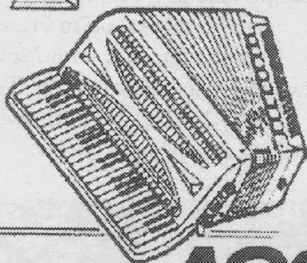


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO



ACCORDION CLUB

July 2006

Official Instrument of San Francisco
1912 🎵 *The World's First Accordion Club* 🎵 2006



President's Message

The club picnic was attended by over 100 and everyone had a good time. Val Kieser and Dick Schiller put on an enjoyable day from beginning to the very end. Thank you to everyone who helped out, the day could not happen without you. The lunch was perfect, lots of prizes (Felix Hernandez won

most of them), and "Jimbo The Clown," our own Jim Murdock, did a terrific job entertaining the little ones. I, for one, would like to see the picnic go on into the evening with some after dinner dancing perhaps, like I remember from years ago. Maybe another time, maybe not.

Accordion campers from all over the country will congregate at Dominican University in San Rafael next week to attend the **Galla-Rini Accordion Camp**. This is not camping out in tents with bears and mosquitoes, it is a weeklong retreat at an idyllic setting with all of the comforts. This is a wonderful opportunity to tune up your musical skills, learn a lot of new stuff, and mingle with some of the nicest people you'll ever know. If you missed it this year, plan to attend next time.

AUGUST MEETING

Sunday, August 20 at 2:00 p.m.

Featuring Frank Montoro, Bruno Bianchini, Don Nurisso, Jerry Choate (all the way from Chico!), and Roberto Rosa

Remember, the Cotati Accordion Festival is August 26th and 27th. Why not get a room and attend both days? **Don Nurisso** and I are on at 3 pm on Sunday, come up and say hello.

Our **August meeting** will be at the Oyster Point Yacht Club on Sunday, August 20 at 2:00 pm. Some great playing is in the works for this meeting; don't forget.

I have my website up and running, please check it out: <http://www.peterdibono.com/>

Play that accordion every day, and remember:
REAL MUSIC IS LIVE!!!

Peter Di Bono

Editor's Note

This newsletter is a week late. The picnic plus playing jobs, the performing groups, medical and countless other personal matters have taken their toll on my time. I hope and trust you all remembered that there was to be **NO MEETING** in July because of the picnic! It pays to read those announcements!

Val

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, August 20

2:00 p.m. SHARP

The Oyster Point Yacht Club

911 Marina Blvd., South San Francisco

From 101 South or 101 North take Oyster Point exit. Go east on Oyster Point Blvd. 1 mile; turn right on Marina Blvd. (look for blue Marina sign) and continue to the end.

June: One of our Most Special Meetings Ever!

The June entertainment was organized entirely by our great friend to the north, **Steve Balich of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods**, and what a program it was!

Pre-meeting music was provided by **Bob Smith**, playing some terrific "oldies" from the book of such pieces that he



Bob Smith

recently put together (call Bob if you'd like a copy 925-294-9659).

Before the program started, Pres. Peter Di Bono wished everyone a Happy Father's Day, plus special Congratulations to **Tom and Jeannette Cordoni** on their 46th wedding anniversary!

Without further delay the musical program was launched in grand manner by **Marie Meredith**

(accordion) and her "Polkanomics" band. Band members are, in addition to Marie: **Elizabeth Cabraser** (on drums), **Nancy Vogl, Suzanne Shanbaum and Inge Hoogerhuis**. This lively group of ladies, who have been performing together for three years, put on a great show, playing, among other tunes, a great Tex-Mex piece (Dolores Huerta), *Pennsylvania Polka, Sandman, La Vie En Rose, Hernando's Hideaway, That's Amore, Hey Mambo Italiano*. After that performance, nothing could stop the party mood that was underway.



Marie Meredith and "Polkanomics" Mr.

Keeping the mood going, **Tom Cordoni** was up next. As most of you know, Tom is the organizer of the great annual Petaluma Accordion Celebration, which took place June 24 (our SF Accordion Band was among the players). Today Tom played a variety of tunes, beginning with a Spanish set, *Morena di mi*



Tom Cordoni

Coplas and *El Gato Montes*. Then, after playing the familiar *Charade*, Tom launched into a German

series: *Edelweiss, Lili Marlene* and *The Happy Wanderer* ("Valderi-Valdera"). Then he moved on to France with a lovely set of French waltzes. I wasn't familiar with *Piove, Guaglione* and *Marina* but believe that was an Italian set. Tom finished with a little whimsy: *Yo-Ho, Yo-Ho; Bibbity Bobbity Boo, Mickey Mouse March*, and *It's a Small World*.

Next came **The Eurotones**, very familiar to me and many others. The group consists of **Kay and Tom Newburg** on button box and **Harry Cannata** on amplified guitar. Kay sings the vocals, sometimes in Slovenian, sometimes in German, as well as English,



The Eurotones: Tom, Harry, Kay and she has a wonderful voice. And—you couldn't hope to meet nicer people. Except for the well-known *Oh How He lied*, I wasn't able to write down the other beautiful pieces they played.

After an intermission that featured a lot of great food (and a lot of hard work by volunteers), the music continued with **Bart Beninco**, who had his beautiful mom, Mary, with him. Bart is one of the smoothest, most exquisite players one could ever hope to hear. Bart started out playing his Sonola accordion, with *A Media Luz* (tango); *Andalucia (The Breeze and I)*; *Pietro Frosini's Autumn Breezes*, composed for accordion and containing some awesome bass melodies; *Dark Eyes* with variations, that included two melodies in the right hand simultaneously! Wow!! Bart related how he used to play Italian music with his dad, so he played a few. One was *Tre Veglia e Sono (Retuning Dreams)*. Then he played a tango that is one of his specialties: *Chitarra Romana*, followed by *Non Scordar Di Me (Don't Forget Me, that Pavarotti often sang at the end of his concerts)*. Bart continued with Henry



Bart Beninco

Mancini's *Baby Elephant Walk* with a repeating bass pattern and a surprise ending on a very high note. Bart's last piece on the Sonola accordion was *The Peanut Vendor* (Brazilian) with a Latin bass pattern, expertly executed as always. Then Bart switched to his Giuliotti accordion for his *pièce de résistance*, Schubert's *Ave Maria*. The audience,



Steve Balich Polka Band

already in a party mood, fell so silent you could have heard a pin drop. I'm sure there wasn't a dry eye in the house. It was the most moving rendition of the famous *Ave Maria* that I have ever heard. The applause afterward was deafening—and well deserved!

The rest of the afternoon featured the great **Steve Balich** himself

with his polka band, including son **Steve Jr.** (also on accordion) and **Tom Casazza** (drums and vocal). Before I had to leave (I hear the fun went on for hours longer), I heard at least these songs: *El Rio Drive Polka*; *Bionda Biondina* (Everyone



Audience enjoying the show

Calls Me Blondie), *Il Sirio*, *Oh How She*

Lied. By now there were quite a number of dancers out on the floor and even outside on the deck! (Pres. Peter Di Bono introduced here a great dancer who happens to be 93 years old: **Millie Wait**!!) The Balich Band continued with the Slovenian *Daj Daj* and *Schneewalzer* (Snow Waltz); *Spanish Eyes/Yours Till the End of Life's Story/Solamente Una Vez* (You Belong to My Heart); *I don't Know Why I Love You Like I Do/Nevertheless/I Left My Heart in San Francisco*; *Il Bersaglieri Polka*, *La Paloma*, a Mexican Waltz, *Your Cheatin' Heart/Hey Good Lookin'*; *Have I told You Lately That I Love You* . . . And on and on. The audience couldn't get enough, and I had to leave for another obligation or I would have stayed there till the very end.

We of the SF Accordion Club thank you, **Steve and Jennie Balich**, for organizing a terrific show for our club, and for bringing down with you many, many members of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods—showing not only what a following you have, but also showing warm support between our clubs. I hope we can reciprocate for your club, and that we can do this exchange quite regularly. Val



Ed and Isabelle: our star dancers



Happy 46th Anniversary to Jeannette and Tom Cordoni



Barbara and Jim Firpo



Drawing: Hey, how 'bout a smile?



Fabulous buffet thanks to volunteers

(More photos on next page)

Our Special Thanks . . .

. . . To the volunteers who brought food and/or served the buffet and/or cleaned up after our June meeting: Bob Hansen's mom **Lydia**, **Frances Benedetto**, **Rosemary Armano**, **Ed and Isabelle Massolo**, **Lynn Levine**, **Bernie Andreini**, **Teri Traverso**, **Lucille Creamer**, **Dick Schiller**, **Lilia and Iris Martinez**. I hope I haven't left anyone out! It was an outstanding buffet.

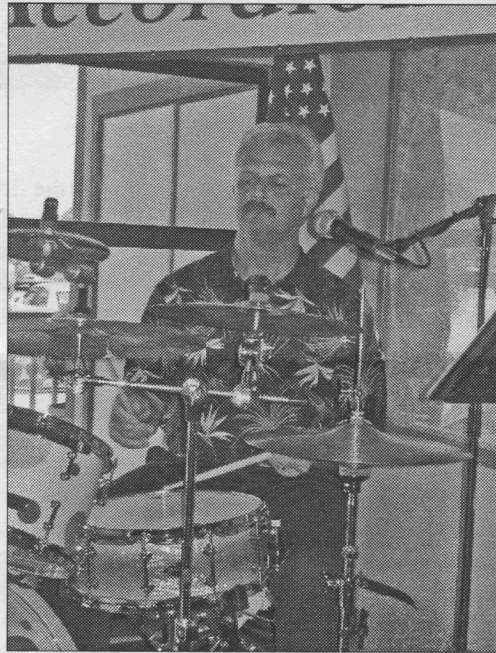
And while I'm thanking people: we also thank **Michael Sanossian** for folding, labeling, taping, stamping and mailing the newsletters these last few months. That's a huge job and we appreciate it so much.

***PLEASE REMEMBER TO
LEAVE THE MEETING HALL CLEAN
AND FREE OF FOOD, PAPER PLATES,
NAPKINS, CANS, BOTTLES, ETC. !!!!***

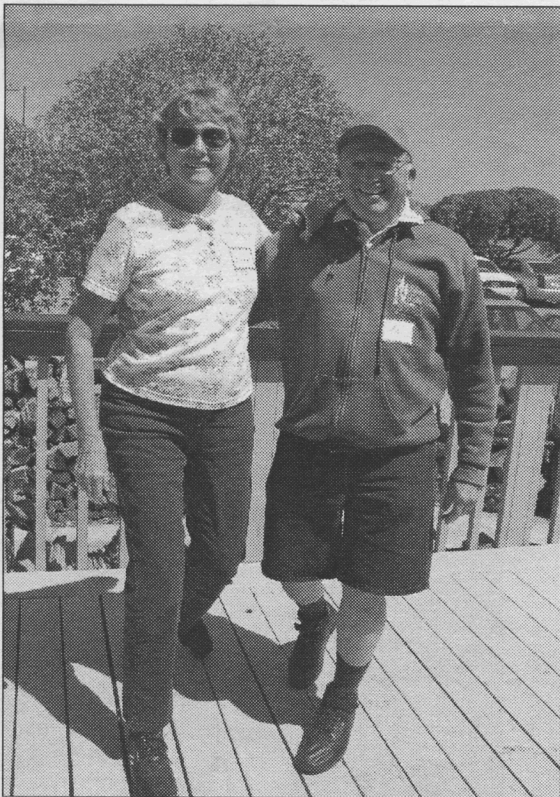
***August 20 Meeting: Featur-
ing Frank Montoro, Bruno Bi-
anchini, Don Nurisso, Jerry
Choate and Roberto Rosa***



A table of VIP's from Accordion Club of the Redwoods



**Steve Balich's Drummer and Vocalist
Tom Casazza**



More dancing stars: Barbara and Vic Corsiglia



Teri and Walter Traverso with friends visiting from Germany: Fritz and Petra Ehrensberger and Uta Wagner. Walter and Teri had another guest too (unfortunately I didn't get his picture): John Gitti, who runs the steam train at the SF Zoo!





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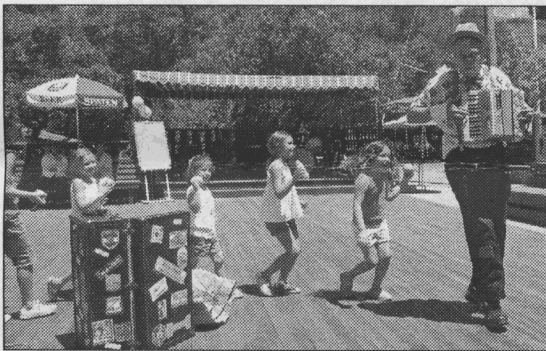
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The SF Accordion Club warmly thanks Hunan Yuan Restaurant for offering us a gift certificate for the raffle at the picnic. To thank them we shall run their business-card ad for six months.

The SFAC Picnic: A Record Number?

Yes, that's right—we had 103 paid participants this year! The weather was perfect and everything went smoothly. I could not possibly have watched over everything that was



Jim Murdock the clown leads the kids in a merry follow-the-leader

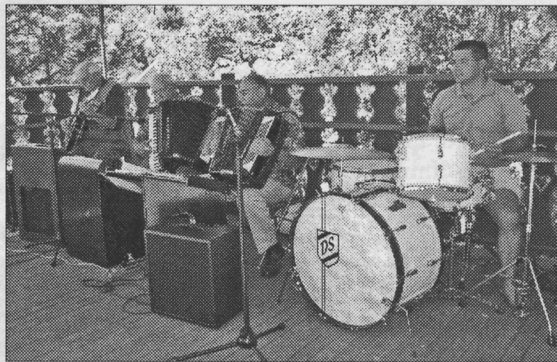
going on, so I was fortunate that our wonderful volunteers saw what needed to be done and went right to work on their own. Several people also brought salads, chili, and other food items. I thank each and every one of

them, and hope eventually to gather together all the names of those who contributed so that I can thank them properly. They included members of **Jim Firpo's** family, including Jim himself, who put up the signs directing people to the picnic and also contributed coffee and some other items; **Mark Zhagel** for helping put up umbrellas; **Fran Benedetto** who contributed food and lots of help in the kitchen; **Victoria Di Bono** who helped set out food; **Ed and Isabelle Massolo** (Isabelle contributed some food and Ed directed cars for parking), **Gwyn Lister** (brought food and helped in the kitchen), **Sue Hirigoyen** who contributed some food and offered to help in any way; **Anne and Bernard Métais** for letting us use their canopy, and for setting it up for us. Then there was **Vince Cirelli** who remained at the Welcome Table *all day long*, greeting guests and delivering will-call tickets. Another indispensable helper was **Telmo Echeverría** who did most of the covering of the tables, which means cutting, taping or stapling every plastic tablecloth. Telmo also helped with cleanup afterward, and in countless other ways. **Dick Schiller**, who co-chaired

Tidbit from Charles Magnante, 1952:
Finger nails: "Personally, I feel it is important that the right hand finger nails are just the right length—not too short and not too long. They should be cut in a more or less straight style manicure and certainly not pointed. This gives you a more solid touch. For the left hand, I prefer to have my nails a little more on the short side."

the picnic with me, helped in numerous ways, in every aspect of the picnic. Two very kind gentlemen volunteered on-the-spot to help serve the food—and I never got their names. If it was YOU, please let me know so I can thank you in print!

Meanwhile, I thank all the *performers*. They were outstanding! First **Jim Murdock** put on a wonderful clown act, to the delight of the many kids who were there, who got to be part of the act. The **San Francisco Accordion Band**, a.k.a. the "Fun Band," put on an abbreviated program (since we were running a bit late). **Harry Gay** and **Bob Foppiano**, with **Harry Cannata** backing them up—always are terrific crowd pleasers! Pres. **Peter Di Bono** played for a while; also **Ron Harris**, and **Jerry Choate** who came all the way from Chico to entertain us (I hear he'll be back to play for our August meeting—thanks, Jerry!).



Harry Cannata, Harry Gay, Bob Foppiano, Don Schiller

Mike Zampiceni played for the tables before and during lunch. We were looking forward to hearing **Ed Massolo** and **Dick Schiller**, but we ran out of time! Special thanks to **Don Schiller** for backing up many of the players with his expert drumming, and to **Harry Cannata** also for his willing participation in backing up musicians with his guitar.

You were all great! Here are a few photos of the picnic. I wish I could have captured more of the fun, but I was occupied trying to be in several places at once!

Val

(More about the picnic on page 6)





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It Was a Hot Time at the “Ole San Francisco Accordion Picnic” — BOY WAS IT!!

On a gorgeous day, in the Oakland Hills overlooking San Francisco Bay, the 2006 edition of the picnic swung into action with great entertainment, tasty food and drink (no one went away hungry!) and good fellowship. Accordion music was everywhere from early morning on.

As soon as **Harry Gay** and **Bob Foppiano** arrived, out came the accordions. **Ed Massolo** ran for his Excelsior (hey Ed, who’s directing the car parking?) as did **Jim Firpo**, and the fun began. **Vince Cirelli** was at his usual post delivering tickets and serving as one-man welcoming committee. Vince got everyone in the mood to laugh and have fun. With his winning smile and comments, he always has just the right thing to say to put people at ease!

On the entertainment side, **Jim Murdock** delighted the kiddies with his new clown routine, including participation by the kids themselves. It was a joy to behold all those happy little faces!

Starting the musical side of the entertainment was the **San Francisco Accordion Band** with **Sharon Greyhosky** at the helm, always with unusual offerings; followed by the ultimate dance combo of **Harry Gay** and **Bob Foppiano** (who came all the way from Stockton) including some nice vocals by Harry, showing another of his great talents—backed up by **Harry Cannata’s** stellar guitar playing and the fine drumming of **Don Schiller**. **Jerry Choate**, another long-distance traveler, who came all the way from Chico to support our club, played some great easy-listening melodies. **Peter Di Bono** and **Ron Harris** played some nice light jazz numbers. Such wonderful support for our club picnic from these fine musicians! As MC Ed Massolo said when the dance music started, “We dare you to get out and dance!”

It was WARM in the sun, but our intrepid dancers found a way to cut a rug under the many umbrellas lining the dance floor

(thanks, **Mark Zhagel**, for helping to put them up!).

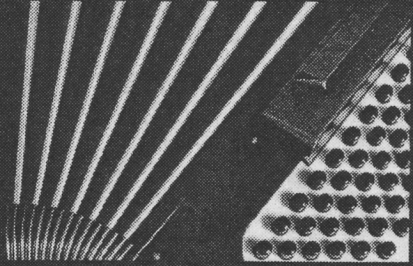
Lots of volunteers helped with preparing and serving the food. And what a joy to have **Frances Benedetto** back with us—and of course she wound up as the mainstay in



Thelma and Rusty Bartoli

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the kitchen (how do we get Frances to take it easy and enjoy the festivities??).

It was a grand time with over 100 participants! We went away with a very nice feeling, thanks to the tireless efforts of Val Kieser. Her smiles and hugs and selfless acts over the years are an integral part of our club. RS



The “Fun Band” (Photo courtesy of Mel Schwing)



Enjoying a great picnic on a beautiful day!

The Las Vegas International Accordion Convention

By Ed Massolo

The Gold Coast Casino was a great improvement over the previous location. Food and service were tops and the entertainment outstanding. It was well organized, especially the workshops. Our own **Ron Borelli** gave two excellent classes, one on Melody and the other on Major and Minor Blues Scales. Each day you had a choice of six classes, all given by top instructors.

The highlight for Isabelle and me was the announcement of our 59th wedding anniversary by **Paul Pasquali** on the last evening, to the over-400 in attendance; and the cocktail invitation by **Judy and Steve Trucco**. We found ourselves surrounded by the very "greats"—namely, **Art Van Damme, Dick Contno, Peter and Mady Soave, Carl Fortina, Corky Bennett**; and our own **Harry Gay, Bob Foppiano, Ron Borelli** and **Marian Kelly**.

Between lunch and dinner, a visit to the "store" is a must! I guess there were easily 25 or 30 various accordions that you could pick up and try, as well as CD's, music, shirts, hats and much, much more.

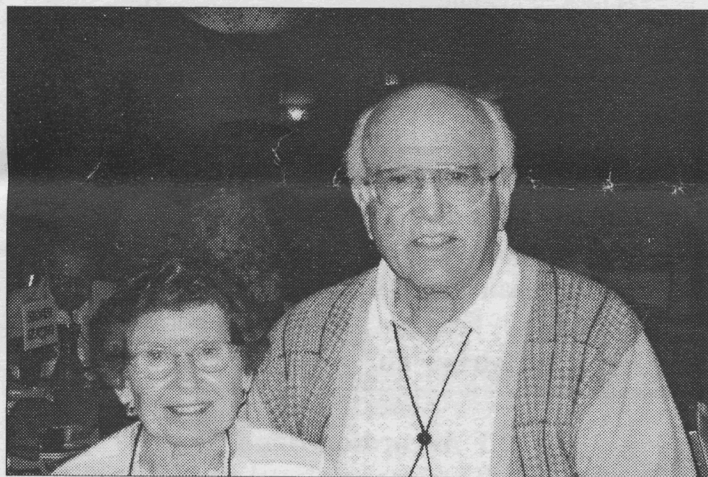
This was our second trip to the Convention, and may I say "Good Job!" to Paul Pasquali. Keep it up! EM



Mel and Cherie Schwing with son Mel Jr. at LV Convention 2006



Evelyn Baulch and Jim Holliday at the Convention



Isabelle and Ed Massolo at the Las Vegas Convention 2006

Your Executive Board Met . . .

. . . on Monday, June 12. Bank balance as of June 1 was \$10,226. The Treasurer presented a proposed budget which was discussed in detail. The board voted to have a very short business meeting at the beginning of each meeting, before the musical entertainment. Beginning in September, the meeting admission charge will be \$5 for members, \$8 for guests. People wishing to play pre-meeting music should contact Ed Massolo (650) 589-8409.



Convention Hosts Paul Pasquali and Gina Branelli

Las Vegas Convention Photos courtesy of Mel Schwing

Wanted

Items for the newsletter! Send me your articles: on playing tips, technique, accordion history, music theory (not too complicated!), accordion history, events, photos—whatever might be of interest for the newsletter.

Call Val (510) 531-4836 or vtkacc@ifn.net.

Our Sincere Thanks

To those who have generously donated to the Club since the beginning of this year. Donations that your Editor has heard about:

Jim Holliday (in memory of Ed Zaro)
Frances and Dominic Benedetto
Mark Zhagel

Robert Sprugasci (2 Raffle Ticket Scramblers)

This list is cumulative throughout the calendar year.

Please let me know if you have contributed in 2006 and I did not print it—we want you to be recognized!

Val (510) 531-4836 vtkacc@ifn.net

Word Has It . . .

. . . that **Frank Panacci** is recovering well from his back surgery and is starting to pick up the accordion again! Great, Frank—we've missed you!

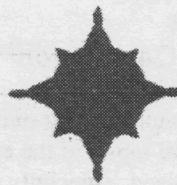
. . . that SFAC member who moved north to Petaluma, **Domenic Saso**, took a fall and injured himself. I understand he is on the road to recovery and appreciates everyone's well wishes.

. . . that a Very Special Concert, free to the public, will be presented on Thursday, July 27 at 7:30 p.m. in Angelico Hall, 50 Acacia Avenue on the Dominican University campus in San Rafael. The concert will feature the 50-piece orchestra made up of participants in the **Galla-Rini Accordion Camp**, and also some numbers by the **ACE Ensemble** and some outstanding soloists. Music will include classical, show tunes and folk music. All ensemble music is conducted by our own **Joe Smiell**. *This concert is truly not to be missed!*

. . . that an autobiographical, inspirational book by **Carmen Vitanza**, with Foreword by **Art Van Damme**, is available for \$23.95. The book is called *The Music of My Life* and may be obtained by sending a check to Carmen Vitanza, 3842 Berkley Ave., Drexel Hill, PA 19026. It is a compilation of stories, tidbits and family life from one who's "been there, done that"!

. . . that **Joe Vento** e-mailed: "Dear SFAC Friends, Am on rigid-tour-sched that keeps me away from my Las Vegas home most of the time, thankfully at 81 still remain busy, guess my playing is so bad "they" seek my services over and over 'til maybe *someday, I just may 'get it right.*" Eagerly look forward to reading your interesting SFAC newsletter in keeping up with my accordion colleagues' activities, and if I should be in close proximity, I'll attempt to attend your upcoming picnic to celebrate and 'jam-along' with you as well, if it is OK. (Editor: Of course, Joe, we would have loved to have you and are sorry you didn't make it!) . . . *Joe Vento* (Joe attached several photos and a couple of CD samplings and a bio.)

. . . And that **John Simkus** of the Chicago Accordion Club writes: . . . Give my best to Joe (Smiell). Had I known he would be the (Galla-Rini) camp director, I would have made plans to attend. I always have had the highest respect for Joe, and I feel this year's camp is fortunate to have him as musical director! . . ."



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Welcome New Members

A great big "Welcome Aboard" to:

- * **Jolene Ormonde** of Half Moon Bay, student of **Lynn Ewing**. Jolene loves all accordion music, especially European, Tex-Mex and Zydeco.
- * **Eric Barr** of Fremont, an accordion lover brought to us by **Sue Hirigoyen**.

SF Accordion Band News

The "Fun Band" has been very busy lately, having played at Tom Torriglia's SF Day of the Accordion event, Tom Cordoni's Celebrate the Accordion Day in Petaluma, and the annual "Piccolo Pavilion" Sunday afternoon musical event in Corte Madera.

All of us in the band were hit hard by the news that our wonderful Director, **Sharon Walters Greyhosky**, will be taking a well-deserved hiatus from the band to take care of personal matters that have been, until now, on the more-or-less permanent "back burner." I can surely relate to that! We'll miss you, Sharon, and hope your "hiatus" will be temporary! Meanwhile, Val will do her best to hold the band together until Sharon comes back. We will be taking our own hiatus until early October, when we once again prepare for the Columbus Day parade and the Christmas program.

ACE Ensemble News

The ACE Ensemble has been hard at work getting ready for the **Galla-Rini Camp concert July 27**, rehearsing even while Joe was out of town. We have a terrific program in the works. ACE members will also be "leaders" of the various parts at Galla-Rini camp, holding special practices with players of each part, to familiarize players with their parts and how each part fits into the whole.

SFAC Evening Ensemble Practice

*First and Third Wednesday of the month
at Ed Massolo's home, 612 Lassen ST.,
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ON SUMMER HIATUS—members will be notified when we start up again!

SFAC Band Practice

ON HIATUS until October.

Band members will be notified.

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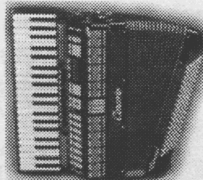
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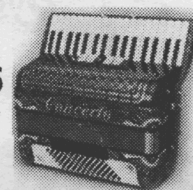
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Admission to Meetings: \$5.00; beginning Sept. 2006,
admission will be \$5 for members and \$8 for each guest

SFAC Officers

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(415) 753-1502 pdibono@hotmail.com

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Treasurer: Robert Hansen (650) 756-3547

rhansen50@sbcglobal.net

Secretary: Rosemary Armanino

(650) 589-9088 GARmanino@aol.com

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James Firpo (415) 648-3674

Valerie Kieser (510) 531-4836 vtacc@ifn.net (new)

Ed Massolo (650) 589-8409

massolo612@aol.com

Newsletter Editor: Valerie T. Kieser

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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.

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, August 20

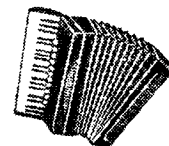
PROMPTLY AT 2:00 P.M.

OYSTER POINT YACHT CLUB

911 Marina Blvd., Oyster Point Marina

**Oyster Point exit from 101; east on Oyster Point; right on Marina Blvd.,
through gate house to sign "Oyster Point Yacht Club"**

There is ~~NO MEETING IN JULY~~ because of the picnic!



**Newsletter of the
San Francisco Accordion Club**

P.O. Box 318175

San Francisco, CA 94131-8175



FIRST CLASS POSTAGE