



Official Instrument of San Francisco
 1912 ♪ *The World's First Accordion Club* ♪ 2009

SUNDAY, February 15 ENTERTAINMENT: DON'T MISS
The Robert Reich Trio
The Di Chicacchio & Knapp Duo (Guitar and Accordion)
Special Guest Jerry Choate from Chico*

... And a great surprise that you will enjoy!

** The Lynn-Sharon-Marian Trio had to postpone their performance due to a conflict*

President's Message

Have you ever thought about the mechanics that went into the production of your accordion? Today's piano accordions are a far cry from earlier models. Remember, the piano accordion has been around for a century and has undergone great improvements over the years. Today's piano accordions are made with precision and crafted to withstand the rigor of constant use. Repairs are relatively rare compared to those of years ago. I recall having a can of beeswax and a tool handy with which I returned the reeds when they popped out of the reed block. They made a special black tape to repair the bellows because they didn't hold up to constant use.

The "guts" of the instrument are the reed blocks, usually three or four on the treble side and five on the bass side of a standard accordion. They are carefully crafted using a special lightweight but sturdy wood. Holes are bored to permit the reeds to vibrate when air provided by the bellows passes through. The quality of the steel used to form the reeds determines the difference of tone from one instrument to another. Tuning an accordion is vastly more complicated than tuning a piano, for instance. A series of

levers controls the various tones such as clarinet, bassoon, etc. by use of switches. But if you really want to see something mind-boggling, remove the side panel of the bass side. There you see countless levers which select three tones for each of eighty chords in addition to twenty bass notes. One source states that there are about 4000 individual parts on an accordion.

San Francisco was once a great center for the manufacture of accordions. As many as eight factories produced accordions from scratch years ago in San Francisco, according to the book *The Golden Age of the Accordion* by Flynn, Davison and Chavez. I watched my first professional accordion being built by Pacific Accordions in 1946. The skilled craftsman who built the body of the instrument was a young man named Vincent Cirelli.

Today most accordions are manufactured in Europe. We are fortunate that there are still a few people like Vince who know how to tune and maintain our accordions, and we value them and the skill of true craftsmanship.

Frank Montoro



rections to Oyster Point Yacht Club, 911 Marina Blvd., South San Francisco
 From 101 traveling either north or south, take Oyster Point exit. Turn right on Marina Blvd. (be careful not to turn right on Gull Drive,

Di-

Our Website is again active and growing—check it out! www.sfaccordionclub.com

January Music: A Great Variety

President Frank Montoro pointed out the fact that this day, January 18, is the birth date shared by both founder Lou Soper and Maestro Anthony Galla-Rini. We had hoped to have Lou Soper's daughter, Dawn Halverson, here for a special appearance, but unfortunately she was unable to come at the last minute. We hope Dawn knows, however, that she is more than welcome to attend any of our musical meetings, and that we would be so happy to greet her!

Val presented new SFAC member Ross Bausone and his wife Laureen. We are very happy to have Ross aboard and hope to see both of them often.

On to the music. We have enjoyed the playing of Lou Jacklich and his students many times in the past, and we have especially looked forward to today's appearance, having heard from other clubs what a



Gabe Soper

great show they have been putting on recently. And now we know why!

Frank introduced Lou, and Lou took over the microphone. First he presented 15-year-old Gabe Soper (his having the same surname as Lou Soper is purely coincidental). Gabe has been studying with Lou Jacklich for 8 years—imagine!

That's more than half his young life! Gabe showed us how those years paid off by playing *España Cañí* and *El Cubanchero*—all while standing up—followed by enthusiastic applause.

The next player, another student of Lou Jacklich, was Salane Schultz, whom many of you will recognize from the "Accordion Babes" calendar. When we first met Salane, she was studying with Lou Soper, and actually performed for the club when she was still his student. One day about a year ago I ran into Salane in a restaurant in Alameda, and she approached me and asked about the club—and she was looking for another teacher. I referred her to Lou Jacklich. So, she re-joined the club and began studying with Lou

Jacklich. Welcome back, Salane!

Salane played *La Comparsita* and *Tico-Tico* with great panache!

Jane Tripi has been a student of Lou Jacklich ever since I've known her—we met at a Lou Jacklich composition seminar at Boaz Accordions many years ago.

We have heard Jane play for various clubs and she always takes on challenging music, something I'd be afraid to try! Today she joined up with Lou, who backed her up, as she



Lou Jacklich and Jane Tripi

played *Nature Boy*, a slow, haunting mood piece. Jane's other piece was *Ca-ballo Viejo*, or "Old Horse," from one of Mario Pedone's Latin music books.

Thor Miao also is no stranger to our club. He has played for us several times in the past, and has received one of our scholarships. Thor also takes on difficult music—classical—and plays long, complicated numbers without music! Thor has played 12 years with Lou. Thor played a difficult arrangement of *Finlandia* by Sibelius. I can only imagine how much work went into learning that piece!

Next came the long-awaited special treat of Lou Jacklich playing solo. First Lou played a George Gershwin med-



Thor Miao



Salane Schultz



Lou Jacklich

ley that included the beautiful *Rhapsody in Blue*. I don't know the names of all the other tunes in the medley, but detected some motifs from *Porgy & Bess* in there. Beautiful, Lou!

Then Lou played *Malagueña* while standing, and including a bellow shake that brought applause

and whistles from the audience. The *Bumble Boogie* that followed reminded me of the days long ago when I played it on the piano. I had never thought of it as an accordion piece, I guess because I was in hiatus from accordion for 40+ years and didn't realize that it had become an accordion standard—but wow! Lou made it sound terrific!

Lou concluded with a beautiful and unusual arrangement of a medley of *Over The Rainbow* and *Misty*, two of my favorite pieces. What an ovation Lou got! Thanks again, Lou—and come around more often! By the way, how many of you know anyone who actually makes a living playing and teaching accordion? Well, Lou does!

After the break with the usual great food prepared by Tuti, the big drawing was held—and none other than **Amil Samayoa** won the cash prize! Amil is a very enthusiastic, long-time member of our club, and also one of our most generous donors, so this must be karma!

Pres. **Frank Montoro** announced that the **Galla-Rini Camp**

this year will take place in San Rafael July 25-30. This will be the 20th anniversary of the Galla-Rini camp.

More about the

camp coming up!

The musical program resumed with the **Alex Gonzales Quartet**. Quartet, you say? Where was the fourth player? Well the fourth player was the electronic percussion section inasmuch as the percussionist was ill and unable to come today. The players were: **Alex Gonzales** of course, playing a three-row Gabanelli diatonic button box. Wow, could he make that button box sing and dance! Alex also played guitar while guitarist **Juan** was singing vocals. The other two players were **Juan** and **Rudi**, and I did not get their last names—but they surely knew their instruments and played very professionally.

The group played/sang the perennial Tex-Mex favorite *Hey Baby, ¿Qué Pasó?* followed by many wonderful familiar tunes including *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, *San Antonio Rose* (everyone

clapped along), *On the Road Again*, and *Spanish Eyes*. They also played some other terrific pieces whose names I did not get, that included rhythms reminiscent

of the schottische, the waltz and the polka. It's easy to see why this group is so popular!

What a nice, upbeat ending to a great musical afternoon!

But I would like to add special thanks to **Telmo Echeverría** for setting up and writing out the program on our signboard every month; to **Vinny Rinaldi** for his help in setting up the sound system and being available for any task that might be needed; to **Ruby Dezman** and **Jonelle Preiser** for helping at the welcome table, and to **Evelyn Baulch** for being the Raffle Lady almost every month. These people, who are always willing to help out, are some of the "unsung heroes" of our club. There are others too, when they are able to come: **Jim Firpo** and his wife **Barbara**; **Sue Hirigoyen**, **Michael Sanossian**, to name a few (and risk excluding others who also deserve recognition). And this is just for the meetings! These and others are helping behind the scenes too, especially with the newsletter. To all of you a big **THANK YOU!**

Val



Welcome Table with Ruby Dezman and Jonelle Preiser

"Make a Difficult Passage More Difficult."

When Julius Caesar planned to attack his enemy beyond the Alps, he had his troops drill with fifty pound weights on their shoes. When these weights were removed, they practically flew over the Alps.

Apply this principle by holding one key down while moving the others or any other way to increase the difficulty. Use imagination.



For instance if you found this passage difficult, you might break it down like this:

(1) The First Two Notes



The 2nd and 3rd Notes



(2) Hold Top Note



Hold Bottom Note

Same with the next two notes



(3) First three notes Forward and Backward



First four notes Forward and Backward



And so on until passage is completed. Adding more difficulty to the passage makes the passage itself simpler by comparison. This requires practice, but it is well rewarded.

A page from *Principles of Accordion Technique* by Vincent Geraci
No date given, but quite old.



Thor Miao and his dad, Duke



Grigoriy Krumik, Vinny Rinaldi, Steve Mobia

Kids' Letters to God

"Maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each (sic.) so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother. Larry"
"Dear God, Please send Dennis Clark to a different camp this year. Peter."

"Dear God, Thank you for the baby brother but what I prayed for was a puppy. Joyce"



Welcome New Members

Ross Bausone of Castro Valley plays piano accordion and enjoys "Oldies," Modern/jazz, Classical and European music. Ross plays with two different Blues bands, one in the Valley, "The Esquires Blues Band;" and one in the East Bay, "The Circuit Breakers." He is interested in our club activities, and we hope Ross will participate often—and of course, play for us!

Paul Gonyea of San Francisco is a brand new and enthusiastic student of Sharon Greyhosky.

Christina Knapp of Hayward likes European music, folk, cowboy, jazz, Tex-Mex, Cajun and classical music. She is also learning to yodel! Chris is a student of Lou Jacklich and is very much intrigued by the accordion. She attended our January meeting and decided to join.

A great big "welcome aboard" to Ross, Paul and Chris! We hope to see you often!

News of the San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble

The ensemble will be performing at the Accordion Club of the Redwoods at their February 15 meeting; also at the "Fun After 50" club in Redwood City on Tuesday, Feb. 10. The Spring Concert will be presented on Sunday, April 26 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Redwood City. Details on the concert will follow.

News of the San Francisco Accordion Band

The band is currently working on a spring program and has several prospects (not yet confirmed) for playing. The band is definitely scheduled to play at the Silicon Valley Accordion Society on Sunday, June 7.

Word Has It . . .

. . . That the German band *Deutscher Musikverein* is interested in pursuing some activity with our club and/or our band. This could be very exciting for our club. Stay tuned for developments.

. . . That club founder **Jim Holliday** is celebrating 90 great years! **HAPPY BIRTHDAY & HERE'S TO MANY MORE, JIM!**



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When Do Our Fellow Accordion Clubs in the Bay Area (and slightly beyond) Meet?

Accordion Club of the Redwoods (ACR) regularly meets on the third Monday of the month, Hermann & Sons Hall, 860 Western Avenue, Petaluma. Contact: Kris Nelson krisnelson@aol.com or (707) 795-4860.

Silicon Valley Accordion Society (SVAS) meets on the first Sunday of the month, 1:30 p.m. at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue between Keily Blvd. and Stevens Creek Blvd. Contact: Bill Topogna (408) 984-5290.

Golden State Accordion Club (GSAC) has three chapters: The Vacaville club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30, at Creekside Bar & Grill, 555 Main street, Vacaville. The Humboldt Club meets on the third Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., Humboldt Swiss Club, 5403 Tompkins Hill Road, Loleta, CA 95551. The Sacramento group meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd., Sacramento. Contact for all the GSAC Chapters: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359.

Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC) meets on the second Wednesday of the month 7:00 p.m. in the Escalon Community Center, 1055 Escalon Avenue, Escalon. Contact: (209) 545-3603.

Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS) meets 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month at Lutheran Church Hall, 6365 Douglas Blvd, off Highway 80 in Granite Bay, CA. Contact: Vince Cukar (916) 791-3041.



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Our Sincere Thanks

To those who generously donate to the Club.
Each year we start a new cumulative list of donors. If you donate in 2009 and your name doesn't show up in this column, please call Val (510) 531-4836 or vtkacc@ifn.net and let me know. We want to be sure you are recognized! Thanks! These donations are very much appreciated. So far this year your Editor has learned of donations from: **Maryanne Romanowski** and her firm, which is Care2.com Inc.; **Amil Samayoa**; (I know there was at least one other but accidentally recycled the sheet of paper so can't look it up now—I hope that person will contact me!—Val)



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SF Accordion Band Practice

Wed., Feb. 11 and Wed. Feb. 25 7 p.m.
at Val Kieser's Home in Oakland

CALL AHEAD because sometimes there are changes!! Please join us! Info: call Frank Schlotter (510) 339-1163

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- * Renée de la Prade Culann's Hounds, San Francisco www.sfhounds.com
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- * Reno Di Bono South Bay ourhike@aol.com * William De Michelis South Bay wdd777@comcast.net
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Members may place one small ad for one month free of charge in a given year; after that the charge is \$6.00 per issue. A business-card-size ad costs \$6 per issue or \$60 per year for members; a quarter-page ad costs \$15.00 for members; a half-page ad costs \$25 for members. A full-page ad costs \$50.00 for members. Discount available for ongoing ads. Ads placed by non-members will cost twice the above-quoted prices. A flyer advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members.

NEXT MEETING:
Sunday, February 15, 2009
2:00 Oyster Point Yacht Club



**Newsletter of the
San Francisco Accordion Club**

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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE



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20th Annual
Galla-Rini Accordion Camp
Joe Smiell, Music Director

San Domenico Music Conservatory
July 26 – July 31, 2009



Presented by the
San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble Association
A non-profit corporation

July 26 - July 31, 2009

**SAVE THE DATE,
SHARE OUR EXCITEMENT!!!!!!**

For its 20th annual edition, the Galla-Rini Accordion Camp will be moving to the **San Domenico Music Conservatory** on the beautiful campus of San Domenico School; a stunning setting in rural **San Anselmo**, Marin County, California.

We plan to make this our permanent home and we extend a special invitation to past campers to attend this 20th anniversary camp and share our excitement as well as your memories and music in a **special evening dedicated to Maestro Anthony Galla-Rini**; new campers will surely enjoy this look back and then look forward to music created by our **new Maestro, Joe Smiell**, who in 2005, at the personal request of Maestro Galla-Rini, was asked to continue the camp and expand the program of presenting the accordion as a serious musical instrument.

Maestro Smiell is uniquely suited to this task being a Conservatory trained musician (Peabody Conservatory); with years of experience in writing, scoring and arranging solo, ensemble and orchestral music (popular and folk as well as classical) for the accordion.

For more information and to reserve place contact: **Tor Arild**

By Mail: SFACE Association

By email: tarild@gotsky.com

c/o T Arild

P O Box 620063

By phone: 1650 851 7831

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