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SAN DIEGO

# ROUBADOOR

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

FREE



April 2010

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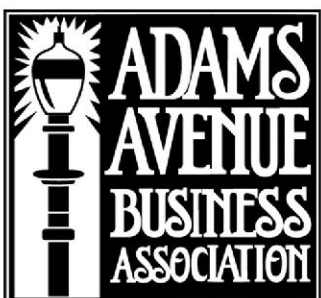
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The **San Diego Troubadour** is dedicated to the memory of **Ellen and Lyle Duplessie**, whose vision inspired the creation of this newspaper.

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# Music to Set Your Soul on Fire!

by Paul Hornick

Before the conquistadores set sail for the New World, before Cervantes wrote of Don Quixote thrusting his lance at the windmills on the plains of southern Iberia, before the Great Armada met its defeat by the English, Spain was an altogether different country and perhaps a place difficult for us now to think of as "Spanish." For centuries, while the rest of Europe torpidly endured the Middle Ages, North Africans, Jews, and Gypsies came together in the Iberian Peninsula and left a legacy of arts and learning that still reverberates more than 500 years after that halcyon age came to an end. In a concert titled *Souls on Fire: Music of the Moors, Gitanos and Jews of Medieval Spain*, Yale Strom and an eclectic ensemble of performers will celebrate this rich and often overlooked period of European history and culture.

Currently an artist in residence at SDSU in Jewish Studies, Strom is a world-renowned ethnographer who has chronicled and written about the lives of east European Jews. His numerous books describe their foods, culture, and music. He completed a great deal of his work in the 1980s – before the fall of the Berlin Wall and collapse of the Soviet Empire – and was thus able to witness and record much about the east European Jews before their legacy was swept away by history.

Strom is also a performer of the east European Jewish known as klezmer. His wife, Elizabeth Schwartz, often sings with Strom and is also steeped in klezmer's traditions and techniques. Recognized internationally, the couple will be performing the concert of medieval music after an almost two-week tour of Hong Kong and Japan that includes klezmer lectures, performances, and workshops. Always open to exploring new musical experiences as well as the traditional, February saw Strom in New Delhi, joining forces with Pakistan's version of Sting – Salman Ahmadand. The two performed with

Ahmadand's rock band Junoon for the Summit for Sustainable Development.

After the disintegration of the Roman Empire, the Moors – Arabs from North Africa – ruled Spain for over 800 years and left their mark on the country's language and culture, which still survives centuries after Ferdinand and Isabella – yes, that Ferdinand and Isabella – expelled them. Their legacy can be seen in the arches and minarets of the La Mezquita in Cordoba, the Alhambra, as well as other 13th and 14th century mosques and palaces. Their musical contribution to Spain, and indeed the rest of the world, is the guitar. The sounds of Segovia or even U2's Edge can be traced back to the Moors who played a four-stringed instrument called the oud, an instrument that can still be found in the Middle East. From the oud the Moors developed the six-stringed guitar. Accordingly, the word guitar comes from the Arabic *guitarra*.

The Jews of Spain predate even the Moors, having been brought there as slaves by the Romans. For centuries they retained their music, with its Middle Eastern modalities. They also have a legacy of language from their time living in Spain. Just as Yiddish is the language of East European Jews, Ladino is the language that Jews spoke in Spain. Schwartz will sing Ladino songs that can be traced back to the Jews' time in Moorish Spain. She will also sing selections of Arabic melodies, musical relics of Spain's Moors.

The Gypsies, or as the Spanish call them, Gitanos, arrived in Spain sometime during the sixth century. Like the Jews, the Gypsies were – and still are – a people without a homeland. Originating in what is now India and Pakistan, the Gypsies brought to Spain music and modalities of the Asian subcontinent. They also brought with them a certain type of passionate singing. If you were lucky enough to see *Latho Drum*, a film that follows the music of the Gypsies from the Middle East and throughout Europe, the Spanish Gypsies conclude the movie with this strong, driving singing. At the concert



this demanding vocal style will be demonstrated by singer-composer Jesus Montoya. Gypsy by birth, Montoya was born and raised in Seville, Spain, but now makes his home in Long Beach. He is the artistic director of the well-renowned Montoya Flamenco Dance and Music Company.

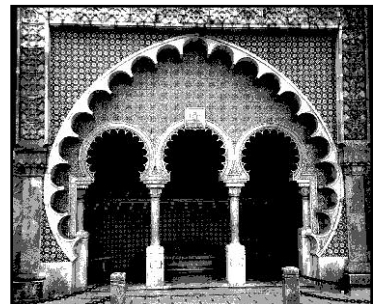
First played by the Gypsies of northern Spain during the 18th century and using the Moorish guitar as its heartbeat, flamenco is the result of melding Moorish, Jewish, and Gypsy music. Engaging the body, mind, and spirit, flamenco is passionate yet elegant. It can be raucous, with hands clapping and heels loudly stamping on the floor. Sending the sparks flying with flamenco dance will be Lakshmi Basile Pekarek. American by birth, the young dancer makes her home in Spain and is regarded by her adopted country as one of the finest flamenco performers, an accomplishment for an outsider who is neither Gypsy nor a native Spaniard.



One of the world's greatest flamenco and classical guitarists, Los Angeles-based Adam DelMonte, will be joining the ensemble and performing flamenco selections. As an Israeli who grew up in Spain, DelMonte is particularly attuned to the cultural mix of Iberia. In 1997 he was the first prize winner of the Stotsenberg International Classical Guitar Competition. Also a composer, he has written a flamenco guitar concerto, which he premiered with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project; the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet commissioned him to write a flamenco piece for them as well. He has recorded with the Atlanta Symphony for the Deutsche Gramophone label.

The bassist for this evening's performance will be Lakshmi's father, Jeff Pekarek. At age 17, Pekarek was the youngest musician to perform as a member of the San Diego Symphony. He has enjoyed a 35-year musical career in which he has performed with everyone from Sarah Vaughn to Sergio Mendez. Pekarek has led a number of folk music ensembles. Many long-time San Diego residents will remember his ensemble the Electrocarpathians, which filled the old Better World Galleria and other performance spaces with the songs and melodies of Eastern Europe. Completing the rest of the rhythm section is Persian-American Marko Emtesali, who will play percussion on the cajon.

*Souls on Fire!* Music from the Golden Age of Spain, Tuesday, April 13, Smith Recital Hall, SDSU Campus, 5500 Campanile Dr., 7pm.



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Arlo Guthrie and Family

by Terry Roland

She speaks in a voice that rings with generations of American folk music. If you listen to her youthful enthusiasm, you can hear the essence of her grandfather, Woody Guthrie's dust-bowl and train-riding songs and tales. You may hear her father – humorist, songwriter, and philosopher Arlo Guthrie with his tales of Woodstock, Alice, and a passenger train called the City of New Orleans. But, mostly, you'll hear the voice of Sarah Lee Guthrie, Arlo's daughter. As she talks and sings, her voice brings up a folksinger as American as those waving wheat fields her grandfather once wrote about. So it is only natural that she has been appointed the spokesperson for the new Guthrie Family Rides Again American Tour rolling into town this month at the California Center for the Performing Arts in Escondido.

On the morning of our phone conversation from Florida, over the hum of her Mom's cappuccino machine and the sweet sound of children's voices in the background, we traveled to the land of her childhood raised in an ashram; her newly discovered connection with her iconic grandfather; the spiritual example her parents have set for her; the passionate skill of her husband, Johnny Irion's musicianship and songwriting; and the joys of the music she's been making with her recent Grammy-worthy Waggaloo, a collaboration of friends and family writing original songs for children. Her collaborators, like the upcoming tour, span generations, including Woody through his archives of unpublished lyrics, Pete Seeger, Arlo, Johnny Irion, and more family members than it's possible to count.

Arlo, the storytelling forever-song-singing folk legend in his own right, has insights into his own journey over the last few years that shows how the folksinger can't be bound by any traditions or expected preconceived notions. Guthrie Rides Again follows last year's Solo Reunion Tour, titled in Arlo's typical absurdest humor. For this tour he's handed the reins to a new generation of family musicians led by Sarah Lee and her posse of children, cousins, nephews, nieces, brothers, and sisters. And I have a feeling Arlo would agree to a special guest in spirit, Woody Guthrie. For the past 40 years Arlo has carried two legacies with grace, humor, and dignity: Woody's as well as his own misadventures that began in the '60s with the counter-culture epic, "Alice's Restaurant." But, while he occasionally resurrects the 22-minute opus, the point of the song and his career has been one of a talented teller of stories, both tall and short, large and small, true and well, maybe a bit exaggerated. Be it his mythical motorcycle adventures, bringing questionable substances into Los Angeles, or singing an old Elvis tune somewhere in Eastern Europe.

Regarding the tour, Arlo recently

said, "What we're really trying to show is that music's a part of the family life. Some of it might be better than others. But it's all fun, and we like playing together, and we like traveling around together. So, that's what we're doing. It's pretty special to have four generations of Guthries represented in some way on the tour. You start to notice things about the family. Like even though my children are into different kinds of music, there's a certain humor and political sense that runs through it all. I love being able to see that. All the kids all doing great on their own. I didn't think the majority of my children were going to get into music. They have their own styles of songwriting, their own way of doing things. I figured before they all get too popular, let's get together to do a family tour."

Talking about traveling with generations of kids, Arlo said, "Having all the children on tour is like herding cats. They were told over and over again, 'You don't have to do this. If you don't want to be there, just say so.' And on some given nights, if they're getting grouchy or something, they don't show up. It's a zoo up on stage. There are dozens of us at this point – some of the younger grand-kids may even come on stage for a bit before heading behind the curtains to have some fun. We obviously don't have some of the littlest ones on stage all of the time because they would fall asleep, like the ones in the audience at that age. Basically, what we are working on at the moment is seeing how long they can stand up..."

Both Sarah and Arlo agree folk music has no boundaries in style or substance and both artists carry Woody's legacy and even more so, America's treasure of folk music, with ease, humor and a celebration of joy.

#### INTERVIEW WITH SARAH LEE:

*San Diego Troubadour: Tell me about the Guthrie Rides Again Tour.*

**Sarah Lee:** It's just that it fits into this space and time. It may not ever happen again. But it's just great to be the Guthrie family and feel Woody's spirit. He comes to visit us each every night we play – like an extended visit. You can feel him there.

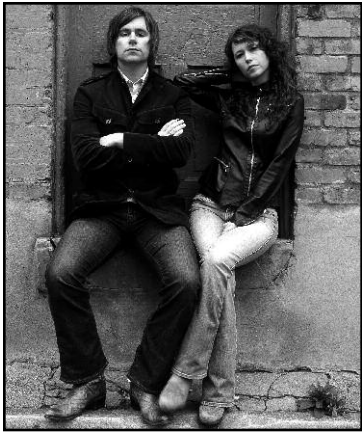
**SDT: I read there are a lot of new songs by Woody.**

**Sarah Lee:** We've been singing a lot of the new songs. We've been singing a lot of what others have recorded, the new lyrics....you know, Billy Bragg, Wilco, Janis Ian. It's been my dad's way of thanking these artists for the songs of Woody's they have recorded.

**SDT: And the family is all with you?**

**Sarah Lee:** We have the entire family – kids, grandkids, and they're all getting up on stage in one way or another. We've been inspired by the Carter Family. My sister's even playing the autoharp. My niece Serana, Abe's daughter, is playing clarinet. I'm playing mandolin. I've never

# Arlo, Sarah Lee, and Family Ride Into San Diego



Sara Lee Guthrie with husband, Johnny Irion



Family patriarch Woody Guthrie

played the mandolin before.

**SDT: So, when did you first become aware that your dad and grandfather were these great icons of American folk music?**

**Sarah Lee:** It was because of overzealous teachers during elementary school. I was just a kid in this small town in Massachusetts. The teacher would make a big deal and talk about it. Even stand me up in front of the class. Also, when I'd come home from school there would be people like the Dillards or Ramblin' Jack Elliot. That's pretty unusual. But that's only surface. It really hit me when I started playing music. Then I started thinking of Woody. He's like this endless well. I go to the archives and I keep finding more. And I haven't found the bottom. There just seems to be more and more. Then I meet people who knew Woody. It makes my life richer. But, it's really when I'm out there in front of people, I can feel Woody. During this tour, when we sing the familiar songs Woody wrote, like "Plane Crash at Los Gatos," I cry. I get deep into the meaning.

**SDT: And how about Arlo?**

**Sarah Lee:** My dad? He has been so important to me. Like my spiritual teacher. He's so in touch. He's taught me to be in touch with the big things, all things much bigger than us and to not worry about the little things. He's also my teacher in what I do. The music. He has so much energy on stage. He keeps everyone together. He never divides people. It's really good. I'm his student.

**SDT: He's a great storyteller.**

**SARAH LEE:** Yes. He can do things on the spot. He tells a little story and he'll get all wrapped up in it...[laughs]

**SDT: What about the spirituality behind the music?**

**Sarah Lee:** For 20 years I grew up in an Ashram in Florida. We lived there with the guru. I took it for granted. The difference didn't hit me until I left. I didn't know what the world was like out there. So, being there has been so rejuvenating.

**SDT: How did you come to live there?**

**SARAH LEE:** My dad's always searching for something real. You know, he was a monk for a while and into Christianity. He met this guru, Ma Jaya Sati Bhagavati and he said he had found something real. And she's from Brooklyn and Jewish, so it was perfect! But, it's an interfaith ashram. Primarily Hindu, but there's a Christ garden and a Zen garden....

**SDT: How does your music and this faith experience work together?**

**Sarah Lee:** I just heard, from Tom Petty, some people have a religious experience and they preach the rest of their lives. They go to church. For me, it's the music. It's my religion, my church, it's what keeps filling me up.

**SDT: One of the songs that has been a stand-out for me this last year is "Kindness."**

**Sarah Lee:** Thank you. That was written by Johnny [Irion]. He's such a good songwriter. He's more of a songcrafter. He works at it everyday and takes the song through from start to finish, carefully. When I write it's more like something is moving through me, but you never know when that's gonna happen. Johnny will get up in the middle of the night and start working. Usually, for me, it's hard to get up out of bed. But, I've learned so much from him.

**SDT: What is folk music?**

**SARAH LEE:** It's the music of the people that has survived for thousands of years. You know, it's just recently we've started making recordings. Before that, it was always the music people would play in their homes. It's the underlying melody of our lives. You know, it has no boundaries. It's blues, gospel, rock and roll.

**SDT: How about rap, hip-hop?**

**Sarah Lee:** Yes, of course, it's folk music. The only thing I'd say that is not folk is classical, which takes some actual disciplined skill. But, with folk music, everybody can do it in one way or another. Everybody can be a part of it.

**SDT: Who are some of your favorite groups or artists?**

**Sarah Lee:** I grew up loving punk. Of course, I love the Drive-By Truckers. Patterson Hood is great. I love Wilco.

**SDT: Tell me about your approach to songwriting.**

**Sarah Lee:** Well, I've taken a lot from my dad. I've always written in some way – essays, poems, and it just seems like the words come through. It's like they come in like a breeze. Dad always says it's like fishing. You gotta catch the songs. Johnny is a songcrafter. His songs keep getting better and better. I tend to wait for inspiration, but Johnny's at it every day. You gotta figure, you might write 20 bad songs to get one good one, but at least you got that one. I've really become more about performing though Johnny's really the songwriter. This question would really be answered better by Johnny. He's the one who does the hard work at it. We have a home studio, which makes it easy. We have another record ready. We're shopping it around right now.

**SDT: How did you meet Johnny?**

**Sarah Lee:** I was 18. I met him in California. Chris Robinson of the Black Crowes introduced us.

**SDT: You have a new album for children?**

**Sarah Lee:** Yes. Go Waggaloo. We put together all of these songs. Three of them were songs of Woody's with no music. Go Waggaloo is one of those. Pete Seeger

plays on it. We even have two and three-year-olds on it. We're planning some shows with just the kids. I'm excited about it. It was voted the number one kid's album in Parent magazine over Elmo! Be sure you print that. **It was number one over Elmo!**

Don't miss the performance of The Guthrie Family Rides Again, featuring Arlo Guthrie with Abe, Cathy, Annie, Sarah Lee Guthrie, Johnny Irion... and the kids on Wednesday, April 14, 8pm at the California Center for Performing Arts in Escondido. For more information, go to [www.artcenter.org/performances/10April/Index.html](http://www.artcenter.org/performances/10April/Index.html)



Arlo Guthrie in the 1960s

## Phil Harmonic Sez



*"I can feel guilty about the past, apprehensive about the future, but only in the present can I act. The ability to be in the present moment is a major component of mental wellness."*

— Abraham Maslow





# Recordially, Lou Curtiss

SOME STUFF ABOUT OLD RECORDS AND WHEN THEY GOT MADE

Let's start with the electric guitar. Every week, on Sunday nights, I go down to KSDS and do my "Jazz Roots" show; I come on right after T (or a worthy substitute, although many may say there is no one completely worthy) and "The Guitar Hour." Now, considering that I'm coming up next with old timey stuff, they'll go out with Charlie Christian (most often "Flying Home" because that was his first one with Benny Goodman) and make the statement that this was the first "electric guitar solo" because that's what Columbia Records said in the liner notes to most every Charlie Christian reissue they've ever come out with. It happened again last Sunday and I got to thinking (fully aware that album liner notes are right up there with the most sacred holy scriptures as truth personified). What would we do, how could we survive, if our liner notes were somehow wrong?

Well, that Charlie Christian version of "Flying Home" with the Benny Goodman Quintet was recorded Oct. 2, 1939. A date marked by some, lo these

many years, as "the first electric guitar solo." Now, I remember talking to Sam McGee at the 1975 San Diego State Folk Festival about why he never took up the electric guitar. He told me that he had gotten a hold of one around 1934 when a lot of folks were starting to use them on recording sessions and he tried it but just wasn't satisfied with how it sounded for him. I got to thinking about what Sam said and, more important, the year he was talking about and decided to do a little digging. Now I don't have all the answers here but I do know that "Flying Home" wasn't the first electric guitar solo. In fact, it wasn't even Charlie Christian's first on record. That would be a session he did with Lionel Hampton on Sept. 11, 1939. Here are some other jazz folks who played electric guitar prior to Charlie.

George Barnes backed up Lewis Powell on March 23, 1938, and Merline Johnson April 7, 1938. He also did backup for singing cowgirl Patsy Montana on Sept. 25, 1939. Ceele Burke did a session with Fats Waller on Dec. 16, 1937 and Slim Gaillard did one with Frank Newton on Apr. 15, 1937. Floyd Smith did his famous "Floyd's Guitar Blues" with Andy Kirk

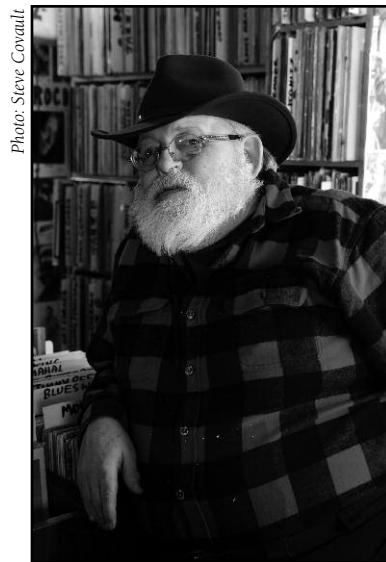
& His 12 Clouds of Joy on March 16, 1939, and did a session with Mildred Bailey on the same day. Lawrence Lucie played electric with Teddy Wilson on May 14, 1936 and didn't care for it, so he put it aside until a 1941 session with Louis Armstrong.

A bunch of other jazz guys were playing electric and might have recorded something before Charlie did. The suspects include Everett Barksdale who I know recorded electric with Una Mae Carlisle in Nov. 1940; William Lewis was playing electric with Benny Carter in 1941; Johnny Collins was playing the same with Fletcher Henderson that same year, Al Hendrickson with Artie Shaw in 1940; Ulysses Livingston recorded with Helen Proctor on Oct. 13, 1939, Frank Newton Apr. 12, 1939, Benny Carter June 29, 1939, and Blue Lu Barker Aug. 30, 1939 (some of those dates are before Charlie but I don't know if he soloed. I suspect he did on at least some of them). Others who might be in this group of electric pickers include Nappy Lamarr, Carl Kress, Freddie Greene, Bernard Addison, Teddy Bunn, Austin Powell, Al Casey, Roy Smeck, Tiny Grimes, and Ike Robinson.

Now we get to the country and western Swing pickers. Start with Eugene "Johnny" Beaudoin who recorded with Hank Snow's band as early as Nov. 6, 1937, Muryel "Zeke" Campbell who recorded with Bill

Boyd's Cowboy Ramblers on June 12, 1937 and with the Light Crust Doughboys on June 12, 1937, Robert "Curly" Nichols recorded with Bob Skyles & His Skyrockets on Feb. 25, 1937, all of those BC (before Charlie). The winner (at least the winner I've been able to find is Jim Boyd with Roy Newman & His Boys playing a session with several solos on Sept. 27, 1935. A little bit earlier Leon McAuliffe put down his steel guitar for some straight out electric guitar work with Bob Wills Texas Playboys on Sept. 23, 1935 but I don't know if he soloed.

Now there were lots of electric lap steel solos by guys like McAuliffe, Bob Dunn, and others that I've left out of this list. I'm sure some blues pickers were plugging in (I know T Bone Walker was recording electric blues as early as 1940). Also I'm sure that other kinds of music (like Hawaiian pickers) experimented with the wall socket. This is where I'll stop it for now. My sources, as always, are Brian Rust's great books: Jazz Records 1897-1942, Tony Russell's Country Music Records A Discography 1921-1942, and R.M.W. Dixon and J. Godrich's Blues and Gospel Records 1902-1943 (The Trilogy that everyone who cares about old records should own). You Can add Brian Rust's Complete Entertainment Discography and Dick Spotswoods nine-volume set on Ethnic records and you'll be set for old time pre-war stuff for all time.



Lou Curtiss

WHAT'S COLLECTABLE ON 78s? Big books have been written on this subject but mostly it's the stuff that's in the books I mentioned above that are most of what to look for. Especially stuff from the early Depression years (1929-1935). Those books will tell you what's what and when, too.

Recordially  
Lou Curtiss

## Alex Chilton 1950 – 2010



Alex Chilton, circa 1973

The John Lennon of independent music, unappreciated artists, and free spirits passed away on St. Patrick's Day. Alex Chilton, a gifted songwriter and cult hero to musicians half his age (and even younger) died of a heart attack at age 59 in New Orleans. His death was only days before an anticipated performance at the South by Southwest festival in Austin.

Alex was a musical prodigy, first gaining international attention in the '60s as the 16-year-old lead singer of the Box Tops, a Memphis group who scored Top 40 AM radio hits with "The Letter," "Cry Like a Baby," "Soul Deep," "Neon Rainbow," and "Sweet Cream Ladies." What separated the Box Tops from other teen groups of the era were the quality of the singles and Alex's extraordinary deep, soulful voice, which sounded more like a black singer from Stax Records than a white kid from the Memphis suburbs.

After a failed attempt at a solo career in New York, Alex returned to his home town and in the early '70s formed Big Star, a quartet that also featured Chris Bell, Jody Stephens, and Andy Hummel. I recalled reading an ecstatic review of their debut LP, #1 Record, in Phonograph Record Magazine. I made a failed attempt to find the record. It turns out I wasn't alone. The album was released on the Ardent label, a Memphis record company distributed, ironically, by Stax. By this point, the glory days of Stax were in the past; Big Star's albums were not properly released – it was more like they escaped – only to find a home on the shelves of a few lucky vinyl collectors.

In 1974, I finally found #1 Record – in a cut-out bin at the old Arcade record store in

Continued on page 16.

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# The G String Chronicles: NOTES FROM THE ROAD



Patric Petrie wearing her hooker boots

by Patric Petrie

After a weekend spent playing fast and furious music at an Irish festival in Los Angeles, our heroine returns triumphant to San Diego with a car lighter in CDs but slacked to the rafters with assorted odds and ends. Imagine her surprise, therefore, when she gets up in the morning and staggers out to the drive, only to be greeted by a vast expanse of empty space....

## THE TRAVELING HOOKER BOOTS, PART II

Now wait a sec. I scan my front yard from left to right, like something will magically appear in my driveway. Wasn't a car there only a couple of hours ago? WITH ALL MY STUFF!

It's just about this time I whip out my cell phone and place a call to our lawyer and the owner of the aforementioned vehicle.

"Ummm, Mr. Riley, good morning, lovely weather, no? By the way, please tell me that you picked up your car this morning with your spare key?"

Alas, no such such act has occurred and I am forced into a rather long litany of somewhat forceful (and unrepeatable) exclamations while I wait for the police to take my statement. "Yes sir, the car was in front of my house when I went to sleep; no, I did not give the car to someone or give them permission to remove said SUV. Describe the contents of the car? Well ..."

By the time I finish describing said cherished professional performance attire (various mini-kilts and my beloved black leather knee-high boots), the detective is in convulsions of laughter.

"Really? Hooker boots, you mean they stole your hooker boots?"

Blah, blah, blah. Whatever.

I spend the next week apologizing to our lawyer, mourning my loss, and envisioning the entire haul making its way south of the border. But instead, that Friday night as I finish my gig around midnight, I get yet another call from the stalwart gentlemen of the San Diego Police Department with the startling information that the missing vehicle has been located! In Clairemont! Of all places!

Of course, there's the slight problem of the driver crashing through a fence, plowing down a couple of trees and scaring the heck out of a Vietnamese family (not to mention the inhabitants of the koi pond in which the vehicle is currently resting) just before the car's axle cracks.

The Nyguen's teenaged son valiantly chases down the driver of the vehicle, who is tackled in the street sporting soggy trousers to above the knee, and who protests his innocence long enough for the police to point out that whoever drove the Ford Explorer into said koi pond would by necessity be a bit on the damp side as they exited the vehicle. Oooops!

And once again, the detectives of San Diego get quite a laugh hauling our lawyer out of bed and asking him to identify the vehicle and any of his "friends" performance gear that might be littering its insides. Sadly, only odds and ends are strewn about the car. The boots have disappeared, along with the mini-kilts.

By this time the entire situation has

degenerated into total farce. Months later, when the defendant is facing sentencing, Mr. Riley asks to make a statement before the court. At that time he offers to drop all charges against the defendant if he will only reveal what has happened to the contents of said vehicle, including the "mini-kilts, and hooker boots." The court convulses with laughter.

The man, however, chokes at the demand and refuses to reveal the whereabouts of the precious cargo and is currently residing in a California State prison (for at least the next few years) and has been ordered to pay back more than \$2,000 in additional restitution.

The insurance company, meanwhile, compensated the loss of the Ford Explorer.

And I only paid \$10 bucks for the silly boots on sale! LOL. Thus ends the saga of the Traveling Hooker Boots.

Patric Petrie daim s i t s all true and only the names have been changed to protect the innocent. She gets endless amusement (and the occasional morning after headache) from performing with her Celtic World Beat band Skelpin', where she plays fiddle (really fast) and sings (not so fast). Skelpin' tours in the U.S. as well as abroad, mainly in Japan; just finished a San Francisco gig for Microsoft, plus a 22-1/2 hour gig for St. Patrick's Day; and believes airlines should stop charging for instruments.

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# The Hutchins Consort: An Unusual Family of Violins

by Paul Hornick

“These are marvels of engineering,” says Joe McNalley. He points not to semi-conductors or the workings of an engine, but to the violins of his ensemble. McNalley is the founder and artistic director of the Hutchins Consort, the ensemble he founded to perform on the New Violin Family, developed by the late Carleen Hutchins.

The New Violin Family is a series of eight violins ranging in size from a behemoth bass violin that is about a third larger than a normal concert double bass, to the treble violin, which is so small that it is hard not to think of as a toy. These new violins are made of the same kinds of wood and other materials as traditional violins, and, at first glance, resemble the familiar instruments of the violin family, with ribs, F-holes, and scrolls, but they are a departure from the violin tradition in a grand way.

Compared to other instruments, the violin has been around almost forever. When Stradivarius and Guarneri were crafting their masterpieces in the early 1700s, what we think of as the violin had already been played in the cities and villages of Europe for almost 150 years. In the 18th century some modifications were made, most notably in the angle and length of the neck; gut strings were replaced with metal to increase the volume of the instrument. Besides these modifications, violins, violas, and cellos have remained unchanged over the decades and centuries. The stringed instruments that premiered the works of Beethoven and Schubert are not much different than the ones found in today's concert halls. So for a violin maker such as Hutchins to create a whole new kind of violin, a whole family of new violins, is all the more striking.

Certain problems have always remained with the violins. For the lower-voiced instruments of the family – the viola and cello – projection and volume have been difficult at times. Additionally, the voices and timbres of violins, violas, cellos, and basses were not developed to have an equal voice or to blend as a single unit. Hutchins designed her octet of strings to project better and be acoustically balanced throughout the entire musical range – all the instruments having equal timbre and volume. The instruments are balanced with each other throughout the entire musical range. The lowest voiced of the eight instruments is the contrabass violin, which is tuned the same as double bass. Following is the bass violin, tuned a fourth higher. The baritone violin is tuned as a cello; thereafter all the violins are graduated in half octaves up to the treble violin, which is tuned an octave above a standard violin. The deeper voiced instruments retain the same body shape of the violin. Their shoulders are not narrowed or sloped, as on a cello or bass, and their ribs are noticeably shorter. Despite being about the length of a small guitar, violists have played Hutchins alto violin under the chin. Cellists who have played the instrument place the instrument between their legs and rest it on a long endpin.

Hearing the instruments, most people are surprised as to the volume produced by the eight instruments. The octet's mezzo violin, which corresponds in tuning to a regular violin, can be as loud as three of the traditional instruments. An *ostinato* played on the contrabass can give the impression that timpani is doubling the line behind the stringed instrument. And the compatibility of timbre increases the overall voice of the ensemble, blending to produce a choir-like richness. McNalley says the consort is “like an organ made of strings, like one super instrument.” With just eight instruments the consort can achieve the volume of a chamber orchestra, with the soprano and treble violins adding brightness not normal-

ly found in a string ensemble.

A few composers have written music for the new violins. Composer Gordon Jacobs composed a piece called “Aphorisms” for the octet, and a recent concert included “Octet Comparsas,” written for the consort by Kevin Walczyk. The consort's bassist, Fred Charlton, whose influences go from Bach to Zappa, also composes pieces for the ensemble. The consort's 2004 season saw the premier of his composition for the New Violin Family and the Native American flute. A great deal of the rest of its repertoire are transcriptions, much of what you might expect from a chamber ensemble, of compositions by Bach, Haydn, Dvorak, and Brahms, and modern compositions from Arvo Pärt and others. McNalley transcribes about 80 percent of the material, with the rest taken up by Charlton. Charlton says that because there are eight voices he adds lines when he transcribes from a quartet composition. “It's like Ravel's orchestral version of Mussorgsky's ‘Pictures at an Exhibition,’” he says. “You have to think of it as creating an entire new piece.”

Although clearly in the classical tradition, the Hutchins Consort doesn't see itself as a bunch of stuffed shirts who play high-brow music. Their repertoire includes transcriptions of Ennio Morricone film music and jazz interpretations, such as Dave Brubeck's “Blue Rondo à la Turk.” Many of the consort members have backgrounds in jazz, and this material gives them a chance to use their chops and improvise. Bridging that gap between classical and pop is the octet's interpretation of Queen's “Bohemian Rhapsody,” which they perform with a soprano singing the part of Freddie Mercury.

The only ensemble to perform with the instruments of the New Violin Family, the consort is presently involved in a five-concert series at the Neurosciences Institute in La Jolla, as well as other concert venues in Southern California. They also put on a free concert every second Saturday of the month at the Encinitas Public Library to crowds that fill the facility's auditorium. Touring has taken the consort to the Midwest and Italy. Most recently the U.S. State Department sponsored the consort as they took part in an extremely successful musical festival in the old colonial town of Alamos Sonora, Mexico.

Often with performances of other string ensembles the music is chosen from a single musical period, but a performance by the Hutchins Consort might be titled “A Big History of Music.” A recent program included a selection of Vivaldi's “Four Seasons,” a new composition from Charlton, and transcriptions of compositions from jazz iconoclast Charles Mingus. And they aren't afraid of having some fun and encouraging the audience to join in. During the performances at the library, it is not unusual to find children dancing in front of the ensemble or to see Chris Woods, the treble violinist, clowning around with the kids. They will often throw in a few surprises, too. What starts off as Mozart's “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik” can turn into the theme of the TV show “Mighty Mouse,” with the consort members chiming in with “Here I come to save the day!”

The New Violin Family is the work of a former science teacher and woodworker who, at the age of 40, may not have imagined that her life's work lay ahead of her. In her mid thirties, married with a family, Carleen Hutchins joined some friends to play chamber music. She bought a viola, because her trumpet was unsuited for the small ensemble. Thinking her new instru-

ment inferior, she determined to make a better one. She spent hours with books and blueprints, and two years later she produced her first instrument.

She met luthier Karl Berger and showed him the viola she had made and the improvements that she had made to the design. He took her interest seriously; the two started a period of work and study that lasted five years and produced 35 instru-

ments. Hutchins then made the acquaintance of Frederick A. Saunders, a Harvard physicist who had started researching the acoustics of stringed instruments in the 1930s. The scientist had run hundreds of

instruments through an analyzer that would record the amplitude and frequency of the instruments' harmonics. Speaking decades later, Hutchins traced the beginnings of her octet to the research that Saunders had done.

Saunders continued his work with violins, but his research was restricted to the violins that musicians would bring him. Hutchins carved wood and instruments specifically for his experiments. She fashioned a “Swiss Cheese Violin,” an instrument with a number of holes in the ribs that could be plugged and unplugged for acoustic tests.

In 1957 the composer Henry Brandt suggested the idea of an octet of violins to Hutchins. Building on her and Saunders' work, Hutchins took up Brandt's suggestion and commenced a campaign that would involve over 200 researchers, musicians, and sponsors. The first complete set of the New Violin Family premiered in 1972. Hutchins continued tirelessly with her instruments and research for decades there-

... the consort is  
“like an organ made  
of strings, like one  
super instrument.”



The Hutchins Consort, current lineup of players

after. She produced over 200 violins, violas, and cellos, and more than 100 instruments of her octet family. She published over 100 articles about her violins and research, some of which have appeared in the pages of *Physics Today* and *Scientific American*. Her work earned her four honorary doctorates. Her dedication and determination never wavered; in 2004, at the age of 93, she talked about planning the next ten years of her work. Hutchins passed away in August of last year.

The Hutchins instruments are an advancement of sorts for the violin, but they also present their own challenges. Normal violin strings broke under the tension needed for the tuning of the highest string on the treble violin. For a solution the consort turned to Bell Laboratories; the scientists there developed a very strong string out of a titanium alloy just for the high-voiced violin. Igor Tchetchko, on soprano violin, says that it is sometimes difficult adjusting to the range of his instrument. The music is written for a regular violin but played a fifth higher. “It can get confusing because the pitches are not where they should be,” he says. The increased responsiveness and capacity for greater volume of the octet mean that the musicians need to be careful. Soft passages can sometimes come across louder than intended.

The genesis of the consort goes back to 1983, when McNalley was a student at UCSD studying under Bert Turetzky. That

year Hutchins brought out one of her octets for a meeting at UCSD of the Catgut Acoustical Society, the organization she cofounded to further violin research. After the meeting, the octet stayed at UCSD without an ensemble to play them. McNalley recognized their potential and often used the octet's contrabass for his orchestral work. In 1999 he approached other string players who were playing in the southern California area to form the consort, choosing members for their personal strengths and backgrounds as well as their musician-ship.

The consort members think of their instruments as an addition to the string family, not new models to replace the old. They are nonetheless excited about their work in the consort and anticipate a growing audience for themselves and their instruments. The ensemble is also reaching out to the next generation. With newly constructed instruments the ensemble is on the verge of creating the first student ensemble to perform on the Hutchins Octet. “We're really working on awareness,” says McNalley, as he plans more seasons and tours for the Hutchins Consort.

Don't miss the Hutchins Consort play live on Saturday, April 10 at the Neurosciences Institute, 10640 John Jay Hopkins Dr., La Jolla, 7:30pm.

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# Postcard from Nashville

by Charlie Redksieck

I was recently in Nashville for a week; it was a day-job work trip (God help me if I tried to keep my standard of living and the Fortress of Relaxation running just off music money). For those of who here plugged into the San Diego music scene, I figure I'd compare the two cities musically.

Nashville truly does earn its nickname of "Music City." It's arguably the only place I really would call a music city, though from the meals I was eating, "Gravy City" would seem appropriate as well. Though Los Angeles and New York are higher up on the music conglomerate food chain, both of those metropolitan areas have music as just one part of the larger entertainment industry, among myriad other "real" industries. What does Nashvegas have if not the music?

Strangely enough, in the current 2010 environment, most record companies, and the music industry in general, are floundering, yet Nashville still seems basically the same as it was 10-15 years ago from a visitor's perspective. There are still publishers, record companies, agencies, promoters, studios, everything involved with the business of music ... everywhere. Music Row is alive and well. It's a company town, all of which makes it seem like it would be exhausting to live there. Sometimes you want to just go to the dry cleaners, Cracker Barrel, or Target without talking about or hearing about aspiring musicians.

I love songwriter nights in bars; San Diego could use a little more of it. But in Nashville seemingly every bar and every hotel has at least a stage set up. It's too diluted (and deluded, but I'll get to that later); those folks interested in hearing live local music have too many places to go. So, for both performers and listeners, what's the point of going to an empty songwriters' night at the Best Western or listening to another girl



set her journal entries to music? By the end of my trip it became like the "Twilight Zone" hitchhiker episode where anywhere and everywhere the woman drove, the hitchhiker was there. No matter where I went that last night – a sushi bar, a pizza place, even a liquor store – I was shoulder to shoulder with nervous hopefuls holding guitar cases, hearing the same storytelling patter from a guy onstage about how he used that song to get over a relationship six years ago. Seriously, this happened in a liquor store. I'm just trying to get some Dr. Pepper to take back to the hotel before settling in for Olympic curling, then in the chips aisle I'm getting knocked in the knees by a kid with a guitar case rushing to sign up for the showcase.

Most of these showcases are about as populated as similar ones in San Diego. If you feel like performing for an audience of four or five fellow musicians is beneath you, then maybe you just don't like playing music. Which is fine, but as much as Nashville embraces songwriters, it's still not a magic place where people throw themselves at your feet because you're pleasant, can sing on key, and know how to play a guitar. You'll get at least a little respect, so

maybe it's a slightly better performing situation than here.

Overall, I'd have to say that the quality of the music at these Nashville showcases is maybe about 10-20 percent better than San Diego. Sorry, San Diego, I know you don't take criticism well. There are just so many people that got sucked into Nashville's gravitational pull for aspiring musicians that the best folks in smaller towns now help populate all of the open mics and hotel bars. If you really do like local music and unknown songwriters, Nashville is fairly rich territory for a listener.

Similarly, New York is a fantastic place for a comedian to start out. You can get on three to five open mic stages per night if you're really motivated. It's kind of like that for musicians in Nashville. Just be prepared for your audience to be mostly fellow musicians waiting for their turn to go on.

Everybody's onstage patter is the same as it is here in San Diego. Everybody has a CD. Everybody mentions their website. Everybody sucks up to each other. Everybody has some sort of quid pro quo worked out for seeing each other perform. Let's face it, it's pretty sad. But that's what we do; it's

better than staying home and watching 1000 CDs pile up in your garage.

Seeing Nashville again really makes me reexamine San Diego as a ground for musicians. I think bands and singers here think that San Diego really is a destination for music career. It ain't. In fact, it's more in limbo than playing someplace else. If you're gonna succeed coming out of San Diego, it's gonna be because you've built up a following there. You can do the same thing in San Antonio, Spokane, Pittsburgh, Tampa – perhaps more likely so because San Diego is lousy with bands. Your chances of being "the man" are much better in another city.

I honestly have no idea how Nashville is or is going to find its way through the digital era of music. But it is still Music City. Music Row (the various small music labels, studios, agencies along 16th and 17th Streets) is simultaneously impressive and quaint. I'm glad it's there, yet it's populated by nice music-loving folks holding non-creative jobs. They need to be sustained by extraneous money in music, which doesn't really exist in reality.

Working in music does seem kind of ridiculous to me. One of my best friends used to work for a management company of several major country artists in Nashville. She would vent and tell me stories of meetings where ten grown adults with college degrees would discuss, for two hours, the merits of a ripped vs. non-ripped pair of jeans in a music video. At that point you couldn't be further from the act of being in a creative field; there's more artistry in logging a forest.

Lots of stuff like that seem counter-intuitive about the "music industry"; it's way more industry than music. Nashville and country music in particular can be severely formulaic. I'm not saying that as a knock, there are literally rules for songwriting. If you're an up and coming songwriter getting somewhere in Nashville, you don't come up with something in the shower and write it down. Your publisher schedules you for a "writing session" with an established Nashville songwriter and perhaps an established recording artist (who often phones it in, getting a co-writing credit in exchange if using his name for credibility). It's a near-must for songs to tell a story. Three verses, same chorus, but the third verse puts a twist on the story that gives a clever new meaning for the chorus. Personally, as a songwriter, I find it a little nauseating or at the very least calculated.

When you add that to the performer side and the influence of "American Idol" on music decision-makers but also on the general listening public; it's all a little sad. Who knows if a young Johnny Cash would ever get anywhere in contemporary Nashville. The record-

ing quality of '60s Rolling Stones records would get slammed on magpie sites like Garage Band and Broadjam. In many ways we've come to expect and prefer professionalism to artistry.

But on a smaller scale, individual do-it-yourselfers and aspiring singer-songwriters do have a chance to get a few people to listen to a record or a song. And in Nashville, more than in San Diego, songwriter nights really are appreciated at legitimate spots like the Bluebird Café. People have some love for the original song, without having to be told that they're supposed to love it. From a casual outside glance, Nashville seems to give a shot to a good songwriter, so that's why people still keep showing up. If you want to make a good living in San Diego, you'd better be brush up on your Jimmy Buffett songbook or be prepared for lots of audiences under 20 people. Then again, maybe that's a great weeder: if you don't enjoy the trying part of a music career, you shouldn't have a music career.

Charlie Redksieck is a San Diego singer and songwriter with the Bigfellas [www.bigfellas.net](http://www.bigfellas.net)



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by Dwight Worden

**DROWNING** in Crystal Rapid, one of the most feared and dangerous rapids on the Colorado River, seemed real to Shawn Rohlf as a huge wave flipped him, the raft he was guiding on a river trip, and its passengers into the turbulent waters. Even as he struggled in the roiling waters, Shawn couldn't help but worry about his banjo in its watertight river bag. "I guess I'll die a true musician, worried about my instruments to the end" was one of the many thoughts that tumbled through Shawn's head. Fortunately for Shawn and his passengers, everyone, including his banjo, made it safely to shore and the trip was successfully completed.

It is but one of many facets of the fascinating life of Shawn Rohlf – serving as a Colorado River guide for many years, affectionately dubbed the "Singing Boatman." Aside from river rafting, Shawn's life has filled the roles of rock and roll musician, international busker, musical play performer, composer and writer, bandleader for San Diego's award winning 7th Day Buskers, key band member for Tim Flannery and Steve Poltz, and leader of the regular Sunday gigs at the Hillcrest Farmers Market, which he's done for going on 15 years. And, oh yeah, Shawn is also a sought after and respected music teacher who runs a band rock camp, writes and performs solo, is a recording school graduate, and owns and operates his own recording studio. He plays electric and acoustic guitar, bass, mandolin, harmonica, and banjo, and he also sings. Shawn is, indeed, a musical "multi-man."

Shawn grew up in rural Elk River, Minnesota, in the 1970s and '80s. His earliest music memories are watching the Johnny Cash and Glen Campbell TV shows of that era; he also combed his hair to look like Glen Campbell. He remembers learning to play Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" over and over on the family record player by moving the needle while playing air guitar on a tennis racket. The family liked Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, and musicians of that ilk, with Shawn's uncle playing the harmonica and his grandfather playing the concertina. Music was woven into Shawn's family fabric from an early age.

In fourth grade Shawn tried out for the music program at his elementary school where he scored very high on drums. Unfortunately, the program was canceled for budgetary reasons before it even began, but as a consolation Shawn's mother steered him toward guitar lessons instead. Shawn borrowed his uncle's nylon-string guitar, attended group lessons, and, at age nine, began a love affair with music that has never stopped. In those early days he learned to play John Denver and Jim Croce songs by memorizing them to the note. In an interesting side note, as bandleader of the 7th Day Buskers many years later Shawn met A.J. Croce, Jim Croce's son, who invited Shawn to play the Gibson guitar on which Jim Croce had written many of the tunes Shawn had learned as a nine-year-old fourth grader.

Shawn learned to sing while in the acclaimed Land of Lakes Choir. With the choir he toured the U.S., appeared on radio and television, and can be heard on three of the group's recordings. (Shawn was also recruited by the nuns to play in his local catholic church, which he did, although he says he hated it.) Alas, when Shawn's voice changed, his choir career ended, but not his passion for music and singing. Perhaps inevitably, as he entered junior high school, he got his hands on his first electric guitar – a Fender Bullet – and swung to the rocker side of music. The Rolling Stones and Tom Petty captured his imagination along with their musical soul. Under their influence Shawn began writing music.

Shawn learned a few electric guitar licks and was introduced to the pentatonic scale and bar chords by an older kid; his electric guitar chops began to take shape. His first rock band was formed during this period with several of his buddies (who all played guitar through one amp because that was all they

had and nobody knew how to play the bass). Shawn named the group Void Where Prohibited and they were off and running playing the local party scene.

A sad note entered Shawn's life as he was graduating from high school and preparing to enter community college when two of his close friends took their own lives. Sadder, but wiser, he started a group called the Shifters. After losing a coin toss it was Shawn who had to evict their weak drummer, after which they recruited a great drummer and became 99 West. They played for dances, weddings, and in some of the better clubs in town as turnover in the band and practice upgraded their quality. He remembers that they packed the two premier dance halls in town with Shawn as lead singer and rhythm guitar player.

A reclusive but talented Twin Cities musician of that time period, Grubb Thomas, surprised Shawn by asking him to play bass in Grubb's band. Shawn was eager and ready to go, except he did not know how to play bass. So, in typical fashion he dove in head-first and soon mastered the art of bass-playing for Grubb's band, the Sons of the Sweethearts. Even after the group disbanded he and Shawn remained close. In fact, Shawn credits Grubb as being the key influence who encouraged him to leave Minnesota to pursue his musical dreams.

During this time Shawn was a regular traveler from rural Elk River to the bustling music scene in the Twin Cities. Punk and bluegrass had captured his imagination, and looking to learn as much as he could about the music world, he entered broadcast school at the Brown Institute. It was here that Shawn first met Choice Pickens (yes, that's his legal name) with whom he formed the Hillwilliams band, a group influenced by Prince, the Replacements, Soul Asylum, and other prominent Minnesota bands of the era. Shawn's vision was for the band to be a "folk punk band," but the Hillwilliams soon broke up, leaving Shawn a bit depressed and adrift.

After reading a help wanted ad Shawn considered going to Alaska to work on a fishing boat, but under the influence of Grubb and his new pal Choice Pickens, Shawn and Choice decided to take off for the Grand Canyon instead. (The urge to fish Alaska might still be there, since Shawn is currently addict-



Photo: Steve Covault

ed to Discovery Channel's "Deadliest Catch," which documents the dangers of Alaskan crab fishing in the Bering sea.)

A three-day Greyhound Bus trip landed Shawn and Choice on the Grand Canyon's South Rim. With little money, no place to stay, and no local contacts, they camped illegally while they looked for work. Shawn reports that he was told to "get lost" when he entered the Grand Canyon Job Center, to which he replied, "No thanks, I'm already lost." After two weeks they were finally assigned to clean rooms and wash dishes at the South Rim's posh El Tovar Hotel. But, as life is sometimes inclined to do, their bad

# SHAWN ROHLF Busker Branches Out

experience in the employment office turned into something good when the El Tovar kitchen manager pulled them aside, mentioning that he remembered how rudely they had been treated, and immediately gave them promotions and raises.

Shawn stayed in the Grand Canyon for three months and met Ben Johnson (lead singer for San Diego's Long and Short of It) who suggested that Shawn tag along with him to Santa Cruz. A train trip took Shawn to Santa Cruz, California where he lived in what he calls a "gutter punk house" log cabin commune in the Redwoods. Among others, Matt Resovich of "Album Leaf" and "Blackheart Procession" hung out at the commune. This gang of misfits, including Shawn, made their own instruments out of junk and played "industrial music." Experimentation was the obsession of the moment for Shawn, along with improv acting and driving a Goodwill truck to pay the bills.

The next phase of Shawn's life brought him back to the Grand Canyon, this time as a well-paid river guide on the Green and Colorado Rivers, which also included a memorable river trip in Alaska. Shawn says, no doubt, it was his musical skills that got him hired by Colorado Rivers and Trails Expeditions whose company owner thought he was great around the campfire with his banjo. For the next eight years Shawn worked summers as a river guide while spending several of his winters in Amsterdam where he began his street busking career, along with playing local Irish and acoustic clubs, including backing up Robin Nolan (who now plays with the John Jorgenson Quintet). Shawn also became infatuated with Amsterdam's "foot bag" (hacky sack) community and became an adept foot bagger and juggler.

When it comes to busking Shawn is "the real deal" with a proven track record of busking throughout Europe and Canada, including in the snow, to make his living. When not wintering in Amsterdam, Shawn could be found in San Francisco where he continued his musical experimentation. He formed Shawn Rohlf and the Canadian Honkers, a San Francisco band that performed all Shawn Rohlf originals. This endeavor led to his "Rusty Clunk" phase, a series of originals performed and recorded to showcase some of Shawn's newer music.

Shawn carries many wonderful memories from this era of his life. He recalls playing music in the Grand Canyon's Red Wall Cavern where, for some reason, he found himself playing predominantly Johnny Cash tunes late into the night only to learn the next day that Johnny had died that night. He recalls his other brush with death on the Westwater section of the Colorado River where Skull Rapid almost took him down for the count. And, of course, he carries many memories and musical influences absorbed from his world travels and from the many passengers he guided on river trips who became lifelong friends.

When his river guiding career came to an end Shawn came to San Diego to visit his old friend Choice Pickens who had become a San Diego transplant. As Shawn put it, he planned to leave again that winter 15 years ago, but is still waiting for a reason to leave the town he has come to love. It was Choice, at the time an organic mushroom farmer

active at the Hillcrest Farmers' Market, who brought Shawn to the Farmers Market and suggested that maybe he could play music there. This was 1997 and Shawn has been performing there every Sunday ever since.

At first it was Shawn solo, then San Diego Bluegrass Society president Liz Burkett began to sit in as did this writer and a handful of others. Soon Shawn had formed his first Farmers Market band called Sockdolage" after one of the rapids in the Grand Canyon. This group featured Greg Carpenter on bass, Par Andreassen on drums, and they were soon joined by Don Hickox playing twin fiddles with Dwight Worden and all-around super talent Steve Peavey.

As the group solidified, folks began to notice that Shawn had more than a pickup band. Soon, the name 7th day Buskers was adopted, which reflected the fact that the band formed busking the Farmers Market on the seventh day of every week. The group released its first CD *Long Live the Caboose* in 2001, which received excellent reviews and sold well ( it is now sold out). This first edition of the 7th Day Buskers band was comprised of Shawn Rohlf on lead guitar, banjo, harmonica and lead vocals singing a combination of his original tunes and bluegrass-Americana classics, backed by Don Hickox and Dwight Worden on twin fiddles, Steve Peavey on mandolin and guitar, and Greg Carpenter on bass. Flat pick phenom, the late Hideo Chino, Liz Burkett, and Laurel Worden made guest appearances on this record.

Funny things happen at the Farmers Market. Shawn has been a lifetime fan of Tom Waits, devouring his music and waiting in breathless anticipation for each new release. At the Farmers Market Shawn is, of course, extremely popular and many people want to chat him up. He tries to be nice to everyone and generally succeeds, although rest and a bit of quiet is often what he seeks on his musical breaks. One older couple seemed intent on chatting with Shawn on Sundays while munching their popcorn. Shawn was tolerant and polite but often looked for an excuse to break away. One day the couple noted that their son, too, plays music (a statement Shawn heard dozens of times per week). To be polite Shawn asked what their son's name was, and when they replied " Tom Waits" Shawn's jaw hit the pavement.

The Buskers, as they were now called, were soon joined by Robin Henkel on dobro and Ken Dow on bass with Don Hickox (fiddle) and Steve Peavey (mandolin) rounding out the group, and Dennis Caplinger playing guest fiddle on a couple of tunes. A more polished second record *Born to Pick* was released in 2002 and the band won the San Diego Music Award for Best Americana Band in 2004. Tours to California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, and Texas followed as the band steadily climbed in proficiency and stature. All the while, Shawn continued to hone his writing skills as evidenced by the numerous originals on this second album.

The Buskers released their third album, *Fool's Grass* in 2004 featuring Shawn, Ken Dow (bass), Weiser champion Melissa Harley (fiddle), Robin Henkel (dobro), and Steve Peavey (guitar and man-





dolin). *Fool's Grass* was a nominee that year for Best Americana CD. Shawn's writing is prominent and the music is fresh and exciting.

Thereafter bass player Ken Dow left for New York to perform in the musical *Jersey Boys* and Melissa Harley went with him, while Steve Peavey departed to Nashville. For a time Dan Broder stepped in on guitar and mandolin, Jim Austin took on the bass duties, Beth Mosko took over fiddle duties, and the group continued to play. The 7th Day Buskers, in one configuration or another, have appeared in every one of the acclaimed "O' Berkley Where Hart Thou" programs and has played the top local and regional venues, including opening in the greeting area as part of the *Down From the Mountain* Tour at the Coors Amphitheater in Chula Vista (the touring performance from the film *O' Brother Where Art Thou?*) and appearing with the San Diego Symphony directed by Marvin Hamlisch.

While all this music was unfolding Shawn started his local San Diego theater career in 1999. He answered an ad to audition for *The Weavers Song* and got the part as Pete Seeger. Thereafter, he performed in numerous musical plays for the Lambs Players and others, including performances at the North Coast Repertory Theater, the Belly up Tavern, Sushi Gallery, Southwest College, and elsewhere. Shawn describes his acting career as a lot of work but great fun.

As the word got around that Shawn was talented and available, the acting calls increased. He played the part of uncle Stanley Sanders in the well-received production of *Smoke on the Mountain* at the Escondido Center for the Arts in which Shawn acted and played four instruments.

In some respects, Shawn notes, his performance in the *Cotton Patch Gospel* was the most fun as the

entire 7th Day Buskers band not only provided all the music for the play but appeared in the production as well. In a tribute to the caliber of this production, several years later the whole show, including the entire band, was shipped to Indiana for an encore performance.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of Shawn's theater career occurred when he was retained to write and perform all the music for a stage play of *The Grapes of Wrath*. Some of his original music from this undertaking has been recorded by Shawn with Buskers Dan Broder on guitar and mandolin and Beth Mosco on fiddle, with Nashville guest artist David Grier sitting in. Look for some of this material to be released in the future.

Shawn was also engaged to play the lead role in a documentary film about the life and times of Edward Abbey, acclaimed writer of the southwest (*Desert Solitaire* and *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, among others). For this project he traveled to Arizona where film footage was shot and interviews were undertaken with many old timers who knew Edward Abbey. Shawn also did some recording with La Jolla Playhouse director Des McAnuff during this time.

As we approach the present we find Shawn playing with Tim Flannery's band as a key member of that entourage; Shawn plays banjo and mandolin and contributes on vocals. He is also actively appearing with Steve Poltz (Cynics, the Rugburns). As we go to press Shawn is, literally, Steve's "right hand man" because, since Steve broke his hand skiing, Shawn is playing all of Steve's guitar parts. In addition, a month-long multi-state tour with Steve Poltz is underway, including appearances at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas.

Shawn reports that playing and trying to keep up with Steve Poltz is a whirlwind challenge, with four

concerts one day, then two the next in Austin, after which the tour is off to more Texas and mid-western states, having already appeared in Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. From Austin, following a "Video Ranch" appearance, the group is off to Athens, Texas, then Kingwood, then three stops in Kansas, then Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana with multiple stops in most states, and all in two weeks! Shawn says he has never worked so hard or had so much fun.

Amidst all this, the Buskers continue to evolve. The current configuration includes Jef Kmac (bass), Alex Watts (guitar), Richard "T Bone" Larson (keyboards), and Dave Berzanski on pedal steel. This new version of the Buskers has been recording some red hot new music, featuring many of Shawn's originals. The music is electric, in contrast to the earlier Buskers releases that were predominantly acoustic, but the same drive and texture is present that Shawn brings to all of his music.

As Shawn puts it, there are two versions of the Buskers: the original non-electric Buskers who still appear occasionally to play a special acoustic show, and the new version of the Buskers who are actively recording and playing hard-driving electric music. As Shawn also notes, he has, on occasion, tried to change the name of his new band but, as testimony to the esteem with which the Buskers are held by their fans, his fans won't let him do it. No matter what new name he tries to promote, he and his group are still called the "Buskers," so with a smile, he has given in.

You can hear the new Buskers band at the Farmers Market in Hillcrest every Sunday from 10am to 2pm. And, the current edition of the Buskers has completed the live recording of the group's next CD release, which will be released soon. You can check the Busker's website at [www.7thdaybuskers.com](http://www.7thdaybuskers.com) for updates on the CD release and where you can hear the band playing locally.

With regard to his rather prodigious songwriting skills, Shawn says that he writes all the time and that he has done so for decades. He's not sure what motivates his writing – sometimes an experience, a thought, or perhaps a comment will capture his imagination. He always carries a writing pad for jotting notes, tunes, lyrics, and melodies, and he usually carries or has handy a small recorder for capturing odd sounds. Sometimes he fusses over certain tunes or melodies for years before recording them. Others emerge quickly, born ready to go.

As far as instruments go, Shawn plays a 1963 Martin D-21, a Martin 1967 000-18, a Collings mandolin, a Deering pot with a Vega No. 2 neck banjo, an Epiphone long-neck banjo, a 1983 standard Fender Telecaster, and a variety of harmonicas. He owns and operates a recording studio behind his house, which he calls the House of Burlap because the interior is decorated with, among other things, classic burlap coffee bags.

For the future Shawn envisions putting out a lot of new material, reporting that he feels he has a five-year backlog on hand. In terms of his personal goals, he wants to continue to improve, identifying some of the musicians he currently plays with as big influences and inspirations, including Doug Pettibone, Dennis Caplinger, and Steve Poltz. Teaching, solo performing, disc golf, an occasional river trip, and family life (Shawn and his longtime life partner have two children) round out Shawn's current life. Not bad for a young choirboy from Elk River, Minnesota.



Choirboy Shawn



Young Shawn with his dog



Shawn as the Singing Boatman on the Colorado River



The Buskers in O'Berkley Where Hart Thou?



Shawn at the Sunday Farmers Market in Hillcrest

Photo: Dennis Andersen





# Bluegrass CORNER

by Dwight Worden

## BLUEGRASS AND MORE BLUEGRASS

March was a great month for bluegrass in San Diego. The Temecula Bluegrass



Alan Munde

Festival was held in Old Town Temecula over the weekend of March 20-21. The weather was beautiful, the hills were green, the food was tasty and the music was outstanding. Headlining the festival was Alan Munday and the **Alan Munde Gazette**. Those who follow bluegrass know Alan as a founding member of supergroup **Country Gazette** in the 1970s. Alan has also played with a variety of other top bands and stars and, for many years, ran the bluegrass program at South Plains College in Levelland, Texas. His current band lives up to his repu-



Bluegrass Etc.

tation and presented some outstanding music to the fans at Temecula.

Also headlining the Temecula Festival was perennial favorite **Bluegrass Etc.** This trio of top-notch performers never ceases to dazzle with their skill and humor. John Moore (guitar and mandolin) and Dennis Caplinger (banjo) have played together for decades and have to be among the very best on their instruments. Bluegrass Etc. is rounded out by long-time standout Bill Bryson, contributing on bass and vocals.

The local San Diego bands were well represented by **Gone Tomorrow** (Dwight Worden, bass; Richard Burkett, mandolin; Dale Desmuke, guitar; and Don Hickox, fiddle) and **Highway 76** (Chris Bauder, banjo; Dan Sankey, mandolin and fiddle; Becky Green, bass; Given Harrison, guitar; and Steve Toth, dobro). Gone Tomorrow was



The Gibson Brothers

joined by fiddler extraordinaire John Mailyander for their Saturday afternoon set at Lumpys barbecue and they had the house rockin'. John was home for spring break from the Berklee School of Music in Boston.

Sunday, March 21, featured an outstanding concert at the Del Mar Powerhouse on the beach in Del Mar, featuring the **Gibson Brothers**. Eric and brother Leigh Gibson began playing together in 1983. By 1994 they had recorded their first album, which was followed by a show case at IBM A in 1995. This was followed by seven well received albums, with their current release *Ring the Bell* (Compass Records 2009) charting at number one on the

National Bluegrass Survey (February 2010). The Del Mar powerhouse is a beautiful, intimate concert location bordering the ocean.

Coming events in April include the annual **Bluegrass Day at the Carlsbad Flower Fields** to be held Saturday, April 10, from 12 noon to 4pm. As we go to press bluegrass bands are being booked. Contact Corky Shelton for information at: corkys@cox.net. Your admission to the flower fields includes the bluegrass music.

Also coming in April is the annual **Spring Bluegrass Campout**. This year's event is held at 1000 Trails Pico Pico in Jamul from Friday, April 23, to Sunday, April 25. For information or to reserve a site, contact Phil Levy at (619) 743-1442. These campouts are always great fun with good company, lots of informal jamming, great food, and a chance to get away and relax.

The **Adams Avenue Roots Festival** will be held over the weekend of April 24-25 on Adams Avenue. This annual event features folk music, traditional roots music, Appalachian folk songs, bluegrass, Americana, blues, Cajun, rockabilly, and more, all presented on multiple stages. Visit <http://adamssavenuebusiness.com> for all the details. Over 40 acts are planned for this year in addition to the traditional vendors, scrumptious foods, and arts and crafts.

On the longer range horizon mark your calendars for the 50th annual Topanga Banjo and Fiddle Contest coming up on May 16 at Paramount Ranch in Los Angeles. And, make a note that the annual Bluegrass Day at the Fair is scheduled for Saturday, June 12. Following not too far after that is the outstanding Huck Finn festival on Father's Day weekend in June. More information about these coming events will be presented in future columns.

As a closing note, the entire San Diego bluegrass community wishes Dennis Andersen well as he moves to Panama to start a new chapter in his life. Dennis is a truly outstanding photographer and person. He has photo documented many of San Diego's bluegrass concerts and activities. If you have not seen his work you can take a look at <http://www.actionsportsphoto.smugmug.com/Music>



## The Zen of Recording

### FYI ON DIY MASTERING (YOUR ACTUAL MILEAGE MAY VARY)

As a working music professional, one question that I'm often asked is "What exactly is mastering, anyway?"

Essentially, it's the process by which audio mixes are optimized for consistent playback across a variety of listening environments. Through skilled and judicious use of eq, compression, and limiting, final mixes are "sweetened" so that they are seen (or heard in this case) in their best possible light. Projects with multiple songs are compiled into albums and EPs by sequencing the songs into a complimentary order and edits, including fade-ins, fade outs, and spaces between songs are subsequently applied. The project is then ready for burning to a replication-ready digital master or submitted for online delivery.

It is a crucial final step before presenting your music to the world. It is the point at which your project is transformed from a collection of songs into an actual *listening experience*.

Traditionally speaking, it's also a highly specialized field. The engineers and technicians who perform these tasks have spent years honing their craft and developing skills specific to these tasks and they generally have no problem spelling this all out for you if required.

They will rightfully explain to you the need for objectivity and the benefits of hearing your project outside your present recording environment alongside a trained professional.

Conceptually and philosophically, I completely agree.

Having said that, I have done virtually all of my own mastering for the last 10 years, as well as provided dedicated mastering services for hundreds of domestic and international releases. Many have even won awards and accolades.

Now, I know this guy. He's a mastering engineer whose work I truly respect. He has laid out this case to me several times, both directly and through clients he's pitched his serv-

ices to. It would appear that he feels I am trespassing; that I've traversed the boundaries from my domain into his and that I damn well ought to know better. In fact, I would go so far as to imagine that my self-mastering actions (ahem) are even seen by some as *reckless*.

Fair enough. Perhaps you could indulge me, as I relay how I arrived at my current personal perspective and rule-breaking working method.

My first experiences with recording came through dubbing what later became known as mix tapes. Just basically compiling the songs I liked, but really paying attention to how the songs worked together ... the pacing...the transitions...how different keys, feels, and tempos all interacted. I discovered there is an overall rhythm and structure to albums, just as there are in songs. Each has its own distinct vibe or mood that the listeners exists within and is left with after listening.

I did not start out as a one-stop shop. I worked as a graphic artist and spent eight years intensively studying recording and production techniques before I ever charged a nickel for those services. It was another eight years before I started my own business, offering record production and art design services. CD replication and web design were eventually added, as they were closely related to things I was already doing.

My policy for the first dozen years or so was to get a project the best mastering it could afford.

Additionally, I enjoyed the perspective presented by hearing it in a new, but somewhat specialized environment, alongside a seasoned professional.

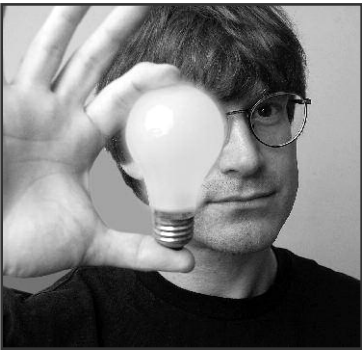
Over the years I have been fortunate enough to have enlisted the services of some great mastering engineers: Bernie Grundman, Paul Tavenner, Brian Gardner to name a few...and some not so good ones who worked out of studios, mostly. The good ones cost a lot of money and the bad ones were a waste of both time *and* money.

But something happened to my door along the way.

I am referring to my studio's control room door. The one that sports a huge Spiderman poster on it for two reasons: 1. Spiderman is cool. 2. There's a huge hole from when I put my hand through it. The latter happened (quite surprisingly; I'm not so physical, but it's not a great door, either) as a direct result of being disappointed one too many times with the mastering that was currently available locally, as well as the increasing costs of traveling elsewhere to do it. With the permission of my next several clients, I began to do some test mastering at the conclusion of our productions. Surprisingly, I did all right.

I say "surprisingly" because I was always so fanatical about NOT doing it oneself, for all of the aforementioned reasons, but as time progressed, I began to realize that mastering myself kept me in even deeper touch with the song throughout the post-production process.

I noticed through my experiences that there are often several things that can interactively result: compressing the mix can glue things



Sven-Erik Seaholm

together, but make the low-midrange frequencies too chunky. Widening the stereo field can bring out ambience and shimmer, but can pull the bass and lead vocal down too far into the mix. Sometimes, it all just sounds totally different at the mastering stage.

Often, the only choice is an alternate mix, but how can one accurately anticipate which elements will be affected by mastering and by how much?

Mastering my own projects gives me that feedback and allows me to make those adjustments and audition the results right then. Granted it's getting easier to accomplish these work-arounds via ftp, but it can still require several revisions to achieve the desired result. Those can be expensive.

The added benefit that most mastering professionals overlook are the creative options. Many are obsessed with making it sound "perfect." I like a lot of different kinds of music and recording styles and many are not considered to be audiophile quality or even hi-fidelity. Sometimes these imperfect renderings are exactly what's called for in bringing the truest representation of an artist's music to their audience.

Not that meeting or exceeding the highest standards of quality are not an issue. I have always been one to audition mixes on more than just my studio monitors. I'll listen to any car's stereo (I love that they're still referred to as stereos, by and large!), any one's home setup, iPod, or laptop and for sure any large club or venue. I have been known to listen to playback on every boom box, clock radio, and home theater system on display when I can, if I think that will help me sleep better at night.

Maybe I just know my room. Or my frequencies. Or my own ears. Or how music sounds best to me and hopefully, my clients who in the end always have the final say. Regardless, I record and produce records and whenever possible I master them myself to ensure that the shared vision of myself and the artist is adhered to.

Many professional mastering engineers may well have the skills, insight, and perspective to do an even better job than I. I've always been more than willing to investigate this whenever a client wishes to and where budgets allow.

Rules be damned, the proof is always in the proverbial pudding: When it sounds right, it is right!

Yes, Sven-Erik Seaholm provides mastering services in addition to his recording and production work, and, yes, he also offers design and replication services. Visit him online at [www.kaspro.com](http://www.kaspro.com), or call 619-287-1955.

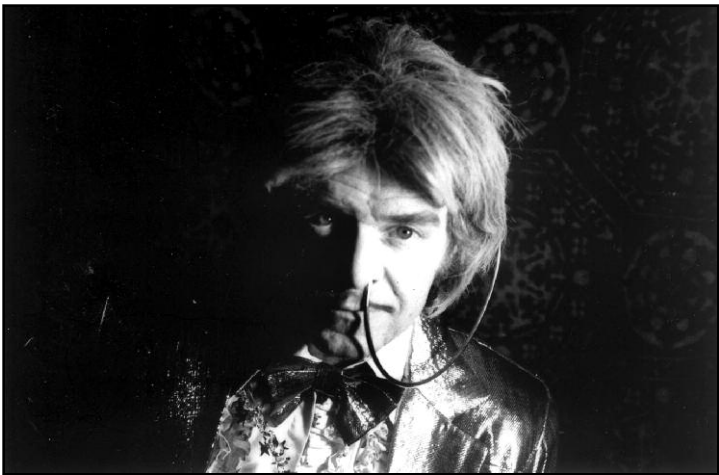






# Hosing Down

by José Sinatra



The piercingly incisive José Sinatra

## DARLING DARLA

I abandoned traditional modes of celebrating St. Patrick's Day after sixth grade, when our teacher had us decorate ourselves in green clothes and paper shamrocks and dance around the classroom and playground like a bunch of drunken leprechauns. Watching adults behave similarly every year lost its power to even mildly amuse me at least three decades ago; since then my annual rite consists of staying clear of all streets and freeways and devoting myself to Walt Disney's *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*. Or, as I sometimes refer to it when drowning in a tide of political correctness, *Darby O'Gill and the Diminutive Ones*.

Generally, I'll start off by reading Scripture from the old Dell novelization until I begin to trance out to the day in 1959 when I first encountered the film. The reading continues until a pervasive emptiness creeps upon me — an aching void caused by my still-unsatisfied longing for the movie's female lead, Janet Monro. My first sight of her on the screen at the Fox Theatre downtown at the age of seven stunned me into instant knowledge of the power of Romantic Love. I felt close to Heaven as I surveyed her perfect form, her hypnotic face, the balletic motions of her modest haunches as I sighed and whispered softly to my own heart, "I want you some of that."

Early evening this year found me again enthralled in her perfection, watching my own 16mm print of *Darby*, seeing her surprise Sean Connery with a longed-for-kiss (the only other perfect pair of lips for hers to touch, surely, have always been mine). Seeing her eyes sparkle while mine watered, singing along with her on the delightful song "Pretty Irish Girl," receiving during the change of reels a phone call that wrenched my thoughts away from my need for Janet Monro's drool in my own mouth.

The call came from London and lasted nearly two hours. It was from Darla Pinkett, the terribly sweet *amour* of my cousin Fowle N. Faraday. Both of them are involved in the British recording industry, he as head of a promotions agency, she as a secretary at Abbey Road Studios (yup, *that* one), where she's been employed for nine years.

Darla wanted to let me know well in advance of the official press release (which is set now for either April 12th or 19th) regarding a recent major find in the studio's vaults. She made me promise not to reveal this to anyone and I did so, with my fingers crossed. (I mean *come on*, it'll hit the Internet sooner than that, won't it? Doesn't everything?)

The four reels of four-track recording tape were discovered among the preserved masters of singer Shirley Bassey's mid-sixties recordings. Several more were found among the Matt Monro masters, which turned out to be blank and unused. But the "Bassey Batch" were all filled to 90% of their capacity. They were primarily forgotten sessions by the Beatles and were likely recorded in 1965 and 1966.

I made notes as Darla itemized the discoveries — notes that are surprisingly legible and that I have subsequently verified with her. So, if it hasn't all gotten out by now, you, my honey bunch poopykins readers, may be among the first Yanks and Wanks to learn the details. Please save your thanks until the next time I happen to feel needy.

Tape #1 begins with several start-and-stop versions of what would become "Yesterday," with no strings but all of the fabs playing along, John on organ. It ends with three complete versions, each slightly different from the song as we know it. In fact, the word "yesterday" appears nowhere at all. Here, it's "find a way" or "why is she" and once, yes, on the first take, "scrambled eggs," a near complete run-through that ends only when McCartney messes up the bizarre phrase "pickled Liverpool" and the lads exhaust themselves in laughter.

Reel #2 is take after take of an unrecognizable, embryonic "She's a Woman," which here is actually about Dr. Robert! (*Doctor Robert will understand/Dr. Robert will take your hand*) and there are some jazzy horns in the background.

Reel #3 contains several complete versions of a remarkable song that has never been released; no one recalls ever reading or hearing about it. Probably destined to be called "Pink Ivory Waterfalls," it too is sung by John with gorgeous backing by Paul and George. Overlaid with mellotron and strings, it is a thing of beauty and certain to make some major waves.

Reel #4 (and the real reason Darla had called me in the first place, believe it or not) has nothing to do with the Beatles, but contains the entire recording session of Janet Monro and Sean Connery on several versions of "Pretty Irish Girl" from *Darby O'Gill*!

Before I even thought of asking her, sweet Darla offered to send me CDs of all four reels.

"Can you?! Will you, Darla?"

"I know you'll keep it to yourself, darling, won't you?"

"Absolutely," I said with all the honest conviction I could conjure with all ten of my toes crossed.

The package arrived days later. I had called soundman/Beatle maniac Scott Munson and musicians Bob Tedde and Mark DeCerro (of Rockola) about this discovery and they rushed over to share in the unveiling. They were all entirely stunned. No doubt Mark and Bob have already added "Pink Ivory Waterfalls" to their immense repertoire after only hearing it once. (They are that good.)

But dear, sweet Darla somehow didn't include anything from the fourth reel, the *Darby O'Gill* stuff, and I was shattered. In frustration I kicked the CD player as if it were Carl Rove's head, breaking it, the disks, and my heart.

Darla's a blonde, so I did the right thing and I forgave her. And I can't stop feeling entirely like a Fool myself as I begin my happy jig through April.

# RADIO DAZE



Jim McInnes

by Jim McInnes

## 40 YEARS

It was 6:59pm. The record was cued up and ready to play. It was Jeff Beck's version of "Jailhouse Rock," featuring a young Rod Stewart on the vocal. The engineer in the studio across from me held up 5 fingers, then 4, 3, 2, 1 and pointed at me. That meant the automation was turned off and we were ready to rock. I turned on the microphone, opened my mouth, and said, "Uh....." I was petrified! I couldn't say anything until my boss gave me the evil eye, no doubt thinking, "Has this guy got what it takes to be a disc jockey?" After what seemed like an eternity but was only a couple of seconds, I squeaked, "You're listening to WIBA-FM in Madison, and this is Radio Free Madison." I started the record and my radio career was off and running.

That's how it started back in April of 1970.

This month, I am celebrating 40 years(!) as a professional radio personality. (Despite Raul Sandelin's flattering two-part article last year in the Troubadour, I've only been on San Diego radio for 36 years!)

I have seen a lot of changes over those four decades.

I remember the thrill the WIBA-FM staff of six people felt in 1971 when the station switched to stereo! And an even bigger thrill when Radio Free Madison expanded to a 12-hours-a-day operation in 1972, following a power boost from 15,000 watts to 50,000 watts. That's when listeners started to notice us. Calls came in from Northern Illinois, Iowa, Milwaukee, and parts of North-Central Wisconsin. Later that same year I was promoted to program director, the BIG CHEESE of the station! My air staff was made up of hippies, bartenders, mechanics, pot dealers, and musicians. It was all about the music back then. We didn't care about, nor did we have any ratings.

In 1973 I came to San Diego to work for the original KPRI. Some great folks on that staff, including PD Mike Harrison, who's now a big shot in the Talk Radio world; Jeff Gelb; and the late Greg Faulkner, aka Adrian Boulton. KPRI was all about the music until January of 1974, when Harrison gutted the library and imposed a playlist of about 400 songs. That's when I decided to go elsewhere.

On May 1 of 1974, I was hired by KGB. I worked there for almost 29 years with scores of terrific talents like Jeff Prescott, Digby Welch, Bob Coburn, Gabriel Wisdom, Steve Crowley, Bill Hergonson, and my late ex-wife Linda. (I've left out many names for the sake of brevity. Sorry.) Those decades are well-documented in Sandelin's article.

I spent a couple of years doing the afternoon show on 103.7 The Planet

continued on page 16.



by Peter Bolland

## TEN STEPS TO A GREAT MARRIAGE

It's coming up on wedding season. Many young and not so young couples are planning their summer nuptials. Everyone loves a great party, and while it is sensible to put some thought and energy into all of the details surrounding catering, décor, and bridesmaid gowns, it is far more important to think deeply about what marriage itself actually means. A lovely wedding does not a marriage make.

I am no expert on marriage, although Lori and I will be celebrating our twenty-fifth anniversary this June, and I suppose that counts for something. Along the way we've gotten a few things wrong and a lot of things right. It really isn't that mysterious. As a wedding present to all of you soon-to-be newlyweds, please allow me to share some of the things I've learned. Let's call this Ten Steps to a Great Marriage.

### 1. Never Stop Being a Girlfriend/ Boyfriend

I'm often shocked at the utter contempt some married people display toward each other. They act as if their spouse is the least important person in the world, little more than an annoying roommate, sibling, or co-worker. This is easily remedied. Remember how you acted when you were dating? Do that. Put your best face forward. Call them on the phone for no reason. Put erotic notes in the pockets of their coats. Pack them a lunch. Bring home their favorite candy bar. Take care of your self, keep the weight down, dress nice, bathe. Look them in the eye. Listen. Act like you care, because you do, don't you?

### 2. People Don't Change – Choose Wisely

Don't marry a musician, then complain because they're gone ten nights a month. Don't marry an artist, then resent their poverty. Don't marry an ambitious go-getter, then complain that their career always seems to come first. Don't marry a momma's boy, then act surprised at his weakness and indecision. Don't marry an assertive man, then whine to your friends that he's too controlling. Don't rescue a damsel in distress, and resent her for not being a powerful, competent life partner. Don't marry a quiet man, then complain because he never talks, or a talkative woman, then complain because she never shuts up. Those traits were there in full display the first day you met. Perhaps they were hard to see through the fog of your own denial, desperation, or fantasy, but you chose this person out of the billions of people on earth. There was something about those traits you wanted, even needed. Try and figure all of this out before the wedding bells chime.

### 3. Be Kind

No matter what's happening, find a way to be gracious and kind. Your anger is your problem. Try to avoid using your spouse as a garbage disposal, a convenient place to dump all your darkness and bile. This is the one time when it makes sense to treat your spouse like a stranger, that is, restrain yourself. Courtesy and decorum pave the way for genuine bonding.

### 4. One Bank Account

Real intimacy has nothing to do with taking your clothes off. Real intimacy is pooling all of your resources and blending your fates into one. Only when you know you are responsible for the whole damn thing do you rise up out of your childish selfishness and become a full grown man or woman, someone who practices good communication and is intimately acquainted with prudence, restraint, and generosity. If you can't let go of control, you aren't ready to be married.

PHILOSOPHY, ART, CULTURE, & MUSIC

# STAGES

### 5. On Big Decisions, Everyone Has Veto Power

Respect your spouse and believe with all your heart that this person really does have your back. Trust their judgment. Honor their opinion. On the really big decisions, everyone has veto power. What are the really big decisions? To have kids or not, to have a dog, where to live, major expenditures, vacations, religion, money. Again, all of this should be fully explored before you shove wedding cake into each other's faces. And, by the way, don't shove wedding cake into each other's faces. That is so over.

### 6. Let Your Spouse Be Who They Are

Naturally, you both need to put the marriage before your own childish desires. Foolish obsessions that pull you out of the marriage are to be avoided. You might have to let go of those World of Warcraft all-nighters. But this most certainly does not mean you are a slave to the other. Set your spouse free to be who they really are. Not all of your interests have to align. In fact, it would be weird if they did. A good marriage is a safe place to be true to yourself. To some extent, have separate lives.

### 7. Avoid Danger

We're only human. Be smart about situations and environments that erode loyalties. This is controversial, I know, but it's pretty risky for married people to have close friends of the opposite sex. Intimacies develop. Attachments form. Secrets are shared. Pretty soon, lines get blurred. Good people go bad. A world of suffering can be avoided by simply avoiding certain situations. Some married couples have one shared email address. Not a bad idea.

### 8. Sex Is Not an Option

This just in from the Obvious Department: sex is an essential, profoundly transformative experience. Open and honest sexuality between committed partners cements bonds in ways that no one really fully understands. Regular and frequent sex creates an atmosphere of trust, celebrates generosity, concretizes love, bolsters self-acceptance, and heals wounds you didn't even know you had. Sex makes everything better. A sexless marriage is a three-legged dog — it still gets down the road but it isn't pretty. And here's a surprise you don't hear much in popular culture: married sex is way better than single sex. It is. And if your sex life starts to lag there's a simple reason: you're lagging on steps one through seven.

### 9. Men and Women are Different

Men and women have different needs and different ways of doing things. Wise women know that men are simple — if a man knows that he is loved and admired by his woman, he will do anything for her. Wise woman also know that men show affection by mowing lawns, washing cars, and painting mailboxes. Wise men know that women are complicated and that satisfying them is a mysterious art requiring intelligence, awareness, vigilance, and an almost preternatural sensitivity to the subtlest of non-verbal cues. Husbands, pay attention. Get out of your head and into your heart, then feel your way. You'll be fine.

### 10. Mindfulness in Action

Marriage is a microcosm of the whole world. The same energies and actions that create a great marriage create a better world. Cultivate the sensitivity to hear what the other is saying as well as what they're not saying. Ask questions. Say what you mean without drama and embellishment. Ask for what you want, but keep it simple. Be willing. Stop saying no all the time. When

continued on page 16.



# THE TEXAS TORNADOS ON THE ROAD AGAIN

by Bart Mendoza

The words “legendary” and “super-group” are bandied about so much these days, they’ve almost lost their meaning. However, on rare occasions, as with the Texas Tornados, who will appear at Viejas’ Dreamcatcher Lounge on May 1, those words barely touch on the historic significance of the group.

The band formed officially in 1990, featuring the team of guitarist/singer Doug Sahm and keyboardist Augie Meyers, plus guitarist/singer Freddy Fender and accordion player Flaco Jimenez. A huge hit from the go, the band won a Grammy in 1990 for their debut album, scoring hits with songs like “Is Anybody Going to San Antonio?” and their classic, “(Hey Baby) Que Paso.” Sadly, Sahm passed away in 1999, bringing the band’s first era to an end. Fender passed away in 2006.

Though it was almost too much to hope for, the surviving members, Meyers and Jimenez, have put together a new version of the Texas Tornados, honoring their friends’ legacies and continuing to make great new music. Though they use the same backing musicians, Doug Sahm’s spot is taken by his

son, Shawn Sahm. A neat historical sidebar: father and son were pictured together on a 1968 Rolling Stone cover.

The Texas Tornados official beginnings go



Tornados’ original lineup (from left, clockwise): Freddy Fender, Augie Meyers, Flaco Jimenez, Doug Sahm

back to 1973, when Sahm released a solo album under the title, *Texas Tornado*, which included performances from Meyers and Fender. Of course, their roots go back decades before that. Sahm and Meyers had been close friends since they were 12 years old, releasing, in 1955, their first music together, “A Real American Joe” by Little

Doug Sahm. They would go on to considerable success with the Sir Douglas Quintet and their hits “She’s About a Mover” (#13, 1965) and “Mendocino” (#27, 1969). Ironically, the latter was a much bigger hit in Europe, where the pair would go on to score again in the 1980s, particularly with their single, “Meet Me in Stockholm.” Proving to be a smash in Sweden, they earned a platinum single. Meanwhile, Fender is likely best known for his 1975 hits “Before the Next Teardrop Falls” (#1) and “Wasted Days and Wasted Nights” (#8), but that’s just the tip of the iceberg. A major, if under-rated country star, he placed 20 singles on the Billboard Top 100 country chart, including four #1’s, for a total of 16 Top 40 hits. Finally, Jimenez is a five-time Grammy Award winner, who can be seen in such films as *Tin Cup* and *Picking Up the Pieces*. An icon of Mexican-American music, Hohner instruments recently issued a Signature Jimenez accordion. It’s no coincidence that, among many others, Jimenez, Sahm, and Meyers have all worked with Bob Dylan.

Speaking with Meyers on a Sunday afternoon, it’s clear how happy he is to have the Texas Tornados on the road again and, especially, recording again. According to him, the title to the Texas Tornados new album, *Esta Bueno*, loosely translated as “it’s all good,” comes from a song he wrote about jalapeño



Texas Tornados (front row): Flaco Jimenez, Augie Meyers, Shawn Sahm; (back row) Ernie Durwa, Speedy Sparks, Michael Guerra, Louie Ortega

peppers. “It’s from something that happened when we were first working on the album,” Meyers recalled. “Freddy asked me for something funny for the album. Later on, I had eaten some jalapeño peppers, pretty hot. My wife asked me how I was feeling afterwards,” he laughed. “And I said, ‘Tie-Wino’ (Esta Bueno). I kind of had to come up with a song about that. By the time we got back to the studio, the song was written.”

The seeds of the band’s revival were sown at a Las Vegas concert featuring Fender and Meyers. Obvious interest in the Tornados’ hits and sound inspired the pair to pursue the idea further, regroup with Jimenez, and bring back their band. According to Meyers, Sahm’s son was the perfect choice to fill in. “Shawn has been around this music, and us, his whole life; he knows the sound, knows the feel of the songs. It was a natural choice.”

The album itself ended up evolving over time. Unfortunately Fender’s ill health prevented them from completing the recordings. “We started doing the album about two years before Freddy passed,” Meyers recalled. “When he got sick and couldn’t tour anymore, we put it aside. Out of respect we didn’t go back to it for awhile.”

The remaining band members eventually reconvened in the studio to polish off what would become *Esta Bueno*, the album ultimately featuring 13 tracks. It’s a winning mix of old and new material, including three new tunes from Fender and a previously unheard Doug Sahm composition, “Girl Going Nowhere,” taken from 1990s’ Texas Tornados demos.

Meyers turns 70 years old on May 30. “People ask me all the time if I still play music for fun. I always say, ‘no, I do it so I don’t starve,’” he joked. Meyers considers that it’s “still a lot of fun to tour and travel, except for things like going to airports, with all the new security measures.”

For Meyers, the best part of the Texas Tornados is obvious. As great as the music they make is, in a way it’s almost secondary. “It’s just being with the guys,” he said. “I’ve known Flaco since the 1960s and Shawn

since before he was born; I knew his father that long. With the original backing band also going back decades, well, we’re like brothers,” he noted. He’s also pleased their music has now spanned generations. “We get all ages at our shows, but it’s great when you get a 19 or 20-year-old that comes up at a show and says, ‘When I was growing up, my mother and father played your music.’ One generation introducing music to the next.” The band is now taking on a larger presence on the Internet as well. Indeed, the day before our conversation they had taped a virtual online concert. However, even that foray into the world of new technology had its roots in the past. The project was helmed by video pioneer Michael Nesmith, an old friend of Meyers since the days of the Sir Douglas Quintet opened for the Monkees.

Are there plans for further Texas Tornados activities? “Oh yeah,” Meyers remarked. “We’re already talking about another album and touring Europe later this year.” Pausing to reflect on almost 60 years in music, it’s clear he couldn’t consider not recording or touring. “What else would I do?” he laughed.


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Doug Sahm and his son Shawn on the cover of Rolling Stone in 1968

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# LEON REDBONE

## Enigmatic yet Charismatic

by Steve Thom

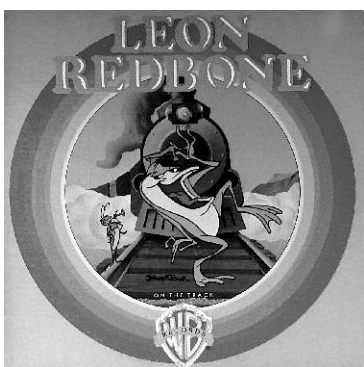
Austin Powers has nothing on Leon Redbone.

Powers, the fictional, testosterone-motored '60s British spy made famous by Mike Meyers, is the "international man of mystery." Redbone is the enigmatic yet charismatic performer who has succeeded in keeping his personal life off the radar screen for more than three decades.

Leon Redbone isn't even his real name. No revelation there; the music industry is filled with performers who have hidden behind a nom de guerre. And while many blues enthusiasts know that Howlin' Wolf's actual birth name was Chester Burnett, most Redbone devotees still don't know the name of the immaculately dressed entertainer with the deep well of a voice.

Redbone isn't throwing out clues. He won't even tell you where he grew up and the decade in which he was born, although more inquiring minds of the Fourth Estate have narrowed it down to the Toronto area. His birthdate? Sometime in the late '40s. He first showed up on the television screens of America when he was the musical guest on "Saturday Night Live" February 28, 1976, the night actress Jill Clayburgh was hosting. "Hectic" comes to mind," said Redbone, contacting the S.D. Troubadour by phone from the East Coast leg of his current American tour. "I remember it involved a lot of sets being moved around for the skits. I wasn't in any of the skits, I was the musical interlude that night."

To have a returning invitation to Saturday Night Live for the coveted musical guest slot meant the artist not only got



Redbone's first CD cover with illustration by Chuck Jones



The mysterious Mr. Redbone

along well with regular cast members but also found favor with the man calling the shots: producer Lorne Michaels. Redbone appeared on three additional SNL episodes: May 29, 1976 (with guest host Elliot Gould); November 19, 1977 (screenwriter Buck Henry); and March 12, 1983 (actor Bruce Dern).

Media pundits and unapologetic rock snobs didn't quite know what to make of the Redbone persona in the early years. Was his schtick totally focused on irony? Was Leon so out of contemporary music that he was "in?" In hindsight 34 years later, the Leon Redbone concert experience – which touches ground in Poway this month – remains, on the surface, intentionally amusing. But what is no laughing matter is Redbone's scholarly pursuit of songs from America's past; his concerts provide an outlet for which they can be heard and appreciated.

Think of dusty fairgrounds. Gospel revivals in a tent. Riverboats teeming with card sharks. A romantic ride in a canoe. Illustrations from a Currier and Ives catalog. These and other iconic images leap from the pages of faded sheet music and old 78 rpm discs to find their spots on the welcome mat of Redbone's stage. "I have the opportunity [in concert] to perform these wonderfully crafted songs," said Redbone. "What I've also noticed when

I'm out on the road is how many people are familiar with the songs and are genuinely in love with them."

The 1976 release of the *On the Track* album demonstrated that the Redbone oeuvre could survive the sometimes impersonal confines of a modern recording studio. Released by Warner Brothers, the home of "Looney Tunes" cartoons, the album features a Chuck Jones illustration of a bullfrog, a creature obviously plucked from the world of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Elmer Fudd. *On the Track* remains an excellent introduction to the Redbone catalog and a blueprint for numerous discs to follow. No less than two songs by the "Singing Brakeman," Jimmie Rodgers, grace the disc; "Sweet Mama Hurray Home Or I'll Be Gone"; and "Desert Blues (Big Chief Buffalo Nickel)." There are also two compositions by Irving Berlin (1888-1989), a man who nearly lived to see the entire 20th Century – "My Walking Stick" and "Marie."

2009 marked the 100th birthday of Savannah, Georgia's favorite son, Johnny Mercer. A Mercer collaboration with Hoagy "Stardust" Carmichael, "Lazybones," appears on *On the Track*. Other great songs allowed to shine are Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'," Shelton Brooks' "Some of these Days," and William Crawley's "Big Time Woman."

The songwriting team of lyricist Al Dubin and composer Harry Warren are represented by the bluesy "Lulu's Back in Town," a concert showstopper for Mel "the Velvet Fog" Torme over several decades.

The final song on *On the Track* is credited as public domain. Although there are several theories on the origin of "Polly Wolly Doodle," it has delighted Americans – particularly children – since the 19th century. There's a memorable version by Shirley Temple in the film *The Little Rascals*. Redbone's version appeals to the child in us all:

Fare thee well, fare thee well,  
fare thee well, my fairy Fay  
for I'm off to Louisiana for to see my  
Susanna  
sing Polly wolly doodle all the day

*Double Time*, the sequel to *On the Track*, actually made an appearance on the Billboard Top 40 charts, a remarkable achievement in 1977, the year disco was at its peak and the growling of punk rock was rising from the underground. For his follow-up record, Redbone polished up another collection of neglected musical gems. Standouts included Jelly Roll Morton's "Winin' Boy Blues" and "Nobody's Sweetheart," a Gus Kahn collaboration with songwriters Billy Meyers, Elmer Schoebel, and lyricist Ernie Erdman. (There's a particularly riveting version from the 1930s by the never-was-bashful Cab Calloway.)

It wasn't long before Redbone took his guitar, bow tie, and sunglasses and explored other mediums. Situation comedies "Mr. Belvedere" and "Harry and the Hendersons" both featured theme songs crooned by Redbone. He also had the opportunity to act on "Life Goes On," portraying a guardian to Corky, one of the regular characters on the show. Corporate pitching for Chevrolet and Budweiser allowed Redbone to collaborate with the more creative minds from Madison Avenue advertising agencies. The "Bud" ad was particularly noteworthy for special effects that were advanced for the time.

Ballet might seem light years away from the Redbone solar system, but in the '90s New Yorkers responded warmly to a collaboration between the singer and famed choreographer Elliot Feld. Feld first wowed audiences with his athleticism when he earned a part at age 16 in the Broadway production of *West Side Story*. He later portrayed gang member Baby John in Robert Wise's screen adaptation of the play, which starred Natalie Wood as Maria.

Feld created two dance productions that featured Redbone's music and international ballet star Mikhail Baryshnikov. The critically acclaimed *Mr. XYZ* featured innovative choreography by Feld, the finesse of Baryshnikov, and Redbone's unmistakable vocals on Spencer Williams'

"I Ain't Got Nobody," and Sam H. Stept and Sidney Clare's "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone."

So successful was *Mr. XYZ* that Feld and Redbone collaborated on another production, *Paper Tiger*, a ballet involving 11 Redbone-performed numbers. Feld revealed to *Los Angeles Times* writer Elizabeth Zimmer that he "adore[d] Leon Redbone. The interpretation of music is very important to me. How Leon sings these songs gives them a world, a universe. He's a tragic clown." Redbone told Zimmer that the feeling was mutual. "I was quite fascinated by the whole thing," said Redbone. "I have a visual sense for the music; it has to stay true to a certain sense of period. I rely on a sense of colors and mood in my approach to the arrangement... I was surprised to see all those things I think of when I put the music together actually represented."

One of the more unique Redbone performances in recent years was privy to a chosen few. On June 22, 2003, comedian Adam Sandler and actress Jackie Titone were married in Malibu and Redbone was requested to perform a few songs for the happy couple. It was one member of the SNL alumni saluting another.

The Redbone discography shows that the last CD release was 2005's *Live at the Olympia*, and that's actually a recording of a 1992 concert. In truth, the last studio work was 2001's *Any Time*. There's no indication that a new recording project is in the works, but it will occur when least expected. He's a man of mystery, you understand.

(There's no mystery to the news that Leon Redbone will be appearing – in the flesh – April 24, 8 p.m. at the Poway Center for the Performing Arts. Visit [www.powayarts.com](http://www.powayarts.com).)

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John Mayall Concert featuring an opening set with  
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143 South Cedros, Solana Beach (858) 481-8140

Sun, May 2, Lestat's, 8pm  
Robin Henkel Band with Horns!  
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Robin Henkel solo blues  
1:30 Bourbon St Stage  
3:30 Bayou Grove Stage  
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Alex Chilton, continued from page 5.



The Box Tops, 1967

downtown San Diego. Believing I had found rock's equivalent of the Excalibur Sword, I stayed in my house for days and heard something new with each listening session. Had anyone ever captured the awkwardness of adolescence better than Chilton on the ballad "Thirteen"? Won't you let me walk you home from school?/Won't you let me meet you at the pool?/Maybe Friday I can get tickets for the dance/and I'll take you. Then, there was "The Ballad of El Goodo," and its four minutes of Roger McGuinn-inspired wonderment. "When My Baby's Beside Me" was the obvious single, but, like the album, it too crashed before lift off.

There were wheels within wheels turning in Big Star's group dynamics. It was a southern drama worthy of the writing talents of Tennessee Williams, Lillian Hellman, and Flannery O'Connor. Tension was growing between Bell and Chilton; Bell would soon leave the band, continue to make brilliant music on his own, and die tragically in a car crash in 1978.

The Big Star discography was originally a remarkable triumvirate. Radio City was the boisterous followup to the first album, with the anthem "September Gurls" raising the bar for great power pop singles. The final Big Star album, released four years after the group disbanded, packed an emotional wallop. Originally titled *Third* and in later releases *Sister Lovers*, the album is in essence a Chilton solo record, with only drummer Stephens on board from the band. Other musicians contributing to the album were Memphis legends Steve Cropper and Jim Dickinson. An expression of immense disappointment over the failure of Big Star, the album is as brutally honest as Lennon's Plastic Ono Band, Neil Young's "Tonight's the Night" and Richard and Linda Thompson's "I Want to see the Bright Lights Tonight."

Having failed to connect Big Star with a mainstream audience, Chilton led his supporters through an unpredictable and often bewildering solo career for several decades, seemingly charting his own course for artis-

tic self-destruction. But even at the lowest ebb, bands as diverse as REM, Teenage Fan Club, the Replacements, Wilco, and the Jayhawks championed his cause. It's not many artists who can appear in the bible of alternative country, *No Depression*, and a punk rock blog on the Internet. Alex did.

Judging by recent YouTube posts of his live shows, Chilton had eliminated most of his demons. Physically, he looked better than a many his contemporaries, sang great, and seemed to have a renewed respect for his years with the Box Tops and Big Star. All of which makes his death that more painful.

Rep. Steve Cohen of Tennessee recently shared his thoughts on Chilton with Congress. It was nice to hear a politician speak from the heart and not from a teleprompter.

"He is an embodiment of Memphis music," said Cohen. "Hard, different, independent, brilliant, beautiful. We're lucky he came our way."

— Steve Thom



Chilton, recent photo

Jim McInnes, continued from page 13.

(KPLN), again working with a great bunch of men and women like Greg Wood and Steve Wilcox (now stars in Alaska!), Cindy Pace, Mike Dawson, and Jeff J.T. Stewart.

I now find myself simultaneously working three radio jobs. I am the nighttime news anchor for Talk Radio 760 KFMB, the afternoon traffic comedian for 100.7 JACK-FM, and Saturday morning host on KSDS Jazz 88.3. Everyone I currently work with is wonderful. I am blessed.

Over the last four decades I have experienced the birth and ascent of FM rock radio and the inevitable co-opting by big business. The Communications Act of 1996, which deregulated broad-

casting, has brought the radio business to its knees. Clear Channel, in particular, snapped up more than 1,000 radio stations by over-paying for them. The company is crippled by a staggering debt load and has begun selling off properties and dumping popular high-priced talent. We've seen this recently here in San Diego with the demise of the "Dave, Shelly and Chainsaw Show" on KGB and the "Jeff and Jer Showgram" on Star 94.1.

There's now a generation of young people who don't listen to the radio at all!

I think there will always be a need for radio and radio personalities...for that disembodied voice traveling through space and coming out of a speaker to keep you company.

I want to work another few years before I hang up my microphone. Then I'll have spent my entire career doing what I love...and getting paid for it, too. You can't beat that.

Peter Bolland, continued from page 13.

you're feeling lonely and misunderstood, come out of yourself and give. When you wake up in the morning, ask yourself, what are three concrete, specific things I can do today to make my spouse's life easier, better, and more beautiful? Then do those things – and watch your own joy increase. That's the most beautiful thing about a great marriage – you realize that your well-being and happiness are forever intertwined with the well-being and happiness of others. Loving is an action that does not know the difference between giving and receiving. Giving and receiving are two names for one circle.

These are the ten steps to a great marriage. Share them with your fiancé and have a nice long talk. Then after that you can get back to the important things, you know, napkin rings or linen origami?

Have a wonderful wedding. But have an even more wonderful life.

*Peter Bolland is a professor at Southwestern College where he teaches eastern and western philosophy, ethics, world religions, and mythology. After work he is a poet, singer-songwriter, and author. He has a band called the Coyote Problem. He also leads an occasional sat-sang at the Unity Center and knows his way around a kitchen. You can write to him at peterbolland@cox.net*



## Jon Swift Pathway

by Jennifer Carney

Artists like Jon Swift exemplify the quality of singer/songwriters attracted to San Diego of late. Whereas some "native-made" music can be accused of being too sunny, Swift evokes the rugged California instead – a land of mountains and desert, relentless surf, and rainy weather.

Swift's latest, *Pathway*, is a songwriter's triumph. Its arrangements are full-sounding, yet delicate: acoustic and electric guitars, mandolins, vocals, pedal steel, harmonica, maraca or tambourine here and there, or a light brush of a snare drum. Swift's voice is smooth and a bit smoky, like a peaty scotch whisky. His poignant lyrics appear honed from a poetic sensibility and a mind rooted in the beautiful mathematics of astrophysics. (A discipline in which Swift has a PhD.) *Pathway* is chock full of elegiac pastoral descriptions and analogies.

"Invisible Highway" is a strong opener – folk-country with smart harmonies. "Ode to O'Rourke" follows, a loping, echo-y ballad with a nice pedal steel break. Swift first paints a forbidding city landscape, then an inviting rustic one – water, mountains, boats gliding in, sunshine. "Ballad of Big Sur" is an escape ballad that begs for the natural usurpation of the loud and artificial. "All Is Untied Again" is a jangly, faraway song. The slightly out-of-tune guitars work perfectly as Swift explores the theme of destruction and erosion as renewal.

"We Are the One to Blame" speaks to the complexities of love, where feelings are easier expressed in song. "True Love" could have been a very sappy song, but Swift treats it lightly and rewards the listener with an unusual perspective. The double-time waltz, "You and Me," features a wandering piano that intertwines with Leah Thompson's ethereal vocals for something truly special.

The bucolic imagery picks back up with "No 100 Miles" and "Stand with Your Lover." The former describes hills, wind, geese – recalling images that "...ain't no hundred miles away." The latter brings us (figuratively) to the edge of a cliff overlooking the ocean, and includes some tender electric guitar licks. "Listen to the Falling Rain" is full of wistful remembrances as the pedal steel swirls around the melody. "Death Valley Serenade" is a rather buoyant little song in the spirit of Neil Young's "Deep Forbidden Lake."

The album closes with "There May Be No End," an upbeat tune about riding the rails "...north from LA, golden hills behind me." It speaks of the price and thrill of freedom: the hard work, the risk of being forgotten, and the wide-open future. The song crescendos into a wall of sound – a triumphant end to a wonderful album.

Jon Swift's songs seek companions, shelter from the pleasantness. According to his website, his next album will be borne from a barn somewhere in San Diego. If *Pathway* is any indication, Swift will be writing thoughtful, idyllic tunes for a long time to come.



## Ringo Jones The Vulture City Bank Robbery

by Joshua David Saposnekoo

When Reese introduces "Miss Holly Rain," he does so in a southern country fashion. Ironically, a conservative and strong woman is introduced to Jones, since he was previously looking for some easy ladies. Ringo Jones empowers women by announcing Holly Rain as "not the kind of girl you think, I'm respectable." It is a fun little tune with country and reggae style bass lines.

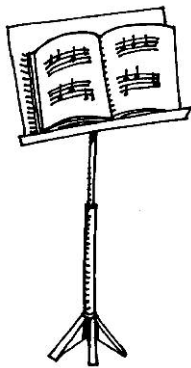
"Victorio" shows off Jones' most structured pop tune and its shortest. It is sung as a duet for the most part but sounds really fun and surf like. Amber Plasters voice sounds happy go lucky on this track. Strange as it is if the lyrics about Native American Indians were exchanged for general sunny pop lyrics, there would be no trouble in imagining this would be charted onto top college radio. "Victorio's" bridge is about as high and fun as the album reaches courtesy of its "bop ba's".

Dreamy and bright sounds highlight "Getaway." Robert Smith would be proud to have crafted together the lead guitar on this track, while Albert Hammond Jr. might approve of the very chill and Spanish rhythm guitar.

A visually stunning "Red Sunset Silhouette" showcases Reese's ability to take the listener into Jones' world. With descriptive lyrics such as "Ringo rode into Mexico. With a red sunset and his silhouette cast as he goes," it is a breeze to envision where the listener goes. Jones becomes a hero by the end of the album, and it might be fun listen if you are in the mood for a good old cowboy western with a splash of California vibe produced into the album.

Guitars are played acoustically, and surf clean. Bass lines chill rhythmically across the album in a southern manner. Surf and cheery drums outline the skeleton of most of the songs on the album. Country vocals grace each track with the taste of California, licking its concept. Organs add to the mysterious mask of Ringo Jones.

*The Vulture City Bank Robbery* is a little bit of Country, Surf, Southern with pop hooks. This album goes well with some hot chocolate and an outing to Old Town. John Peter Reese might even want to consider trying to make Ringo Jones a series for a playwrite. The *Vulture City Bank Robbery* displays a beautiful story and soundtrack to Ringo Jones. Reese showcases his musicianship cleverly and stays true to his fantasy, which is to become Ringo Jones.



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## Gregory Page Heart Strings

by Frank Kocher

A few years and albums ago, in 2006, prolific ex-Rugburn Gregory Page released *Love Made Me Drunk*, an album of songs that musically transported the listener to a European café for a set of his retro pop tunes. The songs were arranged with a small backing group—accordion, jazzy keyboards, and French titles to give just the right touch of exotic class as Page crooned about relationship problems as a man on the streets of Paris.

On his new disc, *Heartstrings*, Page is back with a sound that builds on this earlier music, while differing in important ways as well. The London-born San Diego performer has released numerous albums and seems capable of writing and singing everything from folk-rock to classical piano. The focus on *Heartstrings* is evident on first listen; instead of a trip to France, it is a trip back in time several decades to a dim, relaxed jazz club that could be anywhere.

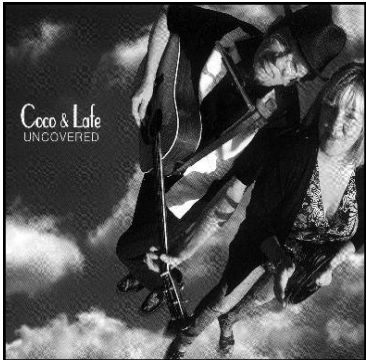
To accomplish this, Page enlisted some help from co-producer Jeff Berkley, pianist Sky Ladd, and a cadre of San Diego’s top session players. Ladd’s grand piano is out front, but Gilbert Castellanos’ hatted trumpet accents and Randy Hoffman’s vibes have their moments. The sound, like some of Page’s other recordings, is soaked in nostalgia, and his unforced, crooning vocals feel right at home.

The first three tracks take the relaxed listener back to a musically simpler time, when all the songs had catchy melodies, the microphones were huge chrome behemoths, there weren’t any big amps crowding the stage, and all of the singers sounded a little bit like Rudy Vallee.

“Promise of a Dream,” the opener, is one of the seven Page originals and sounds like a Tin Pan Alley standard – as do many of his songs on the disc. A combination of Page’s gift for capturing the sound of the era, the melodious song structure and lyrics, and the instrumental flourishes crystallize this nugget, and it works again on “Don’t Cry,” and the title tune. This song, an unforgettable highlight, has an airy, upbeat lyric about “a brand new sunny day,” sung over one of those scales of notes that lock the listener in. “Tuesday Night at Croce’s” is a soft, solo jazz piano piece by Ladd, one of two on the disc that add to the club date feel.

Page the crooner is in top form on “One and Only Love,” and “Rewind Me Back to You.” These both have that old-time flavor, and “Rewind” makes no bones about reminiscing about the good old days: “Life looked bright in black and white.” If the rest of the disc were not so effective, to close with a smooth cover of Edith Piaf’s ‘40s classic “La Vie En Rose” might be risky, but Page manages to make it fit the mood of the other songs. Or, he actually made them to fit it, and succeeded.

*Heartstrings* is a great listen. It shows that many of the things that made good music 70 years ago still work. It also stands up as a considerable statement of Gregory Page’s talent and musical direction.



## Coco & Lafe Uncovered

by Jennifer Carney

At first blush, Coco Kallis and Lafe (rhymes with “waif”) Dutton look like a pair of genial baby boomer troubadours who play at elementary schools from time to time to teach kids folk music.

But Coco & Lafe are quite a bit more than that.

Barely a year since their feature in the San Diego Troubadour (March 2009), these bi-costal farmers’ market balladeers are back with an album of their most requested covers (and two originals) titled, appropriately enough, *Uncovered*. Those familiar with Coco and Lafe know that part of what makes them so engaging is the way they interpret timeless and familiar tunes. The spare production – guitar, vocals, harmonica – delivers their essence and strips their talent bare before the listener, conveying their remarkable chemistry with every song.

A straightforward take on John Prine’s tune “Unwed Fathers” opens the album. Both take turns singing lead and harmony on this spurned father’s lament. A rather upbeat version of Tom Waits’ “Long Way Home” follows, sounding almost Springsteen-like. Next is the first of two originals – “Praying for Rain” – a prayer narrative about drought and desolation, evoking the Lord over and over in a country-fied mantra. It’s a perfect allegory for the current economic climate when desperation welcomes any relief.

Their “Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain” pays homage to Willie Nelson’s version; the honest and sweet melancholy is drawn out by the depth of Coco’s vocals. “Hallelujah” follows; Lafe has a turn at Cohen’s original and he delivers. His dusky lead is strong and emotive without being melodramatic, and Coco adds gorgeous harmonies.

Coco takes the lead on the other original song, “Mexico (A Song for Lance),” which is a fine inspirational/cautionary travel ballad. That this song precedes Townes Van Zandt’s cowboy ballad, “Poncho and Lefty,” is apt. Coco and Lafe’s interpretation is more wistful than the original, evoking the loneliness of the open range as seen by these two characters.

Coco gives “Hard Times Come Again No More” a very nice turn, but a standout is “Corrina, Corrina.” The famous 12-bar blues standard – here amalgamated from Bob Dylan’s folk-blues version and the more straightforward blues of Big Joe Turner – is cut loose as a rollicking porch-stomper.

“Five Hundred Miles” follows, a plaintive dirge that their fellow Boomers may recognize as a Peter & Gordon tune. Coco and Lafe take J.J. Cale’s shuffle, “End of the Line,” and slow it down to a crawl, harmonica wheezing and squeezing like a train whistle. *Uncovered* ends all too soon with Steve Earle’s “Goodbye,” an unfussy yet expressive tune that rounds out a superb album.

Coco and Lafe are returning to San Diego ([cocolafe.com](http://cocolafe.com) for details), which is exciting news for anyone who loves evocative, American songcraft. San Diego is lucky to have Coco and Lafe for part of the year, but perhaps we can entice them to stay longer? After all, our farmers’ markets never stop.



## Tim Easton Porcupine

by Frank Kocher

One of the defining discs of the sixties was Bob Dylan’s *Bringing It All Back Home*, in which the influential folkie managed to turn the musical world around in the space of one record flip and an electric amp jack. That monumental album not only made some of the best contributions to the new folk-rock music, it also contained some of his most intriguing folk songs. After four folk-dominated discs spread out over a eight years, including *Ammonition* from 2006, Tim Easton takes a similar departure on his new one, *Porcupine*. While *Ammonition* had a few hints of Dylan in his mid-’60s folk-rock transition, Easton’s new record moves a step further, adding blues-influenced, hard-edged roots rock on many tracks while not abandoning the pop and folk tunes that got him to this point. It’s a winning combination.

The 12 songs are all Easton originals, pristinely recorded in Nashville with a crack band, prominently featuring guitarist Kenny Vaughn. The bluesy opener “Burgundy Red” tells the listener right off that Easton can handle wearing rock boots, both as a writer and a singer. A grinding, heavy guitar lick leads the way over pounding drums as he howls about how “you woke up this morning with an old song in your head/ spilled wine glass and a stranger in your bed.” The rock and roll continues as the title tune propels itself on an acoustic, three-chord boogie riff that isn’t easy to forget, with Jew’s harp accents adding to the fun. Both “The Young Girls” and “Stone’s Throw Away” are rooted in the country-blues, with slower, haunting melodies that draw the listener in.

The second half of the disc has more of a pop-folk sound, though Easton steers away from framing himself in the stripped-down troubadour format. The best of the softer songs here is “7th Wheel,” which is pure radio pop, nothing deep-but a disc highlight anyway. “Get What I Got” follows, a hard-rock misfire that somehow blends Beatles-like background singing with a “dueling” lead guitar break that sounds edited from an early Led Zeppelin disc. The singing and playing aren’t bad, but don’t match the earlier rockers and this isn’t the kind of disc for six-string flash.

Not to worry, the rest of the disc stays sharp in folk and country forms, especially on “Baltimore.” Here, Easton and the band sound like a Steve Earle outtake with outlaw lyrics, a country-swing vibe, and a foot-tapping rhythm. The quiet, dignified “Goodbye Amsterdam” is the last of a trio of folk-inspired tunes that wrap the music up.

With *Porcupine*, Tim Easton plugs in, rocking up his sound and it works. He is an excellent writer and singer-the songs here bounce around in the listener’s head. This great listen is sure to expand his audience.



## Mike Quick Rain

by Frank Kocher

Mike Quick follows a tradition of storytelling folk singer-songwriters springing out of the Midwest, in the footsteps of John Prine, Tom Paxton, and the late Steve Goodman. He is a Wisconsin native who has performed all over the country and recorded a country-rock disc with a full band before 2004’s *Down Bullfrog Road*, which focused on spare arrangements of folk and blues built around Quick’s striking voice. His latest, *Rain*, continues in the same vein, with plenty of gospel in the mix as well.

The music throughout is a subdued canvas of tastefully picked acoustic guitars, piano and organ, light percussion, and excellent background vocals that complement Quick’s worn and weathered, but comfortable, singing. The production and mixing by Michael Jerling is first rate. It also helps that Quick changes the musical pace enough to keep things interesting.

The title tune opens the disc with a distinct gospel vibe, a message of transformation with a revival-style chorus. “Penny Arcade” manages to softly transport the listener to a county fair, a calliope-like keyboard in the background as the words tell of carousels, roller coasters, and costumes. For the excellent “Get Right With Your Church,” it is more gospel-inspired blues, as Quick fires pulpit lyrics over the top of a rocking beat and nice organ riffing. Hurricane Katrina is the inspiration for “Fats Domino Is Missing,” which relates a story about the events “while the storm blew New Orleans away,” with some New Orleans touches by the backing band. “Get Me to Nirvana on Time” pushes the beat and stands out, an acoustic rocker that has ear-catching lyrics and a punchy arrangement featuring superb acoustic guitar breaks.

Quick has a kind of easy way with a folk melody and familiar voice that draw comparisons to Gordon Lightfoot – especially on songs like “Honey to My Soul,” which sounds like a lost Lightfoot B-side. While his singing lacks the Canadian tenor’s depth, Quick seems to share Lightfoot’s ability to smoothly move from the soft folk idiom into more country-rock, blues, and gospel forms, both as a writer and singer.

“Vampires” is a solid example, a blues-rockers that tackles a familiar folk topic: civil rights. A lyrical story,, based on the disappearance of three civil rights workers in Mississippi, is told to minor chords and powerful electric slide guitar. The storytelling on this song is outstanding, using a nice metaphor to peg racists as bloodsuckers, quoting “America the Beautiful” and observing “God save us from ourselves at last.”

*Rain* gives folk music fans a chance to hear Mike Quick in a batch of songs that demonstrate his considerable talent as a songwriter. His best songs are tales and sermons, which capture the listener’s attention the way any good tale or sermon does.



## Valhalla Hill Go With What You Got

by Will Edwards

Valhalla Hill opens their debut EP *Go With What You Got* with a catchy acoustic guitar hook that mimics the vocals. It’s an effect that causes a delayed reaction. On my first listen, these songs kind of rolled along, but the second time through it was a different story. Simple musical phrases repeated and matched between instruments started to send roots into my musical memory. I started to pre-hear these melodies in lockstep with the pulsing, ambient rhythms that are characteristic of Valhalla Hill’s sound. It’s a kind of branding on all their songs. I liked the result!

“Grace for my Brother,” the opening track, uses rhythm and melody to quickly build a musical house – defined by sonic qualities that harkens to their Seattle roots. Washy, sustained guitars and long reverb tails adorn the music and create a “watery” sound (not to imply watered-down). The rhythm is open and has a pulsing, “native” sound. I imagine this CD is what one might hear if a Joshua Tree-era Brian Eno produced an album for Sky Cries Mary.

Rory Corbin, the band’s main vocalist and songwriter, sings about heartbreak and tragedy based on experiences in his own life and death situations. Occasionally, when the lyrical message and emotional power of Corbin’s personal experience interlock, what you get is a raw and emotive musical style that is very compelling. Corbin showcases one of his strongest performances on “Meet Me by the Bridge.” The soaring, heavily layered chorus pushes through the music and surfaces in an exceptionally powerful and urgent crescendo. The title song, “Go With What You Got,” employs the same effective use of guitar hooks that we see elsewhere on the EP. The music mimics the vocal hooks and again the chorus forces the listener to pay attention. One thing that struck me was that Corbin’s voice has a curious dual personality. On more intimate tracks he can sound extremely fragile and delicate as though he may give out any minute. Alternately, he musters intense, long-held notes that gather tremendous and unexpected power. He’s neither under-utilized nor over-used.

To their credit, Valhalla Hill is a four-member band that sounds like a six-member band. Guitar layers, intelligent and subtle use of percussion, and smooth vocal melodies fill every corner of your ear buds. If you’re not a fan of ambient styles you may not get as much from the music. The lyrics are strong, but can easily blend into the arrangements.

I recommend popping this CD in when you’re ready to take a long, winding road through the northwest. Those who like “driving music” will enjoy the combination of redeeming lyrical content – influenced by Corbin’s personal tribulations and victories over tragedy. It is rare for a band that can, at an early stage in their career, lay out their best strengths right off the bat. This CD has its imperfections and the band has room for improvement, but in the end there’s much more to like.



# APRIL CALENDAR

## thursday • 1

**The Rhythm Jacks**, Sunset Market, Tremont St. & Pier View Way, Oceanside, 5pm.  
**Old Tyme Fiddlers Jam**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 7pm.  
**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 S. Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, 7pm.  
**Joe Rathburn & Gregory Page**, Milano Coffee Co., 8685 Rio San Diego Dr., 7pm.  
**Beausoleil w/ Michael Doucet**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Robin Henkel**, Wine Steals, 1243 University Ave., 8pm.  
**Gregory Page/Cindy Wasserman**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Bad Blokes**, Killarney's Irish Pub, 32435 Hwy. 79 South Temecula, 8pm.  
**Cowboy Jack**, Hennessey's, 2777 Roosevelt St., Carlsbad, 9:30pm.

## friday • 2

**The Rhythm Jacks**, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 5pm.  
**Jake's Mountain**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Mark Jackson Band**, Museum of Making Music, 5790 Armada Dr., Carlsbad, 7pm.  
**Tizer**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Chase Morrin**, Pannikin/BookWorks, Flower Hill Mall, Del Mar, 8pm.  
**Charlie Chavez & his Afrotruko**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 8pm.  
**Carlos Olmeda**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Ari Herstand/Christan Cuff/Skyler Stone**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.  
**Bad Blokes**, O'Sullivan's, 640 Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 9pm.  
**KPRI Homegrown Fridays w/ Sheila Sondergard/Medicine for Madison/The Grass Heat**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 10pm.

## saturday • 3

**Spring Harp Fest w/ James Harman/Nathan James/Billy Watson/Johnny Mastro/Dan Gage/John Frazer & more**, Harry Griffen Park, 9550 Milden St., La Mesa, 11:30am.  
**Sara Petite**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Perfect Age of Rock 'n' Roll Blues Band**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30&9:30pm.  
**Jack Tempchin**, Oasis House Concert, Sorrento Valley, 8pm. www.OasisHouseConcerts.com  
**Gilbert Castellanos New Latin Jazz Quartet**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 8pm.  
**Gregory Page CD Release & Movie**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**The Eleanor England Show**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## sunday • 4

**Bayou Brothers**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 4:15pm.  
**Boxcar Bandits/North Texas Skunkgrass**, Dream Street Live, 2228 Bacon St., OB, 7:30pm.

## monday • 5

**Blue Monday Pro Jam**, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, 2241 Shelter Island Dr., 7pm.  
**Sue Palmer & the Blue Four**, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 8:30pm.

## tuesday • 6

**SDSU Jazz Ensemble/Salpointe Catholic H.S. Jazz Band**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 7pm.  
**Tomasz Stanko Quintet**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Riddle the Roar/Greg Friedman/Nate Donniss**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 8pm.  
**Kasey Anderson**, Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd., 8:30pm.

## wednesday • 7

**High Society Jazz Band**, Ca. Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., 4pm.  
**Kenny Werner & Mike Wofford**, Birch North Park Theatre, 2891 University Ave., 7pm.  
**Richard Smith**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## thursday • 8

**Charlie Imes/Marie Haddad**, Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Dr., 6pm.  
**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 S. Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, 7pm.  
**Muldoon w/ Jamie Kim**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Jaeryoung Lee plays Astor Piazzolla**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 7:30pm.  
**Gregory Page/Jason Fry**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Aaron Beaumont/JT Spangler**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## friday • 9

**Frank Lucio**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Tom Smerk**, Friendly Grounds, 9225 Carlton Hills, Santee, 7pm.  
**Colin Hay**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Randy Phillips**, Rebecca's, 3015 Juniper St., 7:30pm.  
**Peter Sprague & Blurring the Edges w/ Fred Benedetti**, Rm. 220, Fine Arts Hall, Grossmont College, 8pm.  
**Michael Tiernan**, Stellar Cellar, 28636 Old Town Front St., Temecula, 8pm.

**Irving Flores Latin Jazz Quartet**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 8pm.

**George Svoboda**, Pannikin/BookWorks, Flower Hill Mall, Del Mar, 8pm.

**The Gregory Page Show**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

**Kofi Baker Cream Tribute**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 9:30pm.

**Clay Colton & the Blokes**, Molly Bloom's, 2391 S. El Camino Real, San Clemente, 10pm.

## saturday • 10

**Bluegrass Day @ the Flower Fields**, Carlsbad Flower Fields, 5704 Paseo Del Norte, noon.  
**Dave Humphries CD Release w/ Folding Mr. Lincoln/Tornado Magnets/Joey Harris/Regina Leonard/Hector Penalosa/Bart Mendoza**, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, 2241 Shelter Island Dr., 3pm.  
**Sunrise Highway**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**A.J. Croce**, Lawrence Family Jewish Comm. Center, 4126 Executive Dr., La Jolla, 7:30pm.  
**Peter Sprague & Fred Benedetti**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm.  
**Hutchins Consort**, Neurosciences Institute, 10640 Hopkins Dr., La Jolla, 7:30pm.  
**Jeff Diamond/Tim Flood/Reid Albright**, Bella Roma, 6830 La Jolla Blvd., 7:30pm.  
**Jimmy Webb**, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm.  
**Kelsea Raelittle**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Richard Thompson w/ Tripp Sprague & Rob Thorsen**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 8pm.  
**Big Sandy & his Fly Rite Boys**, The Casbah, 2501 Kettner Blvd., 8:30pm.  
**Lisa Sanders & Friends**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## sunday • 11

**S.D. Folk Song Society**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 2pm.  
**Singchronicity**, Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Dr., 2pm.  
**Peter Puppington Quartet**, Avo Playhouse, 303 Main St., Vista, 4pm.  
**Elvis Costello**, Balboa Theatre, 868 4th Ave., 8pm.  
**Patty Griffin/Scott Miller**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 8pm.

## monday • 12

**Poway Folk Circle**, Templar's Hall, Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Rd., 6pm.

## tuesday • 13

**Lou Curtiss Song Circle**, Kadan, 4696 30th St., 6pm.  
**Yale Strom Music Ensemble: Music from the Golden Age of Spain**, Smith Recital Hall, SDSU Campus, 5500 Campanile Dr., 7pm.

## wednesday • 14

**Lisa Sanders**, Fallbrook Library, 124 S. Mission Rd., 6pm.  
**Blue Monday Pro Jam**, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, 2241 Shelter Island Dr., 7pm.  
**Chris Acquavella & Nate Jarrell**, Carmel Valley Library, 3919 Townsgate Dr., 7pm.  
**Songwriters Meetup w/ Jeff Berkley**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 7pm.  
**Sue Palmer Quintet**, Croce's, 802 5th Ave., 7:30pm.  
**Anthony Wilson Trio**, Neurosciences Institute, 10640 Hopkins Dr., 7:30pm.  
**Bill Frisell**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Arlo Guthrie Family**, California Center for the Arts, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., 8pm.  
**A Night of Belly Dancers & Music**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## thursday • 15

**Old Tyme Fiddlers Jam**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 7pm.  
**Robin Henkel**, Wine Steals, 1243 University Ave., 8pm.  
**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 S. Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, 7pm.  
**Mark Knopfler**, Pechanga Casino, 45000 Pechanga Pkwy., Temecula, 7pm.  
**Gregory Page/Get Back Loretta**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.

## friday • 16

**Neck & Neck**, Ocean Beach People's Co-op, 4765 Voltaire, 5:30pm.  
**Glen & Jennifer Smith**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 S. Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, 7pm.  
**Dave Humphries CD Release**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Rio Peligroso**, Hensley's Flying Elephant Pub, 850 Tamarack Ave., Carlsbad, 8:45pm.  
**Aaron Bowen/Nick Jaina Band**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## saturday • 17

**Peter Sprague & Kevyn Lettau**, Founders Hall UUFSD, 1036 Solana Dr., Solana Beach, 7pm.  
**Houston Jones**, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm.  
**Tracy Grammer**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm.  
**Tom Baird & Friends**, Rebecca's, 3015 Juniper St., 7:30pm.

**Berkley Hart**, Rock Valley House Concert, University City, 8pm. 858.452.1539.

**Veronica May**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.

**Paul Seaforth w/ Mo' Sax**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 8pm.

## sunday • 18

**Honky Tonk Jam**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 2pm.  
**Peter Sprague Trio**, Bernardo Winery, 13330 Paseo Del Verano Norte, 2pm.  
**Tony Bennett**, Pala Casino, 35008 Pala Temecula Rd., Pala, 7:30pm.

## monday • 19

**Tommy Gannon**, Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, noon.

## tuesday • 20

**Poway Bluegrass Jam**, Templar's Hall, Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Rd., 6:30pm.  
**Bluegrass Jam**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 7pm.

## wednesday • 21

**Monterey Jazz Festival**, Balboa Theatre, 868 4th Ave., 7:30pm.  
**Victoria Vox CD Release**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 7:30pm.  
**Pat Metheny**, Spreckels Theatre, 121 Broadway, 8pm.

## thursday • 22

**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 S. Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, 7pm.  
**Earl Thomas**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Gilbert Castellanos Quartet presents Gladstone H.S. Jazz Band**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 7:30pm.  
**Nanci Griffith/Ashleigh Flynn**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 8pm.  
**Gregory Page**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Chi McClean/Steelwells**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.

## friday • 23

**Candy Kane**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 5:30pm.  
**Heloise Love**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Carlos Olmeda/Folding Mr. Lincoln/Joey Rathburn**, Solana Beach Library, 157 Stevens Ave., 6:30pm.  
**Judy Collins**, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm.  
**Allison Adams Tucker/Jaeryoung Lee/Evona Vascinski/Jeanette Kangas/Jamie & Chloe Fearanzo**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 7:30pm.  
**Benny Golson Quartet**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Zymzzy Quartet**, Claire de Lune, 2906 University Ave., 8pm.  
**A.J. Croce**, Oasis House Concert, Sorrento Valley, 8pm. www.OasisHouseConcerts.com

## saturday • 24

**Roots Fest on Adams**, Adams Avenue & Hawley Blvd., Normal Heights, 10am-8pm.  
**Robin Henkel**, ArtWalk, 1536 India St., 11am.  
**Your Mom** (Suzanne & Mike Reed), Art Walk, Little Italy, 11am.  
**Key's QuickStart Guitar Series**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 2:30pm.  
**Joe Rathburn**, La Mesa Library, 8074 Allison Ave., 3pm.  
**Shirhouse Bluegrass Band**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Marilyn McCoo & Billy Davis Jr. Band**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30pm.  
**Jim Earp & Friends**, Rebecca's, 3015 Juniper St., 7:30pm.  
**Norah Jones**, Spreckels Theatre, 121 Broadway, 8pm.  
**Leon Redbone**, Poway Center for the Performing Arts, 15498 Espola Rd., 8pm.  
**Candy Kane w/ Charlie Imes**, Tango Del Rey, 3657 Del Rey St., Pacific Beach, 8pm.  
**Azucar Azul**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 8pm.  
**Chet & the Committee**, La Costa Grill, 6996 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, 8:30pm.

## sunday • 25

**Roots Fest on Adams**, Adams Avenue & Hawley Blvd., Normal Heights, 10am-6pm.  
**Robin Henkel**, ArtWalk, 1536 India St., 11am.  
**Bonita Chili Cookoff**, Bonita Rd. & Billy Casper Way, 11am-4pm.  
**Wayne Riker's Fretbook Guitar Workshop**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 2pm.  
**Nicole Torres**, San Marcos Library, 1 Civic Center Dr., 4pm.  
**The Rhythm Jacks**, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 9pm.

## monday • 26

**Chicago Six**, Tango Del Rey, 3567 Del Rey St., Pacific Beach, 5pm.  
**S.D. Youth Symphony Jazz Band**, Dizzy's @ S.D. Wine & Culinary Center, 200 Harbor Dr., 7pm.  
**Rory Block**, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm.

## W E E K L Y

### every sunday

**Shawn Rohlf & Friends**, Farmers Market, DMV parking lot, Hillcrest, 10am.  
**Ronnie Seno**, Lion Coffee, 101 Market St., 10am.  
**Bluegrass Brunch**, Urban Solace, 3823 30th St., 10:30am.  
**Daniel Jackson**, Croce's, 802 5th Ave., 11am.  
**Open Blues Jam w/ Chet & the Committee**, Downtown Cafe, 182 E. Main St., El Cajon, 2:30pm. (no jam on March 28)  
**Celtic Ensemble**, Twigg's, 4590 Park Blvd., 4pm.  
**Original Music Modern Jazz Series**, South Park Bar & Grill, 1946 Fern St., 6pm.  
**Traditional Irish Session**, The Field, 544 5th Ave., 7pm.  
**Open Mic**, E Street Cafe, 125 W. E St., Encinitas, 7:30pm.  
**Jazz Roots w/ Lou Curtiss**, 8-10pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).  
**Open Mic w/ Happy Ron**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., 8pm.  
**Jose Sinatra's OB-oke**, Winston's, 1921 Bacon St., 9:30pm.  
**The Bluegrass Special w/ Wayne Rice**, 10pm-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

### every monday

**Ukulele Society of America Jam**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 6:30pm.  
**Patric Petrie & the Bad Blokes**, O'Sullivan's, 640 Grand Ave., Ste. A., Carlsbad, 7pm.  
**Open Mic**, Kirin Sushi, 4111 Voltaire St., 7pm.  
**Open Mic Banjuka Jam**, Queen Bee's Art & Cultural Center, 3925 Ohio St., 7:30pm.  
**Open Mic**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 7:30pm.  
**Pro-Invitational Blues Jam**, O'Connell's Pub, 1310 Morena Blvd., 8pm.  
**Songwriter's Showcase**, Larry's Beach Club, 1145 S. Tremont, Oceanside, 8:30pm.

### every tuesday

**Lou Fanucchi**, Paesano, 3647 30th St., 5:30pm.  
**Traditional Irish Session**, The Ould Sod, 3373 Adams Ave., 7pm.  
**Open Mic**, Beach Club Grille, 710 Seacoast Dr., Imperial Beach, 7pm.  
**Chet & the Committee All Pro Blues Jam**, The Harp, 4935 Newport Ave., 7:30pm.  
**Open Mic**, Second Wind, 8515 Navajo Rd., 8pm.  
**Open Mic**, The Royal Dive, 2949 San Luis Rey Rd., Oceanside, 8pm.  
**Patrick Berrogain's Hot Club Combo**, Prado Restaurant, Balboa Park, 8pm.  
**Open Mic**, Portugalia, 4839 Newport Ave., O.B., 9pm.

### tuesday • 27

**Lou Curtiss Song Circle**, Kadan, 4696 30th St., 6pm.  
**Sue Palmer & the Blue Four**, Patrick's II, 428 F St., 8:30pm.

### wednesday • 28

**Joe Rathburn**, Fallbrook Library, 124 S. Mission Rd., 6pm.  
**Songwriters Meetup Collaboration**, Old Time Music, 2852 University Ave., 7pm.  
**Sue Palmer Quintet**, Croce's, 802 5th Ave., 7:30pm.  
**John Mayall w/ Robin Henkel & Nathan James**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 8pm.

### thursday • 29

**Peter Sprague**, Roxy Restaurant, 517 S. Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, 7pm.  
**John Foltz w/ Seaholm-Macintosh**, Milano Coffee Co., 8685 Rio San Diego Dr., 7pm.

### every wednesday

**Chuck Schiele & Friends**, Farmers Market, Newport Ave., Ocean Beach, 4-7pm.  
**Lou Fanucchi**, Romesco Restaurant, 4346 Bonita Rd., 6pm.  
**Your Mom** (Suzanne & Mike Reed), Ciao Bella, 5263 Baltimore Dr., La Mesa, 6:30pm.  
**Jerry Gontang**, Desi & Friends, 2734 Lytton St., 7pm.  
**Sunshine Brooks Music Series**, Sunshine Brooks Theatre, 217 N. Coast Hwy. 101, Oceanside, 7pm.  
**Scandinavian Dance Class**, Folk Dance Center, Dancing Unlimited, 4569 30th St., 7:30pm.  
**Open Mic**, Across the Street @ Mueller College, 4605 Park Blvd., 8pm.  
**Open Mic**, Skybox Bar & Grill, 4809 Clairemont Dr., 8:30pm.  
**Open Mic**, South Park Bar & Grill, 1946 Fern St., 9pm.

### every thursday

**Happy Hour Jam**, Winston's, 1921 Bacon St., 5:30pm.  
**Chet & the Committee Open Blues Jam**, Downtown Cafe, 182 E. Main, El Cajon, 6pm.  
**Wood 'n' Lips Open Mic**, Friendly Grounds, 9225 Carlton Hills Blvd., Santee, 6:30pm.  
**Lou Fanucchi**, Il Fornaio, 1333 1st St., Coronado, 6:30pm.  
**Joe Rathburn's Folkey Monkey**, Milano Coffee Co., 8685 Rio San Diego Dr., 7pm.  
**Open Mic**, Turquoise Coffee, 841 Turquoise St., P.B., 7pm.  
**Moonlight Serenade Orchestra**, Lucky Star Restaurant, 3893 54th St., 7pm.  
**Traditional Irish Session**, Thornton's Irish Pub, 1221 Broadway, El Cajon, 8pm.  
**Open Mic/Family Jam**, Rebecca's, 3015 Juniper St., 8pm.  
**Open Jazz Jam**, South Park Bar & Grill, 1946 Fern St., 9:30pm.

### every friday

**Open Mic**, Lion Coffee, 101 Market St., 6pm.  
**John Kopecky Trio**, South Park Bar & Grill, 1946 Fern St., 7pm.  
**Open Mic**, Bella Roma Restaurant, 6830 La Jolla Blvd. #103, 8pm.  
**Open Mic**, L'Amour de Yogurt, 9975 Carmel Mountain Rd., 8pm.  
**Open Mic**, Egyptian Tea Room & Smoking Parlour, 4644 College Ave., 9pm.

### every saturday

**Ronnie Seno**, Lion Coffee, 101 Market St., 10am.  
**Open Mic** (last Saturday of the month), Valley Music, 1611 N. Magnolia Ave., El Cajon, 6pm.  
**Blues Jam**, South Park Bar & Grill, 1946 Fern St., 9pm.

### friday • 30

**Mountain Tribal Gypsies**, Wynola Pizza, 4355 Hwy 78, Julian, 6pm.  
**Eddie Palmieri**, Birch North Park Theatre, 2891 University Ave., 7pm.  
**Chris Hassett**, Acoustic Music San Diego, 4650 Mansfield St., 7:30pm.  
**Raul Midon**, Anthology, 1337 India St., 7:30&9:30pm.  
**Billy Watson**, Belly Up, 143 S. Cedros, Solana Beach, 8pm.  
**Peggy Watson & David Beldock**, Java Joe's @ Cafe Libertalia, 3834 5th Ave., Hillcrest, 8pm.  
**Molly Jensen**, Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave., 9pm.  
**Chet & the Committee**, The Harp, 4935 Newport Ave., 9pm.  
**Grand Canyon Sundown**, The Leucadian, 1542 N. Coast Hwy. 101, Leucadia, 9:30pm.

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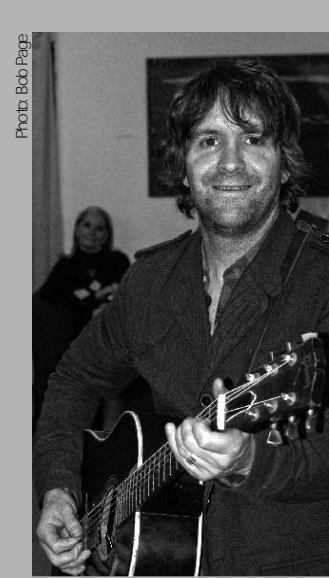
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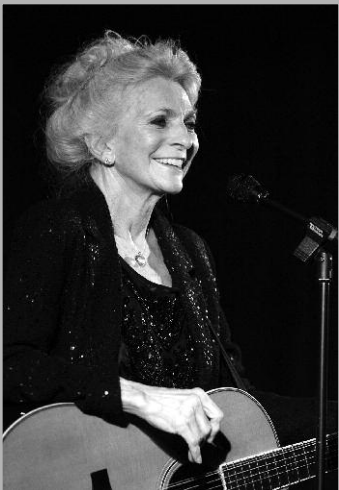




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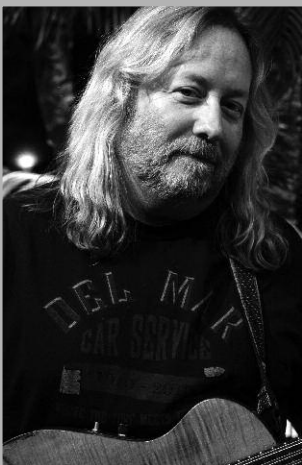
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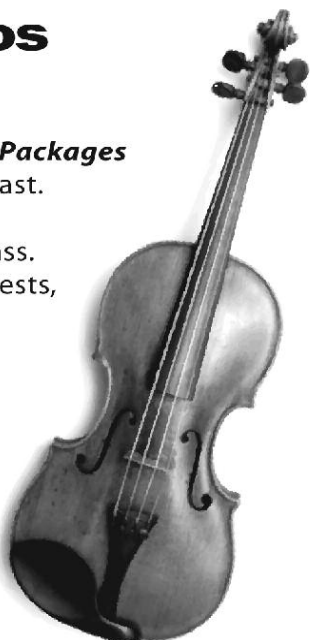
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Mon Apr 5 • Ukulele Society of America 6:30 pm - 9 pm

Free lesson and play along.. Ukulele fun! FREE

Sun Apr 11 • San Diego Folk Song Society 2 pm - 6 pm

Second Sunday of every month. FREE

Mon Apr 12 • Ukulele Society of America 6:30 pm - 9 pm FREE

Wed Apr 14 • 7pm - 9pm

San Diego Songwriter Meetup FREE

Thu Apr 15 • 7pm - 9pm

Old Tyme Fiddlers Jam FREE

Sun Apr 18 • 2pm - 5pm

Honky Tonk Jam FREE

Mon Apr 19 • Ukulele Society of America 6:30 pm - 9 pm FREE

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Bluegrass Jam 3rd Tuesday FREE

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Mon Apr 26 • Ukulele Society of America 6:30 pm - 9 pm FREE

Wed Apr 28 • Songwriter Meet up FREE

Sat May 1 • 12:30pm - 4pm

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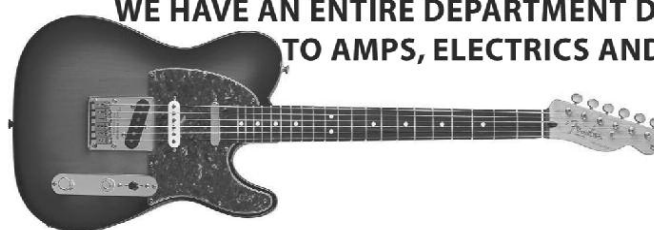
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