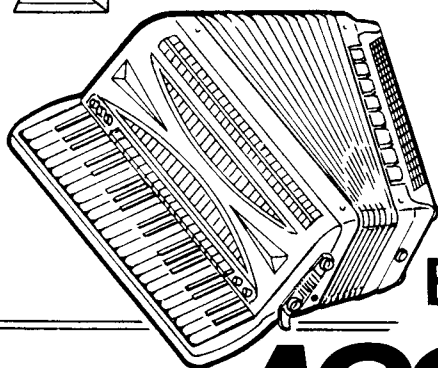


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB

AUGUST, 1997

August General Meeting

by: Val Kieser

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Ed Massolo, acting in President Bob Berta's absence, opened the meeting with announcements about the October 26th annual dinner, the upcoming Cotati Festival, and the Boggio memorial. He reminded everyone that dues have now been increased to \$25 annually, and added that anyone paying dues before October first will be able to renew at the old \$20 rate.

Bob Smith, our Nominating Committee chair, announced that committee's slate: for President, **Marian Kelly**; for Vice-President, **Joe Smiell**; for Secretary, **Valerie Kieser**; and for the two open Board positions, **Frank Montoro** and **Sharon Walters**. Then additional nominations were requested, and **Lou Soper** was nominated for President and **Domenic Saso** was nominated for Vice-President.

Therefore, there will be voting by printed ballot at our September meeting, being held on the second Monday, September 8th, because of the Labor Day holiday. You must attend that meeting in order to vote, one ballot per member, to be distributed at the door.

The entertainment part of the meeting began with **Frank Schlotter** playing

his beautiful 140-bass Colombo accordion. **Frank** presented a series of old cowboy songs: *Ragtime Cowboy Joe* (written in 1912!), *Tumbling Tumbleweed* from the 1930's, written by Bob Nolan of the Sons of the Pioneers (the others are Roy Rogers and Dick Spencer), and another Bob Nolan song, the well-known, memory-evoking *Cool Water*. Some of us couldn't help but sing along with the wonderful songs we all grew up with. Frank concluded with *South of the Border*, citing the inevitable role of Mexico in our cowboy history.

Next up were **Joe Simoni** and **John Linda** with their festive cream-colored and red accordions. What a lively duo! They began with a medley of *Just Because* (including vocal by **John**), *Reginella Campagnola* and *I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover*, again with **John's** vocal. Next they played a Latin medley including *La Paloma*, *Arrivederci Roma*, and *Never On Sunday*. Their finale was a standards medley: *Five Foot Two, Oh Marie!* and *Bye Bye Blackbird*, vocalized by both **John** and the audience. I heard a lot of foot-tapping. What fun!

We were then treated to a wonderful performance by **Norma Parsons**, a pe-

Aug. 30, Sat. Sebastopol Cajun/Zydeco Festival. Laguna Park, Marris St. 12 - 8 PM. \$5.00.

Sept. 3rd, Wed. BAAC Ensemble Practice, Moose Lodge, Daly City. Call Joe, (510) 832-6838.

Sept. 8th, SECOND Monday. BAAC General Meeting featuring Vyatcheslav Semyonov (bayan) (OK to call him "Slava") and his wife Natasha (domra), with Robert Sattler (bayan). Elections tonight (see p. 5). Long intermission will include food and drink: members are encouraged to bring an appetizer or other nibbly. Admission tonight is \$5.00. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus, S.F. just north of Stonestown Shopping Center. 7 PM.

Sept. 10th, Wed. BAAC Board Meeting 7:30 PM at Bob Berta's, 4 Park Manor Drive, Daly City.

September 14th, Sun. ALSI (San Diego Accordion Club sponsors Dick Contino at the El Cajon Performing Arts Center, 210 E. Main St., El Cajon, 2-4 PM. Call (619) 440-2277.

Sep 14 - 20: Joe Smiell's Button Box Camp at Norden. Call (510) 832-6938 for info.

ANNUAL DINNER

Sept. 19th - 21st: Northeast Squeeze-In: Free-reed getaway in the Berkshires. Various accommodations. Contact the Button Box, Amherst, Massachusetts, (413) 549-0171.

Sept. 24th, Wed. (and every fourth Wednesday), BAAC Fun Band. Moose Lodge, Daly City. Call Domenic, 587-7557

Sept. 27th, Sat. First Annual Cajun/Zydeco Experience. Ardenwood Historic Farm, 880& Hwy 84, Fremont. Music, dance lessons, story telling, food, wagon rides, farm animals. \$12. Under 10, free. Call Maryanne, (510) 635-0135.

October 6th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting with a group of accordionists from Sweden.

October 26th, Sunday. BAAC Annual Dinner at the Irish Cultural Center. Y'all Come!

December 15. Annual Accordion Club of the Redwoods dinner and December meeting. Volpi's Restaurant, Petaluma. *Please send Calendar Information to Your Editor, using the address on the last page. Thank you. -*

It is drawing near my two year term as President of the BAAC. While I will write a more in depth article in next month's newsletter about my experiences, the one thing that I did want to talk about is what our Club is now and can be in the future. The BAAC has grown from just a handful of members a short time ago to a very large organization. Of course there are as many opinions as members as to how the club should exist. They range from a simple monthly meeting of "entertainment" to very elaborate concerts, workshops and so on. Complicating these possibilities is the requirements associated with our status as a 501c non-profit organization per the IRS. To maintain that status means that we must be more than just a

Celebrating both Incoming and Outgoing Officers and Presentation of Awards

Everyone is urged to attend BAAC's annual dinner to be held this year on Sunday, October 26th at the Irish Cultural Center, 2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco (near the zoo). We'll follow a format similar to last year's, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. Doors will open at six, with dinner at approximately seven. And bring your dancing shoes!

Choose from Breast of Chicken Jerusalem or Roast Cross Ribs of Beef with Bordelaise Sauce. Dinners included salad, potato or rice, vegetables, rolls, and dessert. No host bar. And there's plenty of nearby parking!

Mail your reservations to: Bob Smith, 2300 St. Francis Drive, Palo Alto 94303. Cost is \$20.00 for chicken and \$21.00 for beef, including tax and gratuity.

President's Message

by Bob Berta

hobby club. We MUST provide good for the community or risk losing our non-profit status. We currently accomplish this through participation in civic and ethnic events, sponsorship of a scholarship fund, etc. But there is a lot more we can do. One area I feel that we have really neglected is promotion of accordion playing to the young. I suspect that I am one of the younger members of the club at my 49 years of age. If the accordion is to survive it needs to have youngsters actively recruited and encouraged to participate in our club meetings. While that has been done in a limited way (past scholarships to two young artists), we need to do more of that.

So I am asking all of our members to try to invite youngsters to the meetings. Even

Famed Accordion Teacher & Merchant Orlando Meni-Ketti Dies

by Steve Mobia

Late February this year, renowned accordion teacher Orlando Meni-ketti died of multiple strokes. He was 86. From the nineteen thirties through the sixties, Meni-ketti taught accordion, not only from his home base in Oakland, but throughout Northern California. At the peak of his teaching, he had 200 students weekly. In 1945 he started a general music store as well, which he continued to run up until his death. Because accordions fell out of favor in the late sixties, Orlando stopped teaching and in the mid seventies he sold furniture in addition to accordions, guitars and other instruments.

He leaves behind his wife Margaret, two daughters and a son.

The store's last location at 19 Grand Avenue in Oakland is undergoing a transition through Reuven Kall who has renamed it "Nathan-Aaron's", and w^l says he will continue to sell accordions. Kimric Smythe, a BAAC member, will do accordion repairs through the store.

if they don't play accordion, you may spark some interest. In addition I would encourage all the accordion teachers to use the Club as a venue for "showing off" their young students' skills. I and many of you can remember playing in recitals in our youth. This is a good way to hone your performance skills and develop the poise and self-confidence needed later in life. The BAAC has had an ongoing commitment to recognize youngsters and sadly we haven't had much chance to do it lately due to the limited participation by children.

All of us have a limited time on this earth and if you love the accordion as much as I do I am sure you wouldn't want it to "die" as each of us passes away with no one to pass our legacy onto.

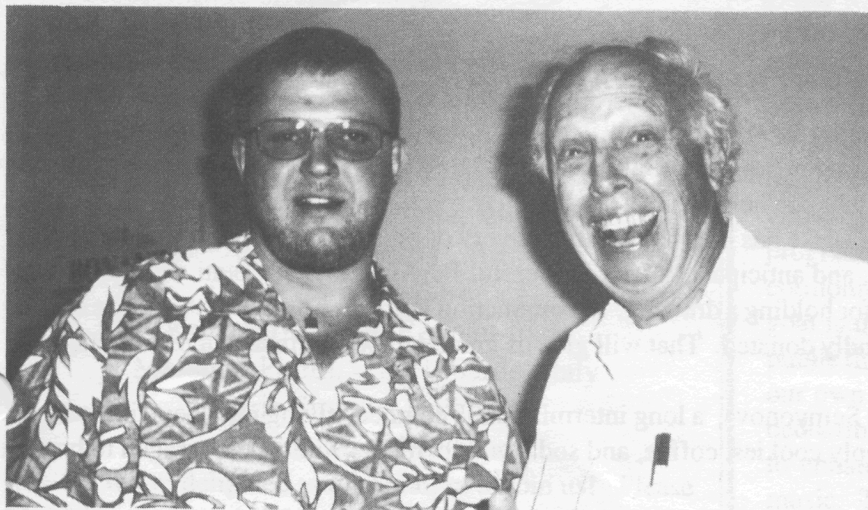
August General Meeting, cont.

ennial favorite at BAAC. Her first tune was an old, familiar one but delicate and difficult, an intermezzo pizzicata, *The Secret* by Gautier. **Norma** played it with lots of expression and precision at the same time. Next, *Norma* played a Jimmie McHugh medley, including *I Can't Believe That You're in Love With Me*, with vocal, followed by two well-known tangos: *El Choclo* and *La Cumparsita*. **Norma** finished with *Kansas City* with vocal. All of it was simply beautiful.



Joe Simoni, John Linda

Jorgen Sundeqvist, on U.S. tour from Sweden, treated us to a whole concert for the second half of the evening. **Jorgen** played 16 pieces altogether, covering a wide variety of tastes and interests, and he did every one of them with total precision. All I can say is (to use Jorgen's own favorite expression), WOW!! What a combination of talent and charisma! **Jorgen's** songs were: The well-known Galla-Rini arrangement of the Italian song, *Dicitencello Vuie (Just Say I Love Her)*; the *Italian Polka* by Rachmaninoff, originally written for two pianos, sounding a lot like Russian folk music, with much



Jorgen Sundeqvist, Glenn McClelland

lively finger work; a beautiful *Now Take My Heart*, by Swedish composer Hugo Alfvan, who wrote it for his wife who was 30 years younger than he!; *The Hoop*, another song by a Swedish composer, Andrew Walter; *Para Mis Amigos (For My Friends)* also by Andrew Walter; a brand new arrangement by **Jorgen** of a well-known aria from Puccini's *Turandot* (this arrangement requires much bellow work; **Jorgen's** accordion has an extra bellow fold for greater capacity, and he certainly does know how to handle it!); a very difficult Bulgarian number in 11/16 time (you count 4-3-4); a 1918 Frosini overture dedicated to Pietro Deiro, *Omaggio a Pietro*, which picks up on several famous themes from Pietro Deiro's works (in 1913 Deiro stole a theme from Puccini and made it into a march, as part of *Pietro's Return*; the original is the theme for the popular song *Don't You Know*, and it sounds completely different as a march!).

Jorgen then performed a bit of "magic", changing his accordion from freebass to stradella in just over one minute, by removing the pins and replacing the entire bass section! The free bass section weighs much, much more than the stradella. Continuing his program, now with stradella bass, **Jorgen** played *Five O'Clock Rush* by Eugene Ettore, complete with car horns honking and other rush-hour noises; Charles Magnante's arrangements of *La Cumparsita* and *Magnante's Boogie*; then, having received from **Joe Smiell** a request for a polka, **Jorgen** played a Norwegian polka by Henry Haagenrud, *Polka Jubilee*, which bowled everyone over with a few brief and very fast chromatic runs in both hands simultaneously (WOW!!). He then played a Swedish polka, with a very busy and fast-moving right hand; a beautiful, sophisticated arrangement of *Avalon* with very fancy fingerwork in surprise bursts, by the late genius Vince Geraci of Chicago; then a Galla-Rini arrangement from FIFTY YEARS AGO of *Jalousie*, with frequent changes



Norma Parsons



August Meeting

of register in the bass to reach all the pitches required; *Concert Overture* by Eric Gylling, the best overture Gylling ever wrote but which was never published; John Molinari, Sr. had recorded it and Jorgen wrote the music from listening to the recording. The piece contains some brief and very effective bellow-shakes.

Thus **Jorgen** concluded his concert to a standing ovation and cries for more! WOW!!



Here's Jorgen!

BAAC Picnic

BAAC's annual picnic, held again this year at the Elks' Club in Palo Alto on Sunday, June 29th and chaired by Lou Soper, provided a fun time for everybody. It was attended by approximately 160 people, most of whom stayed for hours jamming, listening, talking, playing, and eating, all of which are favorite activities of accordionists. Lou showcased some terrific BAAC musicians, which kept everybody happy for the entire afternoon.

Picnic revenue (tickets plus raffle sales) totalled \$909. Expenses included \$700 for rental of the grounds, \$100 door prizes, \$144 for food and a cook, \$160 for musicians and \$50 for tickets and name tags, leaving a deficit of \$245.

BAAC owes considerable thanks to Lou and to his committee persons for handling all the details of this year's picnic and making sure that a wonderful time was had by all.

Contact Phone #s for Officers and Board Members:

Pres: Bob Berta (415) 756-8309
 V.P. Frank Panacci (415) 731-1039
 Treas. Peter Adler (510) 845-4936
 Record.Sect. Val Kieser (510) 531-4836
 Finan. Sect. Bob Smith (415) 856-9321

Ed Massolo (415) 589-8409
 Herb Meier (415) 364-5398
 Frank Schlotter (510) 339-8657

BAAC August BOARD MEETING

- Treasurer Peter Adler reports bank balances totaling \$6946.
- The Italian Festival to be held Sept. 20th at Jack London Square in Oakland needs 8 to 10 people to play from approximately 11 AM to 4 PM. They will pay you. Call Bob if you can help.
- Herb Meier, our Cotati booth chair, says the UPS strike has interfered with delivery of the Hero accordions to our supplier; however he expects the situation to resolve itself, and anticipates a very successful BAAC booth at Cotati.
- Peter Adler volunteered to handle arrangements for holding a drawing, in conjunction with our Cotati Booth, for the red and white 12-bass accordion which Ed Suterko so kindly donated. That will give us greater exposure than at a regular meeting, plus some additional names for our mailing list.
- For the September general meeting featuring the Semyonovs, a long intermission is planned, giving members time to meet and talk with our famous guests. BAAC will supply cookies, coffee, and soda, and members will be encouraged to bring a little food for nibbles.
- The Club will pay for the rental of Moose Lodge for rehearsals of BAAC Ensemble (first and third Wednesdays) and for the BAAC Fun Band on the fourth Wednesday beginning in September.

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ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD at our *September Meeting*.

BAAC's September meeting (the SECOND Monday, September 8th) is an important one not only because we are honored to host Vyatcheslav Semyonov, one of the world's most respected accordion artists, but also because we are holding our annual elections at that meeting. Two offices are contested, those of President (Lou Soper and Marian Kelly) and of Vice-President, (Domenic Saso and Joe Smiell), so the voting will be formal. The office of secretary is not contested (Valerie Kieser, candidate), nor are the two open Board positions (Sharon Walters and Frank Montoro, candidates).

As you arrive at that meeting, your name will be checked against a list of current members, and each membership unit will receive one ballot. Ballots will be collected during intermission, and the results will be announced before you leave.

Here are statements from each of the two candidates for President.

LOU SOPER

Lou Soper is a co-founder and was President of this accordion club our first two years, 1990 and 1991. We started with 27 charter members and by 1991 numbered over 270. Since that time, our membership has increased to 350, a gain of only 80 members in five years. That is less than 20 members each year. There must be some reason for such a slow growth. Better yet, there must be a solution.

Strong leadership and more membership participation always produce excellent results. More committees are required to make an organization operate smoother. As your President, new committees will be selected to perform activities which will spread the work load and increase efficiency.

We definitely need a promotion committee, an activity committee, a workshop committee, a membership committee, and an advertising/publicity committee. Where will they come from?? This club has many talented members that could easily form these committees. How do we get them to volunteer?? Ask Them!!

We also need a correspondent to assist in publicity and handle all the newsletters from the many different accordion clubs. These newsletters should be put in albums for our membership to view.

Yes indeed, positive action is what we need, and if this is your desire, then re-elect Lou Soper.

MARIAN KELLY

The common bond that brings us together in BAAC is our love of accordions and music. As Editor of your newsletter for six years, I have come to recognize that the Club also needs goals—a broader sense of purpose. We need direction and leadership to become the Club we want to be. We need to consider why BAAC exists, what our Club is and what it might be, for both the short and the long term. We must involve all our members in this process, not only because we need everybody's help, but also because participation generates enthusiasm, cooperation, and a good time for everyone.

Our main purpose has been and should remain the enjoyment of accordion music and getting to know others who share our passion. As a non-profit Club, we are also committed to promoting our instrument to the general public. BAAC can and should help members (and potential members) locate music and accordion accessories, instruments, teachers, repairs, and further their musical skills.

The standing committees specified in the bylaws provide a structure for organizing BAAC. Those committees, working with a budget and general guidelines, should be formed immediately, then be given considerable autonomy to carry out both their own ideas and those suggested by the Board. Two areas in particular need of thoughtful committees, in my opinion, are Membership and Finance. We need to pay more attention to our members, especially to new ones. We also need to establish financial systems which will ensure accuracy, regular reports to the membership, and filing of all appropriate documents.

One important goal, a vision of mine, is to bring more young people into our Club and to involve them in our activities, as young people are BAAC's lifeline to our future. BAAC's programs should offer special opportunities for aspiring accordionists to shine and enjoy themselves. Another possible goal is that we encourage accordion lessons by helping the public find accordion teachers, by supporting and publicizing our own teachers, and by accepting and making use of tax-deductible donations of used instruments. Yet another goal is to enhance public awareness and enjoyment of accordion music. The commonality of these activities — the glue that holds and motivates us — is musical pleasure, fun, and a good time for all. We'll always have that in mind.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following New Members to our Club:

Albert Gardi, San Francisco
 R. Paul Lynott, Waukesha, Wisconsin
 Ann Miya, Santa Cruz
 Tessa Morrone, Berkeley
 Kristofer Nelson, Rohnert Park
 Massimo Pignini, Castelfidardo, Italy
 Kimric Smythe, Richmond
 Melvin Sten, Millbrae

We're delighted you've chosen to join us! Please help us get acquainted, and let us hear from you!

Vyacheslav Semyonov Plays His Transcriptions

CD Review by: *Henry Doktorski*

I believe that this CD is so extraordinary that I have bumped it up twenty places in my line of CDs to review; it is absolutely breathtaking. It is not everyday that a CD comes along by a world-class performer playing world-class pieces on a world-class instrument recorded with world-class engineering! Whether you like transcriptions or not, this CD will open up your eyes and ears to the beauty, power and grace of the concert accordion.



Natasha and Vyacheslav Semyonov

Vyacheslav Semyonov (b. 1946) is considered "the founder of the modern performance school of bayan," and has taught at the Rostov Musical Pedagogical Institute and the Gnessin Musical Institute, where he is currently professor. He was awarded the Silver Disk at the 1994 International Festival of Bayan and Bayanists and in 1995 received the highest possible title for a Russian: "People's Artist of Russia," granted by a decree from President Boris Yeltsin.

When you listen to this album, you will hear why Semyonov is so highly regarded, as his performances are powerful yet sensitive, grandiose yet delicate. The Bach *Chaconne*, originally written for solo violin, and later transcribed by Busoni for piano, is a masterpiece. I have not heard another accordion performer besides Lips who can so ably communicate the genius of that great German composer-organist — who many consider to be the greatest Western composer of all time — and make this fourteen and a half minute set of monumental variations come alive. In at least one regard, Semyonov's recording surpasses Lips' recording; its sound quality is noticeably superior.

The second track, a set of four Renaissance pieces, provides a nicely balanced

contrast to the heavy opening cut. *Greensleeves* is positively delightful; graceful and enchanting — a wonderful arrangement. And the last of the four pieces — *Canarios* — made me want to dance; its rhythms were so infectious.

In my opinion, Semyonov's performance of the Paganni *La Campanella* is brilliant beyond compare. My adjectives cannot describe the joy I experienced while listening to this album. Let it suffice to say that when I first put this CD on my stereo, I pressed the full-repeat button and let it play for eight hours straight while I worked on my paper for "Musical Performance" magazine. And after all that, I was still not tired of it.

Semyonov's instrument is, according to Semyonov's producer and protege, Robert Sattler, one of only two instruments built by the Pignini company that have Italian action and Russian reeds. The other instrument is owned by Lips. Why are Russian reeds so magnificent? Mogens Ellegaard, the late great Danish accordionist said, "One difference between the Russian accordions and the Western accordions is the reeds. The Russian reeds are all mounted on big plates like the

reeds on a harmonica; no wax at all. Also the shape of the reeds is different. Russian reeds are rectangular and Italian reeds are conic; so different sonorities are produced. The Russian reeds are fantastic; I must say they have qualities that the Western reeds don't have."

Program:
J. S. Bach: Chaconne
Anonymous: Four
Renaissance Pieces
Greensleeves

Kleiner Tanz
Bellezze
Canarios

D. Scarlatti: Sonata in Eb
D. Scarlatti: Sonata in C
D. Scarlatti/C. Tauszig: Pastorale
N. Paganni/F. Liszt: La Campanella
C. Franck: Pastorale (E Major)
O. Messiaen: Dieu Parmi Nous

So this is the extraordinary fellow we'll have the opportunity to enjoy on Monday, Sept. 8th. The recording doesn't include Slava's wife, Natasha, but we'll hear them together, and we guarantee that they make an unforgettable duo.

Members are encouraged (but not required) to bring a little food (cheese, crackers, bread, fruit, sweets, etc) for our planned long intermission in September. Our special guests, the Semyonovs and Robert Sattler, will be in town less than 24 hours, making it difficult to entertain them or even to get to know them. So we thought that we'd ask them to circulate during our intermission on that evening, and that a few goodies would add to the occasion. BAAC will supply cookies, coffee, and soda.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!

It's here, folks. Time to pay your dues again. The change in our fiscal year means that your previous membership lasted an extra three months, but that time has now passed. The Board has raised dues to \$25/year effective October 1, 1997. If you rejoin (or join) prior to October 1, you still pay only \$20.00.

Please complete the form below and send it along with check payable to BAAC to 31 Aliso Way, Portola Valley, 94028. If you joined BAAC after March 31, 1997, or if you have already paid your '97-98 dues, you may ignore this request.

NAME _____

PHONE (_____) _____

ADDRESS _____

FAX (_____) _____

CITY: _____

E-MAIL _____

STATE: _____ ZIP _____

I would be willing to help on the following committee(s): (please check)

- MEMBERSHIP() PUBLICITY() FINANCE() NEWSLETTER() PROGRAM()
 HOSPITALITY() EVENTS() ADMINISTRATION() FACILITY()
 (concerts, workshops, picnic, Cotati, etc.)

I do **NOT** wish my name and phone included on an address list for circulation to members only. ()

Comments here:

BETTER LATE THAN.....????

A postcard was received this month from "A Member":

"I was looking for the answers to what the occupation of The Internationals were and the answer to the cryptogram — none found!!"

Well, of course, this person is right. Your editor neglected to include the cryptoquote solution in the July newsletter, and also neglected to find out from Denny Huff (who had included the question about the occupations) what the answers were. My apologies! My head must have still been on vacation!

And so...here are both solutions:

1. The Cryptoquote should read

The only fellow who gets anywhere playing both ends against the middle is an accordion player. O.A. Battista".

2. The Internationals' Real Jobs:

Jan Meere, who plays horn, is the CEO of a credit union.

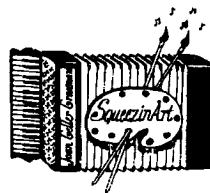
Bob Maggiora, who plays accordion, is a travel agent.

Steve McGinnis, who plays bass guitar and yodels, works at an electrical supply house.

Porter Goltz, the resident drummer, is a lawyer.

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Paul Pasquall

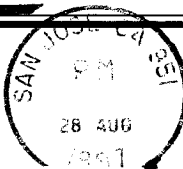
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