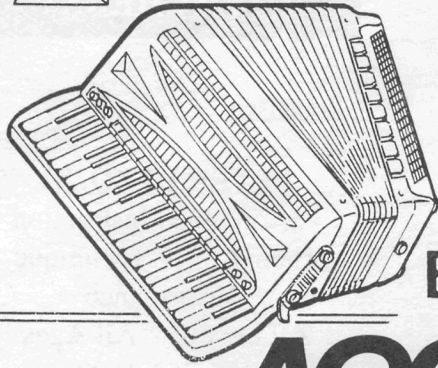


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

# ACCORDION CLUB

MARCH, 1996

## March General Meeting

by Denny Huff

Masterful Master of Ceremonies **Domenic Saso** kicked off the meeting by introducing **Bob Berta**, who gave us all a presidential welcome and briefly conducted some club business. . . Next, **Frank Montoro** proposed several bylaw changes which were accepted. Val Kieser has submitted separates (see p. 2) covering these transactions. Now, on to the music.

**Frank Schlotter** was first up. **Frank's** a long time player, but this was his club

debut as a soloist, if I'm not mistaken. **Frank** noted that he was celebrating double 48's. Hmmm. His birthday? No...he clarified that it was his *accordion birthday*. He's been playing for 48 years, and he began to play in 1948. He had other interesting anecdotes to relate including being beaten in a talent contest by a flashy magician and playing *Sha Boom* (his final number) for six hours as a cadet in 1954. **Frank's** other numbers included *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, *Who's Sorry*

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**March 30th, Saturday.** **POLKACIDE** at the Maritime Hall 450 Harrison St., San Francisco. They're headlining, so may not go on till midnight!

**April 1st, Monday.** BAAC General Meeting featuring bandoneon music and tango demo by special guests from that long-running show in downtown SF, **Forever Tango**. And Lou Jacklich is bringing two students, including one accordion whiz-kid. Each group gets half the program, so Mary-Alice isn't taking other volunteers. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus, S.F., just north of Stonestown Shopping Center. 7PM.

**April 3rd, Wed.** BAAC Board Meeting, 7:30 PM at Ed Massolo's, 612 Lassen, So. S.F. Guests welcome. Call Ed at (415) 589-8409 for directions.

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

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

**April 27th, Saturday.** **POLKACIDE** at The Stork Club, Oakland, CA. Opening for "Eskimo", so on earlier than above

**May 6th, Monday.** Ladies' Night at BAAC. Calling all female accordionists!

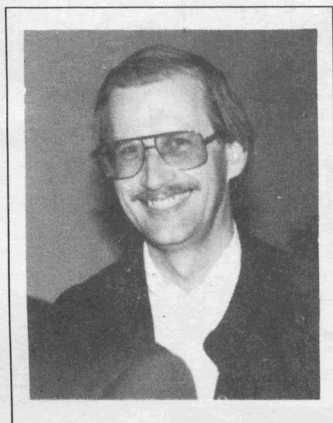
cont. on p. 2



The Internationals

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by *Bob Berta*



One of the goals of the Bay Area Accordion Club is to provide opportunities for the members to participate in activities that enhance their accordion abilities. The Bay Area Accordion Club is sponsoring a long awaited Cajun/Zydeco workshop and demonstration by our very own and highly esteemed expert in this arena, Jim Boggio.

Sunday, April 21st will be the date for this event. Time will be 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. Location is the same spot as our monthly meetings, Donworth Hall at 22nd Ave. and Eucalyptus. Jim will be joined by some members of top Cajun/Zydeco bands.

Besides hearing a demonstration of the various forms of this wonderful style of music, you will have the opportunity, if you wish, to actually learn how to play a few tunes. There will be handouts including music. Participants are encouraged to bring their accordions or button boxes to put into practice what they learn during the day.

Recently Jim and his Swamp Dogs put on two VERY well attended lectures and demonstrations at the Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. He is a great lecturer and we all know how fabulous his playing is! Recently The Swamp Dogs also headlined at Harrah's in Tahoe. Jim is getting well deserved fame and recognition and I would recommend that all BAAC members take the time to attend this event...we may not get this opportunity again once Jim becomes rich and famous! Cost of the workshop will be \$12 at the door or \$10 if you sign up at the regular general membership meeting in April.

### March Board Meeting

#### Synopsis

- Treasurer Algis Ratnikas reports \$7609 in our combined bank accounts.
- Glenn McClelland is organizing an informal South Bay accordion group.
- Gwynn Lister has offered to help BAAC with fundraising, which is her area of expertise.
- Visiting Artists: Ken Olendorf is now confirmed for August. Henry Doktorski from Pittsburgh will be our July guest and he hopes to include on his program pieces which will include several BAAC members. The Board OK'd a maximum of \$500 for Henry's expenses and fee. Bonnie Birch will be our guest in June.
- The Nominating Committee must convene in April to present potential BAAC officers and board members to the membership at the May Meeting. Val Kieser and Frank Schlotter will represent the board on the committee; Bob Berta will choose three persons from the membership at our April meeting, since the bylaws require a committee of five.

MK

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Calendar, from p. 1

**July 7th, Sunday.** BAAC Picnic. Swiss Park in Newark.

**July 18-21st.** Accordion Teachers' Guild annual competition & festival. Arlington Hts., Illinois. (319) 396-6643

**August 18th, Sunday.** BAAC Inauguration and Honors Dinner. Plan to attend!

**August 24th and 25th.** Cotati Accordion Festival. This year's headliner....Golden Bough!

## Minutes of Business Action Taken at BAAC's March 4th General Meeting

by Val Kieser

After a brief discussion of the matter, the following motion was made by the President, Bob Berta, seconded by Glenn McClelland, and passed by a majority show of hands:

...That, in the interest of promoting the accordion in this Year of the Accordion, the Bay Area Accordion Club increase its donation to the American Accordionists' Association by \$400, making BAAC's total donation \$500.

Then, after Frank Montoro outlined for the membership the reasons why the following motion makes sense for the Club, the motion was made and seconded and passed by the required two-thirds majority:

...That the Bylaws be amended as follows:

Article VI, Item 2: Term of Office: Delete the sentence "No officer shall serve more than two successive years."

Article VIII: Delete "No Director shall serve more than two (2) consecutive years."

The reasons given have to do with the need to keep good and willing talent on the Board for more than two years, to maintain continuity. At a later date, a system of rotation of officers/board members might be considered.

After another brief discussion led by Frank Montoro, a motion was made and seconded and passed by the required two-thirds majority:

...That the Bylaws be amended as follows:

Article IX, Nominations and Elections: Item#2: Change "April" to "May"; Item #3, Change "May" to "June"

Reasons have to do with eliminating the unnecessary extra month between May election and July 1 installation of officers and directors.

### Introducing.....Ernie Beck



Ernie is a new BAAC member who kindly completed our recent new members questionnaire. His comments provide an image which we'd like to share with everybody.

Ernie has played accordion for six months. He's currently taking lessons from Peter Di Bono

who has inspired him to practice daily. His favorites are waltzes, Scandinavian music, folk and traditional.

In his non-practicing hours, he can be found at B & H Television Co., 33 Vicente Street in San Francisco. His business does TV and VCR repair, sales, and rentals and handles video tape conversions. Call him at 664-3160 if you're considering sending him a little business.

Sounds like he has been very impressed with the Bay Area Accordion Club, because some of his comments include "good meeting, great bunch of people, great newsletter job." Ernie suggests that we consider scheduling more festivals and ethnic events and workshops. He adds that he would be willing to help with any such BAAC good times.

Welcome, Ernie! Thanks for your comments!

MK

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## March General Meeting

cont from p.1

*Now, Anytime, and Love Letters in the Sand.* One of his specialties is clearly

hear *Alexander's Ragtime Band.* (That was Frank's talent show number.)



*Frank Schlotter*

Golden Oldies. Thanks for the great show, **Frank** — next time we want to

The heavy rain delayed our next planned act, and Steven Shen graciously jumped in to fill the gap. He played a medley of tunes of which *Danube Waves* comprised the main element. As I play that song often myself, I quite enjoyed it. He didn't sing in Italian this time, but he did do another provincial Chinese folk song for us, which he both played and sang. Steven was appropriately clad for the song in traditional Chinese attire, although we think he adlibbed a bit with the cowboy boots! Great job, Steven — and thanks for the last minute response.

The next act was inventive, entertaining, and a delightful change of pace. We were treated to a (the?) Three Penny Opera — actually they called themselves a **Three Penny Cabaret.** There were two violins, an accordion, and an accomplished cast of three. The drama was tense and the music entertaining as we watched youthful Polly Peachum take up with the wrong man much to the dismay of her distraught mother. The entire cast was cleverly costumed as the villainous Mack the Knife

was eventually dragged into court where he narrowly escaped the hangman's noose with a last minute reprieve. Love triumphs! Cast members included **Tisha Page** as *Polly Peachum*, **Paul Rose** as *Mack the Knife* and *Polly's Father*, **Harriet March Page** as *Polly's Mother*, **Jim Hearon** and **Martha Cooper** on violins, and **Sharon Walters** on accordion. The act received enthusiastic and well deserved applause from club members.

In one of the evening's most important events, **Vivian Howard** won \$50 in the raffle. Great way for our newest BAAC member to be introduced!

That heavy rain only delayed, but couldn't stop, **Rick Bez.** (*Nothing* could stop **Rick Bez.**) He was replete with a "new" accordion, which he called *Songbird* because it had a bird on it and sounded very melodic. **Rick** was warming up for the Texas Accordion Convention on March 8th. He began with *Me and Bobby Magee* and then did the old Sons of the Pioneers song, *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*, during which he easily coaxed out good audience participation. **Rick's** interpretation of the "clop clop" was especially unique and in character. He finished with a great version of *Ghost*



*Steven Shen*



*The Three Penny Cabaret*

## More March General Meeting

*Riders in the Sky.* Does anyone enjoy playing more than **Rick?**



*Rick Bez*

I shudda worn my lederhosen! **Rick** was a hard act to follow, but the **Internationals** were up to it. Big Time! They blew our socks off. I'll mention some of their songs, but that doesn't do

them justice. They weren't a band; they were a good time. They were a full dress party! At one time during the show they mentioned that they had taken a group to Germany on a tour, and I immediately commented that I would have loved to have been on the trip with them. I would have worn out my "fun card." By the way, **Arnie Krenn** deserves a big round of applause for bringing them to us.

While they played a lot of Alpine music, they really were "international" in ethnic origin and selections. The accordionist **Bob Maggiora** was (appropriately for BAAC) Italian; the guitar player **Steve McGinnis**, Celtic; the horn player **Jan Meers**, definitely Dutch; and the drummer **Portor Goltz**, Germanic. (I knew there had to be a German in there somewhere!) Varied song selections included Spanish, Italian, French, German, and traditional American numbers. As an interesting sidenote on the musical spectrum of the group, consider the following. The horn player, **Jan Meer**, played at least three different instruments during the show, and none of them was his primary instrument — piano and keyboard.

The best part about the performance (I thought) was that the audience was drawn into the music from the first note. You felt a part of every song played. After a long

day at work and the drive from San Jose, I sometimes get tired by the end of a BAAC meeting. Not tonight! Their last song was *I Don't Want to Go Home*, and indeed, none of us was ready to go home. Other selections included *Wir Kommen von den Bergen* (we

come from the mountains), *It's a Small World, Berg Vagabunden* (one of my favorites), *La Campagnola*, *Hey Baby - Che Paso*, *Alpine Echo*, *Innsbruck*, and *In Heaven There is No Beer*. **Bob Maggiora** got especially loud applause for *Flight of the Angels*. BRAVO INTERNATIONALS!!!

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If you would like to join the San Francisco Bay Area Accordion Club, please send a check for \$20 payable to BAAC to our Financial Secretary, Frank Montoro, 1448 Tarrytown San Mateo, CA. 94402. You will receive newsletters through June '97. We welcome all interested persons!

### Contact Phone #s for Officers and Board Members:

Pres: Bob Berta	(415) 756-8309
V.P. Joe Smiell	(510) 832-6938
Treas. Algis Ratnikas	(415) 587-9910
Record.Sect. Val Kieser	(510) 531-4836
Finan. Sect. Frank Montoro	(415) 574-4757
Mary-Alice Eldon	(415) 366-7819
Marian Kelly	(415) 854-1896
Frank Panacci	(415) 731-1039
Frank Schlotter	(510) 339-8657
Bob Smith	(415) 856-9321



*Portor Goltz, Jan Meer, Bob Maggiora, Steve Mc Ginnis*

## Accordionizing on The Love Boat

by Gene Lovello

BAAC member Gene Lovello is spreading the accordion gospel throughout the South Pacific as he fulfills a six month contract aboard the cruise ship Golden Princess. After visiting Australia, New Zealand, Bali, China, Korea, Russia and Japan, his tour will end in British Columbia in May. Gene reports the following anecdotes — somewhat abridged (with apologies) to fit the newsletter.

“I was playing the *Sicilian Tarantella* at dinner when a woman looked up and asked if I would play ‘something Italian.’ I switched to *Sorrento* when two minutes later another woman asked the same question. At that point I began playing the *Beer Barrel Polka* and all the questions ended.”

“An eleven year old girl laid five song requests on me in a row that I have never heard of. I now avoid 11 year olds.... Polkas being the most popular music, I was stopped one evening by a lady at the dinner table, who asked that I *not* play the *Too Fat Polka*.”

“Another passenger seated at the table was a balding male with a few wisps of flying hair on back. He kept scowling over his shoulder until I asked him what was wrong. His reply was ‘I don’t want to get my hair caught in that darned thing.’”

Gene relates that:

- He most enjoys meeting the passengers, who are mostly American with many from the Bay Area.

-The most difficult aspect of playing aboard ship is strolling under high seas conditions. At times the 600’ ship has lifted its propellers out of the water due to pitching.

-His biggest concerns are busy waiters with their hands full and passengers standing too close with drinks in their hands.

- His contract is for six months, but others run from two to ten months.

(Interested???)

- A frequent question is, “How do you know which button to push?” Gene’s usual reply, “Lucky, I guess.”

Further anecdotes include:

“A Catholic priest with a French accent hailed me one evening and asked me to play *As Time Goes By*. He explained that he had just seen *Casablanca* for the first time and was taken by the song of the movie. The man was 71 years old, and as I left, he said ‘Play it Again, Gene.’”

“Today while playing the lounge, an older lady approached me, standing before me, she reached out and placed her hand on the bass side of the instrument — I didn’t realize she was deaf until she said to me that she had enjoyed watching me play and now she wanted to ‘hear’ it. Being partially deaf in one ear, I felt great empathy for this sweet and gentle soul who so moved me.”

“One evening in the dining room I was stopped by a man seated at the table who requested *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*. As I began to play he stood up and sang it to his wife. Later I came back and asked him how long they had been married ‘54 short years’ was his reply. Once again, I was moved.”

And on the other hand..

“One evening I heard announced over the PA a singles get-together in the disco lounge at 10 PM. ‘Hmmm — why not? I’m single — might meet a nice lady.’ So off I went to the Disco where I sat down and ordered a drink. The music was playing and the mirrored ball was slowly throwing spears of light around the room. I sat there for two hours and do you know who turned up? Nobody! Not one person all night. I went to bed.”

Sorry Gene....better luck on the next cruise, and thanks for your comments. Many of us have wondered about playing aboard ship, and you answered a lot of questions!

BAAC Page  
% M Kelly  
March 20, 1996

Dear Editor,

I am writing to say that the enactment of a bylaw amendment doing away with term limits for our Club officers and board members needs to be reconsidered. This issue as originally stated in the bylaws was well discussed before its inclusion. The underlying reason was to insure that new people would continuously come to the leadership of the Club and would bring with them new ideas and attitudes to their elected positions. The idea of limiting terms, it was stated, also guards against the possibility of a person or group of people taking over the Club as their private entity.

At the March meeting I sat in row three from the back, and I could not hear the proposal or discussion concerning the amendment. This is because of the acoustics at Donworth. Bob Berta speaks in a quick, rapid-fire style, and together with the acoustics, I was not able to hear the proceedings.

Article X of our bylaws states that intended amendments “shall be published in the BAAC Page and voted upon by the membes(sic).” This was not done, and maybe the amendments ought to be brought up again anyhow.

The bylaws state that the “purpose” of the Club is to “promote the accordion as a performing instrument, ...introduce the accordion to young children....” There hasn’t been much done lately to further the “purpose” of the Club. I think this is related to the fact that there are currently people in leadership roles who have been there since the Club’s inception and, I believe, they ought to move over and let new people with new thoughts and ideas have an opportunity to lead. It seems the only “purpose” has been amassing more money in our general fund. This money, without a plan to accomplish the “purpose” of the Club, is useless. It’s like having a silo full of seed for planting, and nobody knows how to plant a crop.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Di Bono

## *Promote the Year of the Accordion*

By Norman Seaton, President,  
Texas Accordion Association

Last year during the Houston-based American Accordionists' Association (AAA) convention, an Accordion Summit Meeting was conducted. The meeting resulted in the development of a marketing campaign to promote the accordion on a national basis. AAA officials were to select various public-oriented accordion-related events to be promoted by a nationally recognized public relations agency. Stephen Koenigsberg (516-264-0640) was selected for this honor.

AAA targeted the New Jersey Accordion Teachers' Association and the Texas Accordion Association's annual convention as the first two public events to be featured for the promotional benefits. Since both events occurred on the same weekend (March 8 - 10), I do not know the results of the NJ event. I do know that the Texas event was well publicized.

Television: Channel 5, one of the leading TV stations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, came to the convention and filmed several accordionists. We received extensive coverage during the 6 PM news and good coverage at the end of the 10 PM news.

Newspapers: We noted good newspaper coverage in the Fort Worth Star Telegram, the Arlington News, and the Houston Chronicle. If any of you have seen it elsewhere, give us a call.

Radio: Dallas' leading rock station KLUV covered the accordion "big time." On Thursday, we received numerous spot announcements. On Friday morning, Jim Rommel and Mike Borelli (two leading accordionists from the DFW area) went to the station for a live promotion. During the next three hours (6 AM to 9 AM), callers asked for rock numbers, and many asked accordion-related questions. The show resulted in great coverage for the accordion, the convention, and those two performers. We predict that this type of promotion could have cost between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Had it not been for the "Year of the Accordion" promotion, this type of advertising would be financially impossible.

Dallas-area public radio station KERA also gave us great coverage. The information is currently being prepared to be broadcast on the chain of NPR stations.

What can you do? Send money. The national accordion promotion is expensive. AAA officials asked for \$1,000/month for this year and they are still about \$2,000 short of that goal.

Editor's Note: BAAC members approved a \$500 donation to this promotional campaign at our March meeting. If anyone wishes to make an individual contribution, send it to the AAA at PO Box 608, Mineola, NY 11501.

## *A Wonderful "Find" in San Luis Obispo*

by Bob Berta

About 4 times a year I go to the San Luis Obispo area of California (central Calif.) on business. Specifically it is to the quaint town of Pismo Beach. On my last trip I was told that if I liked great German food I should check out the Old Vienna Restaurant at 1527 Shell Beach Road. My co-worker said he used to live in Germany and it really reminded him of Germany's fine restaurants. With past trips marked by OK but not notable food I decided to try his recommendation. When I walked in the door I was not only greeted by the sound of an accordion being played, but I also noted about 3 other accordions and button boxes sitting around waiting to be picked up. WOW, this trip was looking better after all! Turns out the owner of the restaurant loves accordion, having come from a family that had an BB accordion-playing father. The owner never learned to play accordion (played piano) but his 14 year old son Seppi plays both PA (really nice 120 bass Da Vinci) and a 2 row Hohner diatonic. He has a lovely younger daughter but I didn't get a chance to find out if she is a musician also. Dad, mom, son and daughter are constantly scooting around waiting tables, playing music, visiting repeat customers and fitting in homework where time allows. It is a real family operation.

Weekends and special events/parties feature adult accordionist Chuck Osborne who played a very nice 126 bass Universal accordion (140 bass with a couple of rows short on the top). Chuck played a little of everything from German to Spanish to jazz including all the popular songs. A spirited group really enjoyed his playing and sang along enthusiastically on just about every song. Besides the seasonal Christmas music, some Jewish tunes, and all the rest, it seemed that that group knew the words to every song written! Young Seppi took the stage for a while and played a selection of German tunes and strolled around the tables like a real pro.

Of course the food was really great. I recommend the chicken breast wrapped in Westphalian Ham. A couple of mugs of Spaten Dark and I found it hard to leave. Once the crowd thinned out I had a chance to talk to papa Reithofer who told me about his love of the accordion and how his dream would be to have an accordion festival there. Unfortunately Pismo Beach is kind of a red-neck town so that may not be too likely in the near future.

Anyway if you are ever in that neck of the woods you might want to check out the place. Also you are invited to bring along your accordion to play a couple of tunes. Any music will do....German is not the only music allowed. If you get down there mention my name....I told him that I would try to get some accordionists down for a visit.

**1996 is the Year of the Accordion ! !**

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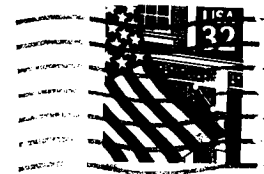
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NEXT MEETING: MONDAY  
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7:00 PM

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