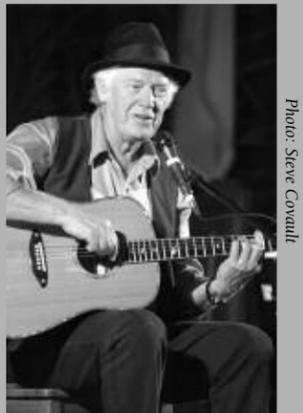
Steph Johnson

Photo: Steve Covault



Marley's Ghost at Acoustic Music S.D.

Photo: Steve Covault



Ronny Cox at Acoustic Music S.D.

Photo: Steve Covault



Saba

Photo: Tim Woods



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