

## SAN DIEGO ROUBA Alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, gospel, and bluegrass music news

## **April 2004**

### **OFFICIAL ROOTS FESTIVAL PROGRAM**

Vol. 3, No. 7

FREE

# what's inside

Welcome Mat.....3 Mission Statement Contributors Message from AABA Letter from the Editor

Full Circle. .....4 **Tomcat Courtney** Lou Curtiss

Fred Gerlach

Center Stage.....7 Adams Ave. Roots Festival

Performing Artists... 8 **Musician Profiles** Performance Times Stages Map Information

Highway's Song.....14 Chuck Brodsky Wild Jammin' Women

 $\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ 

Of Note.....15 Hot Club of San Diego Mexican Roots Trio Jimmie Skinner **Roy Ruiz Clayton** The Shelleys



## May 1 🖗 2, 2004 Satur day & Sunday



 $\star$ MEXICAN ROOTS TRIO **CLYDE DAVENPORT \* BALKAN CAFE ORCHESTRA** 

Ramblin'.....16 Bluegrass Corner Zen of Recording José Sinatra Radio Daze

'Round About ......18 April Music Calendar

The Local Seen.....19 Photo Page



## Ŵ PAUL GEREMIA \* $\star$ N LES CAMPAGNARDS LOU & PETER BERRYMAN G **KENNY HALL** HAWKS AND EAGLES

# Live at Twiggs Jen Knight



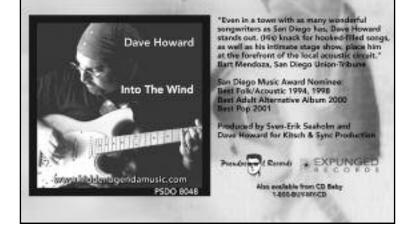
"Music that is fresh, unique and full of integrity."

SATURDAY · APRIL 10 · 8:30 P.M. www.jenknight.com with Special Guests TED E-R SATISH JACK THE ORIGINAL

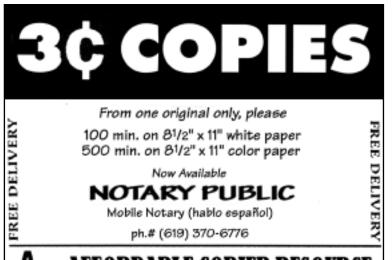
> TWIGGS COFFEEHOUSE 4590 Park Blvd. 619/296-0616 www.twiggs.org Live shows Wed, thru Sun. @ 8:30pm.

The long-awaited follow-up to Dave Howard's "Unbelievable Unknown" is finally here. Backed by San Diego heavies Peter Bolland, Marcia Staub, Jeff Berkley and Nucci, "Into The Wind" showcases Howard's masterful songwriting as well as his engaging guitar and vocal performances.

Featuring collaborations with A.J. Croce, Calman Hart and Dani Carroll, "Into The Wind" is Dave Howard's best effort to date.



JOE? DOB 6344 EL CAJON BLVD. . 619/286-0400 SUNDAY, MONDAY, & TUESDAY HIGHTS, 1981-248. Free Pool & \$6 Pitchers EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT: Miff's Jam Night, 6pm EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT: C.J.'S Open Mic EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT: Deere Johns (except April 29) - HAPPY HOUR DAILY, 4-8pm -APRIL HIGHLIGHTS Friday • 2 Matt Curreri/Goodbye Blue Monday/This Holiday Life Saturday • 3 Tristan Prettyman Friday • 9 Robin Henkel Saturday • 10 Christopher Dale/The Friday Band Friday • 16 Rock Trio Saturday • 17 Hot Lunch Saturday • 24 Anya Marina/Saba Wednesday • 28 Tommy Price www.javajoespub.com





SSS

Family environment coffeehouse offering opportunities for San Diego's music culture to be enjoyed by all ages.

WAM HOT MONKEY LO

We offer coffees, teas, smoothies, and live music 7 days a week.

Come and join us!

5960 El Cajon Blvd. 619/582-5908 www.hotmonkeylovecafe.com

| <b>AFFORDABLE COPIER RESOURCE</b>                        |     |          |              |  |  |  |  |
|--|-----|----------|--------------|--|--|--|--|
| Sales • Service • Supplies                               | 1   |          | Adama Avenue |  |  |  |  |
| 2215 Adams Avenue<br>Ph (619) 282-6252                   | 805 | ACR<br>5 | work the     |  |  |  |  |
| Fax (619) 282-0244<br>Open Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri 10am-5pm | 1   | 32.00    | Banc         |  |  |  |  |

## WANNA BE ON T.V.?

Local artists with original songs that are ready to perform should contact Howard at:

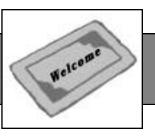


#### YOURSELF PRESENTS 619/284-3605

619/284-3605 howardanshell@cox.net

**Yourself Presents** is broadcast Fridays at 8pm, Cox Channel 23 (Channel 18 in North County) and Thursdays at 10pm, Time Warner Channel 19.

## welcome mat





## **OUR MISSION**

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

To receive advertising rates and information, call 619/298-8488 or e-mail lizabbott@cox.net.

San Diego Troubadour P.O. Box 164 La Jolla, CA 92038 E-mail: sdtroubadour@yahoo.com



SAN DIEGO TROUBADOUR, the local source for alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, gospel, 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.

All opinions expressed in SAN DIEGO TROUBADOUR, unless otherwise stated, are solely the opinion of the writer and do not represent the opinions of the staff or management. All rights reserved.

©2004 San Diego Troubadour.

#### ADAMS AVE. BUSINESS ASSOCIATION **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President Mike Magers, Smitty's Service

Vice President Russ Vuich, Western Commercial R.F. Brokers

Secretary

### **CONTRIBUTORS** FOUNDERS Lyle Duplessie (Publisher Emeritus) Ellen Duplessie Liz Abbott

Kent Johnson

PUBLISHERS Kent Johnson

Liz Abbott

**EDITORIAL/GRAPHICS** Liz Abbott

ADVERTISING/DISTRIBUTION Kent Johnson

PHOTOGRAPHY Millie Moreno

### WRITERS

Annie Bethancourt Lou Curtiss Phil Harmonic Paul Hormick Frederick Leonard Jim McInnes Bart Mendoza Sven-Erik Seaholm José Sinatra D. Dwight Worden John Philip Wyllie

### **ROOTS FESTIVAL**

MUSIC CURATOR Lou Curtiss

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Marco Anguiano

**VENDOR COORDINATOR** Judy Moore

TALENT BUYER Kent Johnson

ILLUSTRATION Roy Ruiz Clayton

GRAPHICS Liz Abbott

NORMAL HEIGHTS KIDS Robert Bodle



#### MESSAGE FROM THE ADAMS AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION PRODUCERS OF THE ADAMS AVENUE ROOTS FESTIVAL

# Welcome

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Adams Avenue Business Association, I want to welcome you to the 33rd annual Adams Avenue Roots Festival. While you're here, we invite you to visit

the antique stores, bookshops, coffee shops, restaurants, and many other businesses located along Adams Avenue.

The "Avenue" features a wide array of distinguished services and goods. We provide a sensible, neighborly alternative to shopping at the malls and big box stores. We hope you'll come back often to sample our one-of-a-kind bistros, courteous car services, rare books, delectable pastries, distinctive fabrics, and trendy taverns.

We also want to highlight a few of our successes on Adams Avenue. With the help of our City Councilmember Toni Atkins, the San Diego City Council, the guidance of our Board of Directors, and the cooperation of business and property owners, the AABA has completed several key public improvement projects on the Avenue. Some of these include:

- Storefront Improvement Projects: Living Art building (Ohio and Adams), Ogden building (Oregon and Adams), Timeless Collectibles (Hamilton and Adams), Adams Plaza (between Mansfield St. and Hawley Blvd.).
- Sidewalk Repairs: These were completed along the south side of the 3200 block of Adams Avenue. The AABA also received a \$705,000 Community Development Block Grant through Councilmember Atkins to complete sidewalk repairs west of 33rd St. along Adams Ave. This work should begin in the spring.
- Maintenance Assessment District: The AABA won the vote of area property owners to assess themselves a small yearly fee to pay for the maintenance of trees and lights in underserved areas of Adams Ave. The AABA will install shade trees and antique lights in the near future from 33rd St. to Texas St. along Adams Ave. and on 30th St. from Adams Ave. to El Cajon Blvd. The AABA has saved funds for several years to buy the trees and lights and pay for their installation.

#### **BRANDING ADAMS AVENUE**

The AABA also markets Adams Avenue to our neighborhood, greater San Diego, and the region with special events and projects designed to gain and retain customers by "branding" Adams Avenue. These events include the Adams Avenue Roots Festival, Taste of Adams Avenue, San Diego-Adams Avenue Antique Street Faire, Holiday on the Avenue, and the Adams Avenue Street Fair. We also publish the Community Business Directory and the Adams Avenue Antiques Directory. The Adams Avenue Business Association wants to recognize the following individuals who

passed away recently, but played an important part in advancing the mission of the AABA.

- Ellen Duplessie, co-founder of the San Diego Troubadour, which doubles as the event program for the Roots Festival and the Adams Avenue Street Fair. Ellen also served on the Street Fair Music Committee for the last two years, helping to select the music acts that made the Street Fair a destination for music lovers.
- Brian Rangeley, poet, writer, and editor of On the Avenue, our special events program prior to the San Diego Troubadour. Though wheelchair bound, his energy was boundless and professional.
- Charles "Chuck" Rucker, artist and business owner of Charles Rucker Gallery on Adams Avenue as well as an innovative artist and mentor.

Marco Anguiano **Executive Director** Adams Avenue Business Association

he idea of creating a newspaper dedicated to the local music scene originated in the mind of one person. That person was Ellen Duplessie. Once she completed the initial groundwork, her husband, Lyle and the two of us collaborated to make her dream a reality. Although it took the combined efforts of the four of us to get the first issue out, it was Ellen's boundless energy in making connections in the community and her devotion to music and her musical family that made it happen. On February 24, the San Diego Troubadour lost Ellen to cancer. She had been living with the disease for many years, yet she was always up-beat, positive, and fearless. Words cannot express how much we will miss her. Her spirit will always remain at the core of this publication.

Dave McPheeters, Zac's Attic

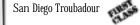
Treasurer Marlene Goldstein, Pet Me, Please!

Lou Curtiss, Folk Arts Rare Records Phil Linssen, Kensington Veterinary Doug Generoli, Pi Financial Sundi Sage, Timeless Collectibles Meredith Morgenroth, Road Rebel Entertainment

Dick Van Ransom Magana, Mariposa Ice Cream

Michael Rammelsberg, Rosie O'Grady's

Raymond Cintron, Hummingbird Confections Robert Rael, Mojo Designs Karen Cobb, Spill the Beans Marco Anguiano, Executive Director



### WRITE TO US!

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



We wish to thank all of you who showed your love and support by writing letters, making donations to breast cancer research in Ellen's name, and by coming to her memorial. The hundreds of people who paid their respect that day is further testimony to how this inddomitable spirit touched and enriched the lives of so many.

Thanks also to City Beat and Taylor Guitar's Wood & Steel publication for the articles they ran. The San Diego Troubadour is planning a tribute issue to Ellen Duplessie in the near future.

Liz Abbott and Kent Johnson Publishers, San Diego Troubadour



## full circle

# **Tomcat Courtney: Patriarch of San Diego's Blues Scene**

#### by Bart Mendoza

"I've had my ups and downs and arounds," says revered San Diego bluesman Tomcat Courtney. He pauses for a chuckle before adding, "mostly downs." Speaking with Courtney from his Spring Valley home, one is struck by the musical history this man has experienced as well as a razor sharp wit, likely honed by decades of stage banter. Long considered the patriarch of the local blues scene, Courtney has indeed lived a life worthy of a movie, with enough roller coaster turns to make it a series.

Courtney was born in Waco, Texas on January 23, 1929, still during the days of plantations and hard living, but the young Courtney found a joy in music. Interestingly, although he's known for his guitar work, it wasn't his first or even second instrument. "When I was a kid, I started out with the harmonica, and I played the coronet a little bit," he says. "My dad used to play piano, so I played the piano a bit. We had an old beat up piano in the house that my grandfather bought for my aunt when they were kids. They must have kept that thing for years. My daddy used to play out but he played piano on what they already had in the little joints." He humorously confides with a laugh, "To tell you the truth, I never did like the piano."

Tragedy soon set Courtney on a path toward entertainment although, once again, not where one might expect. "What happened is that when I was a kid, my parents died," he explains. "And so I joined the circus. It was in the '40s and I was tap dancing. You see, that's when they had minstrel shows. After WWII started on December 7, by '43 and '44 they were drafting everyone into the army, so they had called the best dancers into the service." This gave the young Courtney an opportunity to join what would just a little later become the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. "They found out I could tap dance, so that's how I got on that. I danced with them from 1945 until the war ended."

It was during this time he began to play the six string. "I was fooling around with a guitar during that time, well a little before then, but I never had nothing really good to learn on. It was really junk with just a string or two. I pulled away from it when I joined the circus, because they just wanted me to dance. Well, I started singing too. And that got me back into the guitar." "I kept messing around with the guitar, and I got good enough to play out a little. I was working all the time and playing little places. You know, at that time people were still picking cotton. So we would go out to these little towns and play on Friday and Saturday nights. I was 17 or 18 years old and I got married. So that's going to slow you down," he states with a hearty laugh. "I didn't know that at the time. But I got with a kid who was a

4

very good piano player out of Lubbock, Texas, and that's what started me toward really playing."

Asked for an early influence on his guitar technique, Courtney quickly mentions Lightnin' Hopkins.

"Oh yes, it was inspired very much like Lightnin' Hopkins," he remarks. "I liked his music because of the sound of it. See, when I was a kid Lightnin' Hopkins would come and play those little farm towns. What inspired me about Lightnin' Hopkins a lot was that he played by himself. Most everybody had a box they'd pat their feet on. Well, he carried a rhythm that people could dance to - by himself. I liked the way he could do that. Most people played good, but they didn't have that Lightnin' bass line, that open string. He did that more at these types of places. It kept the audience dancing."

He notes that he didn't tour much at the time. "I was working, and I had a couple of kids," he states. "I went on the road trying those little tour things. Then there wasn't a lot of money," he says, perhaps a bit glum at the memory. "I moved out and after I left there. I was moving around, first to Denver and then to Albuquerque."

An opportunity soon arose that Courtney couldn't turn down. "Bobby 'Blue' Bland came through, and I talked to someone in his band there. I had met Bobby Bland in Texas, and this guy tells me Bobby Bland is going to need a guitar player. His guitar player's sick and we're going to L.A. to play at the Five Four Club." It was a chance Courtney wasn't about to pass up. "Bobby Bland was much bigger than I was," he says. "They were able to live off what they were doing. So I said yeah. He said there probably aren't any tours for you, but I can get you there."

The show at which Courtney filled in turned out to be a major event. The last night of the Five Four Club, all the era's stars turned out to hit the stage one last time. "That sucker turned out so big, they couldn't sell any more tickets. They had Jimmy McCracklin, Bobby Bland, T-Bone Walker, Jimmy Reed, and more. It was a

in L.A., and when you've been in all those cold places that I have ... "

"I started playing in Ocean Beach around '72," he continues. That's actually quite an understatement. He would go on to set what is likely the all-time local record after playing at the Texas Teahouse for 22 years. Taking an off night, he quickly built it into a packed house event. "I started playing there on Sundays, and the place filled up. I just kept playing. I wasn't looking for anywhere else. I had some other little gigs here and around, but I wasn't going to drop that. Then I started getting a bunch of little parties and all kinds of gigs, but that particular place, they were just lining up to come in there. I'm making good tips and a little bit off the bar and then here comes everybody wanting to play with me." He's clearly amused by the memories

To help ends meet, he took a job as a cook with Handlery Hotels in Mission Valley, a move that necessitated moving his show from Sundays to Thursdays, but the crowds stayed constant throughout his run at the club

While already building an audience in town, it was a meeting with music archivist Lou Curtiss that brought his sound to the area's larger stages. "I walked into Folk Arts one day, and I had my guitar. I met Lou and I told him I was a blues singer. He said, 'Well, I'd like to hear you. We're doing some blues shows at the college, at a place called the Backdoor.' So I played him a couple of songs, and he said, 'you're on.'" It's clear from the conversation the respect Courtney has for Curtiss. "Lou started up the Roots Festival and all that stuff," he notes. "Actually, Lou scraped to start that out; he worked hard to get that going, and he helped me a lot, and I helped him a lot." It was at one of these festivals that one of Courtney's few released recordings, a compilation l.p., San Diego Blues Jam, was taped. Originally released by Los Angeles Advent Records in the early '70s, the record is currently available on CD only from HighTone Records. On a tour of Europe in the '90s. Courtney was sur-



Tomcat Courtney

prised to find that the fans there were well acquainted with the album.

The past decade has kept Courtney busier than ever, with millions of music fans getting an opportunity to hear the blues giant, though not in the way you might expect. Recently Courtney, alongside guitarist Buddy Blue, taped music for a Mercedes commercial. Blue had met Courtney in 1979 and spent time backing him. "They were looking for a blues voice, and so Buddy Blue and I cut a track, with him on guitar."

While Courtney is proud of the accomplishment, he's much more excited about his own musical projects. "I've got two CD's out, recorded in 1992 and 1999 (Twelve O'Clock at Midnight and Live at the Texas Teahouse), and I've got a new one just about to come out," he says. While he's not 100 percent sure of the album's title, he has an idea he's leaning toward. "Like all my albums, this is all original music," he states. "And I have a song on the album named "Sundown in San Diego" that I think fits the bill."

As Tomcat Courtney approaches the age of 75, he remains as busy as ever. "Well, as busy as I want to be at my

age," he jokes. "Right now I play at Chateau Orleans every Thursday night, and I play at the Radisson Inn in La Jolla on Fridays. And I play at O'Connells and other places a couple times a month as well," all of which gives his fans an easy opportunity to take in a performance from one of San Diego's most underrated and most talented performers. Whether you take in a set of solo acoustic blues or one with his group, the Bluesbusters, you'll never have less than a rollicking good time. Long since given the title of unofficial godfather of the local blues scene, it's clear that Courtney is a local treasure who deserves a much larger spotlight.

Tomcat Courtney will perform at this year's Roots Festival. See pages 10-11 for days and times.

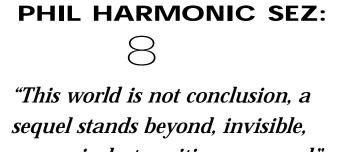


show!"

Courtney appreciated the California climate almost more than the music that night. "I said, 'I ain't going back to Arizona.' I even left a few clothes there," he jokes. "I got to talking to a guy, and we started playing after the show. At that time, music was good there. They had so many little clubs. For a while, I was playing three and four nights a week. That was around 1967 or 1968."

It wasn't long before Courtney found San Diego. "I came here with a band, Saxophone Slim, and we played at the Twilight Zone on Imperial. I got here in 1971, and I liked the weather better," he recalls. "After I was here awhile, I found out the music scene was a little tough, and I thought I might have to leave here. But I just love the weather in San Diego. The smog and stuff wasn't as bad as it is





as music, but positive, as sound."

- Emily Dickinson

Kent Johnson, Robert Johnson's bastard son

## full circle



#### Oh Brother, Here We Are ... Been Here All Along, at Least for Now

Well, as I'm sitting here today and writing this column, the verdict is still out on my future. I've owned the Folk Arts Rare Records business for 37 years and for the past 27, it's been located at 3611 Adams Ave., where I also make my home with my wife Virginia and my son Ben.

Folk Arts Rare Records began as a home place for the yearly folk festivals I've put together since 1967 and has remained that way to this day. (The roots festivals grew out of the old folk festivals, which were held at SDSU from 1967-1987.) Folk Arts is a venue for those who like and love and collect old-time music, whether it's country and bluegrass, blues, jazz, traditional folk, Cajun, Irish, rhythm and blues, or old rock and roll. If it's rare and old, I very possibly have it, or know about it, or can get it. Along with selling old records (mostly LPs, 45s, and 78s), I also sell vintage music on tape and CD from my 90,000-hour personal collection. I host a weekly radio show called Jazz Roots on KSDS (88.3 FM), write liner notes for CDs on the Englandbased Country Routes label, and I put together customized music tapes from personal histories. Mostly, I put people in touch with their roots in one way or another.

My landlord has put the Folk Arts Rare Records property up for sale, so my home and business at 3611 Adams Ave. may have to move. I really don't want to. In fact, I don't

# **Recordially, Lou Curtiss**

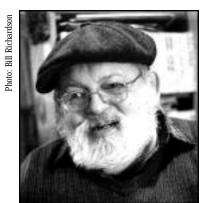


think I can. With rents as they are, I can't afford two different places for my home and business, and it's unlikely that I'll find a location for both that's affordable to me. People tell me there ought to be someone out there who will let me stay where I am. You'd think so, but so far no one has come forward. The people I notice eyeing the property look more like tear-down-and-build-something-new types. I hope I'm wrong and a buyer shows up who will allow me to keep doing what I'm doing.

Another problem with moving is my involvement with the Adams Ave. Roots Festival and the Adams

Ave. Street Fair. If I no longer have a business on Adams Ave., my involvement with these two events would most likely be curbed. So, folks, I'm in a fix. I'm a little scared and feel a little bit picked on. I've been a good tenant for 27 years at this location. I've put a wife and son through college and graduate school (though much of that was their own doing ... they're both just so darn smart), and I guess I know more about the kinds of music and related topics I'm interested in than most people have time to be. I care about San Diego and the individuals who have made their way playing just about every kind of

music here. I hope I can continue to help preserve these kinds of things for a long time to come. I do care, but it's kind of depressing to think about moving my collection and the Folk Arts stock to any old place that has room. You'd think that after the nice piece in the Union-Tribune and Larry Himmel's Channel 8 spot covering my plight, someone would come up with an idea to keep me here, but no one has. Oh, a lot of people tell me they saw the article in the newspaper or on TV and they wanted to come in before I close. That makes me feel real good. I'm trying not to be bitter and I can't let depression set in before there's a reason, but I can't just sit still and do nothing except think about the fix I'm in. So I'm doing one of the things I can do right now. I'm writing about it and sharing it with some of you who have known me



Lou Curtiss

awhile and maybe with some of you who haven't. What can you do, you ask yourselves? You can call the city, call the Adams Ave. Business Association and ask about the roots festival; you can call somebody who has the clout to make Folk Arts a historic landmark. Or, even better, you can buy the property and let me stay. That's what I would do if I could afford it.

Recordially, Lou Curtiss

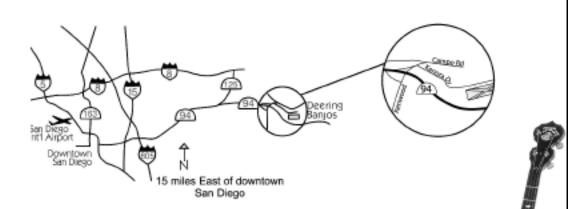




Visit North America's largest banjo making facility!

> Factory Tour, Showroom & Gift shop

Come and see North America's largest banjo making facility: The world renown Deering Banjo Company. For over a quarter of a century, Deering Banjo Company has made and sold all styles of ultra high quality banjos to world famous musicians, professional entertainers, amateurs, teachers and beginners around the globe. Bring family and friends, and take our tour and learn how banjos are made. Visit our factory showroom and gift shop, and see some of the most beautiful banjos in the world. Free admission and parking. Restaurants, groceries, and gas nearby.





#### DEERING BANJO COMPANY The Great American Banjo

Spring Valley, California

# DEERING



- Kenwood Drive Exit
- · At stop take Left on
- Kenwood
- Take first Right on Kenora

Showroom 8 Tour Times:

- Monday Friday
  - 10 4
- For a Free catalog call or write to: DEERING BANJO COMPANY 3733 Kenora Dr., Dept. SDT Spring Valley, CA 91977

www.deeringbanjos.com (800) 845-7791 · (619) 464-8252 · Fax (619) 464-0833

#### We look forward to seeing you!





## front porch

# An Interview with Fred Gerlach

Fred Gerlach, master of the 12-string guitar, is perhaps best known for his Huddie Ledbetter (Leadbelly)-style of playing. Lou Curtiss sat down with Gerlach not too long ago to talk about his days in New York City during the folk revival period of the 1950s and early 1960s. Gerlach was scheduled to play at the this year's Roots Festival but unfortunately had to cancel due to health reasons. This is part one of a two-part series, which will be published in the June issue.

red Gerlach: Oh, I got lots of stories. As a matter of fact, it would make a book. I started playing in 1951, and the reason I remember that date is 'cause that's the year I left my wife. I was a draftsman living up on New York City's West side, in Washington Heights. After a day's work, I would come home and, being an avid artist, paint with pastels, oils, and whatnot. I had a six-string guitar, and I used playing the guitar as a break from the art. I was sure I would make a great artist, as we all do when we first start (I was a big Van Gogh fan; he was my idol), but the art got to be too much, especially after spending the day drafting. Somehow the guitar playing seemed to overwhelm the art. Then I got a 78 recording of Leadbelly playing that walking bass, which, up to that time I'd only heard on a piano, on a guitar, only the sound was totally different from a sixstring. That sank in

Coincidentally I met Queen Ollie Love at that time, who was Leadbelly's niece (everybody knew her as Tiny). I figured first hearing Leadbelly, then meeting his niece was a sign. The first blues tune I learned was Leadbelly's "Good Morning Blues." I had nothing but a six-string Martin and that wasn't adequate for playing that stuff, so I started searching for a 12-string. I

6

found one in a pawn shop on Third Ave. downtown. It was a Regal and cost me 35 dollars. I pulled it down and I tuned it up and it sounded awful-it was absolutely horrible-so I left it there. But I went back and tuned it again and found that it takes about three stages to first tune a 12-string. So I bought that Regal and I played the hell out of that. Then I found an Italian guitar in a shop down in Greenwich Village that I bought from a guy named Peter Carboni. It was a large box six-string, and he converted it for me into a 12. It sounded great except that it wasn't meant to carry 12 strings, so in a year it was gone. I went through several other Italian guitars with big boxes and had them converted but ran into the same problem over and over again. Good durable 12string guitars just didn't exist in the early '50s.

During this time I was living with Tiny and playing lots of music with the likes of Big Bill Broonzy, Sonny Terry, Woody Guthrie, and Rev. Gary Davis. Big Bill took me to Moe Asch at Folkways (who had recorded Leadbelly) and I did some recordings for him and got 50 bucks for what I did. Much to my surprise, I got a write up in the *New York Times* when the record came out. At that time the folk world was very small. The big commercial success was Josh White. He



Fred Gerlach, performing in New York City

was playing at a place called The Blue Angel; Odetta also played there some. I did an audition for a couple who booked people in clubs like that. I played them a couple of tunes and they told me, "Well, that's terrific if we shave his head and paint him red, and tell everyone that he's an Indian, we might get away with it." At that time white people like me didn't play blues. In fact, they had to be downright commercial like Burl Ives or Richard Dyer Bennett to even be successful singing folk songs.

I never considered myself a real traditional folk artist. I wasn't raised on a farm, I didn't do any hollers or sukey jumps, but I did have stuff that was mine and original with me. I look back on that period now, almost 50 years ago, and realize the extent and the circle of people who frequented Tiny's house after Leadbelly died. It was a unique time. Upstairs, one flight up, lived Martha, who was Huddie's wife, and every Saturday and Sunday there'd be parties. Dancing parties and blues parties. Sometimes there was live music, sometimes records, but over a three-year period I saw most of the well-known musicians of that time. Big Bill Broonzy was often there (Uncle Bill, they called him) and I learned a lot watching him.

Rev. Gary Davis played there a lot. I later recorded about three hours of him, and when I went to England a few years later, I sold the tapes to Dobells, who put them out. I got \$125 for them, which was my ticket home on the liner. They were recorded on a Magnachord tape recorder that I had bought on the advice of Pete Seeger, who was also at Tiny's parties. I was hoping to record all of these people: Brownie and Sonny, Big Bill, and the lot even though I knew there was no money in it. I tried to pay Gary Davis \$50 each time I recorded him. Tiny, the one who was his friend, told him, "Yes, record for Fred, and he'll put it out on tape and we'll see if we can make you some money." At that time \$50 was a lot of money for Gary, who mostly worked as a street musician, but at four different sessions I paid him about \$200.

Later, somehow, the word got out that I had secretly recorded him and sold the tapes for a huge amount. I don't know how it could be a secret, since Tiny was sitting there during the four hours we spent with the tape recorder. Somehow the tapes I sold to Dobells later got back here and into



Fred Gerlach in the 1950s

the hands of Manny Greenshill, who was later Gary's manager and they were issued again [giving Fred no credit for having recorded some of the best recordings of Rev. Davis' career. It's sad what an untrue rumor can bring — Lou Curtiss]. . . but back to the parties.

Every Saturday and Sunday at Tiny and Martha's, there were all kinds of things going on. Woody Guthrie was there. He had just burned his arm and could hardly play the guitar. Woody stayed with me at my house up in the Bronx with a gal named Annika. I lived up on Jerome Ave. in the Bronx. He and Annika and the baby popped in and he moved in and that was it. He'd play guitar all day long. I had a mattress on the floor and he'd write verse after verse after verse. I remember about 30 verses about the elevated train going by. He had a gig downtown at WNYC for Oscar Brand and got an \$800 advance, but he never showed up for the recording. He bought a Martin guitar and gave me \$100, which I didn't need. But he insisted and bought about 10 bags of groceries and started to cook enough food to last for three days. Over half the food just went bad.

This interview continues with Part Two in the June issue.



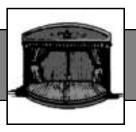
to get to the new store for Duffelo Dree Cuiters Con DARK THIRTY PRODUCTIONS www.darkthirty.com presents



HOME OF THE 100% UPGRADE POLICY! THOUSANDS OF GUITARS TO CHOOSE FROM! VISIT OUR NEW STORE OR OUR WEBSITE!



## center stage



## ANNUAL ADAMS AVENUE ROOTS FESTIVAL 3 1 S T A History Lesson You Can **Tap Your Foot To**

#### by Paul Hormick

elcome to the 31st Annual Adams Avenue Roots Festival, the annual celebration of our American musical heritage. Sometime during the mid-1980s the term "roots music" began to replace "folk music" because the connotation of "folk" had narrowed to a picture of hillbillies on the back porch or of Bob Dylan wannabees – not quite exiting enough to build an entire festival around. Roots music encompasses more. It can mean any form of music that contributed to our modern forms of pop, rock, and jazz. It comprises the masala of song styles that make up this country's musical heritage, from Southwest conjunto and mariachi, to the hammered dulcimer ensembles of the Appalachians. Even some of the more modern music, like rhythm and blues and the songs of Hank Williams and Woody Guthrie, are included on roots programs because of their influence on modern popular music.

The deepest roots of American music go back to Europe. When Europeans began colonizing the New World during the 1500s, they brought their jigs, chanties, reels, and other songs to their new home. They also brought their instruments and, except for the banjo, which comes from Africa, all the instruments used to play American roots music are European. As some ethnic groups settled more heavily in certain areas, they retained more of their roots in the music of their new land. For example, the Appalachians were settled by waves of Scottish and Irish immigrants; the resulting mountain music retained a great deal of Celtic character. Other waves of immigrants, including Germans, Poles, Slavs, and others, brought folk tunes from the Old World and added them to the American mix. You can hear such roots at this year's festival by a diverse group of musicians performing the music of Greece, Poland, Russia, France, and other countries of the continent.

trace their origins to this interaction. The two scale systems — the do re mi — of the two continents differed. Africa has more "natural" pentatonic scales, whereas in Europe, as a result of the development of keyboard instruments and the influence of composers like Bach, the natural scales were tampered with.

area but a hundred years later. More immigration brought additional influences, and the repertoire expanded to include schottisches and mazurkas, resulting in a more high spirited music.

Cajun comes from the Frenchspeaking Acadians who settled in Louisiana after their expulsion from Canada. This style of music developed around dance hall

ly in both styles, and they come from from the same area of the country, but Zydeco is of Creole origin. It developed after WWII as the Creoles mixed rhythm and blues with more traditional song styles. Zydeco and Cajun have intermixed and influenced each other, but are separate music traditions, related more by marriage than blood.

As mentioned above, certain individuals, because of their virtuosity or strength of their personality, have had a profound effect on a musical genre or created an entire style and dozens of international festivals that celebrate his musical contribution. You'll hear Reinhardt's legacy as the Hot Club of San Diego brings the gypsy jazz to this year's festival.

If the U.S. were a movie, part of the soundtrack would have to include the music of the troubadours and minstrels who traveled from town to town singing their songs. These tunes were passed down through the train yards, cheap hotels, and jails where the minstrels gathered. As this music was not written down, verses were added or altered, and sometimes the songs would change completely. It's thought that the bizarre lyrics to the country standard, "Wild Wood Flower," developed this way.

Woody Guthrie took the tradition of the troubadour and added his signature to the songs by mak-

ing them topical. He sang about the masses of Okies seeking the

promised land in California; his songs criticized McCarthy and the Red Scare; and his repertoire told stories about hard work and the hardscrabble life of the poor. His influence is immense. All the folk singers who graced the Greenwich

Village coffee shops - Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, and Tom Rush - owe it all to him. As a matter of fact, songs that address social issues or are topical in any way, no matter what the style, can trace some of their inspiration back to Guthrie. Ross Altman, known as a singer/ songfighter, embodies this tradition. And the quirky observations of Lou and Peter Berryman owe more than a nod of the hat to Guthrie. as do the American Folk Singers, Gregory Page and Tom Brosseau. These are only a few highlights of this year's Roots Festival. There is much more — country music, blue-it's all there. Workshops will also be conducted by performers who will offer tips on their styles and instruments. And don't forget the vendors and the beer garden. By supporting the vendors you support the music. No matter what your favorite music is — rock and roll, hip-hop, or jazz — have a good time at the festival and get in touch with your roots.

Notes were sharp-

ened or flattened, and new ones were added altogether. When the black slaves tried to sing the songs of their southern white owners, they bent the unusual European notes to the African ones. Of all the music

fiddle tunes. This dance music was usually performed by a fiddle duo - one instrument droned double stops as the other played the melody. The songs were sung in a strong high-pitched manner to be

genre of their own. Django Reinhardt probably didn't know that he was creating an entirely new type of jazz when he started listening to the records of Louis Armstrong and other American performers that hit shores of France in the 1930s. Reinhardt was a gypsy who had grown up playing the Romany music of his ancestors. Once again, the scales upon which this music is based are different from the ones used by the American jazz players. When Reinhardt tried to play jazz, he couldn't help but infuse the tunes with a Gypsy flair.

The biggest crux around which most American roots music augers is the blend of European and Africa music. Rock, hip-hop, blues, country, jazz, gospel, and almost all the musical styles of this country can

descended from this interaction, the blues retains this quality the most. You'll be able to hear in the guitar work of Robin Henkel and Tomcat **Courtney** the bending and sliding of notes that go back to the antebellum South.

This festival also features music of northern Mexico and the American Southwest, which are also based on the music of Europe. Los Californios perform characteristically sweet and restrained waltzes and polkas that were heard in this part of the world before the Mexican-American War. The Mexican Roots Trio gives us a musical development of this same

heard above the sound of all the dancers shoes on the floor.

What we think of as the essential Cajun instrument — the button accordion — is a relatively late addition to this music. It was incorporated by German immigrants in the 1880s who brought their instruments with them when they settled in Louisiana. Although a late comer, the accordion was an important musical influence. The breath of the instrument, the time it takes to push or pull the hand bellows, gives Cajun music its characteristic feel.

Zydeco is often mistaken or confused with Cajun music. The button accordion figures prominent-

It's been said that Mozart's music can be described as both happy and sad at the same time. Reinhardt's music is the same. His take on jazz accentuates all the sadness and sweetness, joy and sorrow in the music. There are now thousands of musicians who carry on his



#### **Jon Adams** S REMEMBERS



California musician, I first met Jon at Sweets Mill around 1967. Jon is one of those great song leaders and finger-style guitarists who always has some-

thing new to play. He hasn't played a San Diego Festival since 1987 (when it was still at SDSU). These musicians move around a lot and I sort of lost track of Jon, but when fellow songster Mark Spoelstra called, he remarked that he sometimes played music with Jon and did I want him too, and I certainly did.

Saturday: 6pm, 34th & Adams Stage; 7pm with Mark Spoelstra, Church Sanctuary, Sunday: 3pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 5pm, Hawley & Adams Stage

### Los Alacranes



Los Alacranes are one San Diego's most beloved group of musicians and the pride of San Diego's Mexican-American community. The music of these "musicos locos" has been described as sort of a cross between the humorous style of Lalo Guerero and the corridos and old timev norteño sonos. "Chunky" Sanchez explains it as Southwest-Chicano-Mexican-Barrio folklore. His song about a chorizo sandwich is not to be believed

Founded in 1977 by Ramon "Chunky"

Sanchez and his brother Ricardo, Los Alacranes, along with Don "Güero" Knapp and Miguel Lopez, have inspired audiences for more than two decades. Following the success of their critically acclaimed CD, Rising Souls, released May 1999, Los Alacranes released Picando, originally recorded in 1989. This group always puts on a good show.

Sunday: 2pm, Beer Garden; 4pm, DiMille Stage

#### **Ross Altman** LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS

A self-described "singer-sonafight er," Ross Altman keeps up with the times with topical songs that reflect the great traditions of the genre popularized by

Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Phil Ochs, and Tom Paxton. Ross has been a regular at the Adams Avenue Roots Festival as well as other Southern California folk venues for many years.

Saturday: 11am & 1pm, Hawley & Adams

### The American Folk **Singers**



with their offbeat blend of music from the bad old days. Gregory Page and Tom Brosseau are a dynamic duo who play songs from the '80s - the 1880s, that is. They are back from their national tour of

senior citizen homes, promoting their new album, Folk Music the Way God Intended It to Be

Saturday: noon, DiMille Stage; 8pm, Hawley & Adams Stage/Sunday: noon, 34th & Adams Stage

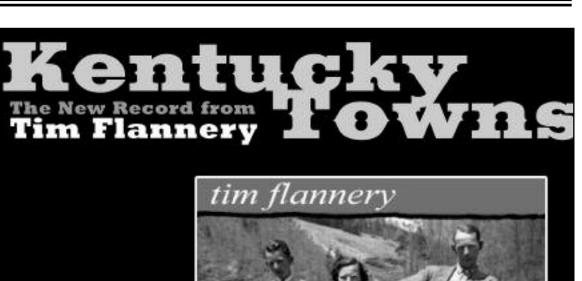
### **Balkan Cafe** Orchestra

REMEMBERS



When we first moved the festival from SDSU to its new home on Adams Avenue, the first person I got in touch with was Hank Bradley. He, along with Frannie Leopold, had played at the last festival at SDSU in 1987. In 1994 his wife, Cathie Whitesides, joined them to create the Balkan Cafe Orchestra. At least one of these noble three have performed at every one of the Roots Festivals with their fine music and original songs culled from many years and many miles they've covered in their search for great acoustic music. The trio offers plenty: Cajun songs, Greek dances, Cape Breton strathspeys, North Carolina heat, Bosnian breakdowns, and much more, tapping into the galaxy of highly crafted scales, rhythms, and harmonies unavailable in either western classical or rock-related music. Frannie's southern and Cajun vocals and warm guitar; Cathie's dazzling Celtic and Balkan fiddle; and Hank's banjo, bouzouki, and southern and Balkan fiddle make the Balkan Cafe Orchestra a must-see at any Roots Festival. They smile a lot too and have a good time. You will too.

Saturday: 4pm, Troubadour Park Stage; 8pm, Church Sanctuary/Sunday: 2pm, Troubadour Park Stage



## Lou & Peter Berryman

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS

Lou and Peter Berryman are musical humorists who write clever, inventive songs that are rich in wordplay. Drawing from influences as diverse as Woody Guthrie, Gilbert

and Sullivan, George Burns and Gracie Allen, and Jacques Brel, these two are originals who blend (and mock) midwestern culture with worldly savvy to produce some wickedly funny material. Formerly married and longtime friends, they've been performing together for 20 years at cafes, folk festivals, and clubs, keeping audiences highly entertained with their sense of wit, wisdom, and whimsy. This is their second visit to the Adams Avenue Roots Festival.

Saturday: 3pm, Church Sanctuary; 6pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall/Sunday: 1pm, 34th & Adams Stage; 3pm, Troubadour Park Stage

## **Ray Bierl**

CURTISS REMEMBERS LOU



those folk/country singer-guitarists who played about every coffeehouse and club. When the Roots Festivals first began, Ray

was involved as a performer/emcee as well as somebody we went to for ideas. Sometime during the 1970s, Ray drifted up to the San Francisco Bay area, making his visits to San Diego fewer and fewer over the years. During his years in the Bay Area, he worked with Malvina Reynolds and Mayne Smith and became a driving force with the famous Hillbillies from Mars. Along with his trusty guitar, he has picked up some expertise on the fiddle.

This accomplished musician plays guitar and sings in a number of styles, which span the range of traditional American music. For more than 20 years, Ray Bierl has been plaving the fiddle music of North America and the British Isles to appreciative contra and square dancers in the San Francisco Bay area and beyond, most notably as a member of the group Hillbillies from Mars. Cowboy Dancing, his well-received recording of songs and fiddle tunes, has recently been re-issued in CD format.

Sunday: noon, Beer Garden; 3pm, 34th & Adams Stage; 5pm, Church Sanctuary

## **John Bosley**

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS

John used to play

held at the old Folk Arts before it

moved to Adams

'70s. He wrote

songs that sound-

Avenue in the early

regularly at the concert series we too. It's always a pleasure to have him at the Roots Festivals.

Saturday: 11am, DiMille Stage; 5pm, Hawley & Adams Stage; 6pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall/Sunday: 3pm, DiMille Stage

## **Curt Bouterse**

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS



I met Curt in 1963 in an African history class at San Diego State. He was carrying an autoharp case and a shape note hymnal, and he looked like he might be interested in some

of the kinds of music that I was. Shortly thereafter Curt and I, along with some other folks, founded the SDSU Organized Folksingers. Almost right away we talked about doing a festival there on campus. In 1967 we finally got around to it. Curt played at that very first festival and he's played at every one we've had since. Old time Appalachian folksongs with fretless banjo, hammered dulcimer, autoharp, plucked dulcimer, and Vietnamese mouth harp (upon which he plays Southern mountain dance tunes) are his specialties.

Saturday: noon, Church Social Hall; 8pm, 34th & Adams Stage/Sunday: 11am, DiMille Stage; 3pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall

### **Tom Boyer**



temporary fingerstyle approach is soaked in the fluid country and jazz idioms mastered by Chet Atkins and finds further inspiration in the nimble grace of Doyle Dykes' arrangements. Tom first picked up

Tom Boyer's con-

the guitar at 13, seduced initially by the twangy reverb of the Ventures, Duane Eddy, and later by the electric energy of all things rock 'n' roll. When he was 17, Tom's brother turned him on to a Chet Atkins album. "I was stunned by what he could do on a guitar and became a fan for life," Boyer recalls. "I bought every album he came out with and drowned myself in his style."

At 19, Boyer met inventive fingerstylist D.R. Auten, who became his mentor, teaching him the rhythmic nuances and licks that informed the Chet style. Boyer has credited Auten as "the greatest teacher I ever had," and subsequently went on to perform with Auten at various social functions. He continued to pursue fingerstyle guitar passionately in the ensuing years, absorbing the influences of such standout fretboard stylists as Jerry Reed, Charlie Byrd, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Larry Carlton, George Benson, and anyone who played like Chet.

Saturday: 4pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 6pm, Hawley & Adams Stade/Sunday 2pm, DiMille Stage; 4pm, Church Social Hall



Kentucky Towns is a classic... your best yet."

**P.J Curtis 2 Time Grammy Winner** and Ireland's Celtic Music Historian



### IN STORES NOW!

8

BES Available at all San Diego area Best Buy Stores.



ed like old '30s pop tunes, with kind of a raggedy guitar backing. He'd occasionally throw in an old time tune, so it always kept us song collectors wondering. John was from New York and wrote poetry along with his songs. As no one has an easy time making any kind of living from music, John got a job (outside of music), got married, and had kids, but he never threw away that guitar, and occasionally we can talk him into revisiting those raggedy old songs and some newer ones

### The Budapest **Brothers**

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS



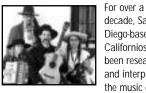
E.Z. Mark and Lee Birch have been around the scene and played at various Folk Festivals since the very early '70s. Chuck Borsos has also

performed at most of the Roots Festivals. They could just as easily be the Zagreb Boys or the Warsaw Guys. I've heard them do Greek, French, and even an old timey tune or two. E.Z. plays old jazz and vaudeville novelty songs and Lee does Mexican and

Cajun tunes. What we have here are three veteran old-time musicians who know a lot of good tunes, play a lot of instruments, and play them well. They are always good for a surprise.

Saturday: 1pm, DiMille Stage; 6pm, Beer Garden/Sunday: 4pm, Hawley & Adams Stage

### Los Californios



decade, San Diego-based Los Californios has been researching and interpreting the music of

Spanish and Mexican California, focusing on the nineteenth century and the days when California was part of Spain and then Mexico. This sweet, melodic music was played for dancing and singing at the festive gatherings hosted by the Spanish and Mexican settlers or the Californios, who ran cattle on the huge ranchos during their heyday in the 1830s and 1840s. Working from primary sources, including Californio testimonials, travelers' accounts, and the early sound recordings of Spanish-speaking Californians made by Charles Fletcher Lummis almost a century ago, they endeavor to recreate the sound of serenade and fandango from the days before California became a state. Los Californios are Vykki Mende Gray, Janet Martini, Peter DuBois, and David Swarens.

Saturday: 4pm, Hawley & Adams Stage; 8pm, DiMille Stage

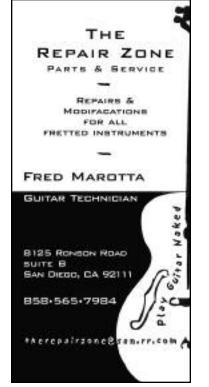
### Les Campagnards



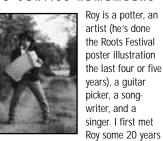
Founded in 1995 by Alan Keith, Barbara Slone, Gary Breitbard, and Bruce Culbertson, this group plays the music of central France, specifically the ancient

provinces of Berry, Bourbonnais, and Auvergne as well as tunes and songs from Gascogne, Pays Basque, Provence, and Alsaçe, all of which are intended primarily for dancing. In addition to the most important of the forms - the bourrée of central France - the band's repertoire also includes Scottish dances, polkas, mazurkas, waltzes, and rondeaus played on the hurdy-gurdy, bagpipes, accordion, and violin.

Saturday: noon, Hawley & Adams Stage; 5pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 7pm, Beer Garden/Sunday: 3pm, Church Sanctuary



### **Roy Ruiz Clayton** CURTISS REMEMBERS



Roy is a potter, an artist (he's done the Roots Festival poster illustration the last four or five years), a guitar picker, a songwriter, and a singer. I first met

ago when he wandered in Folk Arts Rare Records to inquire about playing some music for us. He's played a whole lot of times for us over the years and is one of those guys who writes songs with words you have to listen to. You won't be sorry.

Clayton's CD is reviewed this month. See page 15

Saturday: 1pm Song Swap; 2pm, 34th & Adams Stage; 6pm, DiMille Stage/Sunday: 5pm, DiMille Stage

### Tomcat Courtney



I was doing a blues concert series at Folk Arts Rare Records back in the very early '70s when Tomcat walked into the shop and asked if he could get up and do a song or

two. He did, and we've been good friends ever since. Tom hails from Waco. Texas, and broke into the blues biz as a tap dancer in a T-Bone Walker show back in the '40s. He first played with his old partner, Henry Ford Thompson, at the fifth San Diego Folk Festival in 1971 and at most of them since. Tom has been responsible for giving many young San Diego musicians a chance to play in his bands. And his style of Texas blues, with influences ranging from Lightnin' Hopkins to Muddy Waters and B.B. King to his original mentor T-Bone, continues to bring down the house.

Saturday: 3pm, 34th & Adams Stage/ Sunday: 11am, Beer Garden; 1pm, Hawley & Adams Stage

## **Clyde Davenport**



Adams Avenue Roots Festival. Kentucky is the birthplace of bluegrass music, but Davenport performs the older styles of the Appalachians. He plays banjo in the clawhammer manner and the influence Irish and Scottish reels and jigs are more apparent in the tunes and dronings of his fiddle than what you hear in a bluegrass ensemble. It has been said that "no living musician sustains more of the 19th century solo fiddling traidition than Davenport. His playing preserves rare tunes . . . that had all but vanished by the time he was born." The blues touch some of Davenport's fiddling as well: he slides around on some notes and tunes. His low-key attitude about his fiddling and his reluctance to seek recognition are in stark contrast to the way old-time music fans have received his playing. Since his fiddling debut on records, the world has beaten a path to his door, hailing his unique and interesting style and repertoire. Young musicians all over have made the trek to his home hoping to learn from the master. Coming from a fiddling family, Davenport's father and three of his five brothers played the instrument, while he

made his first fiddle at the age of nine and a banjo when he was 16. As a teenager, Davenport played at dances in his home town area with his brothers and, since they were all fiddlers, he decided to pick up the banjo

At one point in his life, he stopped playing music for a period of 17 years. Although he admits that this hiatus may have hurt his playing, Davenport believes, on the other hand, that it may have been a good thing. Had he been playing during this time, he might have become a bluegrass fiddler and abandoned his original repertoire

Clyde Davenport is the epitome of a folk musician. Although he has always been aware of his talents, he has never made his living as a professional musician. He loves to work and has always had a day job. He brags that he has never been fired or laid off from any position.

Saturday: 3pm & 6pm, Troubadour Park Stage/Sunday: 4pm, Troubadour Park Stage

### **Paul Geremia**



Since the mid-'60s, Paul Geremia has built a reputation as a first-rate bluesman, songwriter, scholar of early jazz and

blues, and one of the best country blues fingerpickers ever. With the help of his six- and 12-string guitars, harmonica, piano, and a husky soulful voice - plus an innate sense of the humor and drama of the music -Geremia keeps traditional blues fresh and alive with his performances. Combining his interpretations of Blind Lemon Jefferson, Robert Johnson, Blind Willie McTell, Scrapper Blackwell, and Blind Blake, with his original compositions, he has created a style very much his own. This is his second appearance at the Adams Avenue Roots Festival

Saturday: 2pm, Hawley & Adams Stage; 4pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 8pm, Troubadour Park Stage/Sunday: 4pm, 34th & Adams Stage

### **Gone Tomorrow**



San Diego-based Gone Tomorrow plays a wide variety of bluegrass, old-time, and early country music, from Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers, and Hank Snow to contemporary bluegrass and fiddle tunes. This entertaining band features Richard Burkett on guitar, Lisa Burns on upright bass, Steve Dame on banjo, John Highkin on mandolin, and Beth Mosko on fiddle. They are appearing for the first time this year at the Roots Festival and are also on the roster for the Summergrass bluegrass festival in August. Saturday: 11am, Beer Garden; 3pm, Hawley & Adams Stage/Sunday: 5pm, Troubadour Park Stage

### Kenny Hall

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS

I first saw Kenny

with the old

Sweets Mill

Mountain Boys

Everwine, and

(Ron Hughey, Pete

Frank Hicks) at a

cabaret concert at

the Berkeley Folk

in the mid-1960s

Festival some time



and again shortly after that at the Sweets Mill Festival (east of Fresno in the Sierras). He brought his unique old timey tater-bug mandolin and fiddle to the third San Diego Folk Festival, along with Fresno compatriots Jim Ringer and Ron Tinkler, and has played at most of them since. Kenny is a true California musical treasure. He must know a couple thousand songs. I've seen him so many times, yet he continues to surprise and amaze me. As a band musician (with



the Sweets Mill String Band, his Long Haul Band, or any other combination) his mandolin is always a standout and his great old timey vocals a treat. Kenny was unable to be at the festival last year, so we're glad to have him back

Saturday: 1pm, Troubadour Park Stage; 3pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall: 6pm, Church Sanctuary/Sunday: 4pm, Beer Garden

### Patty Hall

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS



Patty Hall began her musical career as a teenager in the San Francisco Bay Area. Already a diligent plunker on her Dad's ukulele, she won tickets to the 1963 Berkeley Folk Festival from radio

station KPFA. That experience changed everything, prompting Hall to teach herself to play the banjo, guitar, and autoharp. With a growing interest in folk music, she began writing and performing her own songs and eventually enrolled in the folklore graduate program at UCLA. After earning her master's degree, she moved to Nashville to work at the Country Music Hall of Fame, where she taught banjo workshops, hosted women's songwriting seminars, produced historical country music recordings, and continued writing and performing.

Merging her musical interests with her scholarly pursuits, Patty's music blends it all together in a fusion of old-timey tunes, funky girl blues, upbeat kids' songs, and topical ballads, spiked with a little folkloric commentary and lots of good humor. Saturday: noon, Beer Garden; 3pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall/Sunday: noon,

Hawley & Adams Stage; 5pm, 34th & Adams

9

continued on page 12

Stage



Thur. 4/15 Bushwalla, Renata Youngblood, Anna Troy One of the World's Premier Drummers Fri, 4/16 Robin Henkel **BOBBY ROCK Drum clinic** Thursday 4/8 at 8 p.m. Only \$5 DO NOT MISS THIS: Sat. 4/17 Allison Lonsdale 6-8pm Gregory Page 9pm Drum World Magazines 2-time clinician of the year! Sun. 4/18 The Walking, The Enchanted, The exfriends Wed. 4/21 San Diego's Finest Every Mon. • Open Mic. Thurs. 4/22 Pete Thurston, Truckee Bros. Hosted by Isaac 7:30 p.m. - 11 p.m. Fri. 4/23 The Emerson Band, Jack the Original Sat. 4/24 7th Day Buskers Every Tues. • Comedy Night Sun. 4/25 Tom Brosseau, Angela Correa, Lisa Sanders Hosted by America 9 p.m. - 11 p.m. Wed. 4/28 San Diego's Finest Wed. • San Diego's Finest TV Show Thurs, 4/29 Jezebel, Make out boys Filming from 9 p.m. - 11 p.m. Fri. 4/30 Berkley Hart

> Under the big neon Normal Heights sign. 3343 Adams Ave. 619-282-0437

> > www.lestats.com





## Love Music? Learn to Dance!



The International Dance Association of San Diego County offers free and very low cost dance instruction in all types of dance, in beautiful Balboa Park. No partners and no experience necessary.

visit www.idasdc.org or call 858/274-9162

nsored by City of San Diego Park and Recreation.



Online Community Directories for: City Heights, College, Hillcrest, Kensington, Normal Heights, North Park, South Park

### www.GoThere.org

"GoThere before you go there."

Note to business and organizations: Your listings can be upgraded to include photos, long descriptions, links to Web and Email. Changes easily made by you online, anytime. For more information visit the Web or call Fred Jacobsen, 619 890-4867



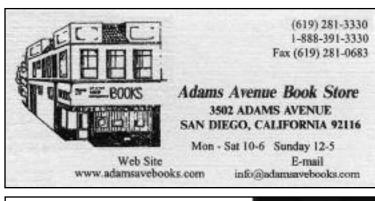


| ΤΙΜΕՏ         | Troubadour<br>PARK STAGE    | CHURCH<br>SANCTUARY           | CHURCH<br>SOCIAL HALL  | BEER<br>GARDEN              | 34TH &<br>ADAMS        | HAWLEY &<br>ADAMS        | DIMILLE'S<br>PARKING                                |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 11-11:45 am   | Mary McCaslin               |                               |  | Gone Tommorrow              | 7th Day Buskers        | Ross Altman              | John Bosley   |
| noon-12:45 pm | New Smokey<br>Mountain Boys | Hawks & Eagles                | Curt Bouterse  | Patty Hall                  | Robin Henkel           | Les Campagnards          | American Folk<br>Singers                            |
| 1-1:45 pm     | Kenny Hall                  | Holdstock &<br>MacLeod        | <u>Song Swap</u><br>New Lost Melody Boys<br>Bob Labeau<br>Roy Ruiz Clayton | San Diego Cajun<br>Playboys | Mary McCaslin          | Ross Altman              | Budapest Brothers                                   |
| 2-2:45 pm     | Mark Spoelstra              | Siamsa Gael<br>Ceili          | Mimi Wright  | High, Wide &<br>Handsome    | Roy Ruiz Clayton       | Paul Geremia             | Happy Herman &<br>his Uke w/ guests<br>The Shelleys |
| 3-3:45 pm     | Clyde Davenport             | Lou & Peter<br>Berryman       | <u>Song Swap</u><br>Patty Hall<br>Kenny Hall<br>New Smokey Mtn. Boys       | San Diego Cajun<br>Playboys | Tomcat Courtney        | Gone Tommorrow           | Mexican Roots Trio                                  |
| 4-4:45 pm     | Balkan Cafe<br>Orchestra    | Hawks & Eagles                | <u>Song Swap</u><br>Paul Geremia<br>Mark Spoelstra<br>Tom Boyer            | Siamsa Gael Ceili           | Bob Labeau             | Los Californios          | New Smokey Mtn.<br>Boys                             |
| 5-5:45 pm     | Mexican Roots<br>Trio       | Mark Spoelstra                | <u>Song Swap</u><br>Larry Hanks<br>Mimi Wright<br>Les Campagnards          | San Diego Cajun<br>Playboys | Holdstock &<br>MacLeod | John Bosley              | New Lost Melody<br>Boys                             |
| 6-6:45 pm     | Clyde Davenport             | Kenny Hall                    | <u>Song Swap</u><br>Mary McCaslin<br>John Bosley<br>Lou & PeterBerryman    | Budapest<br>Brothers        | Jon Adams              | Tom Boyer                | Roy Ruiz<br>Clayton                                 |
| 7-7:45 pm     | High, Wide &<br>Handsome    | Jon Adams &<br>Mark Spoelstra | Old Timey<br>Dance with Hot  | Les<br>Campagnards          | Larry Hanks            | Bob Labeau               | New Lost<br>Melody Boys                             |
| 8-8:45 pm     | Paul Geremia                | Balkan Cafe<br>Orchestra      | String Band<br>Music   | New Smokey<br>Mtn. Boys     | Curt Bouterse          | American Folk<br>Singers | Los Californios                                     |

#### gfghehehehehehehgfghgf f gf











| ΤΙΜΕՏ                          | Troubadour<br>PARK STAGE                         | CHURCH<br>SANCTUARY | CHURCH<br>SOCIAL HALL   | BEER<br>GARDEN           | 34TH &<br>ADAMS          | HAWLEY &<br>ADAMS                          | DIMILLE'S<br>PARKING                        | LEGEND  |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| 11-11:45 am                    | Hawks & Eagles                                   |                     |   | Tomcat Courtney          | Los Californios          | Bob Labeau                                 | Curt Bouterse                               | •••• Port-a-Potties   |
| noon-12:45 pm                  | Mexican Roots<br>Trio                            |                     |   | Ray Bierl                | American Folk<br>Singers | Patty Hall                                 | Larry Hanks                                 | Disabled<br>Restroom  |
| 1-1:45 pm                      | Hot Club of San<br>Diego                         |                     | Hawks & Eagles  | High, Wide &<br>Handsome | Lou & Peter<br>Berryman  | Tomcat Courtney                            | Holdstock &<br>MacLeod                      | First Aid   |
| 2-2:45 pm                      | Balkan Cafe<br>Orchestra                         |                     | Mimi Wright   | Los Alacranes            | Larry Hanks              | Robin Henkel                               | Tom Boyer                                   | Food  |
| 3-3:45 pm                      | Lou & Peter<br>Berryman                          | Les Campagnards     | Song Swap<br>Holdstock & MacLeod<br>Curt Bouterse<br>Jon Adams  | Hot Club of San<br>Diego | Ray Bierl                | 7th Day Buskers                            | John Bosley                                 |   |
| 4-4:45 pm                      | Clyde Davenport                                  | Mary McCaslin       | Tom Boyer   | Kenny Hall               | Paul Geremia             | Budapest<br>Brothers                       | Los Alacranes                               | LOST CHILDREN<br>can be taken to the nearest  |
| 5-5:45 pm                      | Gone Tomorrow                                    | Ray Bierl           | Robin Henkel  | New Lost Melody<br>Boys  | Patty Hall               | Jon Adams                                  | Roy Ruiz Clayton                            | stage. Announcements will   |
| fgfę                           | fgfgfghehehehehehehgfghgf be made between songs. |                     |   |                          |                          |  |   |   |
| Bosie<br>O'Grady<br>A D<br>A D |  | Hawley B            | First Aid<br>Police, Security<br>O<br>A V E<br>Smithy's Service<br>Normal Heig<br>Methodist<br>Church | hts                      | Mansfield Street         | BLOCK<br>DiMille's<br>Parking<br>Lot Stage | C<br>DiMille's<br>Restaurant<br>32th Street | VVhile at the<br>Roots Festival,<br>dont forget to<br>stop by the<br>Troubadour<br>Booth,<br>adjacent to the<br>Park Stage. |
|                                | e 7-11 parking                                   |                     |   | Social Hall<br>Stages    |                          | averaged                                   |   |   |



big/28i-8qb2 coolwithbabsecox.net

Used Out of Print Cook Books, Children's Books, and Paperbacks

41121/2 Adams Ave.

San Diego, CA 9286

GUITARS, BANJOS, MANDOLINS,

UKULELES, STRINGS, AND THINGS



 $\widehat{}$ 



## Larry Hanks



RTISS REMEMBERS Larry Hanks, singer, guitarist, and trumpist (Jew's harp), sings a wide variety of traditional American styles, including old-time country and cowboy songs, bal-

lads, blues, fiddle tunes played on the Jew's harp, children's songs, and topical and contemporary songs by such well-known writers as Utah Phillips, Pete Seeger, and Woody Guthrie

Since 1962 Hanks has performed up and down the West Coast at folk clubs, coffeehouses, and festivals. Hanks sings goofy, ornery hoedown ditties; home-made laments; stark, lonesome ballads; and wry and angry topical songs about life, work, and politics.

Saturday: 5pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 7pm, 34th & Adams Stage/Sunday: noon, DiMille Stage; 2pm, 34th & Adams Stage

### Happy Herman



You won't want to miss the Happy Herman show at this year's Roots Festival, his first show ever in public. His unique sound, reminis-

cent of a broken radio from the roaring '20s, is performed on a ukulele and a kazoo. His music is falling forward into the past fast and is a delight for the whole family as well as for the lonely person who has no one. Special guest appearance by the Shellevs

Saturday: 2pm, DiMille Stage

### Hawks & Eagles LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS



been performing traditional California

music for more than 25 years, spinning sto-

ries from the past as they weave intricate tapestries of melody on a journey through time. Violins dance to the rhythm of Spanish conquest. Guitars serenade the western sunsets. Mandolins filled with old-world charm pluck at the heartstrings of the not-so-distant past. These modern minstrels know hundreds of songs and play just about everything American: Cowboy songs, Gypsy tangos, Bolivian melodies, Irish schottisches, swingin' stomps, Cajun two-steps, blues, bluegrass, mountain music, Hungarian café serenades, French bourees, and so on. It's been awhile since they played in San Diego - at the 1987 Roots Festival - so we're happy to have them with us this year.

Saturday: noon, Church Sanctuary; 4pm, Church Sanctuary/Sunday: 11am Troubadour Park Stage; 1pm, Church Social

### **Robin Henkel**



Robin Henkel's music ranges from primitive, . Mississippi Delta blues and the urban Chicago sound to Texasstyle western swing and beyond. An

amazing blues slide guitarist, Robin has been playing music since the '60s, both as a solo act and as a contributing band member. With the Robin Henkel Band he uses a variety of back-up musicians whom he custom picks to fit each gig. He has opened for such top acts as Dizzie Gillespie. Bonnie Raitt, Arlo Guthrie, and Dave Mason. Henkel has also performed with Buddy Miles, John Hammond, Sha Na Na, and Big Jay McNeal.

A seasoned veteran and winner of Best Blues Album at the 2000 San Diego Music Awards, he has participated in numerous blues festivals. He is also a guitar teacher at the legendary Blue Guitar, where he has been giving lessons to students who are eager to learn from the legend himself.

Saturday: noon, 34th & Adams Stage/ Sunday: 2pm, Hawley & Adams Stage; 5pm, Church Social Hall



### High, Wide & Handsome



Tommy Presley, Kenny Wertz, Ed Douglas, Dennis Toler, Clarke Powell, Ricky Araiza, and Larry Murray are all local San Diegans who have played music together on and off for 40 years, ever since the legendary Blue Guitar opened its doors. Their combined resume is impressive - some of the band members have played with such well-known bands as the Flying Burrito Brothers, Country Gazette, Hearts and Flowers, and the New Christie Minstrels at one time or another. A few of them got their first taste of performing with the infamous Scottsville Squirrel Barkers, and all of the members have been in at least a hundred unknown bands with long forgotten names. Describing their music as "cowbilly," the band plays a medley of bluegrass, '50s R&B, country and western music, blues, rockabilly, cowboy songs, Beatles, folk music, and songs sung by Merle, Marty, Buck, and Hank. Whatever you call it, you're

in for a real good time.

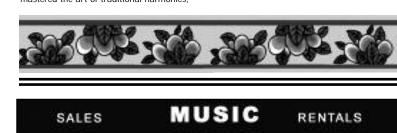
Saturday: 2pm, Beer Garden; 7pm, Troubadour Park Stage/Sunday: 1pm, Beer Garden

### Holdstock & MacLeod



Dick Holdstock, originally from Sittingbourne, Kent in the south of England, and Allan MacLeod, from Armadale, West

Lothian, Scotland, specialize in traditional British folk music, which includes music of the sea as well as nineteenth century Scottish and English ballads. Still performing enthusiastically after 24 years, Holdstock and MacLeod trade off on mandolin and guitar accompaniments on some of their songs and frequently use a cappella arrangements for their material. They have mastered the art of traditional harmonies.



#### which are often described as descants. Their strong melodic tones resonate with all who hear them sing.

Saturday: 1pm, Church Sanctuary; 5pm, 34th & Adams Stage/Sunday: 1pm, DiMille Stage; 3pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall

### Hot Club of San Diego



gypsy guitarist with some of their own compositions. Members include Patrick Berrogain on lead guitar; Alain Cola, head of San Diegobased Dell'Arte Guitars, on rhythm guitar, and Kevin Hennessy on bass, which all adds up to a delightful performance

of gypsy jazz. See page 15 for a review of their CD. Sunday: 1pm, Troubadour Park Stage; 3pm, Beer Garden

### **Bob Labeau** LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS

Bob came out to San Diego from a place called Farmington, Minnesota sometime in the early '60s. With his original songs and humor, he quickly became part of the San Diego folk music scene and a regular at the Heritage, Mission Beach's late, lamented coffeehouse. During the late '70s and early '80s he owned and operated his own Bob Labeau Music store in Point Loma. A few years later he moved up to San Jose and started his own business. Bob played a number of the early festivals - the last one, I think, in 1987 – and also came down to an Adams Avenue Street Fair a few years ago

It's always important when a part of our city's musical history makes a return visit, particularly when it's an artist who enjoys making and sharing his music so much.

Saturday: 1pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 4pm, 34th & Adams Stage; 7pm, Hawley & Adams Stage/Sunday: 11am, Hawley & Adams Stage

## Mexican Roots Trio



What a band – two guys and one foot," says band member Joel Guzman as he describes the old canjunto records that inspire him and the Mexican Roots Trio. "[T]hey had one mic, and

you can hear the guy's foot on the wood floor. That's the bass drum. The bajo player is playing the bass, rhythm, and solos. The accordion player is like the lead guitar player. And they're both singing.'

Conjunto embodies an amalgamation of European styles that flowed into northern Mexico and the southwestern United States around the turn of the twentieth century. The Mexican Roots Trio recreates these waltzes, mazurkas, polkas, and schottisches from that time before the introduction of bass, drums, and horn.

Relative youngsters to be playing roots music, the three members - Joel Guzman on button accordion, wife Sarah Fox on vocals, and Max Baca on bajo, 12-string guitar, and vocals - nonetheless have plenty of experience with conjunto. Guzman's father was a prominent bajo player, and Guzman was a prodigy on the accordion, releasing his first record at the age of eight. For part of their research, they recorded Fox's mother as she sang the old Mexican-American songs she remembered from the '20s and '30s. Songs from their repertoire, such as "Adelita" and "Mal Hombre," are performed the same way as they were decades ago. See page 15 for a review of their CD.

Saturday: 3pm, DiMille Stage; 5pm, Troubadour Park Stage/Sunday: noon, Troubadour Park Stage

### Mary McCaslin

RTISS REMEMBERS



I first saw Mary when she opened for Lightnin' Hopkins at La Mesa's old Bifrost Bridge coffee house in the late '60s and, not long after that, at the Heritage coffee-

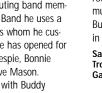
house in Mission Beach. She performed at the third annual festival in 1969. Mary writes very intimate songs about people and things you think you know about. If you know Mary and some of what her life is about, her songs leave you in a slight daze with sparkles of insight. The songs and the way she sings them are just so darned good. Mary has listened to a lot of old-time roots music from Appalachian to cowboy ballads. A lot of what she's heard remains in her music

Saturday: 11am, Troubadour Park Stage; 1pm, 34th & Adams Stage; 6pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall/Sunday: 4pm, Church



THE SAN DIEGO FOLK HERITAGE PRESENTS









groups as the Skillet Lickers, the Fruit Jar Drinkers, and the Delmore Brothers. As the New Lost Melody Boys, they are perhaps San Diego's premier vintage old timey string band.

Saturday: 1pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 5pm & 7pm, DiMille Stage/Sunday: 5pm, Beer Garden

## New Smokey Mountain Boys

I guess I met Clark Powell first, as he was one of the founding members of the San Diego State Organized Folksingers back around 1963. Clark and I even played music together some. Clark plays dobro, guitar, and five-string banio. He knew Wavne Brandon, who is the western world's biggest Roy Acuff fan and sings Acuff songs about as well as anyone except for Roy himself. For a few years in the '60s, we made what we thought was some pretty good music and then ended up going our separate ways. Clark became a lead guitarist in a variety of country music bands, and Wayne became an elementary school principal. It was only when we started doing the Roots Festivals in the mid-'90s that we got back together somehow. For the past three or four years, other old friends from those '60s bands have come on board, but it's Wayne's Roy Acuff-sounding vocals and Clark's Bashful Brother Oswald-sounding dobro steel guitar that give this band its unique flavor. If you like the sound of Roy Acuff's band of the '30s and '40s, these guys are worth a listen.

Saturday: noon, Troubadour Park Stage; 3pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 4pm, DiMille Stage; 8pm, Beer Garden

### San Diego Cajun Playboys



The San Diego Cajun Playboys have been keeping Cajun French music going strong in Southern California with a full repertoire of traditional Cajun language music.

Along with original members Jon Grant (accordion, fiddle) and Bill Riddell (guitar), the group features South Louisiana-born Joel Breaux (accordion, fiddle) from Loreauville (pop. 860), and Greg Rasberry (triangle) from Iota and Crowley, Louisiana.

Saturday: 1pm, 3pm, & 5pm, Beer Garden

### Siamsa Gael Ceili Band



The Siamsa Gael Ceili Band (pronounced Sheem-sha Gale Kay-lee) presents the traditional melodies of Ireland played in the "old style."

The band's existence and main source of inspiration can be attributed to a Dublin man named Dave Page. An accomplished Irish piper, he played in the original Siamsa Gael Ceili Band during the early 1930s. He moved to San Diego in the mid-1970s where he met current band members John Tuohy (uilleann pipes), lan Law (flute), and Judy Lipnick (fiddle), teaching them his music and eventually passing his pipes on to John. Dave Page's influence can be clearly heard in the band's repertoire and style. Saturday: 2pm, Church Sanctuary; 4pm, Beer

### 7th Day Buskers



The 7th Day Buskers are a five-piece acoustic roots band who have been seen by much of San Diego every Sunday morning at the Hillcrest Farmers Market. It was here that the band formed one by one after Shawn P. Rohlf opened up his banjo case and started busking (an old European word for performing on the street) several years ago. Their huge repertoire of original and traditional material covers a wide range of styles, including bluegrass, folk, country, Irish, and blues. Members of the Buskers include Robin Henkel on Dobro, Steve Peevey on mandolin and guitar, Don Hickox on fiddle. Ken Dow on bass, and Rohlf on banjo, guitar, harmonica, and vocals. With the release of two CDs, Long Live the Caboose and Born to Pick, the Buskers can be seen performing in many venues from San Diego to Seattle.

Saturday: 11am, 34th & Adams Stage/ Sunday: 3pm, Hawley & Adams Stage

## Mark Spoelstra



I first saw Mark at a Broadside magazine hootenanny on one of my Newport Folk Festival trips sometime in the early 1960s (maybe it was 1965). He was an important part of the New York City

singer-songwriter scene. A confirmed pacifist and a conscientious objector to military service, his songs often reflected such themes. His debut, Five And Twenty Questions, featured 12 original songs and introduced his quiet, unassuming style. Later I met Mark a couple of times at the Sweets Mill Festival in the Sierras east of Fresno, Mark was doing alternate service and living in the Fresno area then. He came and played at the San Diego Folk Festival in the early '70s with a band called the Frontier Constabulary and then more or less dropped out of the music scene – or at least the music scene I was aware of. This year my friend Patty Hall told me about his new CD (Mark's first recording in 20 years) and a renewed interest in performing at festivals. So here he is with 12-string guitar, a lot of new tunes and quite a few old ones, some duets with old Sweets Mill buddy Jon Adams, and a new outlook on playing music

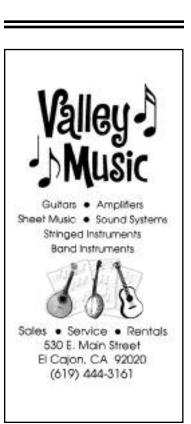
Saturday: 2pm, Troubadour Park Stage; 4pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall; 5pm, Church Sanctuary; 7pm with Jon Adams, Church Sanctuary

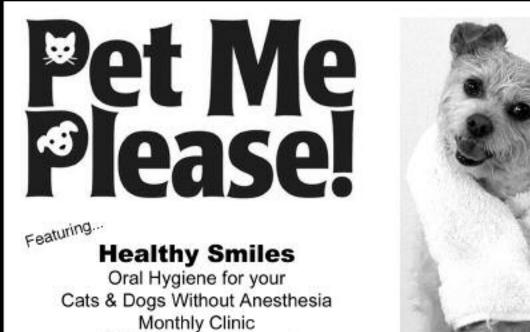


## Mimi Wright

LOU CURTISS REMEMBERS One of our very own song catchers here in San Diego is Mimi Wright, who sings old mountain songs — mostly unaccompanied, sometimes with autoharp, and always with spirit and a touch of wonder. If there's an unusual variant of an old time song to be found, Mimi will find it. Always bright moments at the Roots Festivals are her Rocking Chair Concerts.

Saturday: 2pm, Church Social Hall; 5pm Song Swap, Church Social Hall/Sunday: 2pm, Church Social Hall





The Place For All-Natural Pet Foods & Supplies, Plus The Best Gifts, Toys & Accessories in San Diego!

### Take Your Dirty Dog Home Clean!

Self-Service Dog Wash Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-5 pm Frequent Bather Plan, Get 13th bath FREE Bring in this Ad for

> \$5 off Dog Wash Offer Expires 5/30/04 Limit 1 per customer

Call for an Appointment



3401 Adams Avenue NORMAL HEIGHTS 619 283-5020 Hours: Mon - Sat 10 am - 6 pm







## the highway's song

## Brodsky's Ballads Delight Baseball Fans and Music Lovers

by John Wyllie

s I pulled up to the beautiful Rancho Peñasquitos home of Scharlyn Shaddinger in February, I couldn't help but feel like the boy in the Willie Wonka movie, the one who had just discovered the last golden ticket. Having attended Chuck Brodsky's last San Diego house concert two years ago, there was no way I was going to miss his only 2004 San Diego house concert appearance, even if it was on a Sunday night and three quarters of an hour's drive away. I knew the benefits of his savory musical treats would far outweigh the sleep-deprived exhaustion I would feel the next day at work.

Donning a Bush (George)-Orwell 2004 mock campaign shirt for the occasion, Brodsky arrived, armed with his trademark rapier wit and his travel-worn guitar. For the next several hours, this master storyteller delighted the intimate gathering of about 30 with songs from his current five-CD collection as well as selections from his soon-to-be-released sixth.

Perhaps best known for his brilliant 2002 *Baseball Ballads* compilation, Brodsky, a long-time social critic, demonstrated that he has a lot more than baseball on his mind. We spoke prior to the show.

"I just finished recording a new

project four days ago in New Breton, Nova Scotia," Brodsky said. "I hope to have that out by early to mid-April. I'm right in the middle of putting the graphics together, so it is always an exciting time when you are finishing a new album."

As he did on his other five CDs, Brodsky will again introduce us to his everyday characters and weave his intriguing stories around them.

"There are a number of true story songs on this album," he said. "They tend to be about characters that used to live in the same Appalachian Mountain region where I live now. If there are [recurring] themes on this album, one would be looking back at the things that have been lost from earlier times. The world has sped up, our population has grown, and people have moved. Development has come to areas [like his own in Asheville, North Carolina] that used to be more rural. There are certain values that are being lost in the process and I think those values are really important. It also points out some of the troubles with over development and all of the issues that it brings.

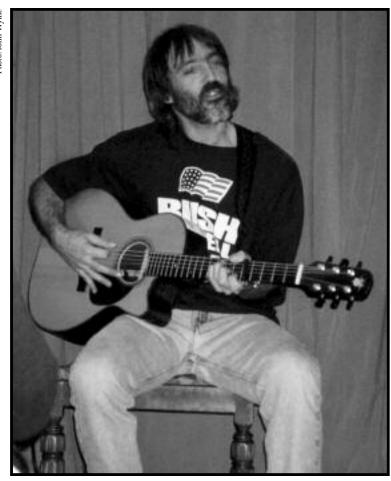
While long-time San Diego residents will have no trouble relating to Brodsky's songs about unbridled growth, baseball fans anticipating the opening of the long awaited Petco Park will be equally enthusiastic about Brodsky's *Baseball Ballads*. With an ability to unearth interesting facets about otherwise little-known baseball players, Brodsky's *Baseball Ballads* soars like a towering fly ball over the left-field wall.

"With the opening of a new baseball season, there is always a peaked interest in baseball. That will be especially true here in San Diego," Brodsky said. "The shelf life of my *Baseball Ballads* CD is going to be pretty long. It is timeless in a way and I always enjoy talking about it."

A dyed-in-the-wool Philadelphia Phillies fan, Brodsky sings about, among other things, the mistreatment that Richie Allen endured during the 1960s at the hands of the often racist fans who used to jeer him in Connie Mack Stadium. His touching song "Letters in the Dirt" doubles as a song in which a father and son connect through their common love of baseball.

"The Ballad of Eddie Klepp" chronicles the little-known true story of how Klepp, a white man, played in the Negro leagues at about the same time that Jackie Robinson was breaking the color barrier in the National League.

"Moe Berg" brings to light an otherwise ordinary player who doubled as an international spy in the days leading up to World War II. Every song on the album is interesting and each one is meticulously researched.



Chuck Brodsky

"I learned the hard way how important it is to do thorough research," Brodsky admitted. "In the process, I learned that doing it can also be a lot of fun." singing about times past, Brodsky uses the same research-driven technique to create songs that are both musically appealing and intellectually stimulating. His CDs are available through his website: www.chuckbrodsky.com.

Whether he is singing about America's national pastime or just

# "Wild Jammin' Women" to Gather at April Music Camp

#### by Annie Bethancourt

Tagine if Britney and Christina could stop arguing about who had the better hair dye job, skimpier leather bustier, or steamier MTV smooch with Madonna and just get along and make good music. Wouldn't the world be a happier place? Women would be empowered, music could blossom, and expression and art might just replace publicity and scandal!

Unfortunately, I think the chances are very slim that these two pop stars will bond together for the sake of sisterhood and the greater good of music. Lucky for us, we have Judy Fjell. At a small San Diego venue late last December, Montana native and musical tour-deforce Fjell led a power-packed group of female musicians (including popular local musician Lisa Sanders) in a spontaneous on-stage improvisation of a song titled "Wild Jammin' Woman." At times singing in unison, at times breaking off into layered harmonies, the musically diverse group of women joyfully rocked through the impromptu tune, which was inspired by the musical empowerment retreat with the same name that Fjell will be running in Big Bear at the end of this month (April 23-25).

cased American folk music and the works of singer/songwriters. Her love for live music grew when she worked at a local dude ranch one summer, listening to her boss play Joan Baez songs on the guitar. Eager to participate in music as a form of expression, Fjell bought a guitar at a yard sale and an instruction booklet at a dime store, then soon began to play at the local shops and stores in her home town. Eleven albums, three undergraduate degrees, 100 songs, and countless performances later, Fjell's has had a rich



approximately 35 women and are designed to foster female bonding, creative expression, and musical growth. As Fjell





DAVE ALVIN - THE HELLECASTERS - POCO - WILL RAY PAUL COTTON - TOM RUSSELL - JOHN JORGENSON - THE BLASTERS THE KNACK - THE SAN DIEGO MUSIC AWARDS

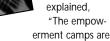


Fjell (pronounced fYELL) is no stranger to this sort of music-based bonding. In fact, she's made it her life's work. Raised in Montana, Fjell was first introduced to music as a young girl by way of popular hootenanny-style radio shows that showand thriving life, thanks to her participation in music — and she wants other people to have the same experience too!

Judy Fjell

In 1986 Fjell became the founding director of what she calls Music Empowerment Camps, retreats that are designed to encourage and cultivate the use of music as a tangible, life-enriching force. Later, in 1991, Fjell began to focus on women and music empowerment by founding her first Women Making Music Retreat.

Now, more than ten years later, the retreats are still offered as havens as well as thriving outlets for women to grow together and enjoy the benefits of music creation. Fjell's latest creation is her first female music retreat in Southern California, a similar female music empowerment camp called Wild Jammin' Women. The camps are open to



not about how well you can play an instrument or sing. The retreats are about women getting together to share their love of music, to support each other and learn from each other, and to make music through the experience of being together."

For more information on Wild Jammin' Women and other Music Empowerment Retreats, visit www.judyfjell.com



## of note





## Hot Club of San Diego West Swing

#### by Frederick Leonard

I've been snappin' my fingers all day listening to - and under the influence of — Hot Club of San Diego's CD, West Swing. Patrick Berrogain on lead guitar delivers a set of compositions and arrangements well worth the callouses I am sure to develop by this time tomorrow. With the killer chops and backing support of Alain Cola, who plays rhythm guitar and also coproduced the CD; Trip Sprague, who was responsible for recording and mastering; Kevin Hennessey on bass; John Stubbs on violin; Lou Fanucchi on accordion; and Bob Goldsand and Monette Marino on percussion, this is indeed a very fine work.

It is also a beautifully produced CD — it's clean, with a no-nonsense approach that allows the music to simply be what it is: good. It also occurs to me that, considering the collective talent of this outfit, it avoids being another egotistical "chop fest" where everybody plays everything because they can. (Why is that?) In this case, a small bunch of very adept musicians deploy the art of reserve. Knowing what not to play happens as instinctually as does what they do choose to play (at least to me, based on how good the vibe feels).

The compositions are beautifully written and arranged, running the gamut from upbeat swings to slow Parisian-Sunday-



## Mexican Roots Trio

#### by Paul Hormick

Joel Guzman, Sarah Fox, and Max Baca play conjunto, a downhome style of norteña, in this limited-edition CD. Staying true to this music, the trio pairs the button accordion with the 12-string guitar, eschewing any additions of bass, drums, or other instrumentation.

All the magic of the mazurka and the polka fill this disk. You hear bits of Germany, then Poland, and a bit of Slovakia in Max Baca's button accordion. There's even a bit of Celtic influence on one of the tunes.

From the mid-nineteenth century through the beginning of the twentieth century, the U.S. attempted to "Americanize" the waves of Eastern European immigrants who flowed to these shores. South of the border the Czechs, Poles, and Slavs played their music and danced their dances. In this country, these wonderful cultures, with their wonderful music, were watered down to such a degree that all we had left were Lawrence Welk and Frankie Yankovic. On the other hand, our neighbors south of the border took the folk songs of their new neighbors, played around with them a little, and gave us all the music of norteña.

By adhering to a firmly established aesthetic, musicians who dedicate themselves to performing an established roots music can often stifle their own spontaneity and creativity. They ape the lines and riffs, but their playing lacks the verve that originally got their music off the ground.



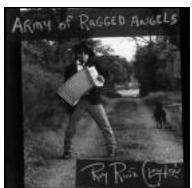
## Jimmie Skinner Doin' My Time

#### by Lou Curtiss

Doin' My Time is a labor of love CD set from the amazing Bear Family label. Jimmie Skinner was one of the real country stylists of the post-war period — a superior songwriter and an influential personality through the Cincinnatibased record shop that bore his name. He made records for Capitol, Decca, and Mercury, but his finest sides were cut for the Cincinnati-based Radio Artist label in 1949-1950.

With a simple down-home style of back up that features the funky electric mandolin of his long-time associate Ray Lunsford, these sides are gems of the early honky-tonk country style. Tunes like "Will You Be Satisfied That Way," "You Don't Know My Mind," "On the Wrong Side of the Track," plus songs Skinner wrote like "Doin' My Time," "Don't Give Your Heart to a Rambler," and the fine "Let's Say Goodbye Like We Said Hello." In 1961 he cut a Jimmie Rodgers tribute album in his distinctive low voice, which was often compared to Ernest Tubb, and that's included as well. The six-CD set includes a 92-page hard-cover book with loads of color pictures and a fascinating discography. This is a fabulous box for anyone who loves pure country music from the early post-war years.





## Roy Ruiz Clayton Army of Ragged Angels

#### by Phil Harmonic

If you have seen any of the Roots Festival posters or ads over the last five years, then you have been treated to the vibrant, distinctive illustrations of Roy Ruiz Clayton. This local renaissance man (singer, songwriter, musician, poet, painter, illustrator, potter) has finally put together his first CD titled Army of Ragged Angels. He synthesizes his poetry into song lyrics and, in turn, into music with feeling and tone, thus "painting" a song. The colors are the instrumentation and voices, provided by Rob Gironda on Hammond organ, Floyd Fronius on violin, Theresa Rochelle-Ross on vocals, Gregory Page on vocals and bass, and David Page on drums. Clayton's voice and guitar set the tone. Like his illustrations, his songs combine complex lyrics with a sparse melodic feel to create an expressive result.

Roy Ruiz Clayton's vocal style is highly Dylanesque but the more you listen, you hear that the nuance and distinctions are clearly his own style. We are blessed with the contributions in art and music and poetry by such a fine talent. Don't miss Roy Ruiz Clayton at the Adams Avenue Roots Festival, May 1 and 2. See pages 10-11 for performance times.



## **The Shelleys**

#### by Phil Harmonic

Local singer/songwriters Tom Brosseau and Angela Correa have joined together to form a country folk duo, calling themselves The Shelleys. When you notice the names of the songwriters on their eight-song CD — Bob Dylan, Elizabeth Cotton, Woody Guthrie, John Prine, Blind Willie Johnson, Leadbelly, and the New Lost City Ramblers — you might think that the Shelleys are senior citizens or middle-aged baby boomers. No way. These youngsters, who haven't even hit the 30-year-old mark yet, adapted and arranged these obscure classic songs into high-quality renditions that remain true to their traditional music styles. It is soooooo refreshing to hear their pure, delicate vocal harmonies, which can be described with one word: SWEET, especially on Bob Dylan's "Billy" and Leadbelly's "Bring a Little Water, Sylvie." The instrumentation consists of one acoustic guitar. This is a case of "less is more." It may appear basic and simple, since it isn't filled with fast-picking riffs, but it's solid and, combined with the subtle playing style, becomes highly effective and a perfect match for the vocals. There's Blind Willie Johnson's "In My Time of Dying," John Prine's "John Garfield Blues," and Woody Guthrie's "Pastures of Plenty."

You can hear them live at this year's Adams Avenue Roots Festival on Saturday, May 1 at 2 p.m. on the DiMille Stage with Happy Herman and his ukulele.

afternoon-picnic-by-the-Seinesounding strolls. The instrumentation, while very acoustic in attitude, offers a variety of soundscapes in much the same way a good waiter offers a spectrum of wines to taste. If you like red wine, you'll probably love this CD. I will verify that this notion holds true a little later this evening. But for now, expect to hear a few jazz moves and French influences, among others, in the get-up of this *West Swing* thing.

You can see them live at the Roots Festival, May 1 and 2. See pages 10-11 for performance times. These musicians don't fall into that trap. Rather, they throw themselves into these numbers as though they were fresh discoveries, remembering to recreate the life and not just the sounds of their predecessors.

Heartache, love, passion, and joy are all in these songs, which were recorded live in concert in San Antonio. Joel Guzman's button accordion laughs and dances and Max Baca holds everything together on the 12-string. Their playful interaction backs Sarah Fox, whose vocals have a wonderful combination of strength and clarity.

See them at the Roots Festival, May 1 and 2. See pages 10-11 for performance times.

## Memories of Renfro Valley

This special CD, for those with an interest in this famous barn dance show from Kentucky, is a collection of assorted songs and tunes by such personalities as Karl and Harty, Red Foley, Linda Parker (the Sunbonnet Girl), Doc Hopkins, and Lily Mae Ledford and the Coon Creek Girls.





## ramblin'

# Bluegrass CORNER

#### by D. Dwight Worden

There's a lot of bluegrass happening in San Diego, so read on, get out, get involved, and have some fun!

#### **COMING: RALPH STANLEY**

Ralph Stanley, one of the few still performing living legends of bluegrass, will be at the East County Performing Arts Center April 13, beginning at 7:30 pm. Tickets and information are available on line: http://www.ecpac.com/eventcalendar.html or by phone: 619/440-0395. ECPAC is a beautiful performance venue with plenty of great seating and an excellent sound system. It is one of the finest places in San Diego to hear good music. You can purchase tickets for \$22-\$32 for a chance to see a true bluegrass legend. The show will be preceded by a free two-hour concert outside the theater, presented by the San Diego Bluegrass Society from 5:30-7:30pm, featuring such top local bluegrass bands as Virtual Strangers, Bigger Fish, The Full Deck, and the Les and Lou Ann Band. This outdoor pre-event is free and will be hosted by the mayor of El Cajon.

Often described as one of the most important country musicians in the world today, Ralph Stanley's voice captures a dark, painful side of life rooted in the cultural amber of remote Appalachia. Ralph Stanley's voice, simply put, is not of this century. Nor of the last one, for that matter. Its stark emotional urgency harkens back to a time when pain was the common coin of life and the world offered sinful humanity no hope of refuge. Singing and playing what he calls "mountain music" or "so-called bluegrass" to distinguish himself from contemporary bluegrass founder Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley made an indelible mark on our music with his brother Carter Stanley and the Stanley Brothers before Carter Stanley's death. Since that time Ralph has continued on with his Clinch Mountain Boys and, in recent years, finally begun receiving some of the national recognition he deserves with his singing role in the film Down From the Mountain and as one of the stars of the Down From the Mountain tour, which traveled nationally following the film's release, including a performance at the Coors arena.

## MARCH GRAND OLE OPRY STYLE EVENT A SUCCESS

music, but you also missed give-away CDs and shirts, courtesy of the radio station, a great KSON birthday cake, and hospitality provided by St. Mark's. You also missed seeing Wayne Rice in a true Nudie Cohen sequined shirt, which he wore when his band **Brush Arbor** played at the real Grand Ole Opry!

### GONE TOMORROW AT THE BIG KITCHEN

On Friday, April 23, San Diego's hot new bluegrass band **Gone Tomorrow** will present a show of traditional and bluegrass music at the famed **Big Kitchen** in North Park from 7:30-9:30pm. Band mem-



Wayne Rice wearing his Nudie shirt

bers include Richard Burkett on guitar, Lisa Burns on bass, Steve Dame on banjo, John Highkin on mandolin, and Beth Mosko on fiddle. Gone Tomorrow is producing the show along with the Big Kitchen's Judy Forman, better known as Judy the Beauty on Duty. So, come on out to this landmark North Park diner and enjoy a great show and outstanding music. Admission is \$5.

#### CALLING ALL MUSIC TEACHERS

The California Bluegrass Association is creating a free listing for all bluegrass music teachers in California, which will also include teachers who provide instruction on an instrument or who offer vocal training. The free listing will also include instruments taught, store location or other teaching location, and other information. If you teach, or know someone who does, look into this free service. Go to www.cbaontheweb.org. Great music will be provided by the James King Band, Cache Valley Drifters, Lost Highway, Sidesaddle and Co., Ron Spears and Within Tradition, and more. So, if you're the travelin' sort, you should give this consideration.

#### LOCAL JAMS

Remember to stop by one or more of our local jam sessions, which are open to the public. Regular **SDBS jams** meet every second Tuesday of the month at Fuddruckers in Grossmont Center. Starting at 7pm, there's open mic and bluegrass karaoke, where you can get up and play or sing a tune of your choice with back-up by the SDBS band **Full Deck**. From 8-9pm a featured band performs (**Dennis Roger Reed** will be there in April) followed by more open mic from 9-10pm. There's also jamming outside



KSON anniversary cake

that's open to everyone. If you want to play the open mic or karaoke, call Gary Kennedy at 619/296-0455 to sign up or, space permitting, sign up at the event.

Every Third Tuesday the SDBS meets at the Chula Vista Fuddruckers, with open mic, bluegrass karaoke, and sign up slots for bands. Contact Les Preston at 619/267-2020 to sign up or, space permitting, sign up at the event.

And don't forget to come to Shirley's Kitchen at 7868 El Cajon Blvd. in La Mesa on every fourth Tuesday for more SDBSsponsored jamming, open mic, band performances, and Shirley's great food at great prices. You'll like the music and the atmosphere at this family restaurant.

If you live in the North County, try the North San Diego County Bluegrass and Folk Club's jam at Roundtable Pizza on Washington St. in Escondido every first Tuesday. April's featured band is **Bigger Fish**. In addition to a featured band and a variety of other performances, there's lots of jamming outside. For those in coastal North County, stop by **Banjo Bob Cox's** jam every Thursday from 6-9pm at New York Pizza on Santa Fe in Encinitas for great group playing and lots of fun. There's lots to do and see. Get

involved — I'll look for you!





by Sven-Erik Seaholm

#### **Raising the Game**

like golf. It's not just the fresh air, little electric carts, bizarre dress code, and ability to smoke cigars and drink beer while doing it either. Part of the attraction is that every time you go to swing the club, a laundry list of all you've ever learned and practiced comes into play. How your feet set up. Where your shoulders are. How you time your backswing. The speed and angle of the downswing. How you follow through. It takes most folks decades to approach what they feel is their best game, and there are no guarantees, although considering the price of playing the sport, perhaps there should be. Until we're all teeing up in virtual simulators at the mall, golf will remain the province of those with enough time and money to chase a little white ball while dressed like somebody's Granddad. Having little of either, I pretty much just watch little televised snatches of it and marvel at guys like Tiger Woods.

Now there's a guy I can really respect. The highly coveted slots on the PGA tour are a hotly contested and precious few, and bringing one's game even near that level requires an overwhelming amount of talent and a lifetime of commitment. Tiger didn't just meet that challenge, though. He beat the hell out of everybody for a couple of years straight. He exceeded the mark by such a large margin that his competitors had to completely rethink their approach. They had to become physically stronger. Their focus and intensity levels needed to be even further honed to an atom-splitting sharpness. In a phrase, the entire tour had to raise its game.

By Tiger pushing himself and his colleagues to new heights of excellence, the very sport itself is what has ultimately benefited most. Anything that is worth all of your time, all of your resources, and your total dedication should be treated with the same sort of passion and respect exemplified by Mr. Woods' approach to golf. Songwriting, performing, and recording are all noble crafts. They're also a lot of fun, and it's easy enough for scores of people to do them, but if you've decided this is what you want to do with your life, shouldn't you bring the full force of you talents and passion to the proverbial table every time? In the past few years, the cost of micro-

phones and preamps has come down drastically, while the quality of such items has increased by an almost equal proportion. Increased competition for a growing consumer-oriented market, paired with its thirst for higher quality results has, in essence, forced manufacturers to raise their game as well. PreSonus has been well within the fairways of affordable, birth quality.



Sven-Erik Seaholm

izer (\$699.95 retail, \$499 street), it looks like their competitors will be scurrying back to the practice tees in large numbers.

At first blush, the Eureka would appear to be a smaller cousin to the popular but pricey Avalon 737sp. You've got that juicy oval VU meter, cool color illuminated buttons, and a similar basic layout. But the Avalon is a tube-based unit, while the Eureka is solid state. Both use discrete Class A components, which for the sake of brevity I'll simply define as the really, really good top shelf stuff put together in the best possible way.

I recently had the opportunity to use Eureka with a really great microphone, the Telefunken Elam 251, a vintage tube microphone from 1959 that sells for upwards of \$25,000. I also tried it with a much more modestly priced Shure SM57. After an initial bit of trial and error, I started to get some really great results in a short amount of time. Later, I used the SM57 dynamic on an electric guitar amp and for some acoustic guitars, and I mic'd a bass drum with an AKG D112 through it. The Eureka's silky bottom and ultra-sparkling clean top end were hallmarks of all these tests, and it definitely displayed a chameleon-like quality in being able to tackle all these chores easily. This thing sounds like stuff that costs four times as much!

I like the variable microphone impedance feature, as well as the Saturation Control, which adds a bit of tube emulation sweetening to an already impressive trick bag. The compressor even has soft or hard knee compression, and three fully parametric bands of eq. The only quibble I had was the inconvenient location of the power button on the rear of the unit, and instead of utilizing that beautiful VU meter for input level metering, they relegated that task to a three-segment LED meter.

Still, this thing does an awesome job of bringing really great sounding gear into the affordable price range for folks like us, and I recommend you take a close look at this piece the next time you're considering raising your studio's game.

Sven-Erik Seaholm is an award-winning recording artist and producer who writes and performs with The Gandhi Method and The Wild Truth when he isn't working with other artists through his company, Kitsch & Sync Production (www.kaspro.com).

Last month, the San Diego Bluegrass Society produced a Grand Ole Opry style event at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Clairmont. The event, which was a great success, featured most of San Diego's top bluegrass bands, including Full Deck, Virtual Strangers, Lighthouse, Tanya Rose and Her Buds, The Les and Lou Ann Band, Bigger Fish, The Gospel According to John, and more. KSON's Wayne Rice, host of the Bluegrass Special (Sundays, 10pm-midnight, 97.3 FM) was master of ceremonies, introducing each group for a three-song set. SDBS's Gary Kennedy also took a turn at the mic to introduce Wayne and his band Lighthouse, making it an especially exciting evening,

Wayne broadcast the entire event on his radio show to celebrate its twentyeighth anniversary, making it the longest running radio show in San Diego history. If you missed this first-of-its-kind event, you not only missed an evening of great

## NORTH COUNTY BLUEGRASS AND FOLK CLUB SPRING CAMP OUT

The NCBFC hosts its annual spring **Camp Out** on the weekend of April 23-25. Located at Chula Vista's KOA campground at 111 North Second Avenue, these camp outs are great fun and an excellent way to meet people, play your instrument, and relax. In addition, this one is so close to home that if you're not a camper, you can come down for the day, stay for the evening pot luck and jamming, and go home to your own bed! For information or to sign up, call Phil Levy of the NCBFC at 619/440-7028. I'll see you there!

#### MID-STATE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

April 30-May 2 is the date of the **Mid-State Bluegrass Festival** in Paso Robles at the Mid-State Fairgrounds. Although the event is not exactly local, it's a pretty five-hour drive to the north. audio for almost 10 years now, and with the introduction of their Eureka single channel preamplifier compressor and equal



## ramblin'



# Hosing Down

#### by José Sinatra

Sometimes it's not enough to let sleeping dogs" lie. Something as simple as a foul mood or as complex as Male Menopausal Menstruation can make you want to immediately throw the car into reverse and repeatedly drive over its stray canine head until the best part of a city block is slick and slippery with doggy dura, creating an invisible danger to any members of the satanic cult of skateboarders who attempt to sweep in and scoop the furry carcass away for their own secret and perverted rites. If only this dumbed-down, zombified world knew the suffering you've been going through.

But that's not nice at all, is it? So what? "Real" life can certainly be a cruel one, and perhaps the faster the frothing masses are reminded of that truth, the faster you can relax and stop talking to yourself so darn much.

For veritable skull-crushing anguish, I doubt that any musical career could match that which was lived, breathed, and perpetrated by perhaps the second finest singer of modern (post-Petomane) times: the one, the only, the original, the they're-paying-me-by-the-word-sobear-with-me-in-this-endeavor icon known as Sammy Davis Jr.

Yes, Sammy, who with three and a half strikes against him still swung that bat and became who he was ... who he still is.

A corpse.

Oh, dear Heavens, Hose, you can't be writing this.

Yes, I can. Sammy says so. Right now it's sometime in March and whatever I'm writing is scheduled to hit the stands on the first of April. That's April Fool's Day, so once again, I've seriously jumped the gun, which always has consequences. Like a very rare state of seriousness.

Grotesque horror (I now confess) is one of my limited arsenal of weapons I pull from concealment when I can't deal with reality. Or at least deal with it in a proper way. If I



The debonair Mr. Sinatra

And when I think of one recent passing in particular. I feel ashamed of myself and far poorer than I was before she left.

Still, I truly have it easy. Because today, there is a gentleman's gentleman named Lyle who has been deprived of the physical reality of a beloved wife. And his superbly talented son who (regardless of his political views), regardless of the pain he has been dealt, will remain a growing source of light in the foggy halls of our world's music cathedral.

The three of them have helped me more than I've realized; that is definitely no April Fool and I'm never going to joke about these three, who have and will continue to serve their fellow men and women with the same grace and care and love with which all three continue to serve their Lord.

Nearly two weeks ago, I saw hundreds of their extended family verify their worth in their sad smiles and tears and miraculous ability to conjure up a breathing being through Love on a Saturday that seemed itself borne of Love. And I love it because it became easy to Believe.

Thus humbled, I remain a Fool this April, but more aware, I think, of seeking opportunities to beautify the grotesque or notice profundity in the mundane, while my own fortunes will most likely remain as always: less than desired, more than deserved.

Get up with your bad selves. Keep driving on.

# Radio Daze

by Jim McInnes

#### Occupational Hazards

his afternoon my wife sent me an instant message while I was on the air at KPLN (103.7 The Planet). In the

message she wrote, "Hi, handsome. Play 'Misty' for me." In an instant I was hearing angelic harp glissandos and experiencing a spinning vortex-like visual effect, sending me back in time...to late 1972.

Clint Eastwood's film Play Misty For Me, about a radio deejay and a delusional female listener, had come out a year before. Probably every radio personality in the country had had someone call and say, "Play 'Misty' for me," at least once during the ensuing year. The joke wore very thin very fast. The story I am about to tell has nothing to do (on the surface, anyway) with "Misty," but ..

Back then I was a radio rookie at WIBA-FM (Radio Free Madison) in Wisconsin. My airshift was on Friday and Saturday nights, from 7 p.m. until 3 a.m. Think about it - an eight-hour show with few commercials and NO format and no rules!

I'd usually start the show with a few hours of "now" music, featuring the Beatles, Stones, Grateful Dead, Zeppelin, Stooges, Captain Beyond, John Renbourne, Grand Funk, Nick Drake, Attila (a heavy-metal keyboard trio with Billy Joel), The Peanut Butter Conspiracy, Curved Air, Fifty Foot Hose, John Cale, Terry Riley, Lothar and the Hand People, all the usual suspects. (I actually dropped all those names to raise my "hipness" quotient, although I did, indeed, play 'em all at one time or another...so I really AM a "hepcat!") By the fifth hour I'd be into longer selections - entire album sides by the Allman Brothers or "Dark Star" from Live Dead. By 2 a.m. I was usually ... er... in an altered state of consciousness, listening to tape hiss or roll-off grooves

on albums (after all, they're metronomically rhythmic just like hip-hop).

One Saturday morning at about 2:30, the request line in the studio lit up. Knowing that callers at that hour had usually been in need of acid rescue, I dreaded answering the phone. "Radio Free Madison," I mumbled. "Hi, sexy," a soft, seductive voice whispered.

Straightening up, I replied, "Hey! Who's this?" "My name is Anna (ahh-na). What are you doing when you get off the air?" Being the straight man, I replied, "I dunno. Whatcha got in mind?" "Wanna come over to my place? I'd love to meet you in person!" I said, "Oh yeah? If you're for real, what's your address?" When she gave me her address and phone number I stood up and tried to follow my imagination as it ran away. She called back three minutes after the first call ended and asked that I bring her a pack of cigarettes. I recalled the old male adage "If she smokes, she pokes!" I exclaimed, "I'll be right over!"

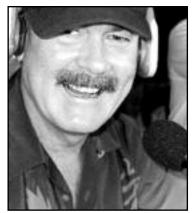
I picked up a sixer of Bud along with her smokes. Maybe we needed to get loose.

I knocked on Ahh-na's door. When she opened the door I was expecting a nightmare, but she was good looking: 5' 5", nice face, and slim...except for those "Ethel Merman" arms. She had probably lost a lot of weight in a short time. I was glad that only I was fat! (It's alright for the 'star' to be overweight.)

We knocked back a few beers and passed around el roacho until we did the mystery dance. It was more than I could have hoped for! Whips and chains! Mayonnaise! Oil and ice! Naughty and nice! I thought, "How cool is this? I didn't have to play the game! Radio is a wonderful gig!"

Ahh-na and I got together often after that wild night. After a few weeks, she told me a secret. "I'm a witch!" she whispered. "Oh?" "But I'm a good witch. I practice white magic." "Whew! If you were a black witch I'd have asked for a demonstration. Who knows where I'd have ended up?" (Hearty laughter on both sides.)

Serving the Community for over 20 Years



Jim McInnes

She began to lean on the mystical witchcraft bit. "I can read minds," she told me. "I know what Jimmy wants right now." Mmmmmmmmffffffm.

Then she started calling and ordering me to be at her place after work. I wondered whether she could make my head explode if I didn't comply. I was beginning to have reservations about this relationship.

One day Ahh-na took me for a ride. We drove through a nice Madison neighborhood, admiring the houses, when she stopped in front of a home with a "For Rent" sign in the front yard. "Here's where we are going to live, Jimmy!" I said, "Wait a minute! Who's we? You and me?" "Of course." "Um, nobody asked me about it." "C'mon Jimmy, you know you want to live with me." "NO!"

I got out of the car and thumbed my way home. That was the end of that.

A few months later I saw her at my favorite watering hole. She was with a new guy. He had a kind of dazed look about him and probably didn't notice when Ahh-na and I locked eyes and she gave me the stare of death! I thought, "Wow! Bad vibes, boys and girls!" That was the last time I saw Ahh-na. I was free again.

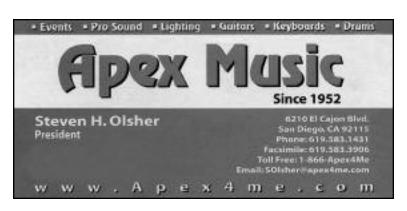
Thank God I never fell under her spell. I'm just trying to figure out how I heard her voice say "Jimmmm" in my ear while I was reading a Zap comic book months later.

17



actually understand what "proper" means in the first place. Or I cared. I especially find it difficult to deal with the death of any one breathing being who would never hurt a fly or harm a dog or an evil skateboarder.

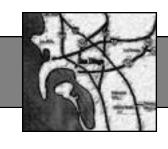




Trades Welcomed! Free Appraisal. Come see our selection of clean, quality cars.

PROBLEM CREDIT? NO PROBLEM! WE FINANCE E-Z DOWN • E-Z TERMS

Adams Avenue at 36th (619) 281-6305



## **'round about**

# APRIL MUSIC CALENDAR

thusday • 1

The Art of Guitar Making, Geisel Library, UCSD, through June 11. 858/534-8074. Martin Storrow/Beezeley/Trevor Davis/ Marit Weitnauer, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### fiiday•2

John Bosley, Tabloid Coffee, Santee, 7pm.

John Wesley Harding, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm. 619/303-8176

Wright & Hess, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm. Alicia Champion/Chris Hobson/Lauren DeRose/Until John/Kevin Wood, Twiggs, 8:30pm

Dehra Dun/LMH, Lestats, 9pm. Tubby, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm.

Photo Charity Event w/ Candye Kane, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

Matt Curreri/Goodbye Blue Monday/This Holiday Life, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.

### saturday•3

Trophy Wife, M-Theory, 3pm. Band in Black (Johnny Cash tribute), Pine Hills Lodge, Julian, 6pm. 760/765-1100.

Steve Gillette/Cindy Mangsen, Old Poway Park, 7pm.

David Wilcox, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm. 619/303-8176.

Randy Phillips/John Katchur/Joe Payne, Dizzys, 7:30pm.

See Spot Run, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm. Jamie Crawford/Jefferson Jay/Annie

Dru/Renata Youngblood/Steve Peavey, Twiggs, 8:30pm. Soothsayers & Friends, Lestats, 9pm.

21 Grams, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm.

Ghost Town Deputies/Fat Tones/Roxy Monoxide, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm. Tristan Prettyman, Java Joes Pub, 6344

### El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.

Annie Dru & Friends, Lestats, 9pm.

monday•5

Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 6:30pm. Modest Mouse, Whistlestop Bar, 9pm.

Bridget's Music Mondays, Humphreys

Sinatra, Dizzys, 7pm.

#### sunday•4 Beach, 7:30pm. Joe Marillo pays tribute to Frank Lighthouse, North County Baptist Church, 221 W. 7th, Escondido, 7pm.

Sue Palmer Supper Club, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., 6-8pm. Scarlet Symphony, M-Theory, 8pm.

### thusday • 15

Josh Ritter, Casbah, 9pm. Berkley Hart, Dizzys, 10:30pm.

fiiday•9

Andersons & Friends, Tabloid Coffee, Santee, 7pm.

Tribute to Glenn Miller, East County Performing Arts Ctr., El Cajon, 7:30pm. Wright & Hess, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm.

Yonder Mountain String Band/ Lighthouse, 4th & B, 8pm.

Tristan Prettyman/Pete Thurston/Dave's Son/Gregory Page/The County, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Proclaimers/Biddy Bums, Casbah, 8:30pm

Joey Show w/ Billy Thompson, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

Big Provider, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm. The Displaced/Bangladeshi Pears/Heat Activated Rhythm, Lestats, 9pm.

Robin Henkel, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.

Highland Way, Patricks Pub, Poway, 9pm.

## saturday • 10

Spring Harmonica Festival, Harry Griffen Park, La Mesa, 11:30am-6pm. San Diego Day of Percussion, Music bldg., SDSU, 1-6pm. Info: 619/594-7452. Keating & Kimball, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm. Jen Knight/Satish/Jack the Original/Ted Ehr, Twiggs, 8:30pm. Edie Brickell, Belly Up Tavern, 9pm. Baja Blues Boys, Patricks, Poway, 9pm. Anya Marina, Lestats, 9pm. Gandhi Method/Hudson Rider, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm. Mississippi Mud CD Release, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm. Christopher Dale/The Friday Band, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm. sunday • 11

### J. Turtle/Saba/Pete Thurston, Lestats, 9pm.

### tuesday • 13

Jonatha Brooke, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Ralph Stanley & Clinch Mountain Boys, East County Performing Arts Ctr., 7:30pm.

### wednesday • 14

Mark Erelli, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm. 619/303-8176. James Brown, Pala Casino, 8pm. Carol Ames, Humphreys Backstage

Tomorrow's Son/American Luxury/ Buzzkill Romantics/Shrines, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm. Rock Trio, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm. League of Crafty Guitarists, Dizzys, 10pm.

### saturday • 17

Allison Lonsdale (6-8pm)/Gregory Page, Lestats, 9pm. Glorious Gospel, 1st Unitarian Church,

4190 Front St., 7:30pm. Coyote Problem/The Inside/Sara

Bancroft/Rebeca Randle, Twiggs, 8:30pm

Transfer (formerly Ten Pound Brown)/ Sweet Tooth/Alpha Ray, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm.

Flying Putos, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm. Hot Lunch, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon

Blvd., 9pm.

### sunday • 18

145th Street, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 2-6pm. Sue Palmer & her Motel Swing Orchestra, Dizzys, 7pm. David Massengill, Dark Thirty Productions, Lakeside, 7:30pm. The Walking/The Enchanted/The Exfriends, Lestats, 9pm.

### monday • 19

Bridget's Music Mondays, Humphreys Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 6:30pm.

#### tuesday • 20

Big Sandy & his Fly-Rite Boys/BR5-49, The Casbah, 8:30pm.

#### wednesday • 21

Sue Palmer Supper Club, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., 6-8pm.

### thusday • 22

Piano Extravaganza, Dizzys, 8pm. Jimmy Patton/Louisa West/LMH/Joe Morgan, Twiggs, 8:30pm. Pete Thurston/Truckee Brothers, Lestats, 9pm

Coyote Problem, Dream Street, 9pm

### fiiday • 23

Coyote Problem, Lanstorm Cafe, 262 E. Grand Ave., Escondido, 6pm. Modern Rhythm, Humphreys Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 6-8pm. Billy Gunn/Physical Impulse/The Darrels, Tabloid Coffee, Santee, 7pm. Gone Tomorrow, Big Kitchen, 3003 Grape

Rock Trio, Tiki Room, 9pm. See Spot Run, Coaster Saloon, Mission Beach, 9pm. The Emerson Band/Jack the Original,

Lestats, 9pm. Jump Jones, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

### saturday • 24

Lite the Night, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm. Kathy Mattea, California Ctr. for the Arts, Escondido, 8pm.

Tim Mudd/Cameron Ash/Robert Spencer/ Kerrie Caldwell/Jimmy Atto, Twiggs, 8:30pm

Baja Blues Boys, Cafe Crema, Pacific Beach, 9pm.

7th Day Buskers, Lestats, 9pm. The Blazers, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm. Anya Marina/Saba, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.

Celticana, Patricks Pub, Poway, 9pm.

### sunday • 25

Tom Brosseau/Angela Correa/Lisa Sanders, Lestats, 9pm.

### wednesday • 28

Coyote Problem, OB Farmers Market, 5pm. Chris Klich, Lestats, 8:30pm. Tommy Price, Java Joes Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm. Teeny-Tiny Pit Orchestra for Silent Films, Che Cafe, UCSD. Screenings at 10 & 11pm.

### thusday • 29

Leonard Patton/Gerard Nolan-Toby Ahrens Jazz Quartet, Twiggs, 8:30pm. Tristan Prettyman/Gregory Page/Billy Shaddox/Saba, Belly Up Tavern, 8:30pm. Jezebel/Make Out Boys, Lestats, 9pm.

### finday • 30

Leigh Taylor Band, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm. Tristan Prettyman/Annie Bethancourt/ Alex Esther/Saba/J. Turtle, Twiggs, 8:30pm. Berkley Hart, Lestats, 9pm. Vern's Burnt Chicken, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

saturday & sunday may1 &2 **Adams Avenue Roots Festival** 

### WEEKIY

#### every **sunday**

7th Day Buskers, Farmer's Market, DMV parking lot, Hillcrest, 9am-1pm. Traditional Irish Music, Tom Giblin's Pub, 640 Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 3pm.

Irish Dance, Dublin Square, 554 Fifth Ave., 3pm.

Celtic Ensemble, Twiggs, 4pm.

Cobblestone (Irish Music & Dance), 5-6:30pm, Boxty Band, 6:30-10pm. The Field, 544 Fifth Ave.

Miff's Jam Night, Java Joes, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 6-9pm.

Jazz Roots w/ Lou Curtiss, 9-10:30pm, KSDS (88.3 FM)

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

### every **monday**

Joe Rathburn, Gallery at the Marina, Chula Visa, 5-9pm Open Mic Night, Rosie O'Grady's, Normal Heights, 7pm.

every **tuesday** 

Traditional Irish Music, The Ould Sod,

Open Mic Night, Casa Picante, 10757

Woodside Ave., Santee, 7:30-9:30pm.

Traditional Irish Music, Blarney Stone,

every wednesday

Open Mic Night, Adams Ave. Studio of

Open Mic Night, The Packing House, 125

Open Mic Night, Twiggs, 6:30pm.

the Arts, 2804 Adams Ave, 8pm.

Open Mic Night, Metaphor Cafe,

Live Taping of San Diego's Finest TV

Highland Way, Tom Giblin's Pub, 640

Hatchet Brothers, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

every **thusday** 

Open Blues Jam w/ Chet & Committee,

Downtown Cafe, 182 E. Main St., El

Open Mic Night, Just Java Cafe, 285

Third Ave., Chula Vista, 7-10pm.

Open Mic Night, Coaster Saloon,

Carrie O'Kee, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

Rockabilly Thursdays w/ Hot Rod

Talent Showcase, Lestats, 9-11pm.

Lincoln, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

S. Main St., Fallbrook, 8pm.

Escondido, 8pm.

Show, Lestats, 8:30pm.

Cajon, 5:30-9:30pm.

Mission Beach, 9pm.

Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 9pm.

Normal Heights, 7pm.

Clairemont, 8:30pm.

Open Mic Night, Lestats, 7:30pm.

tuesday•6

Bigger Fish, Round Table Pizza, 1161 E.Washington St., Escondido, 7pm.

### wednesday • 7

21 Grams/Carol Ames, OB Farmers Market, 4-7pm.

Sue Palmer Supper Club, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., 6-8pm.

Ryan Blue/Angela Patula/Jamie Crawford, Lestats, 9pm.

Billy Shaddox/Tom Brosseau/Pete Thurston, Belly Up Tavern, 9pm.

### thusday•8

Nickel Creek, RIMAC Arena, UCSD. John Hiatt, Sycuan Casino, 8pm. Bobby Rock Drum Clinic, Lestats, 8pm. Sara Bancroft/Tim Mudd/Brian Lee/ Francisco Aviles, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Lounge, Shelter Island, 8pm. Renata Youngblood/Fiona Wong/Mick Overman/AM, Twiggs, 8:30pm. Bushwalla/Renata Youngblood/Anna Troy, Lestats, 9pm.

friday • 16

The Quimbys, Metaphor Cafe, 8pm.

Lounge, Shelter Island, 8:30pm.

Carpenter, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Robin Henkel, Lestats, 9pm.

Santee, 7pm.

8pm

St., Golden Hill, 7:30pm.

Peter Sprague & Pass the Drum , Dizzys, 8pm.

Meghan La Roque/Mermaid's Journey/ Curtis Peoples/Lauren DeRose/Jimmy Atto, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

Want to be included in our monthly calendar?

Email the dates, locations, and times your band is playing to: mrkentman@cox.net



California Rangers McCab Oceanside, 4:30-9pm.

Songwriter Showcase, Tabloid Coffee, 9225-27 Carlton Hills Blvd., Santee, 7pm.

every **friday** 

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

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

Talent Showcase w/ Larry Robinson & the Train Wreck Band, The Packing House, 125 S. Main St., Fallbrook, 8pm.



## the local seen

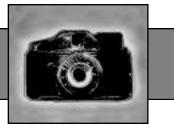




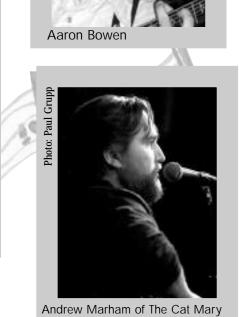
Photo: Joel Sid



Bradley Trafton at Twiggs



Jack Johnson & the Hank Show





Holdstock & MacLeod British Folk & Sea Songs

Hot Club of San Diego

Hawks and Eagles

Paul Geremia Bluesman & 12-String Wizard





High, Wide, & Handsome Cowbilly



Gypsy Jazz

**Bob Labeau** Eclectic Singer-Songwriter

Mary McCaslin Original Songwriter

The New Lost Melody Boys Old-Timey String Band

The New Smokey Mountain Boys Music of Roy Acuff

San Diego Cajun Playboys Louisiana Cajun Music

Siamsa Gael Ceili Band Traditional Irish

7th Day Buskers Americana

Mark Spoelstra Veteran Folkster on 12-String Guitar

Mimi Wright Appalachian Ballads & Folk Songs

Lou & Peter Berryman Folkdom's Favorite Funny Folks

Performers subject to change.

DUMS AND

COMMISSION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

52

Consummate Traveling Minstrels



Balkan Cafe Orchestra Eclectic Folk Music from Around the World





Information: www.GoThere.com/AdamsAve • Music produced by Lou Curtiss and Folk Arts Rare Records • Music Info: 619/282-7833/For booth rentals: 619/282-7329