

January General Meeting

Hello everyone and happy New Year!

Well our January meeting was another example of how the world's best accordion club provides the unique! To start off with, Bob Berta did the M.C. honors in a tuxedo of all things. Bob will go to any length to show his respect to his audience, check the pix. Prez Lou introduced our guests and new members John Sullivan and his son Sam. Sam is taking keyboard lessons and has the idea to try the accordion in the future. We then did the "Soper shuffle", meeting again some new friends, and then it was off to the meeting. This month we were treated to a presentation by our own master Vince Cirelli on accordion handling techniques, reed discussion with regards to switch setup and how musette tuning is accomplished, and a very pleasant song selection demonstrating bellows technique. This is

the first time that Vince has ever done this and as you can imagine what a treat it was for us to hear this discourse by such a distinguished accordion expert. I'm sure Vince will continue to educate us with his vast knowledge at up coming meetings, lucky us and thank you Vince!

Bob Smith was next with his own arrangement of

Bob Smith was next with his own arrangement of the *Ben Hur Chariot Race March*, complete with hand out lyrics for the audience. Bob is an accomplished organist and member of ACE and has published this piece which

includes beautiful graphics on the cover. He did a marvelous job of presentation and we raced along with his playing singing many words, very fast. Great job Bob!

Our next artist exemplifies why our club is so special in spotlighting the unusual. Carolyn Cooley is a lovely young lady, a local artist who has used her creative talents to express her poems and songs with the accordion, voice and dance, a combination of spoken recital, singing and tap dance to present her original creations. I think we were surprised at first at this very unusual approach, but then found ourselves listening closely to the words and the very entertaining way they were presented. Spinning Around In Loco Land and Log Town Lament, were the two songs presented with Log Town Lament having a comedic flavor to it that had us chuckling and Steve Mobia really chuck-

ling! Carolyn appears at local art fairs, but said she prefers to perform for us being such an appreciative audience.

Don't know how Val Kieser has time to practice with all the time given to making BAAC a great place to be, but she did it and started with a



Val Kieser



Carolyn Cooley

BALLOT ON PAGE 7!

grand arrangement of Sibelius' Finlandia. I recognized this song as Be Still My Soul from my Lutheran hymnal. A very moving piece with beautiful moving bass work followed by an Austrian yodel called Erherzog Johann Jodler and finally a lovely French waltz Le Dénicheur. Thank you Val.



Prez. Lou

Prez Lou then took the stage as a soloist this evening, an unusual event since his forte is backing up singers and lead musicians with his marvelous chord combinations. His first offering was his own composition, Valentine Polka. Then Lou played his special rendition of The Nearness Of You using his great chord stylings, a piece that years ago when he played it caught the ear of Art Van Damme and started a wonderful friendship. Finishing off Lou brought his vocal talents to bear on a Henry Mancini medley, Dear Heart, Charade, and Moon River. Those challenging high notes were no problem and shows why Lou has the reputation he does as a fist rate entertainer. Thanks Lou.

Finally Jim Hillman took the stage with his swing quintet which included Ron Borelli/keyboard, Carla Kaufman/string bass, John Madrigal/cornet, Marc Hinchman/drums and/con-

gas. The last time I remember a group getting a standing ovation was when the Internationals appeared at Donsworth Hall, so that gives an inkling of what kind of performance we were treated to. I remember Jim from my playing days in the late 50's when he was known as belonging to a very select group of accordionists in the area known for their jazz expertise, which included Jim Boggio, Lou Casalnuovo, George Cerrutti, and Dick Gumina (cousin of famed Tommy). Jim's early teachers were Domenic Saso and Mickey Conti, and was influenced to expressing his music on accordion like a horn player by clarinetist Elmer Revelli. Jim blossomed and went on to tour the Las Vegas, Reno, & Tahoe circuit for many years with the Andreni Brothers, De Castro Sisters and others. When he returned to the Bay Area he appeared on a steady basis with the Walt Tolleson and Ray Hackett orchestras. But his greatest thrill was performing at the Cal Neva in front of Frank Sinatra and the Rat Pack and being singled out by Frank for praise as playing one "bleeping houseful of accordion".

About six years ago Jim hung it up and retired, selling his accordions and equipment. It was good fortune for BAAC and for Jim when we moved our meeting place to Club Verdi, for we rediscovered one another. Jim credits Peter

DiBono, Ron Borelli, and especially George Alves for bringing him back to the accordion. George Alves gave him the beautiful Imperial accordion that he played this night.

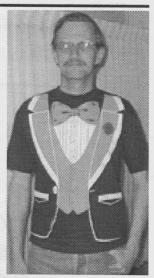
So tonight was Jim's night to shine and shine he did. The numbers included Green Dolphin Street, Don't Get Around Much Anymore, Sweet And Lovely, Bye Bye Blackbird, W h a t 's New?, and Here's that Rainy Day.

Say

right

with Jim was Ron Borelli with great solos along with John Madrigal on cornet and bassist Carla Kaufman,

ing



Is This Guy an MC or What?

and A most appreciative audience warmly applauded all solos. I think it could be said that between Jim Hillman and Lou Soper, we have two of the best swing chord musicians in the business. Jim's style of playing is that he takes no prisoners with his aggressive approach to a song and his five part ten + key intervals makes us wonder how the heck he does it. And by the way Jim, what's that two note doodle-doo thing you do up and down the keyboard? I gotta learn that! A sensational performance and another great artist that we call our own!



The Jim Hillman Gang

Paul Pasquali, Gina and Romany Rye featured at BAAC's February Meeting

Don't miss our February 1st meeting! Our old friend, Paul Pasquali, will be there and will play for us on his Concerto. With him will be Gina and Romany Rve. (she plays...he sings) from Britain, who will delight you with their musical skills. You'll also hear Bart Beninco that night...a fellow we've seen much too little of! See you there!

A Di Bono playing French Music???

Peter DiBono, one of our BAAC artists, is playing an interesting show at the Herbst Theatre on Friday, February 25. It is the Raquel Bitton Show which is touring the United States. Peter will join a top notch jazz ensemble backing Raquel as she sings a program reminiscent of famed French singer Edith Piaf.

Tickets: City Box Office, 415-392-4400

Mark Your Calendars

January 28th, Friday. Henri Ducharme at the Julia Morgan Theater, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley, 8:00 P.M. Admission \$15. Call Henri, (510) 526-3255.

February 1st (Tuesday) BAAC General Membership Meeting at *Verdi Club in San Francisco*, 2424 Mariposa at Potrero. Featuring Paul Pasquali with Gina Brunelli and Romany Rye. 7:00 - 9:30pm+.

February 6th (Sunday) (and every first Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. now being held at the 7th Day Adventist Church, on Carter, near Kooser & Camden in S.J. 3P to 6P. Admission \$3.00. Call Dick Cruickshank for more information. (408) 258-1258.

February 6th, 3:00 PM and February 8th at 8:00 PM. Peter Soave, bandoneon soloist, with the Napa Valley Symphony Orchestra performing Piazzolla's "Aconcagua" Concerto for Bandoneon and Orchestra. Lincoln Theater, Veterans' Home of California, Yountville.

February 8th (Tuesday). Meeting of the Golden State Accordion-Aires. 6:00PM. Veterans' Hall 549 Merchant St. Vacaville.

February 10 th (Thursday) (and every second Thursday). Accordion Circle of the East Bay Music Meeting. 7:30pm, 1542 Grant St., Berkeley, in the cottage behind the main house.

February 13th (Sunday). The San Francisco Chamber Ensemble performance in San Diego for the San Diego Accordion Club (ALSI) at the Family Center behind St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 5150 Wilson Street, La Mesa. 1:00 P.M.

February 14th (Monday). (and every second Monday). *The Good Time Accordion Club*. At the Escalon Methodist Church 7:00pm. Info about joining from Jana Maas at 8001 Beckwith Rd., Modesto. \$15 membership fee includes newsletter called "Accordion News".

February 15th (Tuesday). (and every third Tuesday). Accordion Circle Band in East Bay. Call 510-548-2822 for location and more info.

February 21st (Monday). (and every third Monday). Meeting of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods. 7:00pm. Volpi's in Petaluma.

February 28, Monday. BAAC Board Meeting, 7:00 P. M. Moose Lodge, Daly City. Guests welcome. Call Lou Soper if you need directions.

March 16-19th. The Texas Accordion Association National Accordion Convention. At the Holiday inn in Plano (Dallas), Texas. Motto this year is "Texas is setting the standard for the millennium!" Call Norman Seaton (head organizer) at (972) 270-3791, or email him at NSeaton1@IBM.Net.

March 19th, Sunday. Dick Contino at the Grape Festival in Lodi.

April 4th, Tuesday BAAC General Meeting featuring guests Jorgen Sundeqvist and Oivind Farmen. Save the Date!

April 26th. At the Swedish Club of San Francisco, the Vasterfarnebo Accordion Club. Call George at (650) 368-4764.

May 2nd, Tuesday BAAC General Meeting featuring special guest Tony Lovello (remember the 3 Sons??).

July 12 - 16th. American Accordionists Association annual celebration. Wyndham Hotel, Washington, D.C. www.ameraccord.com; ameracc@aol.com.

July 20-23, 2000. ATG Festival (Accordion Teachers' Guild) in Chicago. Info: Joan Cochran Sommers, 2312 W. 71 Terrace, Prairie Village, KS 66208 or jcsommers@umkc.edu.

August 6 - 10, 2000 National Accordion Convention in Las Vegas. Workshops, master classes (taught by Art Van Damme), exhibits, gala dinner each evening. Rooms are \$35/night at the Plaza Hotel and Convention Center. Call them at 800-634-6575. For info, (801) 486-1695 or www.Accordion-Info.com/convention.

BAAC Ensemble: Meets at Moose Lodge, Daly City the 1st and 3rd. Wed. of the month. Contact Frank Montoro (650) 574-4757 for info.

BAAC Fun Band Meets at Moose Lodge the 4th Wed. of the month. Contact Tom Cordoni (415) 333-5625.

Please send Calendar Information to your Editor, using the address on the last page.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The year 2000 - Wow!

We have some great programs planned for this year. Each month is a new challenge to present exciting musical performances by a variety of touring musicians for your pleasure. All this sprinkled in with our many gifted accordionists offer you a great year of entertainment. Jim Hillman's swing quintet in January was sensational.

This month you will be asked to vote where to hold our monthly meetings, the Club Verdi or the Patio Espanol (formerly the Spanish Cultural Center). Enclosed in this month's newsletter is a single page describing the advantages of both meeting halls. You decide where you would like to meet and the majority vote will determine the outcome. If you don't vote, don't complain. Please fold the sheet as instructed, seal it with tape, put a stamp on it and mail it by Feb 3.

We really need volunteer help for the promotion and membership committees. There is so little time required for any volunteer, it is difficult to understand why so few of our members, who enjoy a great time, are reluctant to help. At the Feb 8 meeting a volunteer sheet will be available to each member describing what each committee does and see if you can help us in any way, please.

Well I'm off for a week-end accordion cruise to do a workshop aboard ship; this will be lots of fun.

See ya in February.

Lou Soper

Celebrating 53 Years in Show Business for The Legend, Dick Contino

The Lodi Italian Club invites everyone to join them in honoring Dick Contino on Sunday, March 19th at the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St., Lodi from 1 to 6 PM. Dick will give two performances, and dance music will be provided between his performances. Bring your accordion so that you can join the jam session which will be held after Dick's second performance.

Tickets for adults are \$12 and for children, \$6. Complementary dessert and coffee will be provided. For tickets, write to Lodi Italian Club, 1117 Port Chelsea Circle, Lodi 95240, enclosing a check and a self-stamped return envelope. NO Tickets Will Be Sold At The Door. For questions, phone Velma Ferrero (209) 368-3077 or Paula Re (209) 832-2655.

BAAC January Board Meeting

Synopsis

- ☐ Rita d'Amico has resigned her position as board member. Lou Casalnuovo was voted in to replace ☐ Treasurer Mike Zampiceni reports \$10.939 in our combined checking accounts. ☐ Payment of annual dues will henceforth entitle the member to two free workshops. ☐ The Board OK'd a new dues payment schedule. If dues are paid from Dec 1 to March 1, the amount is reduced to \$18. If they are paid between March 1 and July 1, the amount is further reduced to \$12. Those paying after July 31 pay the full \$25, but are members for more than 12 months, until the following September 30th. ☐ The Board recommended that we change our meeting location from Verdi to Patio Espagnol, pending a
 - written vote of the membership. The Club Voice Mail will be discontinued, since it is
 - too infrequently used.

SOUTH BAY JAM

A GOOD THING KEEPS GETTING BETTER:

The South Bay group has moved to a new location at the 7th Day Adventist Church on Carterand is it a winner! Two big sunny rooms, one for novice players and the other for the more experienced. And when you come, you had better delay your dinner plans as George Alves stocks the kitchen with so much tempting food that one doesn't stand a chance of resisting. Norma Parson continues to lead the group in style. This meeting she treated us to a great torchy rendition of "Birth Of The Blues", belting it out with lots of feeling. Add to Norma's presence the one liners of Arnie Krenn, Glenn McClelland and Bob Clark and you have a lively and fun atmosphere to enjoy our favorite instrument. This meeting Roberto Rosa introduced his new wife Sandra who was warmly received by everyone. Roberto then performed playing a beautiful love song for his bride. Talk about romantic! Next month, another great player will perform at this fun gathering. Jim Hillman will appear with his fine group, sure to dazzle the lucky ones that attend. If you haven't had a chance to attend one of these meetings, you're really missing a very enjoyable experience. It is a very pleasant way to spend a Sunday afternoon and is becoming a must do on my calendar. DS

A TRIBUTE TO ART VAN DAMME

from Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

Last month we covered the historic concert of Art Van Damme at the Garden City Casino in San Jose. In October of 1999, Art performed with his quintet at The Jazz Corner in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Wherever Art performs, it is interesting to hear the tributes paid him especially the by musicians who consider it a privilege to play with him. Bassist Lee Burrows is the house bass player for the Jazz Corner in Hilton Head. He has backed such artists as Tommy Gumina, Frank Marocco, Myron Floren, Terry Gibbs, Buddy DeFranco, Steve Allen, Mel Torme, and Al Jarreau during his 45 year career. Here, then, are Lee's reactions to his recent experience playing with Art:

"I just wanted to tell you what a great privilege it was for me to play with Art Van Damme. I have admired his music for years. Since I am originally from Milwaukee WI, accordionists have been an important part of my musical experience. I always loved the way the sounds of accordion and bass fit together and it has been my pleasure to play with some really great squeezers.

The Jazz Corner gig with Art was quite an historic occasion. Art brought Freddie Rundquist, his buddy from the Chicago days, and I understand they hadn't played together in 20 or so years. When they sat down and started, you never would have known - it was like yesterday. Freddie's playing is as elegant as ever and Art demonstrated why he is known as "The King". The great touch, the silky blend of accordion, guitar and vibes, the happy swinging stuff, the beautiful ballads. Then, blazing tempos, with Art blowing chorus after chorus and taking no prisoners. Wow!!

I was moved by how many people came from such distances to hear Art - the Nilsens from Rockaway NJ and the Haugens from Scotia NY were there for the entire fourday gig; John and Mary Ann Simkus came from Hampshire IL for three days and the Popes from South Florida on the last night. The champ, though, was Sven Engelund, an accordionist, accordion music historian and publisher of the Norwegian Accordion Journal who came from Oslo to Hilton Head for the duration. These are all warm and wonderful people and I had a great time meeting and hanging out with them. The fact that they were there shows the respect and affection people have for Art and his music

A word about The Jazz Corner - it opened late in March of this year with The George Shearing Quintet and has continued to present swinging, elegant jazz music since. One of the partners in the club, Bob Masteller told me that it would be "the dream of a lifetime" to have Art Van Damme appear there. Since Art and I have some mutual friends I

Sure, your wife wants you to buy a new accordion!

Stolen from the Dec. Plano, Texas monthly meeting announcement. By Pres. Ken Swayze.

How might you slip another new accordion, (like, for instance, the new reedless) past your wife? Here are ten suggestions:

- 1. It followed me home; can we keep it?
- 2. I take out the trash, don't I?
- 3. All of the other guys' wives don't care if they get
- 4. Just think how much better my music will sound!
- 5. I will serenade you.
- 6. I will serenade you with ole numero uno!!!
- 7. You know what my music means to me.
- 8. You have (try to be polite) several pair of shoes many times over.
- 9. I promise I will sell all my other accordions.
- 10. He who dies with the most accordions wins.

Get-well Wishes for Vince

One of our very favorite accordion friends, Vince Cirelli, is recovering at home from an unwelcome little heart problem. Vince had angioplasty last week to clear a couple clogged arteries. He's his usual cheery self now, but has temporarily slowed his activities way down on the

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urging of his doctor. He probably won't be able to swing accordions around in his shop for a while.

Vince, get better very quickly! We all miss you.

took it upon myself to get Bob and Art in touch, and the rest is history. And I was very happy to play a small part in helping it happen.

The other members of the rhythm section deserve enormous credit - vibist Steve Hobbs and drummer Steve Primatic were fantastic. No small feat to play Art's book with minimal rehearsal time! In my 45 years of playing, it is one of my most cherished memories to have had the opportunity to play with Mr. Van Damme" Lee Burrows

MULTISENSORY LEARNING AND YOUR ACCORDION (cont.)

by Sev Garcia

SIGHT (visual)

Watch your instrument. Watch your fingers and the keyboard. Watch your thumb as opposed to your 5th finger. Because of the angle of the accordion as we play, we tend to focus on the thumb and first finger of the right hand. The thumb and first finger do not always play the root (tonic) of the chords or the melody, and this becomes very important when we are memorizing or determining correct fingerings.

"Think ten (10) times; place once (1)" - Franz Lizst, Romantic period pianist and composer.

Practice difficult spots SUPERSLOW. SUPERSLOW means not even one mistake.

"Imaging" becomes especially important for us as accordionists since we do not always see the 4th and 5th fingers of the right hand and we do not see the left hand at all.

"Imaging" is picturing where the notes are located on the keyboard. Remembering where the notes are located through experience (muscle memory) and through spatial relationships of the intervals. It is note-by-note mental rehearsal with the correct fingerings playing in your mind. To sense the tactile relation with the keyboard. Watching the keyboard is very useful while acquiring the visual aspect of memorizing.

Practice in the dark or with your eyes closed to develop kinesthetic memory. Start with your warm-up scales and arpeggios.

As you practice, GLIDE (slide, softly touching) from note to note and chord to chord to "feel" the groups of 2 and 3 black keys. On the left hand GLIDE over the buttons as you count distances up and down and in and out.

"Practicing begins when you get something RIGHT" - Daniel Abrams, pianist and educator.

Watch the notes on the music score. Notice the curvature or the extension of your fingers. Is it what you want it to be?

VISUALIZATION - What goes on in our heads can be very real for us. Visualize (sight and feelings) yourself in a place mentally and physically that will allow your best performance to take place. Watch the baton of the conductor in your head.

"Practicing is an act of faith. The practicing that you do now is your down payment for next year and years to come."
- John Perry, USC professor of piano.

<u>TOUCH</u> (tactile - kinesthetic)

FEEL the key and the buttons under your fingertips. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much pressure are you using? Is this the touch you want for this composition?

Muscular contraction (needless tension) hinders movement. "Releasing into Gravity" will foster greater fluidity of motion. "Releasing into Graviey" is like pouring water from a pitcher; with a FIRM but FLEXIBLE grip. Pouring smoothly in just the right place and just the right amount. By exhaling as you DROP into chords, scales, patterns and arpeggios you are allowing gravity to work for you and not against you.

"Our mind always follows our breathing." - D. T. Suzuki The greatest physical cause of errors and mistakes is the TIGHTENING of too many muscles.

EASY DOES IT..anything more than that is the EGO trying to take control and make it happen.

FEEL the shape of the chords, the shape of the patterns and the shape of the fingerings you are using as well as the thumb changes.

FEEL the shoulder straps. Notice the tension between the right and left shoulders. How does the back feel as you play? FEEL the bass strap on your left hand. Is the pressure just right to allow maximum mobility and accuracy?

FEEL the chair when you are sitting. FEEL your feet when you are standing or sitting. Are you balanced on both feet?

FEEL the accordion against your body. Is it comfortable? Do the straps need adjusting in order to play more comfortably?

FEEL the weight of the acordion on your left thigh as you sit. Is the weight balanced and shared with the shoulder straps?

Moving Sale

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Polytone Cube 100w \$ 75. Roland w/reverb 100w \$100 Some prices negotiable.

Call Michelle Gallandre at (415) 665-3498

DEAR MEMBERS:

Your Board of Directors needs your opinion. They have been discussing changing our meeting place largely because of unanticipated parking difficulties at Verdi. The Spanish Cultural Center (Patio Espagnol) on Alemany Blvd. has made us an offer which the Board found very attractive and therefore has recommended that we do change our location. However, since moving is an important decision, they would like your input about whether you think we should make this move from Verdi to the Spanish Cultural Center. So they are asking you to complete the ballot below and mail it to the club mailing address as shown on the outside back page of this newsletter. (You may also bring the ballot with you to our February meeting on the 1st. Ballots will be counted that evening.)

Advantages of the proposed location include cost (\$210), parking (lighted on the premises), size (larger than Verdi), no front steps, and bathrooms (same floor). A bar will be available for us and some food service. The meeting night would still be Tuesday evening.

Sounds good, but Lou and the Board do want to know what you think. You are encouraged to look at the proposed site, which is at 2850 Alemany Blvd, cross street Farragut. But please vote whether or not you have the opportunity to check it out.

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Lou Soper

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313 N.E. 45th St. Seattle, WA 98105 (206) 632-2700

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