

ACCORDION CLUB

**!!!! NOTE !!!!
APRIL MEET-
ING ONLY**

Takes place on the
fourth Sunday; all
other meetings are
on the third

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April 2005

The Accordion: San Francisco's Official Instrument



President's Message

Did you hear the racket when that tornado passed over the club meeting last month? **Judy Dale** said that maybe God was mad at the accordion players, and was trying to take us all out at one time. It happened just as we were having our midway break. The noise up on the roof was tremendous. Happily, the roof stayed on, and we were able to get back to the

meeting. **Joe Vento** had the honors for the second half, and he was so well received that he got standing ovations and sold a ton of albums. It was my pleasure to join Joe on a few jazz tunes at the end of his performance.

I had a nice phone call from Joe a few days after the meeting. He was so happy to have had the opportunity to play for us, and hopes to return. I learned that Joe was a child prodigy; entered high school at the age of eight, and was so advanced musically, that he actually assisted the music teacher on questions about music theory. Joe is also a decorated war veteran who was wounded three times. In his other life, Joe is an ophthalmologist, somewhat retired, but still treats a few longtime patients.

Did anyone notice my **plea for some help** from the members in my last two articles? We really need a hand. After the meeting last month, the only people left to take down the meeting equipment and clean up, were Dennis Stoscher and me. We finally removed everything after 6 trips up and down in the elevator. Even after having looked all around the room, I didn't see the cake that someone dropped, and ground into the carpet. I took the heat for that, but how about picking up after yourself if you drop something? GRRR!!

Our April meeting will be on the fourth Sunday, the 24th.

NEXT MEETING:

Sunday, April 24 2:00 p.m.

(One week later this month only)

The South San Francisco Senior Center (Municipal Building)

33 Arroyo Drive, South San Francisco.

Featuring some of our favorites:

LOU JACKLICH and some of his students

Plus . . .

ROBERTO ROSA in the second half

because the room was rented out before we came on the scene. **After that, the meetings will return to the 3rd Sunday.** May 15 is Ladies Day, and we have a terrific program planned.

Let me know your ideas and suggestions to better our club; in the meanwhile, I look forward to seeing you at 2:00 pm on April 24.

Play your accordion every day, and remember:

REAL MUSIC IS LIVE!!! *Peter Di Bono*

Come and Enjoy the

SF ACCORDION CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

CONCERT Sunday, April 17 2:00 p.m.

**Redwood City Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
2124 Brewster Avenue, Redwood City**

Classical, light classical, folk and American musical

Refreshments will be provided

\$10 donation requested

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, April 24, 2005 (fourth Sunday this month only!!!!) at 2:00 p.m. at the South San Francisco Senior Center, 33 Arroyo Drive, South SF

March Meeting: The Second in our New Digs

The pre-meeting warm-up music was a special treat provided by our own **Herb Meier**, visiting here from Germany with his bride **Sabine**. Thanks, Herb—it was great seeing and hearing you again! And thanks, **Dennis Stoscher**, for loaning your beautiful Vignoni accordion to Herb.

Announcements: We need someone to store our club equipment long-term, preferably someone who lives nearby and attends meetings. Among visitors today were Peter's student **Bob Hanson** and several friends of Joe Vento. The **Day of the Accordion** celebration in Petaluma will take place on Saturday, June 25 this year. Watch the newsletter for details.

Our first "performance" of the day was our intrepid club videographer **Ed Zaro** who loves the accordion and has lived accordion history in San Francisco, even though he never learned to play. But he surely gives a great talk! He spoke of North Beach where all the accordion activity was. Ed got into ham radio but had to get off the air at the time of World War II, so he got some equipment to make 10" records. From the big accordion names—Guerrini, Piatanesi and others—Ed learned about the inside of the accordion. He has at least 160 videos of our club meetings. He played for us a cassette made from one of his 10" records, of a duet played by Cesar Pezzolo and Mario Pieroni: the *Trieste Overture*. Wow! Thanks, Eddie—that was great!

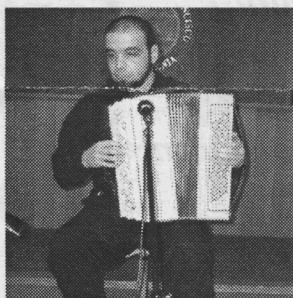


Ed Zaro

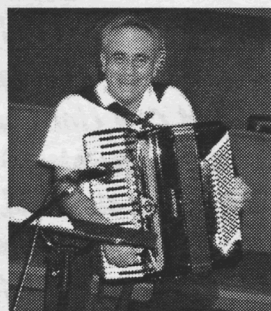
Next we heard from **Michael Berenstein**, student of **Grigoriy Krumik**. Michael played a white, 3-row Bayan, or "continental chromatic," B system, covering 5 octaves. It has a mellow, deep bass, is dry tuned, and has no switches. Michael is a very accomplished player. Telling us about the tunes and composers as he went along, he played a piece by an Austrian, Anton

Diabelli, a contemporary of Chopin (mid-1700's to mid-1800's). Then he played a Prelude in C minor and the beautiful Prelude in A major by Chopin (we in the club's ensembles know the latter, as we have played Joe's Smiell's orchestral arrangement of it). Michael followed with some well-known Tchaikovsky pieces, then a Finnish folk tune (a polka) in a minor key, and then he changed to a 2-row diatonic accordion (that he got through the Internet from New Zealand) and played a waltz in a minor key. Michael is a very fine and sensitive player.

Enter one of our all-time favorite players, **Bart Beninco**, teacher of piano and accordion in Petaluma. Bart played *The Breeze and I* with an intriguing bass pattern, went into a Spanish-sounding interlude and then back to *The Breeze and I* with a new, concert style. I believe this was a Magnante arrangement. Next, Bart played, so very beautifully, the familiar *Tico-Tico*, and then my personal favorite of Bart's repertoire, Sullivan's *The Lost Chord*, which is so beautiful it makes my hair stand on end. It was a Myron Floren arrangement, with organ switch the second time through, pro-



Michael Berenstein



Bart Beninco

ducing a rich organ sound. People just never want Bart to stop playing, so he continued with *The Peanut Vendor* with a terrific bass, and the familiar and beautiful tango, *Chitarra Romana* (Roman Guitar). Bart, that was an exquisite performance!

Congratulations to the winners of the drawing and door prizes:

John Puppo, **Steve Cannata**, new member **Edward Schmidt**, and **Dick Schiller**. These winners must have made quite an impression on **Mother Nature**, who treated South San Francisco to a very rare occurrence: a raging tornado very near our meeting hall (it knocked windows out of some nearby buildings), along with a very loud downpour of hail as it hit the skylights of the atrium!

In the second half of the meeting we were treated to a concert by visiting **Joe Vento**, a World War II veteran, who was with The Three Suns since 1953 (they still play occasionally). He led us on what he called a "truncated" musical journey, in order to cover as much as possible. Here are the songs he played: *Sentimental Journey/Swanee River*; then (with recorded backup operated by Don Pandori), an Italian song whose name I did not know, together with *Stars Fell on Alabama*; then *Autumn Leaves*; *Torno a Sorriento*; *Anema e Core/O Marie/That's Amore*; then *When I Fall In Love*; *Peg O' My Heart*; *O Sole Mio*; *Funiculi, Funicula*; *Tales From the Vienna Woods* (Strauss). What a show! By the way, Joe Vento has a bracelet that he tells us he received from Frank Sinatra! I hope and trust that Joe's CD's sold briskly following that stellar performance!



Joe Vento

I had to leave early, but thanks to our visiting member **Herb Meier**, I learned that following Joe's performance, he and **Peter Di Bono** had a little jam session that included *Satin Doll*, *Honeysuckle Rose* and *Misty*. Thanks, Herb!

Val

Welcome New Members

A big WELCOME to **Felix Hernandez** of Daly City, student of Peter Di Bono. Felix found out about Peter through Tom Torriglia. He is from El Salvador and loves accordion music. He has had an accordion in his garage for 30 years, and decided to learn to play it.

Another big WELCOME to **Edward Schmidt** of Oakland, a talented young man who also is a student of Peter Di Bono. Both these new members have chosen an excellent teacher!

**Some Very Important Birthday Greetings
From The San Francisco Accordion Club
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CONGRATULATIONS
AND MANY HAPPY RETURNS TO
ART VAN DAMME (85 this month)
and JOE PETOSA (80 in May)**

**Also coming up are some more very important landmark birthdays: Myron Floren (85)
and Dick Contino (75)**

Quips

- Don't accept your dog's admiration as conclusive evidence that you are wonderful. Ann Landers
- If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip. Source Unknown
- The average dog is a nicer person than the average person. Andy Rooney



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ACCORDION CLUB OF THE REDWOODS

60 Regents Circle, Rohnert Park, CA. 94928

To: Joe Smiell
 San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble.

03/06/05

From: Kristofer Nelson
 Accordion Club of the Redwoods.

Dear Joe,

I wanted you to know the tremendous positive feedback I received from the membership after the February 21st, 2005 performance of the San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble.

Your program was fantastic from start to finish. The selections were varied and completely engaging. Our audience hung on your every note. The combination of your ten top-notch accordionists and your outstanding arrangements made for an evening that the Accordion Club of the Redwoods will be talking about for some time.

The various parts each musician played blended seamlessly. Each piece painted a picture as it unfolded. It was a pure delight. I felt as if I should have been wearing a tux in a symphony hall, rather than standing in shirt sleeves in our little clubhouse.

I especially appreciated your insights and stories before each piece. It really helped many of our members to be given the "inside scoop" on each selection. Especially the intro to "In a Persian Market." As each part of the piece was revealed, I felt as if I could see the characters in the story.

You mentioned the possibility of the ensemble playing on a night especially designed for our young music students. I think this would be an exceptional idea. The A.C.R. has a night that we honor our young players in late spring. This would be a great opportunity for such a program.

Thank you and all the members of the San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble for presenting a fun-filled and delightful program. We truly appreciate your time, effort, and expertise.

You folks are a spectacular example of what accordion music can achieve. I hope that you continue for many more years to be the "yardstick" that accordionists can measure themselves against.

Thank you, once again, for such a wonderful program.

Yours truly,

Kristofer Nelson
 President
 Accordion Club of the Redwoods.

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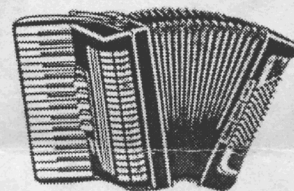
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Thomas Bruno (724) 339-1507

The ACE Ensemble thanks Kris Nelson for this very gratifying letter. We are thrilled that the ACR enjoyed the concert.

Your Executive Board Met . . .

. . . On Thursday, March 31. Not including the CD set aside for the ACE Ensemble, the club has \$1,602 in the Scholarship Fund, \$2,865.21 in the savings account and \$1,126.30 in the Checking account.

Renewal of our insurance policy comes up in May or June and will cost \$2,000. To cut costs, the club will no longer pay for the rental of the rehearsal room at Hope Church for the Fun Band and the club ensemble after April, and the newsletter cost must not exceed \$250 per month. Our Website is canceled for now. All refreshments at meetings will cost \$1.00. We need to come up with ways to generate revenue and attract more people to attend our meetings.

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A Pleasant Surprise in the Redwoods

Being a member and attending the special club functions of the **Accordion Club of the Redwoods** is always a pleasure! The meetings hosted by **Kris Nelson** and his fine supporting staff make our visit ever so pleasurable. One of the special events they put on each year for members is their "Spring Fling" Dinner Dance in March, with a wonderful meal, wine, a raffle with classy prizes, and great music for dancing, all included in the membership subscription.

I'm writing this article because, in addition to the above, as we entered the building this past March for the Spring Fling Dinner Dance, I immediately took note of a very fine-sounding accordion being played for before-dinner listening and dancing enjoyment. I'm always on the lookout for such a player/accordion combo, and this was our pleasant surprise: **Jerry Choate** was playing old and new standards on his vintage Giulietti, a magnificent sounding instrument, tastefully amplified; and playing, to my mind, the way an accordion should be played. Jerry played very nice arrangements flawlessly, with the bass in full partnership with the treble. The success of his offerings was plainly evident by the repeated applause he received. So, Jerry, take a well deserved bow!

And a big hats-off to **Kris Nelson** who presented our own **Vince Cerelli** a surprise and well-deserved award for Vince's years and years of service to our accordion community. *DS*

P.S. To Vince: **Thanks** for saving us a spot at your table! It's always fun to be with special friends.



Jerry Choate
←



Vince receives award from Kris
→

Do You Just Belong? By Al Freudenberg

Reprinted from the January 2004 SFAC Newsletter

Please read this and consider how you might help!

Are you an Active Member, the kind who would be missed?
Or are you just content that your name is on the list?
Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock?
Or do you stay at home, to criticize and knock?
Do you take an active part to help the work along?
Or are you satisfied to only just belong?
Do you work with your committee, and get right in and mix?
Or leave the work to just a few, and talk about the "cliques"?
Think this one over, member, you know right from wrong—
Are you an Active Member, or do you just belong?

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Joe Smiell (510) 832-6938

Scott Williamson (408) 553-7519

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SFAC MEMBERSHIP

\$25 per year for individual; \$30 per year for a family

Mail check to S.F.A.C.

P.O. Box 318175

San Francisco, CA 94131-8175

Admission to Meetings: \$5.00

Ad Policy

A member may place one four-line ad for one month free of charge; after that the charge is \$5.00 per issue; a business-card-size ad will cost \$5.00 per issue or \$50.00 per year; a quarter-page ad will cost \$10.00; a half-page ad will cost \$20.00; and a full-page ad will cost \$35.00. A flyer advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$20. The cost for ads placed by non-members will be twice the above-quoted prices.

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Come and join in ...

San Francisco Accordion Club

Our New Home and New Meeting Schedule!!
Since February 2005 the SFAC meets on the **Third Sunday** of the month (except this month), 2:00 p.m. South San Francisco Senior Center in the South San Francisco Municipal Building
33 Arroyo Drive, South San Francisco
For Info call any board member

East Bay Accordion Circle

Meets the **THIRD TUESDAY** of the month 7:30 p.m.
1540 Scenic Ave., Berkeley. Bring your accordion!
For information call (510) 548-2822

Accordion Club of the Redwoods

Meets 7:30 p.m. the third Monday of the month
Hermann Sons Hall, 860 Western, Petaluma
For information call Harry (707) 838-2859

Golden State Accordion Club

Vacaville Chapter Meets 7 PM
the second Tuesday of the month
Moose Hall, 6585 Gibson Canyon Road
Sacramento Chapter meets 7 PM
the fourth Wednesday
at Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd.
in Sacramento

For information call (707) 864-2359

Northern California Accordion Society

Meets 7 PM the third Thursday of the month
Venita Rhea's Restaurant, 4415 Granite Dr., #1500,
Rocklin, CA
Info: Call Vince Cukar (916) 791-3041

Upcoming Events

Sunday, May 8, 2005: Petosa Accordion Extravaganza 2005
celebrating Joe Petosa's 80th birthday

Sunday, June 5: 15th Annual San Francisco Accordion Festival at The Cannery, noon-6:00 p.m., celebrating National Accordion Awareness Month as well as highlighting San Francisco's official musical instrument. The event is free. For info call Tom Torriglia (415) 771-3112 or e-mail tom@ladyofspain.com.

June 5-10: Rose City Accordion Club Accordion Camp, Silver Falls, Oregon. For info call Geoff Levear (503) 293-0322.

June 15-19, 2005: Accordionists & Teachers Guild Festival, Richardson, TX featuring first-time-ever **Art Van Damme International Jazz Competition**. Info: John Simkus (847) 683-2528; simkus@mc.net.

Saturday, June 25, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.: third annual **Day of the Accordion Celebration** in Petaluma, held in two downtown locations: Putnam Plaza and Petaluma Historical Library & Museum. For info or to participate call Tom Cordoni (707) 762-2231.

July 4-9, 2005: 31st Annual Kimberley International Old Time Accordion Championships (KIOTAC) festival, Kimberley, B.C., Canada. Reservation deadline May 31. See Val for registration form, or call (888) 454-6822. E-mail info@kiotac.ca; Website www.kiotac.ca.

Saturday, July 16, 2005: SF Accordion Club Picnic, Nature Friends Park in the Oakland Hills. **Save the date!**

Sunday, July 24-Friday, July 29, 2005: Galla-Rini Accordion Camp, San Diego, CA. Call Val (510) 531-4836, vtkacc@value.net for info, or call Kjell Holmes (858) 453-5486 or kjell@sanrr.com.

NOTE ABOUT TEACHER LISTINGS:

Please hold onto your old newsletters for the teacher listings, as that is an item we'll need to cut out of the newsletter for a while. If you need names and phone numbers of accordion teachers in the Bay Area (San Francisco/North peninsula, North Bay, East Bay, Peninsula and South Bay) please contact Val at (510) 531-4836 or vtkacc@value.net.

Good Time Accordion Club

Meets 7 p.m. the second Wednesday
of the month

Community Center

1055 Escalon Avenue, Escalon

For information call (209) 545-3603

Medford Accordion Club

(See announcement below, right)

Contact: Joe Zajac, 424 Girard Dr., Medford, OR
97504; (541) 779-3420 or zajac@aol.com

South Bay Accordion Jam

Third Sunday of the month 2:00 p.m.
Location of meeting varies; for info call
Victor Corsiglia (408) 554-6275 or
Bill Tapogna (408) 984-5290.

Silicon Valley Accordion Society

Meets on the first Sunday of the Month
2:00 p.m. at Harry's Hofbrau Restaurant
390 Saratoga Ave., San Jose
(between 280 and Stevens Creek Blvd.)
For Info Phone (408) 270-5003

SFAC Evening Ensemble Practice *New Days!*

First and third Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
Hope Lutheran Church, 55 San Fernando Way,
Daly City

Call first!: Frank Montoro (650) 574-4757

SFAC Band Practice *New Days!*

Second and Fourth Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.
Hope Lutheran Church, 55 San Fernando Way,
Daly City

Call first!: Frank Schlotter (510) 339-1163

DIRECTIONS AND NEWS n.

OUR MUSICAL GROUP

REHEARSALS!!!

Our new rehearsal location is the **Hope Lutheran Church, 55 San Fernando Way in Daly City**. It is very near to the Moose Club.

Coming from the South on 280: Take the exit for Highway 1 South/Pacifica/Mission Street. Follow signs toward Mission Street and make a slight left onto Junipero Serra Blvd. Very shortly you make a sharp left onto San Pedro Road. Cross over the freeway and turn left onto Sullivan Ave. and right away turn right onto San Fernando Way. Look for the sign very soon on your left. Drive to the back of the parking lot. The rehearsal classroom is to the left at the back of the parking lot.

Coming from the North on 280: Take Eastmoor Avenue exit; take left lane of exit road, which will then bend right; turn left on Sullivan and very soon turn right onto San Fernando Way as noted above.

Hearty Thanks to Janet Stechholz for making it possible for us to rehearse at Hope church!

Who Is Playing Where . . .

Editor's Note: It has been fun including the playing dates and locations of our various Bay Area accordion artists. However, because of the requirement *that we drastically cut down the size of our newsletter*, at least for now, I will offer you names and phone numbers to call to *find out where your favorite player is performing*. Anyone wishing to have his/her name added to this list, please contact Val (510) 531-4836 or vtkacc@value.net.

Steve Albini in Napa, North Bay and East Bay (415) 892-5381.

Steve Balich, Sr. in North Bay, El Verano and Sacramento (707) 874-3494.

William DeMichelis in Palo Alto (650) 321-3319.

Joe Domitrowich and the Alpiners USA in the South Bay (408) 255-1259.

Tom Torriglia and the Bella Ciao Band mostly in SF (415) 440-0800; www.ladyofspain.com/bellaciao.html

Word Has It . . .

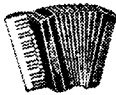
. . . That **Herb Meier** is hoping to get his piano-teacher wife **Sabine** to try the accordion, but she insists she could never learn to do push-pull and buttons at the same time! She has been assured that she could. She is a wonderful pianist and musician!

. . . That **Vince Cirelli** was appropriately honored by the Accordion Club of the Redwoods, who presented him with a beautiful plaque in appreciation of his lifelong love and promotion of the accordion. Congratulations, Vince—it's well deserved, and one to add to your collection of honors over the years. (By the way, you wouldn't believe some of the tales Vince has to tell about his early days playing the accordion in North Beach!!)

. . . That the **Cotati Accordion Festival** WILL take place (last weekend of August), under new management. Stay tuned for details.

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