

# February, 2017

## ♪ SFAC Accordion Circle ♪

Sunday, February 19

Oyster Point Yacht Club, South San Francisco  
Jam band beginning at 1:30pm

Hello Accordion Friends!

**Oyster Point Yacht Club** is the place to be Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> for our **Accordi-on Circle** meeting and some group jam fun.

We have jam books available so bring your box as we bid *bon voyage* to the OPYC (if you go to Millbrae Community Center we won't be there yet!!)

It will be a whale of a good time, informal and open to novice players and experts alike.

No scheduled performers are lined up, making lots of time available for circle participants to play. In honor of Valentine's Day, Love Songs are particularly welcomed!

Lynn Ewing will share some of the tips she learned at the workshop she attended with master accordionist Joe Cerrito in Florida last month. (see article on page 6.)

We encourage your attendance to enjoy the fellowship of accordion enthusiasts and the scenic bay view one last time before we convene next month in Millbrae.

*See you there!*



## SFAC January Meeting: A Memorable *Almost* Adieu to Oyster Point

By Allan Schwartz

Our final *featured performer* meeting in our cozy venue of long standing, the Oyster Point Yacht Club, occurred January 15. Before going further, let us remind you that the February 19 meeting will also take place at Oyster Point and will be our *accordion circle* format (all levels of players: bring your accordion and play). Starting in **March** we move to our exciting, new home, the David J. Chetcuti Community Room in Millbrae. More about that later. First, back to the January meeting.

Recent renovations to Oyster Point made parting all the more bittersweet. The jam band, this time led by San Francisco Accordion Club Board member Mike Zampiceni, kicked off the entertainment. The assembled accordionists, who all seemed to thoroughly enjoy playing together, provided spirited renditions of a number of standards.

Then our event emcee, fellow Board Member Elaine Cooperstein, took the stage. Throughout the afternoon, Elaine fully justified the expectation that she would be a natural at it. *(continued on page 2)*



Steve Hanson, Reno Di Bono, Peter Di Bono; January 15, 2017

*Continued next page...*

## January 2017 meeting review (continued)

(continued from page 1)

Our opening performers, playing before the San Francisco Accordion Club for the first time, were **Paul Aebersold**, accordionist, appearing with singer, **Gloria Mendieta Gazave**. These two perform together as **Il Duetto Musica**. If you get the chance, take it. There must have been somebody at the Club who did not enjoy this performance, but I certainly could not say who it was.



Paul, a part time Bay Area resident, has a lifelong involvement with the accordion. His role in **Il Duetto Musica** is primarily to accompany Gloria, whose rich soprano filled the room and charmed the audience.

The musical style was international and classical. **Il Duetto** played *Oh Marie*, *La Donne E Mobile*, *Vissi d'Arte*, *Habanera*, *Una Furtiva Lagrima*, *Quando Me'n Vo*, then a wonderful sing-along on *That's Amore* and *O Mio Babbino Cara*. The musical selections were preceded by Gloria's interesting verbal introductions to each upcoming piece (she described one of them as the "first Operatic temper tantrum").

Although this splendid opening performance was not an easy



one to follow, **Mike Zampiceni** did so with grace. Mike has played accordion for 60 years, is one of the Bay Area's premier accordion instructors, hails from an illustrious accordion family and is the current Secretary on the San Francisco Accordion Club Board of Directors; these are among some of the attainments of this irreplaceable Bay Area accordion stalwart.

Mike said he usually plays fast and did he ever. With that set of fingers he could have been a master pickpocket, an illusionist, or just about anything else requiring dexterity. We are indeed fortunate so much of his focus has been on the accordion.

Mike commenced with some talking. He talked of such things as his accordion-rich heritage, his background as a music vocal major at San Jose State (which afforded him all the more appreciation of Gloria Gazave), and his remembrances of deceased San Francisco accordion legend, Michael Corino.

When he started playing, Mike's expertise was evident from his first selection, *Crazy Accordion Polka*, with its up tempo and many glissandos. Mike played about 6 songs. Among the other selections were *Ferry Boat Serenade*, *Singing Shepherd Blues* and *The Girl from Ipanema*. His styles ranged from jazz to Brazilian to Italian.

Having now been up front twice, Mike momentarily thought he was done. But not so quick. His birthday was approaching and he did not get far from the stage before Rosemary Busher and Daniel Cher brought up a birthday cake, and one of Mike's students, Siyuan Donelly, donned his accordion and led the group in regaling Mike with two choruses of *Happy Birthday*.



Siyuan then played *Battle Hymn of the Republic* to the enjoyment of all. Additional honors were paid to Mike when about half a dozen of his students came forward and extended him their congratulations.



(continued on next page)

♪♪ **January 2017 meeting review (continued)** ♪♪



(Below) Siyuan draws the tickets for our raffle and door prizes.

(Left) In a surprise move, our raffle winner generously donated his winnings back to the club! Thank you very much, Dominic!



*(continued from page 2)*

After a brief intermission, what better way to go out than with our featured performers, the first two brothers of Bay Area accordion, **Peter and Reno Di Bono**, accompanied by very able bassist, **Steve Hanson**. These are great friends of the Club, not to mention that Peter is our former president. Both Peter and Reno have appeared at the Club in the past. But this is the first known time they played for us together.

The thoroughly enjoyable set was a mixture of Italian and English language standards. Reno did the singing. Both played the accordion, and with virtuosity. We heard great versions of such favorites as *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Ciribiribin*, *Begin the Beguine*, *The Woodpecker Polka*, *It Had to be You*, and that rarely heard classic, *The Di Bono Boogie*. Some of the exchanges, with one of the Di Bonos on lead and the other providing amazing fill, were about as good as any you will hear.



See you February 19, our next and final meeting at **Oyster Point**, in our "accordion circle" format. In March, we commence at the Chetcuti Community Room in Millbrae.

*At our December meeting, the Oyster Point Yacht Club generously donated a ticket to their New Years Eve party, and Glenn Cohen won! He and his wife Ann attended and they had a great time! Glenn reported: The members of the OPYC were very friendly and welcoming to us, and even though we didn't know anyone there, we felt very comfortable because of that. The food, both the dinner and the brunch, were high quality and delicious. We felt very lucky that the caterer/cook, who has put these events on for the last 15 years, is retiring so this was her last time doing this. We also felt very lucky that the OPYC donated the ticket and that we won it.*



On January 17, SFAC members Steve Mobia and Elaine & Robert Cooperstein were thrilled to meet Multi World Champion Accordionist Cory Pesaturo at the Los Angeles Accordionaires club meeting (3rd Tuesdays, *Victorio's Restaurant, North Hollywood*).



**Cory, Elaine & Steve**

## Accordion Adventures in Mexico

Scott Anderson, San Francisco Accordion Club Member

For years, I traveled with an accordion. On trips to the Philippines, Jamaica, the Bahamas and Canada, I found a way to bring along my 120 bass Grande Vox. Then an attendant tossed the instrument around, knocking out a row of bass keys. Although I acquired a smaller 96 bass Fisitalia, I became a bit hesitant to travel with an instrument, given the long security lines and large airport crowds of recent years. Lynn Ewing's recent article, on her trip to Cuba, inspired me to give it a shot again. My wife Camille, and our kids Pia and Lukey, led the way as we visited Puerto Vallarta in late 2016, departing two days after club's December meeting.



We visited centers for disadvantaged children, as part of an outreach project by Para Ti Global, a non-profit organization. The accordion was a hit at Casa Hogar, an orphanage, as well as at Calle de la Esperanza, a youth center. When we visited Pasitos de Luz, a center for disabled kids, they were actively relocating to a new facility, so I did not play. I also played an impromptu gig at our hotel lobby, which pleasantly surprised the staff we had come to know.

The songs that went over best were Latin standards, including *Cielito Lindo*, *Besame Mucho*, and *Vaya Con Dios*, along with the Jose Feliciano Christmas standard *Feliz Navidad*. The kids liked to sing along, and my own teenagers also played ukulele at times. At one center I was mobbed by children striking my keyboard with their hands. I used a Lou Jacklich technique of lining them up to play a one finger version of *Do-a-Deer* from *Sound of Music*, with my hand directing the child's index finger. These kids were fascinated by the sounds of an accordion.

Just before we went to Mexico I slapped a San Francisco Accordion Club bumper sticker on my case, so I could represent our club on the road. The songs I played were quite simple, to be sure. The accordion, however, is more than just a versatile instrument. Our club's instrument of choice is also a great facilitator of human interaction, reaching out to many cultures.

**LOST & FOUND– Please Help:** Our member Dr. Daniel Cher misplaced his set of prescription sunglasses at our January meeting. There were many sunglasses on the tables, and Daniel's glasses (similar to those in the photo below) could have easily been confused with the many others. If anyone has seen them, please feel free to call or email one of the SFAC board members, or email Daniel directly ([djcher@gmail.com](mailto:djcher@gmail.com)).





**KEEP CALM AND VOLUNTEER**

Contact a member of the board to volunteer. See February 2016 Newsletter for descriptions of tasks, small or large, remote or on-site, that you can do to help the SFAC continue its excellent programs and activities!

## Michael Corino, 1918 – 2016

Accordion Artist and Composer

*Reflections by Mike Zampiceni*

Michael Corino, esteemed accordionist, recording artist, and composer, passed on to the great accordion community in the sky on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, having attained the lofty age of 98. He was well known and respected in both San Francisco several decades ago, and in Italy, which was his native country.

I had more than a passing acquaintance of him through my father's association with him professionally as an accordion music publisher in the 1950's and 1960's. Zampiceni Publications published at least two of his compositions, entitled *Crazy Accordion Polka* and *El Chico de Miguel*. Both are part of my repertoire, and I consider them excellent compositions. I did a short tribute to Corino at the January meeting and played both of these pieces. He recorded several singles and about a dozen albums with an orchestra in Italy, and I have four of the vinyl albums. I recently played one of them to refresh my memory of how he played, and noted that he was an excellent player with speedy technique. As a youngster, I remember him as being an affable gentleman who smiled a lot and was cordial towards our family on our visits to his home in the Marina district of San Francisco.



He excelled at the accordion as a child, and his music lessons paid off, because before he was 17, the famous Italian Maestro Angelini heard Mike and hired him immediately as the solo accordionist with his orchestra. In 1938, Mike started on the theater and film circuit performing at Cine Città with tenor Carlo Butti in Rome. He served during WW II in the Italian army, but post-war Italy was financially difficult for young men like Mike, so he made a life-changing de-

cision to immigrate to the United States in 1947. After establishing himself as a performer and teacher in San Francisco, he eventually opened a full-line music store on Columbus Avenue. Noted San Francisco columnist, Herb Caen, declared Corino the "Desi Arnaz of North Beach." Mike's handsome good looks, exemplary music arrangements and compositions, as well as his talent as an accordionist made him popular and brought him worldwide acclaim.

Mike was the honorary director of the 2014 Cotati Accordion Festival (photo below/left), and a complete biography appeared on their website, so you're encouraged to look there for Mike's fascinating life story. Here's a link to a recording of Mike playing perhaps his best known composition, *Fisarmonica Impazzita (Crazy Accordion Polka)*, which features numerous ascending and descending glissandos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7cdHYiyJFw>

## SFAC Scholarships

The SFAC awards two scholarships a year to accordion students studying with teachers who are SFAC members in good standing. Preference will be given to students who demonstrate dedication to pursuing the study of the accordion. Contact Mike Zampiceni for a scholarship application.

Mike Zampiceni  
eclecticguy@comcast.net  
408-569-2579





## Accordion Clinic in Venice, Florida

by Joan Grauman

A good time was had by all as a small group of accordion friends from all over the country gathered at our home in mid-January for a 3-day accordion clinic, under the guidance of renowned accordionist Joe Cerrito. The eight of us enjoyed daily sessions consisting of exercises, some improvisation, excellent teaching tips, sight-reading and group playing. Adding to the enjoyment was gorgeous mild weather, great food, and a little sightseeing in the Venice/Sarasota area. The event ended on a “high note” when we performed for 70 of our very enthusiastic neighbors in the local clubhouse.

Since coming down to Florida, I have been working with Joe Cerrito (for close to a year now), and he has really changed the way I feel about daily exercises, along with instilling in me a new and exciting appreciation for my beloved instrument. As a self-taught accordionist, I have found that working with Joe has given me more self-confidence, not only as a musician but also as a teacher. I wanted to share this experience with some of my friends, so Joe and I came up with the idea of a clinic for accordionists of all levels.

Also living close to us in Florida is former American Accordionists’ Association (AAA) President Linda Soley Reed, who moved here a few months ago. Linda spent time with us daily during the clinic and even prepared a lovely lunch for us one of the days. She was also our guest conductor at the concert.

Keeping the number to eight people worked well, as everyone had the opportunity to get one-on-one assistance from Joe. In the end, each person learned something new and had a great time. Joe pointed out the need for others to create and direct events, such as this clinic, across the country. His mes-

sage to all of us: “If you have the knowledge and ability to help accordionists to become better musicians and better teachers, please share this gift.” The accordion is making a comeback and it’s important, for those who are qualified, to provide good instruction and guidance.

**Participants:** Gail Campanella, Lynn Ewing, Frank Petrilli (California); Mark Nejako (Maryland); JoAnn Pankow (Virginia); Pat Racioppa (Pennsylvania); Betty Fisher (North Carolina); Joan Grauman (Maryland and Florida).

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## Join In the Fun!

Helping with the monthly music programs is a great way to meet new people and make the program run smoothly. We welcome people to help emcee the program, take photos or write a lively report about the music program. You don't need experience—just a willingness to help while you have fun with the group.

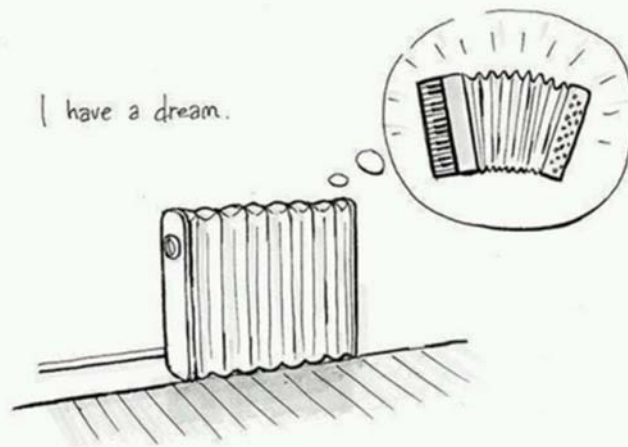
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[www.ameraccord.com/festival.html](http://www.ameraccord.com/festival.html)

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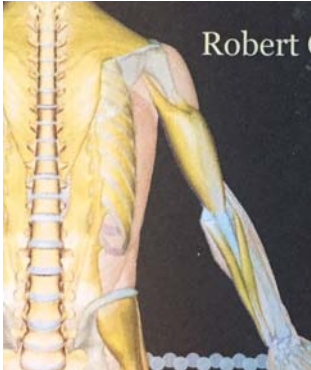
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Contact: Tony Mustaro, President (707) 318-0474  
[dcdacapo@gmail.com](mailto:dcdacapo@gmail.com)

### **Golden State Accordion Club (GSAC)**

[gsaccordionclub.netfirms.com](http://gsaccordionclub.netfirms.com)  
Contact: Jean Stevens, President (916) 872-8081  
[accordionriffs@gmail.com](mailto:accordionriffs@gmail.com)

*Vacaville Chapter*  
2nd Thursday at 6:30 pm.  
Pietro's No. 2,  
679 Merchant Street, Vacaville

*Humboldt Chapter*  
3rd Tuesday at 7pm.  
Humboldt Swiss Club  
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*Sacramento Chapter*  
4th Wednesday at 7 pm.  
Old Spaghetti Factory,  
12401 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova

### **Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC)**

2nd Wednesday at 7 pm. Escalon Community Center  
1055 Escalon Ave, Escalon  
Contact: Ed Sciarini (209) 545-3603

### **Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS)**

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Contact: Jim Shoemaker (916) 443-0974

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Our informal jam band is open to everyone, regardless of experience. Learn new riffs, make new accordion friends and have **WAY TOO MUCH FUN!**

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#### **Technique Tips Appreciated**

*Bay Area Accordion Club (later San Francisco Accordion Club) founding member Barbara Truax liked Mike Zampiceni's piece called "Avoiding the Accordion Hiccups" in our January newsletter. Mike discussed the importance of properly changing bellows direction to maintain musically correct note values, and Barbara writes: So glad to see someone address this part of performing. I think, perhaps, that this has been a neglected part of teaching. I enjoy any performing regardless of "boo boos" but must admit this is one of my pet peeves, perhaps because I was so tough on my students, but in their competition in Colorado, you did NOT do this. Thanks again for reminding us. For those who haven't seen Mike's bellows article, it's worth going back to the January newsletter for a read!*

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NORMA ZONAY-PARSONS (408) 246-3073

### **PLAY for your club!**

Playing warm up or during the break for our Sunday music program is a great, casual way to share your talent and hone your performance skills. Our scheduled performers are drawn from professional players and groups, and from talented amateurs as well. Call us—we're happy to add you to the schedule to play a 10-15 minute set, or even just a couple of songs.

Contact:

**Dominic Palmisano**

(415) 587-4423 [accord47@gmail.com](mailto:accord47@gmail.com) OR

**Lynn Ewing**

(650) 453-3391 [ewinglynn@gmail.com](mailto:ewinglynn@gmail.com)

Join us the third Sunday of each month!

## SFAC SUNDAY MUSIC PROGRAM

Come for fun and great music!!

February 19—Oyster Point Yacht Club\*

### SFAC Accordion Circle

*Jam Band/Workshop/Open Stage*

Admission: \$6 members, \$8 guests

1:30pm Jam Band

#### OYSTER POINT YACHT CLUB\*

Plenty of **free parking**, ramp access.

*DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101 (North or South) in South San Francisco take the Oyster Point Blvd exit & follow signs to Marina Blvd. Avoid turning right at Gull Dr. immediately before Marina Blvd.*

*Turn right onto Marina Blvd and continue 0.7 mile, past the Oyster Point Marina gatehouse to the Oyster Point Yacht Club on the left.*

**\*Beginning in March 2017, we will meet at the Chetcuti Community Room, 450 Poplar Avenue (Civic Center Plaza) in Millbrae! Directions in March newsletter!**



### **Amp up the fun with the SFAC!**

Current membership valid through September 2017

Join or renew with PayPal or credit card at:

[www.sfaccordionclub.com/membership.html](http://www.sfaccordionclub.com/membership.html), or send check payable to "SFAC" to Elaine Cooperstein, 539 Elsie Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577

- ◆ \$35 per year for individual or household
- ◆ -\$5 discount for online newsletter option

### San Francisco Accordion Club Newsletter

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