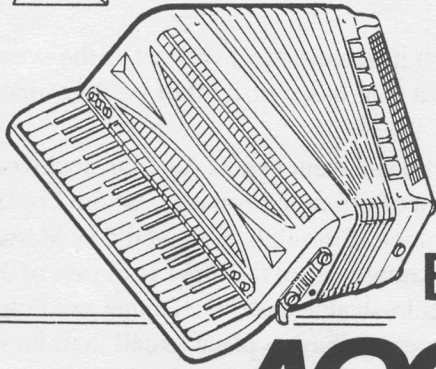


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB

NOVEMBER, 1996



November General Meeting

by Dennis Huff

We were treated in more than one way at November's meeting! It was our second BAAC "Dessert Night," and we were treated to arguably the world's premier accordion (bayan) virtuoso, **Friedrich Lips**. Both were much appreciated pleasures.

What can you say about dessert? We shouldn't eat so much of it, but we certainly all like it and everyone did his/her part in reducing the dessert table to empty plates and crumbs. Brownies, pies, cakes and chocolate chip cookies headlined the selections, and soft drinks and coffee were "on the house." With two intermissions, it was an interesting meeting format which left more time than normal for socializing and which we might want to consider more often. If you were a dessert contributor, thanks! And adjust your calorie meter for another hit as the Christmas meeting and its accompanying cake approaches.

Friedrich Lips. We've heard so much about his distinguished reputation that we expected a performer both amazing and close to flawless. We weren't disappointed.

No one really had an opportunity to get to know him very well, as he was here and gone in little more than one day. Impressions which BAAC members had of him were "intense," "very serious," "extremely well-educated," "well mannered and very polite," "virtuoso," and a "master of the instru-



Friedrich Lips

cont. on p. 3

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

November 24th, Sunday. Musical Tribute/Party for Jim Boggio in Petaluma. Everyone Invited! See p. 6 for details.

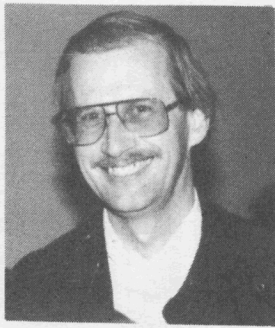
December 2nd, Monday. BAAC General Meeting, our Christmas party! We'll all eat cake and play and sing Christmas songs. If you bring your accordion that night and play with us, you pay NO door fee. Music for that meeting can be found on pp 4 & 5. Bring it with you. Sharing top billing will be all the Joe and Domenic-directed BAAC groups and Santa. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus, S.F., just north of Stonestown Shopping Center. 7 P.

Dec. 4th, 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.

December 9th, Monday. BAAC Accordion Band (Fun Band) practice. House of Parties. Call Domenic Saso, (415) 587-7557.

December 11th, Wednesday 7:00 PM. BAAC Ensemble Practice, House of Parties. Call Joe, 510-832-6938..

Please send Calendar Information to Your Editor, using the address on the last page. Thank you.



President's Message

by Bob Berta

Happy Holidays to you and yours. During this time of year it is traditional to reflect on the events of the past year. I consider the last year to have been a great year based on a lot of work by many members.

There are all of those unsung heroes behind the scenes who make our events run like clockwork (well....most of the time). I won't list all their names for fear of offending someone whom I fail to mention. But I must mention a few names who are the life blood of the club. First would be Marian Kelly who keeps us all on the right path with her extensive knowledge of the inner workings of the club over the years....and of course without her expertise the newsletter would be of far less value. Next are Donna and Frank Panacci and Isabel and Ed Massolo who tirelessly work long hours to see that our meetings have a place to call their home and help do all the "grunt" work of setting up the chairs, tables, etc. And last but not least is Joe Smiell. All of us in the various club orchestras and ensembles recognize all the work he puts into writing and arranging music, conducting and convincing us that we sound pretty good.

The last year has seen many guest artists from around the world and a lot of new friendships with those performers. We hope to continue visits by guest artists in 1997 although we won't have as many. Instead we will focus on highlighting our own members a little more, expand our performances of many other musical styles and tastes, and provide workshops in various subjects during the summer. The annual picnic will return to the Elks club location due to popular demand.

We intend to participate again in the various public events like Cotati, the SF International Accordion Festival, various ethnic festivals and the huge San Francisco musical event on the first day of summer, Making Waves. That event had a great turnout and we received lots of public awareness for our club.

The accordion saw much media attention partly due to the focus on "The Year of the Accordion." Highlights included color photos and an article in US Today about the SF International Accordion Festival which featured many of our members. Other articles in New York magazine and on public radio added to the infusion of media interest.

Sadly we also lost several members of our club who were very important in the history of the accordion. While I grieve for their loss I firmly believe that we are now in the next "Golden Days of the Accordion" era. The accordion is in an era of renewed awareness by the public and we need to help speed that awareness. Our club is seen world wide as the largest and most prestigious club in the US currently and it is due to a lot of hard work. To keep that position we need the help and support of all of our club members....including YOU. Our club can only continue to be successful when our members enthusiastically support all of our activities.

BAAC November Board Meeting

Synopsis

- Treasurer reported balances in our combined accounts which total \$8799.
- Discussion of the hum which was evident at the Lips performance. It is caused by the starter in the sodium vapor lights; hence little can be done about it.
- Santa will make an appearance at the December meeting. An surprise Board person is in charge.
- Veikko Ahvenainen has been scheduled to play at our March, 1997 meeting.
- Discussions for revision of our by-laws will begin in January, 1997.
- The Secretary will send condolence cards to the families of John Molinari and Jim Boggio.

NEW MEMBERS

Ernst Angst, Fremont	Bonnie Birch, SeattleWA
Katharine Boyd, San Rafael	Guido Brandi, Sonora
Patricia Ann Brown, Pacifica	Carolyn Cirimele, Mountain View
Peter A. Evans, Berkeley	Junona Jonas, San Francisco
Jacob Koff, San Francisco	Blanche Milner, Merced
Nikolai Prisakar, Sacramento	Ed Roseboom, San Carlos
Ed Scarini, Modesto	Adam Skory, Berkeley
Seymour Weinberg, San Rafael	

Welcome to all of you! Please help us get to know you, and feel free to make suggestions at any time.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

From **Ken Chambers**: \$50

for the scholarship fund in memory of
John Molinari.

From **Marie Ferrando**: \$20 in memory
of John Molinari.

Thank you: to both these kind people.

November General Meeting, cont.

ment." We learned that he was married with a son and daughter, and that he considered a three hour practice session "not very much practice." **Ed Massolo**, with whom **Prof. Lips** stayed, said that our guest began his practice with very basic scales, which he gradually increased in complexity until they were extremely challenging. Those old piano (and accordion!) teachers were correct. Keep practicing your scales!

Friedrich Lips' began his program with the *Gothic Suite for Organ* by Boellmann: *Introduction - Chorale, Menuete, Prayer, Toccata*. The splendid grand sounds were just a taste of things to come, and the audience responded with great enthusiasm. He followed with *De Profundis* by Gubaidulina, a piece of atonal music written specifically for the bayan, and dedicated to **Prof. Lips**. It was an amazing ingenious demonstration of the "sounds" (as contrasted with the notes) of which the bayan is capable, sounds such as gasping and note

bending which none of us had previously associated with an accordion! Then he entertained us with the *Children's Suite No. 1* by Zolotaryov. We adults were charmed by the sections: *That Queer Thing from Dusseldorf, Toy Soldier's March, Jester Playing on a Squeezebox*. The time had flown by, and the crowd of 210 jumped to its feet (again)cheering.

Following intermission, **Professor Lips** played impeccably well several numbers with which we were quite familiar such as Lecuona's *Maleguena* and *La Comparsa*, and *Asturias* by Albeniz. Then...surprise...a tango, *Sentido Unico* by Astor Piazzola, and a polka by Schnittke in which the use of both major and minor keys helped it sound very Russian. And let's not forget Rossini's *La Danza* and a wonderful *Russian Dance* by Shenderyov. As an encore, our Pro-

fessor gave us *Figaro* by Rossini.

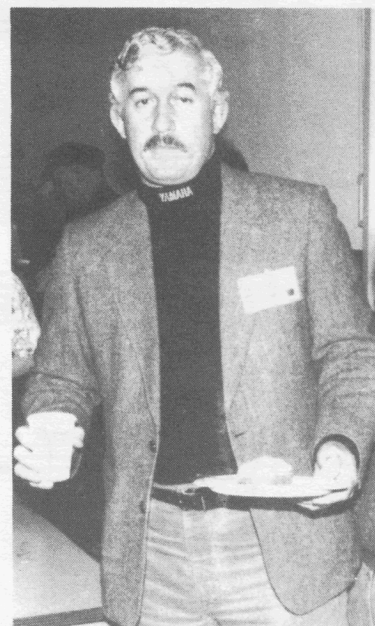
As **Lips** demonstrated his vastly diverse repertoire, I couldn't help visualizing him scoring an entire movie with just his bayan.

There isn't much comparison in our music world to people like **Friedrich Lips**. **Joe Smiell**, whom (by the way) **Prof. Lips** enjoyed meeting, might be somewhat analogous. **Professor Lips** literally has a Ph D in music and the accordion! Even more specifically, the Russian Bayan Accordion. He started playing at age five and rapidly progressed to the forefront of the Russian accordion world. In 1969 he won first prize at the international Klingenthal Accordion Competition; he was selected as a Distinguished Russian Artist in 1982; he was elevated to full professorship in 1989 at age 41. He has toured

much of the world playing the bayan; he gives about forty

to p. 7 

Here are a few of our Professional Dessert Samplers. Wonder what unexpected tastes they were experiencing???



Above: Paul Magistretti
 Top Row: Carl Hoeckner, Nora Mazzara
 Bottom Row: Jim Ragle, Ken Chambers

Across the Editor's Desk.....

Dear BAAC Members,

The recent news of John Molinari's unexpected passing brings back many memories covering more than thirty years of John, of his Father, John, Sr., and of the wonderful Molinari family. The Molinaris, especially John Sr., were heavily involved in the AFNA accordion festivals held locally. I was frequently a contestant, so I hung out with daughter Anne and son John. We had a good time playing our accordions and just generally having fun.

Because of my interest in classical and serious accordion music my teacher, Guido Canevari aligned me with John Sr. as a secondary instructor, and I would at least bi-monthly travel to Oakland with my Dad or Guido to study privately with him. Those lessons lasted 2 to 3 hours, and the time flew by as I was learning so much about interpretation, compositional construction, accordion transcription, harmony and theory of music, and the various accordion techniques. After the lessons I was frequently invited to dinner or at least for a visit to John's home in Oakland giving me the opportunity to become better acquainted with young John.

Years later when John needed to attend the marriage of his sister Margaret, I was the lucky one asked to cover his role as accordion-celeste player with the "Fiddler On The Roof" orchestra at the Shubert Theater in Philadelphia.

Since I had two daughters who were interested in professional skating, our family saw him both perform in and conduct the very popular Ice Capades show on several occasions and always managed to contact and talk with him.

John and I had mutual friends, the Cables, living in Occidental. They had known him from his days traveling with, playing for and directing the circus orchestra, as they had been traveling performers.

John always seemed apologetic for his playing as he felt he was always being compared in stature and performance with his irreplaceable Father. Few people, except those who worked with him and around or under his musical direction, ever really appreciated what a truly great and talented musician he was in his own earned right.

I, for one, do and will sincerely miss seeing his always smiling face and quiet, friendly demeanor as both musician and man.

Sincerely,
Ken Chambers

**PARTY/MUSICAL TRIBUTE
TO
JIM BOGGIO**

Everyone is invited to attend a musical tribute to our friend, Jim Boggio on Sunday, November 24th from 2 to 10PM at the Mystic Theater in Petaluma at 23 Petaluma Blvd. The location is close to downtown Petaluma, right off Washington. The Swamp Dogs all knew it well...they played there frequently with Queen Ida. It's a big place, with bar on site and restaurants next door and down the block. Jim's tapes and CD's will be available.

- From 2 to 4 will be the Gathering of the Accordions.
- From 4 to 6 will be a Jazz/ Polka/ Gypsy jam session
- From 6 to 8 will be a Lady-of-Spain- a thon and Gospel sing.
- From 8 to 10, a Cajun/Zydeco dance party.

If you wish to perform, contact Blair Hardman at (707) 664-1221.

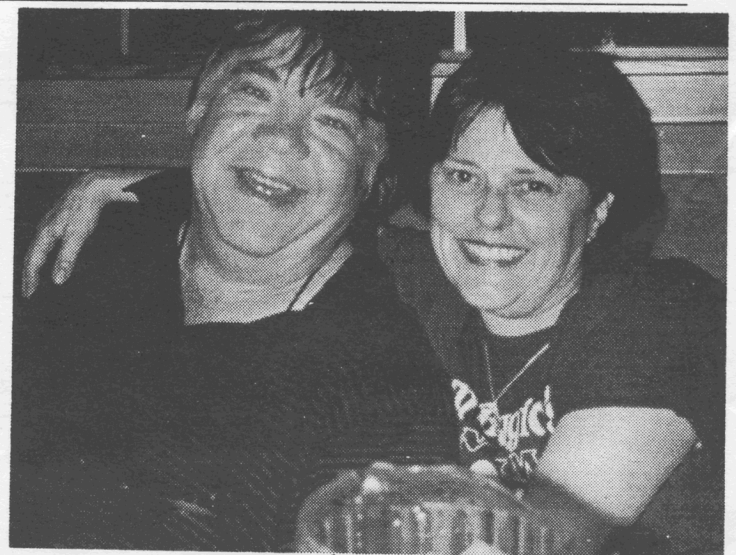
Contributions will be accepted toward the Jim Boggio Memorial Statue Fund...a life-sized statue of Jim will be placed permanently on the Plaza at Cotati.

Wouldn't Jim have loved it!???

From Your Editor:

As many of you already know, the past few weeks have been unusually difficult ones for BAAC members. Three members and a dear friend have passed away, and many of us have almost decided to stop answering the phone. I'm speaking of John Molinari, who died at 56 shortly after a sudden heart attack, and of Jim Boggio, also 56 and also of a heart condition. We are told that George Meier, who ran his accordion business in Rocklin for many years and advertised on the back cover of this newsletter until Dec. '95, also passed away a couple weeks ago, although we have been unable to verify that. And then another call this week... Dorothy Van Damme, Art's wife, has died of a sudden kidney disease. She will be buried in Chicago, where she and Art spent most of their lives.

These people were so important to the accordion and to many of us personally that I could easily use the entire newsletter to write about their lives and contributions. However, because not everyone knew them and for several other reasons, I'm purposely holding down the amount of coverage in this issue. That doesn't exclude the possibility of articles in subsequent issues.



Jim and Suzanne

November General Meeting, cont.

concerts annually (roughly half the number he was doing in the '80s); and he has published a great volume of music, arrangements, articles and text on the bayan. His masterpiece, The Art of Playing the Bayan, was published in Russian in 1985 and subsequently in German. His CD "Seven Words" for bayan, cello and string was awarded the "Golden Diapason" in Paris (1991) "CD of the Year."

Although I'd like to regard myself as moderately urbane, I quickly admit that some of **Professor Lips'** ability and musical inspiration was a little over my head. However I considered it a great privilege and a pleasure to be able to experience one of **Prof. Lips'** performances — an experience I'd gladly repeat. Also, I was extremely proud of the great respect and hushed quiet (except for that hum from the lights) to which BAAC treated our guest. As he departed, **Professor Lips** specifically commented to **Ed Massolo** that he greatly appreciated the focused attention given him during his performance. Good work, BAAC!

The accordion is a complex instrument. Our Club gives us an opportunity

to observe the diverse ways in which so many talented players from around the world coax so many wonderful sounds from our instrument.



Friedrich Lips

Just Released: *The Nutcracker Suite* by Stas Venglevski

Stas Venglevski, who you recall was Friedrich Lips' bayan student in Russia for many years, who has been living in Milwaukee for four years, and who delighted the crowd as our guest at the September meeting with both his playing and his personality, has a new CD available, just in time for Christmas! It's so very appropriate, because Stas has arranged for solo bayan and recorded thirteen selections from Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite" and ballet, and the colorful CD jacket front shows a very toothy Nutcracker playing an accordion.

To arrange this music for his bayan, Stas used Tchaikovsky's piano score for the Suite as a framework then experimented, adding various harmonies and accompaniments which seemed suited for the bayan from the orchestral score for the ballet. He didn't use a pencil...just his accordion and his ear. He found the harmonies amazingly well suited to the bayan.

The Nutcracker Suite is taken from the ballet, but does not include all of the ballet music. Stas has added back in a few of his favorite selections such as the *Children's Galop*, the *Spanish Dance*, *Mother Ginger and the Polichinelles* from the Divertissement, and the *Coda* from the Pas de Deux.

This CD is very easy to listen to, because most of the melodies are so very familiar to American audiences. Everybody knows *Waltz of the Flowers*, for instance, the *March of the Toys*, the *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies*, and the *Overture*. Stas' crisp, sure, light touch encourages one to imagine ballet dancers whirling and fairies with magic wands and toys that come to life.

What a lovely Christmas gift for an accordion lover this would be! Stas didn't quote us a specific price, but we're sure that if you send him a check for \$18, he will mail you your own Christmas copy. Stas Venglevski is at 4790 No. Sheffield Ave., Whitefish Bay, WI 53211. His telephone is (414) 962-8342.

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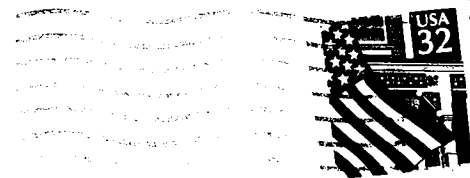
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**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY
DECEMBER 2, 1996
7:00 PM**

**Donworth Hall
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SAN FRANCISCO**

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