

♪ ♪ SFAC Accordions Live! ♪ ♪

**Gordon Kohl**

*January 21, 2024 — 2:00pm (Pacific)*

**LIVE! In Person**

♪ From the **Chetcuti Community Room** ♪

SFAC Members will receive link for ZOOM option



**Gordon Kohl** is probably one of the most diversified individuals in the Accordion profession. Gordon is a performing artist, an educator, lecturer and clinician, a composer and arranger, a band leader, a source for accordion books and sheet music, a purveyor of both new and used accordions and accessories, and a repair person. Gordon can also help you design your own custom built accordion.

Gordon has developed a special sound on the digital accordion and conducts monthly acoustic and electronic hands-on workshops in San Diego, as well as special workshops at conventions, accordion festivals and accordion clubs, using learning tapes and teaching materials he has developed.

In addition, Gordon has been teaching at his own accordion & piano school since the age of 20, allowing him to stay in touch with changing trends in music education. Students today want to explore ideas of what the accordion left hand can do to add harmony and rhythm, challenging both student and teacher.

Gordon's publications include several books of instruction and music, as well as CDs and cassettes of both established tunes and his own originally composed and arranged accordion music.

Gordon plays weekends around Southern California, either performing solo or with his own band, or smaller trio. He is available to entertain at Octoberfests, conventions, accordion events and ethnic celebrations.

These many years of experience have produced a competent, skilled, dedicated, multi-cultural accordionist.

To learn more about Gordon and all that he has to offer, please visit his website: [gordonkohlaccordions.com](http://gordonkohlaccordions.com)

You are also invited to hear Gordon performing on his YouTube Channel: [youtube.com/@gordonkohl1221/videos](https://youtube.com/@gordonkohl1221/videos)

# Across the Miles - From Auckland, New Zealand

## Tracey Collins

By Ken Schwartz

For our November 2023 musical program, the San Francisco Accordion Club reached across 21 time zones and 1 hemisphere to bring our members a Thanksgiving treat: Tracey Collins, one of the most talented and lovely accordionists, anywhere! Thanks to modern technology, and Zoom, we were able to present Tracey live from Auckland, New Zealand, where it's now late spring. Tracey comes from a musical family – her father is a professional drummer in a bagpipe band. She was exposed to traditional Celtic music from early on. Tracey was already an experienced performing professional performing in an Auckland Italian restaurant by age 15, and was even touring with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in 1996!



Tracey performed on her magnificent, custom-made acoustic **Titano Starlight Cassotto** with midi accompaniment for a diverse repertoire of songs—some familiar, others not. Each had her unique musical stamp which made them jazzy, contemporary and simply a delight to hear. The sounds were very different. Under her guidance, Tracey's Titano produced simply beautiful variations in musette and other sounds. In the right hands (Kiwi, of course), it has no match!

Tracey opened with a traditional Irish tune, *Erin Shore/Toss the Feathers*, which starts slow but ambles into a fast Irish jig. It conveyed beautiful tones and chord changes. One could feel and dance to Ireland!

Next was a romantic classic Italian Song, *Amado Mio*, recorded by the group **Pink Martini** from Canada. Tracey performed it with her own blend of technique and enthusiasm. One could “hear” mandolins. Tracey loves French tunes and next performed her beautiful version of *Under Paris Skies*. Next was *Music of the Night* (Andrew Lloyd Webber). Mesmerizing!

Tracey has been with traditional Celtic music her entire life. She next performed a lovely song, *Flower of Scotland*. One could hear the emulation of the bagpipes in the bass.

Tracey noted that German music has only recently become popular in New Zealand (trends take a while to reach that far south!). She performed a song, a takeoff from Britney Spears' *Toxic*, called *Toxic Polka* - part polka, partly toxic. It was, simply put, great fun with all sorts of unexpected sounds, musical tension, chord changes, and huge energy - the list goes on! Great fun, it was my favorite of the afternoon.

Early in her budding career, Tracey participated in many talent competitions, including on a TV show “MacDonald's Young Entertainers.” (She placed 2nd). The song she performed today, *Cubanola*, was that song. Continuing the Latin theme, Tracey performed a terrific version of *Sway*, first recorded by **Dean Martin** in 1954. Lots of Latin themes, transitioning to multiple sounds.

Next was *Morning Nightcap* (recorded by the band **Lunasa**), complete with energetic midi background accompaniment, followed by *Englishman in New York* (**Sting**), a tango called *Sentimientos*, and *La Muchacha del Fuego* – with midi bass accompaniment. Lots of fun! Following, Tracey played her jazzed-up version of the famous classic *Badinerie* (**J.S. Bach**). Given its classical heritage, Tracey's rendition was modern, energetic, and a delight to enjoy! Next, Tracey performed the well-known Scottish lament *Ashokan Farewell*, which she often performs with a fiddler in New Zealand. Lovely.

For her closing piece, Tracey performed *Bluebell Polka*, requested by Ian, her fellow Kiwi, who attended via Zoom.

Thanks to **Rosemary Busher**, who so capably emceed. Rosemary requested we all unmute to give Tracey a standing Zoom round of applause! Cory Pesaturo was not on today's call but conveyed his best regards to Tracey via Rosemary.

Tracey infuses many types of styles of music into the genres she plays, and plays from the heart. She's the package deal – so talented, witty, charming, beautiful, and always smiling! As noted in her official biography, Tracey's performances amply demonstrate how vibrant and versatile the accordion is and proves that it is a very modern and relevant instrument for both older and younger generations. Thank you, Tracey! [traceycollins.co.nz \(https://k7808uig4v.wpdns.site/\)](https://k7808uig4v.wpdns.site/)



# 2023 — It's A Wrap!

Rosemary Busher

Time now for a quick look back at the past 12 months, that seemed to whiz by at breakneck speed. We had in-person meetings 6 times, the rest were either live-cast on ZOOM or replaced by special summer events. Some changes in our Club operations called for some shape-shifting to permit doing what made the most sense, offering a mix of in-person and streaming options. So please *stay on your toes* and check the Club website and newsletters for up-to-date happenings. This year-end review recapitulates what transpired in **2023**.

**January**, we invited Club member and accordionist Paul Aebersold, accompanied by the incredibly expressive opera singer Christine Capsuto-Shulman, to the stage in Millbrae for a delightful musical afternoon. Some of us had never heard a real opera singer in person, and were startled!



**February** was a member participation jam session. We had had lots of great in-person soloists. Several Club members who couldn't be there in-person logged on remotely to play along (mics muted!). We had a long list of players, among them youngsters who really stood out! It is always such a hopeful sign to have school-aged children perform accordion for us, we need/want more participation from this group.

**March** featured a memorable guest appearance by Matt Tolentino - he has accordion-style and sings too! He's a fan of the old Italo-American accordions that were manufactured in Chicago and has honed himself a 1920's style that really complements his classic tunes.



**April**, we thoroughly enjoyed Sergei Teleshev and his lovely daughter Maria for an in-person concert. They sported super-professional black shirts with white pants and proceeded to **wow** the audience, who ate it all up.

**May** was a garden-variety jam session, made special because it was in-person at Millbrae. Those of us able to attend in-real-life (IRL) felt very lucky indeed, as streaming just isn't the same.

**June** featured a ZOOM guest appearance by Pittsburgh-based businessman & accordionist Kevin Solecki, who also runs the Carnegie Accordions store. It was great fun having Kevin perform for the first time for the SFAC.



Also taking place in June, the SFAC was well-represented at San Francisco's Little Italy **Festa Colonniale Italiana** street fair by Board members Ken and Rosemary. We really weren't sure what to expect, but it turned out to be a perfect opportunity to show off a San Francisco-made Guerrini accordion plus a large informational poster (designed by Ken Schwartz and Pamela Tom) that included historical references; both were a big hit. Friends stopped by and all-things-Italian were celebrated during this fun-filled day.



**July**, as you know if you've been paying attention, has become a tradition for our annual picnic in Beresford Park (San Mateo). It is now officially the "July Party". There were a large bunch of people at this 3<sup>rd</sup> annual event and the group picture captures the day nicely.

Continued on next page ...

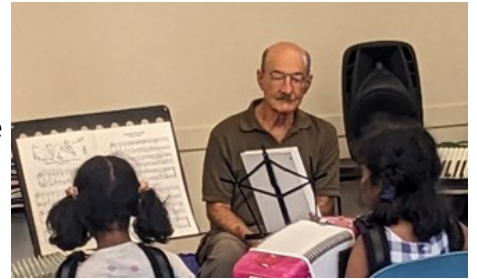
## 2023 — It's A Wrap! (continued)

**August** was the time to head up to Cotati for its annual Accordion Festival! The Cotati Accordion Festival (CAF) is North America's largest accordion music festival and is something you don't want to miss. We always include the schedule in our newsletter in advance and write extensively about it afterwards. Big news in 2023 was the SFAC-Lou Jacklich Scholarship that was awarded on stage at Cotati. Not only that, Board Members Elaine & Robert Cooperstein came all the way from Florida to help out with the Club's booth, and will be back for the 2024 event as well!



**September** featured a spirited jam session using our Oktoberfest music books, but the star of the day was most certainly Gail Campanella. Gail plays with incredible skill and grace, and tells stories between numbers to keep things light and airy. But make no mistake, her beautiful playing and proper use of the bellows is where she stands out. She gets extra stars, merit badges and general recognition for also being a music teacher. Her adoring audience kept her talking long after she had performed, asking questions and chitchatting as well as scoring signed copies of her two CD's.

**October** consisted of a lightly attended jam session - it was small but mighty at the same time. It must have been a busy time, judging by the lack of participation - there were only 11 people knocking around in Millbrae that day. To make matters worse, due to technical reasons, we could not live-stream the meeting. Randy Hicks, the only Board member who could attend, held the fort down, and blessed be he for that! Let us remember: *attendance matters*. Lest we forget, the Club pays rent on the Millbrae space and the cost is going up for 2024.



**November**, the SFAC was delighted to have Tracey Collins live-casting from New Zealand, banging out a superlative concert. She's easy on the eyes (she smiles while she plays!) and was a sheer delight. Tracey had visited northern California in August, when she performed at Cotati along with Cory Pesaturo. We spotted her there and invited her to ZOOM-in sometime for the SFAC, and this worked out great for this month.

**December** we decided to take a pause from conducting a Club musical program, and a collective sigh of relief could be heard.

- ◆ *PS: Quick reminder. Our meetings are variable and somewhat fluid in their structure, and the most up-to-date info is the Club website. Some meetings include in-person "featured professional accordionists", some feature far-away professional accordionists live-streamed on ZOOM, and some are set aside for in-person members' jam sessions, for which all are encouraged to join in!*
- ◆ *Special thanks to SFAC musical leaders Lou Jacklich & Colette Ogata for running the jam sessions, it means so much. and we value you tremendously. And here's a shout-out to Club president Ken Schwartz - for handling Club operations, so many behind-the-scenes details (too many to list here!) Thanks so much for all you do to keep the Club humming along!*





## SFAC COMING EVENTS

*Mark Your Calendars!*



**January 21, 2024 – Gordon Kohl** (*San Diego*)  
(Live at Chetcuti Community Center!)

**February 25, 2024 – East Bay Accordion Circle!**

(*Piedmont Middle School*) See page 6 for details. Contact [info@sfaccordionclub.com](mailto:info@sfaccordionclub.com) or any board member if you need additional information.



**March 17, 2024 – Alicia Jo Straka** - Live online via **ZOOM**



**April 21, 2024 – Steve Albini**  
(Live at Chetcuti Community Center!)

## ACCORDION INSTRUCTION

### East Bay

- ◆ Lou Jacklich\* 510-317-9510
- ◆ Joel Weber\* [www.iotheastbayaccordionlessons.weebly.com/](http://www.iotheastbayaccordionlessons.weebly.com/)
- ◆ Mike Zampiceni\* [www.mikezamp.com](http://www.mikezamp.com)
- ◆ Anand Joseph\* 614-329-9384 (beginner students)

### Peninsula/South Bay

- ◆ Joe Simoni\* [jsimoni2000@gmail.com](mailto:jsimoni2000@gmail.com), 650-867-1122
- ◆ Mike Zampiceni\* [www.mikezamp.com](http://www.mikezamp.com)
- ◆ Anand Joseph\* 614-329-9384 (beginner students)

### Outside the Bay Area

- ◆ Gail Campanella\* [GailCampanella@gmail.com](mailto:GailCampanella@gmail.com) 805-895-0457 (Santa Barbara)
- ◆ Bonnie Birch\* [www.bonniebirch.com](http://www.bonniebirch.com) (Seattle)
- ◆ Pamela Tom\* [accordionpam@gmail.com](mailto:accordionpam@gmail.com) (Davis)
- ◆ Lorna Anderson\* 910-215-5757 (Pinehurst, NC)

\* = remote lessons (ZOOM, Facetime, Skype) available

### SFAC Members Performing Around the Bay

**RON BORELLI** *San Mateo* - [RonBorelli@aol.com](mailto:RonBorelli@aol.com)  
[www.ronborelli.com](http://www.ronborelli.com)

**JOE DOMITROWICH** *South Bay* -  
[www.alpinersusa.com](http://www.alpinersusa.com)  
or [www.capricious-accordion.com](http://www.capricious-accordion.com)

**ED GORZYNSKI, JR.** *East Bay* - [edspolkas@yahoo.com](mailto:edspolkas@yahoo.com)

**PAMELA TOM** *Yolo & Solano Counties*  
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**MIKE ZAMPICENI** *East Bay & South Bay*  
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Petaluma, California 95952

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Noon-8pm Thurs

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[smytheaccordion@gmail.com](mailto:smytheaccordion@gmail.com)

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## Something New!

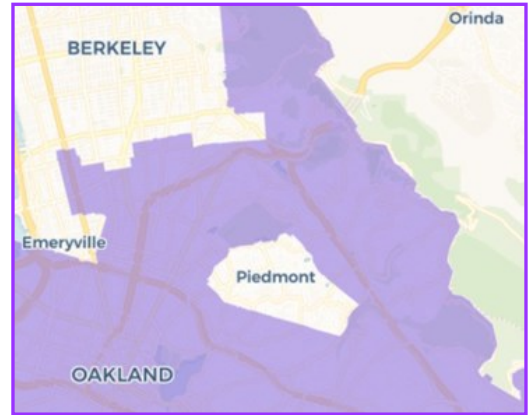
### February 2024 SFAC 'East Bay Accordion Circle'

Despite our name and use of the Golden Gate logo, the San Francisco Accordion Club has many members residing outside of San Francisco, including in the East Bay. So, in response to requests from some of our East Bay members, we're going to change our venue for the February 25, 2024 meeting (4th Sunday). The February venue will be the **Piedmont Middle School, Orchestra Room 503**. Piedmont is basically an island city surrounded by Oakland.

The musical program will run from 2-5pm, with a jam session and probably a few solos, time permitting. The room accommodates up to 30 people, so an RSVP to [info@sfiaccordionclub.com](mailto:info@sfiaccordionclub.com) will be appreciated. We will live-stream the meeting on the ZOOM platform. This is a **one-time-only** venue change, something of an experiment for us, a bold move for SFAC - we hope that this change will not confuse people!

In addition to the venue change, please note we are meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month in February, not our usual 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday. Here is the location, which you will be reminded of in our subsequent newsletter and emails: Piedmont Middle School, Orchestra Room 503, 740 Magnolia Ave., Piedmont, CA 94611

~The SFAC Board of Directors



## View the Houston Accordion Orchestra Concert Live January 13, 2024 at 12:30 PST

The Houston Accordion Orchestra under renowned accordionists Stas Venglevski and Joan C. Sommers will be live-streamed from Texas on **January 13, 2024 at 12:30 PST**. SFAC Member **Gail Campanella** is participating in the Houston Accordion Orchestra, and will be playing bass accordion.

This year's theme, "Gamers Music Galore," features novel sounding music from past and new video games. Get your live stream ticket: <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/stas-v/houston-accordion-orchestra-concert-with-stas-venglevski-live-stream>.

See SFAC November newsletter page 3 for more info: [https://sfaccordionclub.com/newsletter/Nov\\_2023\\_NL\\_OL.pdf](https://sfaccordionclub.com/newsletter/Nov_2023_NL_OL.pdf)

## Membership Update

by Robert Cooperstein

As I noted in the November newsletter, we had concluded a very successful membership renewal drive for 2023-24. At that time there were still some individuals yet to renew, including some we knew would eventually renew. We are all subject to "bandwidth problem", it happens. Of course, many of them did eventually step up. When all is said and done, the number of new members who joined last year were only a few less than the attrition we sustained. Not bad, if you ask me, in something of a confusing and distracting time in these United States. Elaine and I now reside in The Sunshine State, but we will be back in California for the Cotati Accordion Festival in August. The Club has just arranged with the CAF folks for our vendor booth, where we hope to meet-and-greet lots of you in person!

## Weltmeister Rubin Piano Accordion, \$1200

Like-new condition. Lightweight yet versatile piano accordion (12.5 lbs). Made in Germany. 30 treble keys, 12.75" key-to-key, 60 bass buttons. Clarinet and violin (musette) voices. Reeds 2/3 MM with "wet" musette tuning. Includes ergonomic straps, Weltmeister hard case with keys, manufacturer's instruction booklet. Single owner, played gently and never outdoors. Always kept in climate-controlled spaces such as the living room - never in an attic or garage. Link to video showing this model being played: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=FJOY9nkojO>



Contact: Marilyn Valentino, [mvalentino@alumni.stanford.edu](mailto:mvalentino@alumni.stanford.edu), 650-325-8580

## President's Report

# 2024

Ken Schwartz



Dear All – We made it to the finish line with a great 2023! Now, it's on to 2024! I've again compiled a "Wish List," which I hope you'll consider to help the Club continue to thrive and grow. We hope to see more of you attend in-person this year. It requires a team to enable these meetings year-round, so please consider assisting the Club with your talents.

### SFAC 2024 Wish List

- ◆ Meeting Volunteers – on a rotating basis for 1 or 2 meetings/year
- ◆ Assist with the sign-in desk
- ◆ Assist with setup/cleanup
- ◆ Bring snacks, such as small chocolates/cookies and bottled water
- ◆ Put your writing skills to work with an Event Summary, 1 or 2 per year. This would be greatly appreciated. We can work with you to create informative summaries.
- ◆ For those who are tech savvy, manage the Zoom live-stream: setting up the video-camera and linking to Zoom.
- ◆ Your suggestions for featured performers – local or nationwide – are always welcome.
- ◆ Any other ways in which you can volunteer will be appreciated.

**Please invite your friends to join the Club! Membership is a great gift that lasts all year!**

### 🎶 Thank You, Donors! 🎶

**Sincere Thanks** to those who generously donate to support the SFAC. These members have made extra donations during our current membership year (October 2023-September 2024):

Paul Aebersold; Lorna Anderson; Ron Borelli; Gail Campanella; Raymond Celentano; George Chavez; Elaine & Robert Cooperstein; Edward Crnich; Xavier & Candace de la Prade; Ed Gorzynski, Jr.; John Lister; Linda Lonay; Franco & Susan & Lorenzo Lucchesi; Ed Massolo; James Murdoch; Laura Jean Niland; Colette & Casey Ogata; Paul Pasquali; David Perry; Robert D. & Dil Pisani; Nadia Poskatcheeva; Don Savant; Kenneth Schwartz; James Shoemaker; Bill & Gloria Tapogna; Pamela Tom; Jane & Frank Tripi; Frank Venturelli; Carol Whitehead; Barbara Winter; Mike Zampiceni; Marlen Zhagel

If you have donated and your name doesn't appear here, please contact [elainedc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:elainedc@sbcglobal.net). We greatly appreciate the support and want to be sure you are recognized.

## Ron Borelli, Accordionist

### Contact information:

- Email: [RONBORELLI@AOL.COM](mailto:RONBORELLI@AOL.COM)
- WEBSITE: [RONBORELLI.COM](http://RONBORELLI.COM)
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**Dominic Palmisano** (Honorary) [accord47@gmail.com](mailto:accord47@gmail.com)

**Webmaster & Bookkeeping:** Randall Hicks

**Newsletter:** Content, Layout, Edit, Printing, Labeling, Mailing  
Elaine & Robert Cooperstein, Pamela Tom, Rosemary Busher (and credited contributors each issue)

### Scholarship:

Mike Zampiceni (408)569-2579, [eclecticguy@comcast.net](mailto:eclecticguy@comcast.net)

*The San Francisco Accordion Club is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization whose purpose is to enhance, promote and stimulate an appreciation for the accordion within the membership and throughout the general public.*

*Donations are tax-deductible and gratefully accepted by using the **Donate** button at [www.sfaccordionclub.com](http://www.sfaccordionclub.com)*



# Goodbye Gerardo "Jerry" Tramontozzi, AKA *The Energizer Rabbit*

By Robert Cooperstein



As the membership guy, I am always made aware when one of our Club members passes away, since I must update our membership database. Often these are people I have never met, nor knew anything about. Then I try to find out a little about them. Once again, I find it incumbent upon me to let you know that Gerardo "Jerry" Tramontozzi left us at the age of 94, on November 21, 2022. A chill is going down my spine as I write these words, because Jerry died on my birthday, when I was probably celebrating.

The last time one of our Club members passed, I received an unsigned one-sentence letter from someone letting me know. This time was different – Jerry's son Gerard sent me a letter that really touched me, and I would like to share part of it with you.

*"Regrets for not informing of my Dad's passing away Nov 21, 2022. Dad loved the SFAC and always wished to play the accordion again. He lived with me 2½ years and the family loved when he played the home piano."*

I had to piece together an obituary based on web information the last time a member passed, but this time was different, thanks to Gerard -- I have an obituary from the Funeral Home.

- ◆ *"Gerardo "Jerry" Tramontozzi in Arlington formerly of Brighton passed away on November 21, 2022. Beloved husband of over 67 years to the late Hannelore (Schulz) Tramontozzi . . . Jerry was a graduate of Brighton High School and Northeastern University. He was an Army Veteran stationed at the 279th Station Hospital in Berlin Germany as a medical technician. Lifetime member of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans and Veteran of Foreign Wars. Retired Branch Manager and Assistant Vice President of Bay Bank Middlesex. Former President of the Brighton Lions Club and late member of Waltham Red Cross and Family Service League, Waltham Community Foundation, MA Accordion Association, NH Accordion Association, Florida Accordion Association, and San Francisco Accordion Association."* [Yep, 4 accordion clubs!]

There are many links to Jerry online, but the one I found most entertaining had to do with his playing at "SMASH 2008" – an accordion event sponsored by the Florida Accordion Association, with a photo of him captioned "Jerry Tramontozzi "The Energizer Rabbit".

When Randy Hicks (the SFAC's venerable webmaster and curator of all past and present issues of the SFAC/BAAC newsletters) put out a call in 2018 to help find some back issues that were missing, Jerry responded. He helped us rescue from the "dustbins of history" the June 2000 BAAC Newsletter.

Here is a [link](https://www.tributebook.com/domains/9481545d-7a33-4c1f-994f-70bd448ab6e3/obituaries/26460359/book) to the funeral home's tribute book: <https://www.tributebook.com/domains/9481545d-7a33-4c1f-994f-70bd448ab6e3/obituaries/26460359/book>.



## Healing Through Music

Below is a link to a KQED piece from November 15, 2023 about Half Moon Bay farmworkers learning how to play accordion. A Latino-centered community nonprofit organization called Ayudando Latinos A Soñar (ALAS) is providing accordion lessons and music therapy for survivors of trauma. It's a feel-good story that was brought to our attention by Club member Georgia Sutherland (thanks Georgia!). Click on the [link](https://www.kqed.org/news/11966741/culture-cures-accordion-classes-for-half-moon-bay-farmworkers-offer-healing-through-music) below or search for it at the KQED website.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11966741/culture-cures-accordion-classes-for-half-moon-bay-farmworkers-offer-healing-through-music>

For copyright reasons, we are unable to reproduce the article here, so instead we have provided a link to the KQED article.





## Sound Tips on Buying Used Accordions

*Pamela Tom, Accordionist*

Several years ago, Martin Hergt (Tempo Trend Music) – the longtime Cotati Accordion Festival vendor with the largest accordion booth – gave an informative and currently relevant 13-minute [interview](#) with Moshe Zuchter (**Accordion Love**) on what to look for when buying a used accordion (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4xRace7NQU> )

Martin gives sound advice on using your senses (smell, sight, sound, and touch) to evaluate the used accordion's condition. He commented on the various materials that accordions are made of in addition to wood: metal, leather, felt, cardboard, paper (!) and foam. (Foam disintegrates over time!) These materials are all vulnerable to water and moisture which can lead to mildew and mold. Accordions need to be played to keep the leather supple and drive out moisture.

Moist felt can be a breeding ground for weevils. Moisture can cause reeds to rust by adding weight, which causes the reed to go out of tune. The condition of the bellows and keys must be inspected. Checking every reed with each switch by pulling in and out to see if they are in tune is important. The inside set of reeds tend to trap moisture and are more prone to rust which can distort the pitch. The rust can also be detected via odor. Each note on the accordion has two reeds (one for in and one for out). That inexpensive accordion for \$50 might not be so reasonably priced after needed repairs are made, ranging from \$500-\$600 up to \$1,000 for parts and labor. He also gives a price range on used accordions in playable condition: \$300 to \$500.

One piece of advice missing from his interview is to open the accordion by removing the pins/nails that hold it together to check the condition of the interior. This is a more complicated evaluation method than the sniff and hearing tests. With an open accordion you can directly check for signs of rust and leathers which should lay flat, not curled.



### National Accordion Convention ***Celebrating the Return of Live Music!!!!***

**Now is the time to register for the 2024 Party-Driven National Accordion Convention.  
*The convention has "lots of fun" and training for all levels of musicians!***

**2024 National Accordion Convention  
Hilton Garden Inn - 785 SH 121 - Lewisville, Texas  
Hotel is 8 miles North of DFW Airport  
March 20-24, 2024**

***If you are coming to this convention select your pathway by completing this survey today:***  
<https://forms.gle/YbKDLTMo1GoTpHat5>

**NAA Home Page: [www.accordions.com/naa/](http://www.accordions.com/naa/)**

The *American Music Teacher* "[Article of the Year](#)" was written by Jessie Walsh, NCTM

The article offers a positive perspective on an oh-so-important topic for any musician: PRACTICE! Esther Lanting, who serves on the **Accordionists & Teachers Guild (ATG)** Board of Directors, summarizes this article. To learn more about **ATG**, check out their [website](#) and consider joining this professional organization (<https://www.atgaccordions.com/>). Accordion enthusiasts at every level are encouraged to join and participate in a workshop or in one of the many membership benefits they offer. Original article available at link: <https://www.mtna.org/downloads/Informed/AMT/AMT%20AOY/2022AOY.pdf>



Jessie Walsh, NCTM

## Strive for the Ordinary: Where the Magic Happens

By Jessie Welsh, summarized by Esther Lanting

"Strive for the Ordinary: Where the Magic Happens," by Jessie Welsh, NCTM, was named the 2022 Article of the Year by *American Music Teacher* (a periodical published in collaboration with Music Teachers National Association). Welsh, music professor at Western Kentucky University, makes the argument that "what happens in the everyday, the mundane—in the daily grind of habit formation and repetition—in short, the ordinary: troubleshooting fingering; slow, detailed practice; waking up before the sun to run my recital program yet again" is what makes a great musician great. She poses the question then answers it, "What if we stopped trying to be great and started trying to be ordinary? After all, ordinary is where the real magic happens, where the stellar moments are made possible and where the 'one more time' creates habit and consistency and further imprints itself onto our identities."

These are the principles she names and strives for, to be ordinary:

- **Show up.** Musicians are the ones who show up day after day and make music. They are not necessarily the ones with the most degrees. They are the ones who are doing the hard work of sight-reading, repeating difficult passages, counting out loud, managing nerves, and walking out on stage yet again—whether that stage is a concert hall, a Sunday morning church service, or a recital.
- **Form habits.** None of us gets up in the morning planning to fall short of our daily goals. But how is our follow-through when we get up and see our daily "to do" list? The science of habit formation teaches us that what we do every day shapes our identity in the long term. The more we commit to showing up, the more we train our bodies and brains to do the same tomorrow and the following days. Soon it's a habit.
- **Form a support network.** Surround yourself with positive people because the repetitive and isolated work of a musician—the ordinary—can leave us discouraged and unable to move forward. Find someone who is willing to practice the same time as you each day, and send a text when you are finished. Knowing you will be checking in could provide motivation to be consistent. Cheer your friends on when you know they too are practicing the ordinary.
- **Accept challenges.** Welsh says, "It is the individual who is already in the habit of doing his or her work—and who will do it again tomorrow regardless of famed success or utter defeat—who is willing to put himself or herself on the line and rise to the occasion when difficult tasks arise." Give a recital, enter a competition, audition for a job. We can accept challenges because we know we are more than a single event, performance, competition, or audition. Whether you have success or disappointment, taking on the challenge has helped you learn and grow; and any time there is learning and growth, that already is a small victory.

Dr. Welsh concludes: "The small wins are the mundane, the ordinary. These small wins are how medals are won and the repertoire is polished and performance confidence is built." Writers get up each day and write. Runners run. And musicians get to their instrument and practice. This should be our habit, our normal, our ordinary. Because that's where the magic happens.



# ACCORDION HAPPENINGS

## Kokkola Winter Accordion Festival

Kokkola, Finland

February 10 - 17, 2024

<https://festivals.fi/en/festivals/kokkola-winter-accordion-festival/>

## Rose City Accordion Camp

Conductors: Gabe Hall-Rodrigues & Gail Campanella

Instructors: Jamie Tischler & Courtney von Drehle

June 2 - 7, 2024

[rosecityaccordionclub.org](http://rosecityaccordionclub.org)

## Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration

Northwest Accordion Society

June 20 - 23, 2024

Leavenworth is Washington's "Bavarian Village"

[www.accordioncelebration.org](http://www.accordioncelebration.org)

## Accordionists & Teachers Guild International (ATG)

2024 Festival—Honoring Joan C. Sommers

Kansas City, Missouri

July 23 - 27, 2024

<https://www.atgaccordions.com/2024-festival>

## Cotati Accordion Festival

LaPlaza Park, Cotati, California

August 17 - 18, 2024

<https://cotatifest.com/>

## Online/Virtual Events:

**Monthly: 1st & 3rd Monday - Joseph Natoli**

JANPress University - Topics vary monthly (\$)

[janpressmusic@yahoo.com](mailto:janpressmusic@yahoo.com)

**Monthly: 2nd Tuesday** 4:30-6:30 PM (free)

Hosted by Laura Niland [LauraJNiland@outlook.com](mailto:LauraJNiland@outlook.com)

**Monthly: 3rd Sunday - Gordon Kohl Workshop**

Topics vary (\$) [gkohl5890@gmail.com](mailto:gkohl5890@gmail.com)

Members - If you know of an accordion-centric festival or event in 2024 that your fellow SFAC members may be interested in, please contact us at [info@sfacaccordionclub.org](mailto:info@sfacaccordionclub.org)

## Event Reviews:

Volunteers are *very much* needed to assist with the monthly event summaries. This is a great opportunity to express your creative writing skills while assisting your Club! Please volunteer to write up a meeting review for an upcoming newsletter.

Contact: [Kenneth.E.Schwartz@gmail.com](mailto:Kenneth.E.Schwartz@gmail.com)



## Rose City Accordion Club Camp

Register Now

Spots fill up quickly for the Rose City Accordion Camp, which will be held June 2-7, 2025 at Alton Collins Retreat Center in Eagle Creek, OR. Participants are reminded to secure their orchestra slot and room at the lodge early. This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the RCAC. RCAC conductors are Gabe Hall-Rodrigues and SFAC Member, **Gail Campanella**. Courtney Von Drehle and Jamie Maschler are the RCAC workshop instructors. A non-refundable deposit of \$300 is required to hold your space. Contact Delette Huffman, RCAC Camp Director, if you have questions. E-mail: [huffy0421@gmail.com](mailto:huffy0421@gmail.com)



2023 RCAC Orchestra

## Friends of SFAC— Accordion Groups/Clubs

Check websites or contacts to verify meeting schedules

**Accordion Club of the Redwoods**<sup>1</sup> (Santa Rosa)  
Meetings 3rd Wednesdays—Cibo Rustico Pizzeria  
(707) 318-0474, [dcdacapo@gmail.com](mailto:dcdacapo@gmail.com)

**Accordion Lovers Society International (ALSI)**<sup>1</sup>  
2nd Sundays—Mt. Miguel Covenant Village  
Spring Valley, CA  
[gkohl5890@gmail.com](mailto:gkohl5890@gmail.com) (619) 395-0454

**Friends of the Accordion (FOTA)**  
*formerly Accordionaires of Los Angeles*  
MeetUps in North Hollywood & Long Beach, CA  
[dnorferi@aol.com](mailto:dnorferi@aol.com) or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1045691515515866/>

**Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS)**<sup>1</sup>  
2nd Saturdays—Roseville, CA  
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection  
Jerry Kiefer, President (916) 652-0836

**San Antonio Accordion Society**  
2nd Tuesdays online<sup>3</sup> - Meetings on last Tuesdays<sup>1</sup>  
Chester's Hamburgers, San Antonio, TX  
[LauraJNiland@outlook.com](mailto:LauraJNiland@outlook.com)

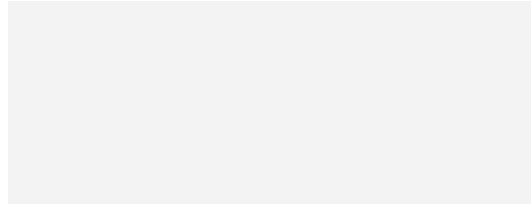
**Silicon Valley Accordion Society (SVAS)**<sup>1</sup>  
1st Sundays  
Christ Episcopal Church, Los Altos, CA  
[www.svasociety.org](http://www.svasociety.org)

<sup>1</sup> In person meeting only

<sup>2</sup> mixed: in-person and ZOOM meeting

<sup>3</sup> ZOOM only meeting

**FIRST CLASS POSTAGE**



**Upcoming Events:** *January 21* Gordon Kohl (from San Diego) Live at Chetcuti  
*February 25 (4th Sunday)*, East Bay Accordion Circle, Piedmont Middle School, Orchestra Room 503

**SFAC Sunday Meeting**

**Accordions Live!**

**Gordon Kohl - from San Diego**


**Sunday, January 21 - 2pm-5pm**

Come join us for fun and great music!

SFAC members will receive ZOOM link via email

See email for details, or

contact [info@sfaccordionclub.com](mailto:info@sfaccordionclub.com)

[fb.com/sanfranciscoaccordionclub](https://fb.com/sanfranciscoaccordionclub) 



**Millbrae Chetcuti Community Room**

Civic Center Plaza/Library Plaza  
450 Poplar Avenue, Millbrae, CA

**SFAC Monthly Meetings:**

Plenty of *free parking in Library lot*

*Accessible location*

*Close to public transit*