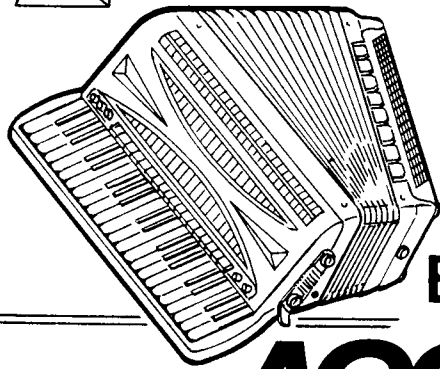


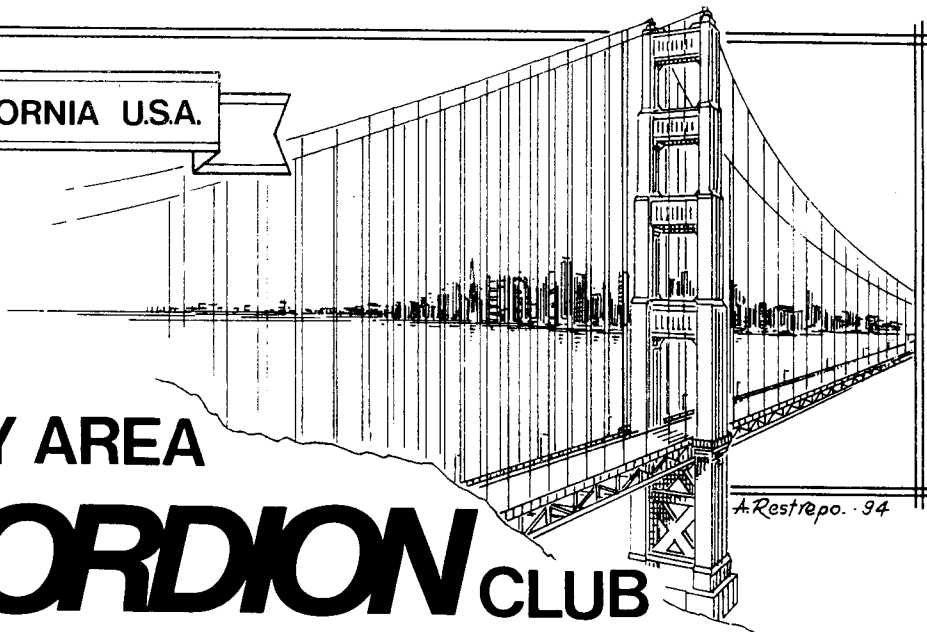
Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

# ACCORDION CLUB



APRIL, 1995

## April General Meeting

by Bob Berta

The April meeting started out with a report from the nominating committee. **Denny** announced the proposed slate of officers and board members and no further nominations were offered from the floor.

President: Bob Berta  
Vice-President: Joe Smiell  
Recording Secretary: Val Kieser  
Treasurer: Algis Ratnikas  
Financial Secretary: Frank Montoro

Board Members:  
Mary Alice Eldon  
Marian Kelly  
Frank Panacci  
Frank Schlotter  
Bob Smith

During the May meeting the general membership will vote to approve the new officers and board members.

President **Frank Montoro** announced the passing of member **Don Kosewic** of San Francisco and asked for a minute of silence.

**Ted Varga** introduced Tunde and Steven who were visiting from Hungary. Hey, we must be pretty good when the tourists put us on their hot places to visit!

cont. on p. 4

## BAAC Picnic

June 11th.

Your Board is hard at work planning to make our annual picnic, to be held this year at Swiss Park in Newark, another rousing success.

Doors will open early, at 9 AM, and you may stay all day. Scheduled entertainment will begin at 1:30 PM and last only until 4 PM, according to entertainment guru Ed Massolo. That means you may jam as loudly as you wish at all the other times.....should be plenty of unscheduled time to satisfy everybody.

Ed is putting together the schedule now; please call him at (415) 589-8409 if you would like to be included.

We'll charge adults \$5.00 at the door; children 16 and under will be admitted free.

You will find a map and many more details in the May newsletter. Till then....keep Sunday the 11th free and bring your whole family!

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**May 1st, Monday.** Ladies' Night at BAAC!! What a lineup! Kristine Kopal, Kelly Koehn, Marjorie Konrad, Norma Parsons, Gospel Accordion to Women, Val Kieser, Nora Mazzara, Diana Gutkin, Odile Levault, Marian Kelly, and a special surprise....Feminili Siciliana, a scintillating trio from Italy, currently on tour! You'll hafta be there, obviously. Donworth Hall, 22nd and Eucalyptus, San Francisco. Please come promptly; due to the long program, we'll start right at 7:00.

**May 3rd, Wednesday** at 7:30. BAAC Board Meeting at Ed Massolo's, 612 Lassen, So. San Francisco. Guests are always welcome. 415-589-8409.

**May 8th, Monday.** Fun Band Practice, 7:00 PM. House of Parties. Call Domenic, 415-587-7557.

**May 8th, Monday.** LA area birthday party for Art Van Damme. March newsletter had reservation form.

**May 10th & 24th, Wednesdays,** 7:00 PM. BAAC Accordion Practice, House of Parties. Call Joe, 510-832-6938

**June 5th, Monday.** There will be no general meeting in June because of BAAC's picnic.

**June 11th, Sunday.** BAAC annual picnic at Swiss Park in Newark.

cont. p. 2

*Mark Your Calendars, cont.*

**June 18th, Sunday.** Myron Floren in concert as presented by the San Diego Accordion Club, ALSI. 210 E. Main St. El Cajon, 3 to 5 PM. Call for tickets now at 619-440-2277.

**June 21st** (summer solstice) Wednesday. Making Waves, San Francisco Music Day.

**June 23, 24, 25.** San Francisco Folk Festival.

**July 2nd.** Accordion Jamboree 1995. Held at the Donkey Deli Beer Garden, 322 Third St., San Juan Bautista, 11 to 6. (408) 623-4521. See details in Joe Domitrowich's Letter to the Editor.

**July 3 thru 8th,** Kimberley International Old-Time Accordion Championships, Kimberley, B.C. Call (604) 427-4877.

**July 7th - 12th,** American Accordionists' Association Festival, Houston at JW Marriott on Westheimer.. Reservations: 1-800-231-6058.

**July 8th, Saturday.** Festa Italiana in Lodi, at the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, all day. Featuring Dick Contino and The Gaylords. See next column.

**July 9th - 15th.** Button Box Camp. Call Joe Smiell, 510-832-6938.

**July 10th, Monday.** BAAC General Meeting. Accordion "Swap" Night.

**July 20th-23rd.** Accordion Teachers' Guild International Competition and Festival, Kansas City MO. Concerts, competitions, workshops, master-classes. Call 816-756-1720.

**July 23rd to 28th.** Sixth Annual Galla-Rini Accordion Camp in Silver Falls, Oregon sponsored by Accordion World, and featuring this year, Jorgen Sundeqvist assisting Tony. Call John Bonica (Accordion World) at (503)-244-2545 or (503) 257-9648.

**August 3rd, Monday.** BAAC General Meeting featuring special guest artist Jorgen Sundeqvist.

**August 10th - 13th,** Leavenworth, Washington International Accordion Celebration and Competition. Marian has competition info and a map. (415) 854-1896.

**August 23rd- 27th.** (note date change) AFNA (Accordion Federation of North America) celebrates its 40th birthday with a bangup Festival at the Hyatt at LAX. Call 213-686-1769 for info and reservations.

**August 26th and 27th,** Cotati Accordion Festival.

**Sept. 10th - 16th.** Button Box Camp. Call Joe Smiell, 510-832-6938.

*April Board Meeting*

*Synopsis*

- The Treasurer reported \$6707 in our combined checking and savings accounts.
- Two delegates from BAAC to the Festival in Houston July 7 to 12th were selected, Lou Soper and Marian Kelly. The Club will reimburse each representative for partial charges. In return, the delegates will report back to the membership in writing about the Festival, and the reports will appear in the Newsletter.
- The Board spent a little time discussing the upcoming Picnic. The gate charge, as previously, will be \$5.00, but young persons (under 16) will be admitted without charge. More time will be allotted to spontaneous jamming this year.
- All agreed that the desserts contributed greatly to a successful April meeting; we'll do something similar again soon.
- No prize in the logo contest announced a few months ago was given because of lack of submissions.
- Marian Kelly is working with Joe Petosa and Jorgen Sundeqvist to bring Jorgen in as a Guest Artist at BAAC's August general meeting. The Board authorized a \$300 fee.
- Since the Cotati Accordion Festival generated a profit last year and made a donation to a the music program of a local school, the Board did not find it necessary to give them a donation from BAAC this year. However, we do want a booth, and we want them to have a jam tent. It would also be well to place a BAAC ad in the program. Marian agreed to suggest to the Festival Committee that they provide us with those three things for \$500 (considerably less than the stated individual costs).
- Frank Montoro thanked the Nominating Committee for a job well done. (Nominees elsewhere in this newsletter). Since there were no further nominees from the floor at the April general meeting, a ballot will not be needed in May, and the President will ask that the slate be accepted by acclamation.

MK



*Has Your Editorial Staff Gone to the Dog?*

## Pushing Right Buttons, Irish Musician Green Again

from the *Wall Street Journal*, March 16, 1995

by *Earle Hitchner*, traditional music writer for the Irish Echo newspaper.

Tomorrow, St. Patrick's Day, the button-accordion virtuoso Joe Derrane, born in Boston in 1930 to Irish immigrant parents, will perform for the president of the United States and the prime minister of Ireland at the White House. Just two years ago, Derrane rarely performed any music at all, had not played a button accordion in well over three decades, and was working part-time in data entry and word processing at St. Timothy's, a Catholic church in the south Boston suburb of Norwood. What happened in that couple of years constitutes the single greatest comeback in the history of Irish traditional music.

In 1993, Rego Records of Garden City, NY, reissued on one album all 16 tracks from the 78-rpm solo recordings Joe Derrane made for Boston's independent Copley label in the late 1940's — recordings he started to cut when he was just a senior at Mission High School in Roxbury, Mass. "I remember the first recording session very well," said Derrane from his home in Randolph, Mass., where he lives with his Irish-born wife of 40 years, Anne. "It was the late fall of 1947, and I had to come home, cram my homework in, then grab a streetcar to the studio in Boston.

"Everything was done live. There was no double tracking or dubbing at all. Make a mistake and you had to record the track all over again. Justus DeWitt, the owner of Copley, was in the control room the whole time. He rarely smoked, but when we had to redo a take and studio rental time started to pile up, he'd pull out those big fat cigars and smoke like a chimney. I was 17 at the time, and I could just imagine the dollar bills going up in smoke, too."

The release of those monaural recordings nearly 50 years ago transformed the way aficionados of Irish music in America viewed the two-row "button box," often

the butt of jokes and the bane of a *seisiun* (an Irish music jam). Derrane's right-hand finger work on the accordion keyboard was technically matchless. He was able to execute precise, cascading triplets and other embellishments in perfect tempo without once falling outside the framework of the melody. Derrane performed Irish jigs, reels, hornpipes, and polkas with astonishing grace, expertise and lift, and their effect on listeners is as galvanic as it was back then.

The critical reception of the Rego reissue proved so strong that it prompted the organizing committee of the Irish Folk Festival at the Wolf Trap performing arts center in Vienna, VA., to ask Derrane to perform there in 1994. The invitation went out in the fall of 1993, and it was risky. No one had a clue whether Derrane could approach, let alone equal, the extraordinary level of performance he had once achieved.

What complicated matters further was that Derrane had switched to the piano accordion by the late 1950's, a time when the large Irish ballroom-dancing venues that employed him as a button accordionist were on the wane. So for years he had been playing an accordion of a quite different type with Jewish, Italian, Polish and other bands that cut across the popular musical spectrum. Among the exceptional instrumentalists he met during this period were Sid Shulman, former first-chair trumpeter for the Boston Pops Orchestra, and Art Van Damme, widely recognized as the leading jazz piano accordionist of his time.

Then the piano accordion fell into disfavor in the 1960s. "Most young people were hooked on rock-and-roll, and they considered the piano accordion rinky-dink and old-fashioned," Derrane recalled. He shifted to synthesizers. "It was either that or not working in music at all," he said. Derrane played electric keyboards and, on occasion, piano accordion for the next 20

years, ending with Nightlife, a local pop band that he founded with his son, Joe Jr. "It gave me the chance to spend about six years playing music with him, since for so many years playing music prevented me from spending much time with either of my kids."

In 1988, Derrane retired as a manager of workers' compensation with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, where he was employed for 27 years. "I almost always had a day job while I played music," he said. From 1989, when Nightlife disbanded, to 1993, when he first took the part-time job at St. Timothy's, Joe Derrane "did about six gigs total, all on synthesizer." That made the surprise invitation to play the button accordion at the 1994 Wolf Trap Irish Folk Festival all the more exciting — and nerve-racking.

"I said yes without realizing all the work I had to do to get ready," recalled Derrane. He had reacquired a button accordion as a gift from a friend only two years earlier, but had not touched it since. He had seven months to remove the rust of a 35-year layoff.

"I started practicing in my basement and got to the point where I was playing seven hours a day, seven days a week. When I'd come up to the kitchen, my hands were so sore I had to soak them in ice water."

The woodshedding paid off on the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in 1994 when Derrane, accompanied by New York pianist Felix Dolan, took the Wolf Trap festival stage in midafternoon. They went on without rehearsal, relying instead on previous phone conversations and rough cassettes sent through the mail. Their first medley was a pair of Irish traditional jigs, and the overflow crowd knew instantly that the old fire still burned brightly

*cont. p.6*





*The Fun Band and Some Listeners*

### ***April General Meeting, cont.***

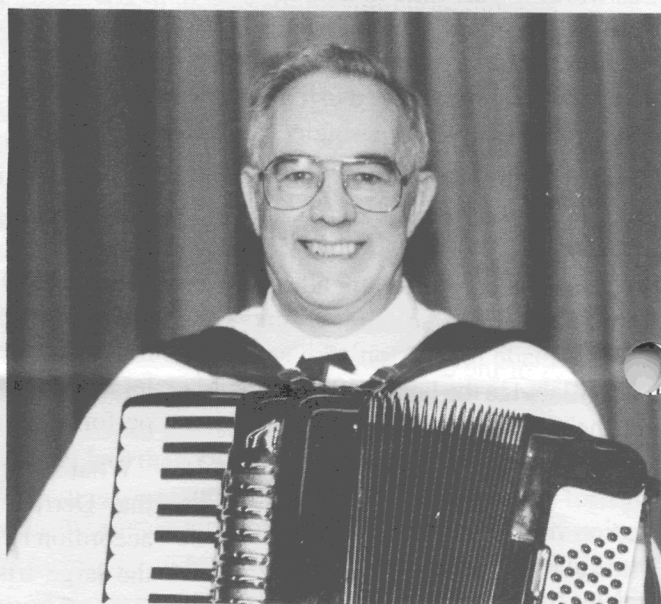
The entertainment for the night featured the BAAC Fun Band, conducted by **Domenic Saso**. They played spirited versions of *California Here I Come*, *Beer Barrel Polka*, *In the Mood*, and an encore of *Pennsylvania Polka*. The band sounded great, and it was obvious that they were having fun. Of course they are always happy to greet a newcomer should you get the urge to join in.

Then, **Mr. Saso** took the stage as our MC. The night's entertainment began with **Bob Smith**, who walked on stage with his right hand all bandaged up. After a lot of gasps and questions about the nature of his injury, he proceeded to sit down and play the Galla-Rini bass solo, *Down By The Old Mill Stream*. Then, to everyone's relief, **Bob** removed the bandage, and the audience realized they had been had by an old vaudeville trick. After his miraculous "healing," **Bob** launched into a neat arrangement of *Summertime* from the Galla-Rini accordion camp. For **Bob's** final number he played his arrangement of *The Burning of Rome*. This dramatic selection was written by E. Paul around 1903. **Bob's** playing certainly painted the picture of the drama of the chariot races and the fire which brought Rome to the brink of destruction.

Next up was **Algis Ratnikas**. I always enjoy **Algis's** selection of music. His playing of *Czardas* was neat, but his original composition entitled *Tryptick in F* was really a treat. Many members remarked that it was a very nice composition deserving of more playing. His final selection was *Walking After Midnight*.

Our trusty duo of **Frank Panacci** and **Ed Massolo** came forward with a selection of numbers that they will be performing in May for the Northwest Club as our traveling representatives. They played a lively *Lichtensteiner Polka*, then *Espaná*, and a really neat rendition of *Italian Aires*. I have a feeling that we may have a hard time getting the Northwest Club to let them return home once they hear **Frank** and **Ed**!

The customary fluid management break was much expanded on this evening, and very successfully, everybody felt. Everyone had been asked to bring a dessert to serve 4, and **Isabel Massolo** and **Donna Panacci** had displayed everything beautifully on a long table on the side of the room along with plates and napkins. There was a big rush to the table at intermission, because we had all been tantalized by the wonderful aromas coming from the goodies during the entire first half of the program. But after the first rush, everyone realized that there was plenty for all, and the half hour break zoomed by as we all had time to greet both friends and newcomers.



*Bob Smith*



*Don Gilbrook*

## MIDI Accordions...Gaining Favor in the Press

The March issue of *Electronic Musician*, a magazine widely read by folks interested in MIDI, featured a wonderful, long, feature article about accordions called MIDI ACCORDIONS RULE! The quick description of the article in the Table of Contents says "Accordions are coming back! The instrument's funky wail and wheeze are all over recent television commercials, sitcom themes, and movie scores. And now, newfangled MIDI accordions are giving aficionados unprecedented performance versatility."

The article itself speaks a bit of the accordion's decline, then its recent renewed popularity. It partly attributes the high current level of new accordion sales of to the performance versatility offered by MIDI-equipped accordions. It describes how an acoustic accordion works, then how a MIDI accordion works. The rest of the article discusses what it calls three MIDI design philosophies, three fundamental styles of MIDI accordion. They conclude that an accordionist must decide whether to buy new or to have the family accordion retrofitted, with samples of the cost of various options.

Much of the information in the article came from Petosa Accordions, whose initiative made the article happen. If you are interested in learning more about MIDI technology and MIDI accordions in particular, it would be well for you to read this article. Your Editor has two copies; club members who already own a MIDI accordion will probably also have a copy.

## April General Meeting.....

**Don Gilbrook** had come in from Danville, and took the stage when we were all sated with goodies. **Don** hails from England where he played in several hotels and restaurants. He is making a CD which is slated to be released in August. He played *Late Again*, *Gypsy Moth* and *Unter Der Spiegelbanner*. Members enjoyed his fine musicianship and hope he will be willing to make the trip again.

The final artist was teacher and performer **Mike Zampecini** performing on the new Concerto MIDI accordion. **Mike** played neat arrangements, all apparently effortlessly, of *The Continental*, *Get Me to the Church On Time*, *Maria Elena*, *Flying Butterfly Mazurka*, *Love for Sale*, *El Cumbanchero* and *Whispering*. Hearing playing like this, one comes to appreciate the outstanding talent we have throughout our club. It seems that we are blessed with many of the finest accordionists in the world today as members of our club.

Next meeting will be the annual Ladies Night. A large contingent of women are scheduled to perform. This event was last year's best attended meeting, so you can count on an outstanding evening. Come early for a seat up front!.

## TEACHERS

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Seconds??? Who, Us??.. Paul Magistretti, Rob Campanella



Dessert Table

## Where is Ricky Bez?

Does anyone know how to find Ricky Bez? You will recall he played for us at both our February and March meetings...his picture appeared in the February newsletter. He paid us a membership fee, and we thought we had his address (in Colfax), but his newsletters are being returned to us stamped "address unknown". A phone call to information yielded no person with last name Bez in Colfax. Can anybody help? Call Marian...415-854-1896.

## New CD: Legends of the Accordion

A great new CD, *Legends of the Accordion*, highlights 18 accordionists: Dick Contino, JoAnn Castle, Clifton Chenier, The Bay State IV, "Weird Al" Yankovic, Steve Jordan, Joey Miskulin, Lawrence Welk, Those Darn Accordions!, Angelo DiPippo, Milton DeLugg, Frank Yankovic, Guy Klucsevsek, Myron Floren, Flaco Jimenez, Anthony Gallarini, Andrew Cormier & the Smiling Cajuns, and the Art Van Damme Quintet. You'll savor choice morsels from each performer.

Order the CD from ED Music, PO Box 608, Mineola, NY 11501, for \$18., including shipping and handling.

## Mogens Ellegaard Dies

A giant of the accordion world, Mogens Ellegaard of Denmark, passed away on March 28th after a brief bout with leukemia.

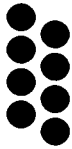
Ellegaard was a brilliant musician who championed the free bass accordion and 20th century music throughout his career. To increase the supply of original music, he spearheaded the drive for important Nordic composers to write for the accordion.

Virtually renouncing traditional music, he sought out avant-garde works for his concert appearances with leading European symphonic orchestras and chamber ensembles.

Ellegaard influenced a number of accordionists who were his students at the Danish Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen and the Conservatory of Gratz, where he taught for many years.

(From the newsletter of the American Accordionists' Association, Spring '95)

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## Accordionist in the White House, cont.

in Joe Derrane's music. It was a truly incandescent performance, and at the end, amid cheers from the audience, the emcee asked an emotional Derrane to pledge publicly that he'd never abandon the button accordion again. In front of his wife, his 38-year old son and 35-year old daughter, who had never seen her father play the button accordion before, Joe Derrane took that pledge.

He has kept it since. An offer to record anew came as soon as he left the Wolf Trap stage, and last October, accompanied by Felix Dolan, Derrane cut his first long-playing solo album, "Give Us Another," for Green Linnet Records, a Danbury, Conn. based label known world-wide for the quality of its Irish traditional music. "Unplugged" long before it became an MTV fashion, he is nothing short of sensational on the newly released album, belying the passage of

years and playing at a level that eclipses the achievement of his classic 78's from nearly half a century ago.

Upcoming for Joe Derrane in 1995 are concerts in Paris, Alaska, California, Massachusetts, Virginia, Tipperary, Dublin and in Cork, where he will give his first public performance in Ireland. "All the things I had hazily in the back of my mind for so many years — playing in Ireland, making a new record, performing some nice concerts again, even going to Alaska — all of a sudden, they're here."

"Last May, I was sweating that I could just get through Wolf Trap and not make a complete fool of myself and not let a lot of people down." Then, with a laugh, he added, "Now, nine months later, my first gig after the day I turn 65 will be for the president of the United States and the Irish prime minister. It's almost beyond belief."

## Female Accordionists

Karen Gerlovich announces the publication of a new book called Happy Gals USA & The Wonderful ABC's (Accordions, Button boxes, Concertinas). Its 185 pages feature pictures and bios of 26 female ABC entertainers such as Joan Cochran Sommers, Juli Silfverberg, Helmi Harrington, Diane Schmidt, and Joanne Arnold.

Order the book from:

Accordion Music Sales  
3277 Beneva Road — Unit 104  
Sarasota, FL 34232  
PH 813-922-0890

Enclose check or money order for \$17.00, which includes tax and shipping.



## Across the Editor's Desk.....

Dear Editor;

I think this event (at the Donkey Deli in San Juan Bautista on July 2nd) will be of interest to all BAAC members, and I am requesting that you include it in the BAAC Newsletter.

Here are some details of **Accordion Jamboree 1995**. We'll play, dance, eat and drink all day, from 11 to 6. All accordion types are welcome, and participation by all varieties of accordion-based music and groups are strongly encouraged. On-stage performers will include professionals and amateurs, solo and groups. Amplification is provided; bass and drum accompaniment are available. Then, there will be lots of open jam sessions, in which all instruments are welcome. Accordions and memorabilia will be for sale. Admission is \$3.00.

If you wish to stay overnight, accommodations include the San Juan Inn (408) 623-4380 and the Mission Farm RV Campgrounds (10% discount for jamboree guests) (408) 623-4456.

Sign up in advance for a time slot by calling me (Joe) at 408-255-1259. Please let me know if I can provide additional information. *Joe Domitrowich*

Dear Editor:

"This next song \_\_\_\_." My next song \_\_\_\_." "The next song \_\_\_\_." "This tune \_\_\_\_."

Unplanned, rambling program announcements such as these will guarantee that we won't have financially rewarding careers as performers.

A fine Beverly Hills jeweler puts one item in a small window and "showcases" it attractively. A dime store slops everything in the window together.

Are we selling gems or junk?

Let's plan our acts to include variety, an emotional "build" to a climax — AND the words we use to frame our shows.

An excellent book on this subject (and especially chapter 5 — "Blah, Blah, Blah") is *The Singing Entertainer (A Contemporary Study of the Art and Business of Being a Professional)* by John Davidson and Cort Casady. Copyright 1982, Hidden Hills Productions, Inc. Published by Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

*Bill Court*  
Santa Rosa

Dear Editor:

My Oakland-based rock band **Amy X Neuburg & Men** is looking for a MIDI accordion player to replace our keyboardist.

We play a variety of interesting electronic instruments and have strong backgrounds in music technology. Our music is fun, challenging, gutsy, and sometimes weird. We've been playing in the Bay Area for two years, and we're on an independent record label, about to come out with our second record.

Rehearsals are about once a week. We'll probably take some short tours in the fall.

If you'd like more information, please contact Amy at (510) 653-3556.

Thank you,  
*Amy*

Dear Editor:

My husband and I have thoroughly enjoyed all the meetings of this year. The effort on behalf of the S.F. BAAC by President Frank Montoro and the Board of Directors has had only positive revelations. Our friends, accordion players and non-players, think SFBAAC is fantastic.

Would it be helpful if the President had a gavel or a whistle to bring the meeting to a 7:00 PM start? Some of us travel a distance across the Bay and, due to time constraints, would also appreciate those noisy people in the back of the room, recognizing the seven o'clock gun.

I am enclosing an article which may or may not be something useful for including in the newsletter. (See p. ) After all, it is newsworthy when the accordion is going to the White House, isn't it?

Thank you for a very informative and interesting newsletter.

Sincerely,  
*Barbara Winter*

## TDA! On the Move

We've had two communications this month from Tom Torriglia, of Those Darn Accordions! fame. The first, via computer, is an announcement that TDA have been nominated for a NAIRD award. NAIRD, he says, stands for National Association of Independent Record Distributors, and is like the Grammy awards, only for independent record labels.

NAIRD will have a convention in San Francisco May 11-15, at which time the awards will be given out. Way to go, TDA! Congratulations....and we certainly hope you win!

Another message says that Tom is in the process of trying to get an accordion related catalogue up and running. He believes that he can help with product distribution for any of us who have produced tapes or CDs but who are not on a label. If you would like to be included in his catalogue, send him a promo copy of your tape or CD. Send to World Accordion Association, 3551 Pierce St., San Francisco, CA 94123. Phone is (415) 346-5862.

He plans to carry items such as T-shirts, caps, rubber stamps, videos, bumperstickers, pins, etc. Call him with ideas or questions.

**AD POLICY**

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NON-MEMBERS PAY TWICE THE MEMBERS' RATE.  
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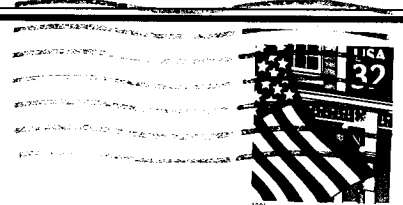
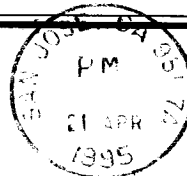
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**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY**  
May 1, 1995  
7:00 PM

Donworth Hall  
22nd & Eucalyptus  
SAN FRANCISCO

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PLAY AT A  
MEETING, CALL ED AT 415-589-8409

Conductor  
Frank Montoro

Co-Conductor  
Bob Berta

Banker  
Algis Ratnikas

Teller  
Glenn McClelland

Scribe  
Josephine Hornbrook