



# The San Francisco Accordion Club



World's First Accordion Club 1912-2010



Newsletter for February 2010

The  
official instrument of  
San Francisco!

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## Newsletter

**Valerie Kieser**, Copy Editor  
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## Vice-President's Message

### 2010 Frank Marocco Accordion Event—A Huge Success!



By Lynn Ewing

In January, 50 accordionists attended the Frank Marocco Accordion Event which was held at the Dobson Ranch Inn in Mesa Arizona. This event is so popular that 38 accordionists were left on the waiting list, and the concert on Sunday evening was standing room only, with over 300 people trying to find a place in the hall! What makes an event like this so enthusiastically attended?

The amazing thing, I think, is the camaraderie which occurs when accordionists who range in ability from Palmer Hughes Book 2 to world-class

professionals all come together for a common purpose. The orchestra played 8 pieces this year, from a wide variety of arrangers. Jazz great **Frank Marocco**, who is the Musical Director and Conductor of the event, arranged the *Star Spangled Banner*, *Por Una Cabeza*, *Slaughter on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue*, and *Adiós Nonino*. Assistant Music Director, **Stas Venglevski** arranged two pieces by famed Russian composer *Georgy Sviridov*, *Troika*, and *Valse*. We were



Asst. Music Director Stas Venglevski with Music Director and Conductor Frank Marocco

treated to a beautiful original piece, *Juntos*, composed and arranged by **Amy Jo Sawyer**, and ended with a rousing Galla-Rini arrangement of *God Bless America*. The orchestra was ably supported by college students **Wes Anderson** on Percussion and **Sean Brogan** on string bass, not to mention the fine bass



The 2010 FMAE Orchestra

# Frank Marocco Accordion Event . . .



College students **Wes Anderson (Drums)** and **Sean Brogan (Bass)** with **Amy Jo Sawyer**

accordion work provided by **John Simkus** from Chicago.

Our youngest player was 11 year old **Lisa Breccia**, who arrived with her mom, **Elke Ahrenholz**, from Castelfidardo, Italy, representing Victoria

Accordions, and we were also delighted to have college student **Gabe Hall-Rodrigues**, who took up the accordion after hearing our concert last year.

Mornings were devoted to orchestra rehearsal, and afternoons to workshops, master classes, and section rehearsals.

We had some fabulous workshops, including one by **Elke Ahrenholz**, one by **Frank** himself on creating additional chords with the left hand, and one from **Gabe Hall-Rodrigues**, a music therapy major, on "Music Therapy, My Accordion and Me."



**Frank Marocco** performing with **Gabe Hall-Rodrigues**



Get out your magnifying glass! Can you spot the many members of our club in attendance?

Lunches and dinners were filled with music from players who generously contributed their talents for our enjoyment, and in the evenings, we had wonderful music of all kinds.

Evening highlights included featured performances by the guest artists in attendance, as well as performances from a wide spectrum of players. **Stas Venglevski** brought the house down with his brilliant and tender solos, and we were also privileged to hear from the Connecticut accordion quintet **Vitality**, **Gabe**



**Joan Grauman** and **Gwyn Lister** performing in an informal evening jam session



# . . . A Huge Success!

Hall-Rodrigues, and Lisa Breccia. We were thrilled to hear wonderful music from Frank Marocco himself, **Father Joe Baccellieri**, John Simkus, Amy Jo Sawyer and other fine players including a number of Frank Marocco's students, and others who played in various constellations.



Lynn Ewing and Marian Kelly also providing entertainment during the event

**Rita Davidson**, the editor of the wonderful website [www.AccordionUSA.com](http://www.AccordionUSA.com) gave us a rare treat by playing a mini concert of seldom heard works by Eugene Et-tore, her teacher and mentor.

Last but not least, Stas brought his wife, profes-sional cellist **Roza Borisova**, who brought tears to our eyes with her virtuosity. She and Stas truly make



Cellist, Roza Borisova with hus-band, Stas Venglevski delighting the audience

beautiful music together. **Joan and Dan Grauman**, the event organizers, did every-thing possible to ensure that the event ran smoothly and that all the good sugges-tions from past attendees were

incorporated into an outstanding experience of learn-ing, listening, performing, and connecting with new and old friends who share our passion for our beloved in-strument.

These wonderful memories will remain with us for-ever!



Lynn, Gus & Sharon showing off some of Joan Grauman's clever artwork!



The SF Bay Area was well repre-sented!



**From the editor:** Lynn, thank you for offering this wonder-ful account of the Marocco Accordion Event. Evidenced by both words and pic-tures, it must have been a rewarding and

inspiring experience. I'm sure many more of us wish we could have been in attendance.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Joan Grauman for sharing with us, the wonderful photos of the event by **Bruce Lawrie**. Randy

# January Musical Meeting . . .

President **Frank Montoro** was MC for this program. He announced that *Tangonero* (see below) has an excellent CD for sale and urged everyone to buy it. He also told of **Reno Di Bono's** new CD, *Songs of My Father* (Italian). Frank reiterated that our club is non-profit, to educate the public about the accordion, its versatility and what it can do.

First up to play for us was **Mike Zampiceni**, who is always willing to play, plays so beautifully, and has a beautiful tenor voice for vocals. Mike started off with *Cabaret* including vocal; *It's a Wonderful Day*, *España Cañi* including a brief and tasteful bellow shake; a nice, slow *Georgia On my Mind* (a switch from Mike's usual fast style!); a lively *Sweet Georgia Brown*; *Swinging Shepherd Blues* that he first heard while in high school; a terrific medley of *Five Foot Two/Twelfth Street Rag/Bye Bye Blackbird*. Thanks, Mike! (Let's have more vocals next time!)



**Mike Zampiceni**

*Tangonero's* Website ([www.tangonero.com](http://www.tangonero.com)) describes their music better than I possibly could: "We specialize in classic tango, a genre that fuses intense passion with quiet tenderness, alternating sharp percussive rhythms with slow nostalgic melodies. It squeezes your heart to tears and then sets your feet to dancing." Well said! By the end of *Tangonero's* presentation I think they must have sold a lot of CD's because they put on a show to remember, with authentic tango sound (remember *Forever Tango?*) including bandoneón well represented by **Alex Roitman's** Sonola accordion. Two of the tangos were ones we are familiar with, but played in real classic tango style: *El Choclo* and *La Cumparsita*. The only thing missing was tango dancers!

Alex Roitman is an accordion student of **Peter Di Bono**, and represents a "New Generation of Accordion-

ists" as Frank Montoro calls him. And Alex is a fantastic player. I was impressed by the fact that all the instruments are acoustic--no electronics trying to imitate the real thing.

In the band: **Michele Walther** on violin; **Jacob**



*Tangonero*: **Alex Roitman**, **Michele Walther**, **Zac Selissen** and **Jacob Johnson**

**Johnson** on bass; **Zac Selissen** on guitar; and of course Alex on accordion. Each instrument (musician)--violin, guitar, bass, accordion--was highlighted at some point, offering its own special effects, including "La Yumba" that featured the bass sounding like a train chugging. Oh yes, they also played a few waltzes and *milongas*. I recommend that you check out their Website, [www.tangonero.com](http://www.tangonero.com), to see the bios on these musicians. Each and every one of them has an impressive musical background. Thanks to Alex and the *Tangonero* players for an incredible show!

After a wonderful lunch (thanks once more, Tuti!) and the door prize and raffle drawings, we got another special treat. It has been too long since we heard **Bonnie Birch** from Seattle. Thanks to **Randy Hicks** we got Bonnie to make the trip down to



President and MC **Frank Montoro** with **Natasha Brocks** drawing door prize tickets



# . . . Another All-Star Show!

play for us today. Bonnie is a natural star and has a very busy professional musical life, including her own band and various vocalists and other instruments that she accompanies. I don't know how she keeps up with it all.

Bonnie told us the story of her trip down from Seattle. The guy in Security, on seeing the accordion, asked "What's that?" When Bonnie told him it's an accordion, he said laughingly, "Oh we knew that!" Bonnie cracked up laughing.

Bonnie's program for us today was a sort of "ABC" of accordion music--that is, she had several pieces lined up for each letter of the alphabet. Playing just one song per letter, she got only to the letter "M," and then skipped to "P" and "S" for the end of her performance. I'm sure I didn't get



**Bonnie Birch**

all the names correctly, but some of them are: (A) *A Man and A Woman*; (B) *Brazillerinho*; (C) *Carmen* medley; (D) *Dream A Little Dream*; (E) *Ecstasy* tango; (F) *Felix the Fisherman* (Irish jig); (G) *Glad Och Livad*, a Swedish Schottische; (H) *Hungarian Dance #5* by Brahms; (I) Italian medley, including a fabulous *Ciribiribin*; (J) *La Java* (French); (K) *Komm Zigany* (Come Gypsy; a Hungarian tune); (L) Two songs about "Lola"; (M) *Marechiare*. With time running short, she skipped to (P) *Play Fiddle Play* and ended with (S) *Säk-kijärven Polkka*.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who performed in this All-Star program!

Val

Coming Next Month . . .

## The Aurora Mandolin Orchestra



The Aurora Mandolin Orchestra (AMO), first made its appearance in the 1930s. In 1970 the group was "revived" by original member, Gino Pellegrini, who served as Director and Concertmaster until 2006. Josephine Pellegrini, known as Jo, assumed the role of Director and Conductor and has successfully preserved his legacy of bringing the vibrancy and passion of the mandolin orchestral repertoire to new audiences throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Aurora Mandolin Orchestra is the largest orchestra of its kind in the San Francisco Bay Area and consists of up to thirty professional and amateur musicians (mandolin, mandola, mandocello, guitar, string bass, accordion, flute and percussion) from various parts of the Bay Area. The uniqueness of this group is its varied repertoire including traditional and semi-classical Italian, Spanish, Russian, specialty ethnic and contemporary orchestral compositions. For more information you may visit their website:

[www.auroramandolin.com](http://www.auroramandolin.com)



# News and Announcements

## *Our Sincere Thanks!*

To those who generously donate to the Club.

With each new membership year we start a new cumulative list of donors. If you have donated and your name doesn't show up in this column, please contact Val at (510) 531-4836 or [vtkacc@ifn.net](mailto:vtkacc@ifn.net) and let her know. We greatly appreciate your support and we want to be sure you are recognized. We gratefully acknowledge donations from: Ross and Laureen Bausone, Xavier de la Prade, Lynn Ewing, Lou Fabbri, Johan and Marja Gullmes, Ron Harris, Randall Hicks, Val Kieser, Bruce Kirschner, Herb Meier, Frank Montoro, Sundi O'Mara, Larry and Paula Re, Alex Roitman, Maryanne Romanowski (with a matching employer grant), Paul Thiel, Scott Williamson, Barbara Winter, Lore Warren, Richard Yaus & Mark Zhagel.

## *Mark your Calendars*

**2010 National Accordion Convention (NAA)** March 11-13, Dallas, TX. For more information visit: <http://www.accordions.com/naa/convention/convention2010/index.html>

**Art Van Damme's Birthday Bash** April 9 Lodi, CA  
For Tickets: Phone (209) 333-5550 or visit [www.loditickets.com](http://www.loditickets.com) \$30 through 2/28—\$45 after.

**Accordion Cruise Festival** April 17–24, 2010. San Francisco Accordion Club members are invited to receive a € 25 per person discount on 1 or 2 bed bookings in a double cabin. For more details visit the Eng-

lish language section of [www.fisarmonicheincrociera.com](http://www.fisarmonicheincrociera.com).

**Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration** June 17-22 Leavenworth, WA. For more information visit: [www.nwasnews.com/liac.html](http://www.nwasnews.com/liac.html)

**2010 American Accordionists' Association Competition and Festival** July 14-18, Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel, Harrisburg, PA. For more information visit: [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com)

**2010 Accordionists and Teachers Guild Competition and Festival** July 21-25, 2010. It is never too soon to mark your calendars for this event being held in our own back yard (San Jose). Watch for further details!

## *Sad News*

Those who knew him will be saddened to know that **Jim Hillman** passed away on January 20 after a long illness. Jim was a very popular jazz accordionist and accomplished musician; also a founder and frequent MC for the SVAS meetings. A memorial service was held January 29th.



## *Executive Board News*

Gus Greyhosky has graciously accepted the Executive Board's request to fill the Director-at-Large position vacated by Aldo Argenti, due to illness. We thank Gus and ask that you also keep Aldo and his family in your thoughts during this difficult time.

## **Want to see the Newsletter in Color?**

The January Newsletter had some great color photographs from our December meeting. Those having their newsletter distributed on-line will be able to see the Newsletter in color. To enroll or for more details, please contact Randy Hicks at [hickr01@sprintmail.com](mailto:hickr01@sprintmail.com).

## *SFAC Scholarship Program*

Scholarships are awarded each April and October. The Scholarship requirements have been distributed to area teachers and are available upon request. Application forms are available at the monthly meetings or from any board member and must be returned to Frank Montoro, 1448 Tarrytown St., San Mateo, CA 94402 by the end of either March or September to be considered for award the following month. **Teachers, please note**, we are quickly coming to the next deadline. Applications for scholarships to be awarded in April are due to Frank at the end of March.

## News and Announcements (continued)

### *Who is performing around the Bay?*

**Steve Balich**, North Bay (707) 874-3494

**Ron Borelli**, Peninsula (650) 574-5707  
*rborelli@aol.com*

**Renée de la Prade**, Culann's Hounds, San Francisco *www.sfhounds.com*

**Richard Denier**, Carmel *rdenier@sbcglobal.net*

**Peter Di Bono**, San Francisco  
*peterdsf@gmail.com*

**Reno Di Bono**, South Bay  
*ourhike@aol.com*

**William De Michelis**, South Bay  
*wdd777@comcast.net*

**Joe Domitrowich**, South Bay  
*www.capricious-accordion.com* or  
*www.alpinersusa.com*

**Bruce Kirschner and The Klezmakers**,  
*kirschner@aol.com*

*www.klezmakers.com*

**Don Nurisso**, *nurisso@mindspring.com*

**Mike Zampiceni**, South Bay *electricguy@comcast.net*

**Due Zighi Baci**, (Sheri Mignano) San Francisco *www.zighibaci.com* or  
*zighi@sonic.net*



### *Please Remember!*

To leave our meeting hall at the beautiful Oyster Point Yacht Club clean! Please clean up any food or drink spills and toss out paper plates, napkins, cups, etc. before leaving. **Thank you!**

### *SF Accordion Band Practice*

Wednesdays, February 10 and 24, 7:00 p.m. at Val Kieser's home in Oakland. Please **CALL AHEAD** in case there is a change. Everyone is welcome to join. For more information, contact Val (510) 531-4836 or *vtkacc@ifn.net*

### *Our Neighboring Bay Area Accordion Clubs*

**Accordion Club of the Redwoods (ACR)** meets monthly on the third Monday, 7:30 p.m. at Hermann & Sons Hall, 860 Western Avenue, Petaluma. Contact: Kris Nelson *krisnelson@aol.com* or (707) 795-4860

**Silicon Valley Accordion Society (SVAS)** meets monthly on the first Sunday, 1:30 at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue between Keily Blvd and Stevens Creek Blvd, San Jose. Contact: Bill Toponga (408) 984-5290

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

**Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC)** meets monthly on the second Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. at Escalon Community Center, 1055 Escalon Ave, Escalon. Contact: (209) 545-3603

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

### *Your Club Wants YOU!!*

Don't panic— we want you to play for our musical meetings! If you think you aren't ready for the "big time" (stage) just yet, please consider playing a piece or two before the meeting and/or during intermission! Don't be shy—we are a very forgiving, appreciative and supportive audience! Just contact any of our friendly board members listed on the front of the newsletter.

### *SFAC Membership*

\$30.00 per year for individual or family membership. Meeting admission is \$5.00 for members and \$7.00 for guests. For membership renewal, please send a check to: S.F.A.C., c/o Valerie Kieser, 3437 Crane Way, Oakland, CA 94602. For new members, please include your name and address along with your check, as well as a phone number and email address, if available.



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## Accordion Instruction

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*Ron Borelli (650) 574-5707*  
*Irving Cardoza (408) 264-9755*  
*David Chelini (916) 428-8764*  
*Peter Di Bono (415) 753-1502*  
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internet [www.castiglioneaccordions.com](http://www.castiglioneaccordions.com)

## **SFAC Newsletter Ad Policy**

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 \$30 for members, \$60 for non-members.





**NEXT MEETING:**



**Sunday, February 21, 2010  
2:00 p.m. Oyster Point Yacht Club**



**Entertainment:**

**Students of Aaron Seeman (aka Duckmandu)**

**The Don Nurisso Trio**

**The Aurora Mandolin Orchestra**

**Directions to Oyster Point Yacht Club, 911 Marina Blvd, South San Francisco:**

From 101 traveling either North or South, take the Oyster Point exit. Turn right onto Marina Blvd. (be careful not to turn right onto Gull Drive, just before Marina Blvd.). Continue past the gate house to the sign "Oyster Point Yacht Club." There is plenty of parking and ramp access.

**And come visit us online at our regularly updated website: [www.sfaccordionclub.com](http://www.sfaccordionclub.com)**

***Newsletter of the  
San Francisco Accordion Club***

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