

# VICTORY REVIEW

Acoustic Music Magazine

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Number 06

## *Victory Future*

## PASSING THE TORCH!



Inside...

- ✦ Remembering David MacAusland
- ✦ Folking Around: Joe Jencks
- ✦ Musical Traditions: The Walt Robertson I Knew (Part 1)
- ✦ Accents On Music Therapy: Arts-Based Research

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4 <sup>th</sup>	Jay Thomas Big Band w/ Becca Duran
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11 <sup>th</sup>	Pete Lenionen w/The John Holte Radio Rythm Orchestra
16 <sup>th</sup>	Becki Sue & the Big Rockin' Daddies
17 <sup>th</sup>	Rent Collectors
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# REMEMBERING DAVID MACAUSLAN

BY DEB SEYMOUR

If you had told me three weeks ago that I'd be writing an article on the "late" David MacAuslan, I would have said, "yeah, right!" After all, we, the Debonairs, one of David's many bands, had just gotten off stage at Cafe Allegro, fresh from singing a rousing chorus of my new song "Say Yes To A Positive Future" and were happily contemplating just that: a full summer of Debonairs gigs and musical camaraderie.

Yeah, right. Death has a way of messing with the best laid of plans.

\*\*\*\*\*

I first met David at the Ravenna Victory Open Mic and then started to notice him in my audience a lot at my Deb Seymour shows. And knowing how marvelous his voice was from the open mic, it was a natural to haul him up on stage with Alan Kausal, Stanislove, Alan Camhi, Kurt Mesford, whichever "Swabbie Boys" were hanging about. One thing led to another, and last summer, he joined forces with Alan Kausal, to create "The Debonairs." David lent a balance and an anchor to our trio, cementing Alan Kausal's and my harmonies together. With his bevy of percussive instruments, David added the icing on the multi-stylistic cake that makes up the "demented wit, haunting blues and moving ballads" of the repertoire, even playing reggae rhythms on the djembe, his most recent acquisition. He was also the band wardrobe consultant: ("NO BRIGHT BLUE PANTS, ALAN!" and supplied the bow ties.

A little history: David MacAuslan (real name: David Mark Michaels) was born in Pennsylvania on July 1, 1958, to Alan and Phyllis Michaels. He began playing piano at age three, guitar at age 10 and also played trombone in the high school pit orchestra. There he was introduced to musical theater. His mother recalls: "One day, though, he came home and said 'Mom, they're all having much more fun up there on stage. And that's where I'm going. I don't want to be down in the pit anymore,'" and so he quit the orchestra and started acting instead."

Thus began a long career of theater productions: *1776*, *Hello Dolly*, *How to Succeed*

*In Business Without Really Trying*, and *Arsenic and Old Lace*, to name a few. David also performed in numerous Gilbert and Sullivan productions: *The Mikado*, *Yeoman of the Guard*, *HMS Pinafore*, *The Gondoliers* and others. "You thought he was busy here in Seattle," said mom Phyllis, "you should have seen him back in Chicago!" His passion for all things musical was not limited to musical theater; he had over 20,000

local folk scene, though, sadly, he did not get as involved in the local Gilbert and Sullivan troupe due to work schedule constraints. He had just gotten his dream full-time job as office manager and bookkeeper at Advanced Clinical Software, a job in which his multi-organizational skills, attention to detail and computer knowledge were appreciated. He was out bowling with some of his co-workers when his heart attack hit.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is at this point that I'd like to turn over the commentary on David to some of the many folks with whom he played, after all, it is only fitting:

From Andy Blyth and Sue Peterson  
(The Raging Zephyr and Old Dogs ~ New Tricks)



Above: From left to right: David MacAuslan, Alan Kausal, Deb Seymour, Michael Guthrie performing at the Tumbleweed Music Festival. Photo by: Ron Dalton

CDs in his collection, ranging from Sea Shanties to Heavy Metal.

David spent quite a bit of his youth living in different places around the world as the family moved to follow his father's career as a physicist and material scientist: Connecticut, California, Germany (where David and his younger sister Robin both learned to speak fluent German), Toronto, and finally Chicago. David received a full scholarship to the University of Chicago, where he majored in Economics and Computer Science. In 1991, his parents retired here to Seattle and David followed 10 years later. Upon arrival, he immediately got involved with Toastmasters and started hanging around in the

"So many special times come to mind as we remember David MacAuslan fondly.

Andy and I approached David about helping us put together a new folk and Americana group, The Raging Zephyr, (made up primarily of Victory musicians) a little over two years ago. An incredibly talented vocalist, David anchored the Zephyr, bringing a willingness to give of his exceptional talent and time to perform for causes that benefited many nonprofit organizations throughout the area. He performed with the Zephyr at Bellevue Strawberry Festival, the Tumbleweed Festival in Richland, WA and the South 47 Farm - "A Maize 'n Music." Andy, David and Alan Kausal started singing together

at Tumbleweed last year and were just beginning to perform under the stage name Old Dogs ~ New Tricks. David struck a good balance between professionalism and lighthearted playfulness. Uncompromising in the quality of his music, he would hold our feet to the fire, striving for perfection. Extremely dependable, he never gave anything less than his best with care and consideration.

He wasn't much of a joke teller though – in fact Andy says he was awful – but I can't judge him, as I can't tell a joke either! I can see the quizzical look in his eye though when you told him a joke or funny story that he didn't quite get...I will sure miss that! I also loved his authentic style when he would make a mistake on his guitar and sort of roll his eyes or get so frustrated that he would start over. Andy wanted to know if anyone could ever remember seeing Superman, Clark Kent and David in the same room together? With his classic handsome face and dark glasses - was he really Superman in disguise?

From singer- songwriter Michael Carlos:  
(The Michael Carlos Band)

"I've actually known David longer than I've known Victory Music! I had just moved to the Northwest from Chicago the first part of 2003 and was starting to look at opportunities on the Seattle music scene and landed at the Hopvine Pub's Wednesday open mic. When I arrived there with my girlfriend, it was full, so we asked this pleasant looking fellow who was sitting at a table by himself if we could join him. As it turned out, David had recently moved to Seattle after living in Chicago for over 20 years, so we hit it off immediately. Talking about Chicago became one of our favorite ways to pass the time on the road. That night he was hanging out at the Hopvine because his car had been hit and he was forced to take the bus home. On his way, he decided to stop in for a beer and watch some folks play at the open mic. As I think back on that first meeting, I realize that it summarizes David perfectly: he never had much luck with cars; he always spent as much time listening to others' music as he did playing his own; and he certainly enjoyed a good microbrew, so much so that wherever we traveled for a gig, he took extra time to sample the local microbrewery.

That chance meeting at the Hopvine meant that David was the first person I recognized when I started coming to Victory Music events. He became a tireless supporter of my music. Ultimately, this led to his joining the Michael

Carlos Band as a backing vocalist and hand-percussionist in 2004. I have fielded a lot of questions about David over the year-and-a-half that he toured with us. People frequently wondered how we could afford to have a backing vocalist when most bands are just barely scraping by in today's music industry. The answer is that David's work ethic, positive attitude, dedication, organizational skills and loyalty to the band are what every band leader wishes for. It is these traits that hold a band together just as much as, if not more than, musical talent. Other fans have recognized this fact as well. During set breaks, I often overheard conversations among audience members commenting on how well David strengthened the delivery of the lyrics to my songs. A fan from Bellingham wrote to me after our appearance there, just three weeks before David died: "A typical band has a singer, guitarist, bass player and drummer. I really like that you have a percussionist as well. It adds just the right touch to the music."

From Alan Kausal:

"I first met David at the Ravenna open mic, probably about three years ago.

I think I first started singing with David with Ron Dalton's first band, the Dalton Gang, in Fall of 2004 and then, some time later, he and I joined the Raging Zephyr and performed a number of benefit concerts over the course of 2005. We also sang in a trio put together by Andy Blythe that was just getting started, and of course, with Deb Seymour as her band "The Debonairs." It was also sweet of David and his family to have me over for Thanksgiving 2004, where a got to meet his parents, his sister Robin, and his niece. David was a true and loyal friend. He did not speak badly of other people. He was always supporting his friends, especially with their music, by either singing behind them or attending their shows. He was reliable: If he said he would do something, he would do it; and he was always on time. He was very honest. He was a warm and gracious emcee at the open mic. It was great to watch him getting better as a performer; from the time he first started playing the open mic.

Among of the moments I remember sharing with David: dressing up in cumber buns and bow ties as Debonairs; David's announcement, at the end of Deb's 'I Hate Beer' song, that 'The opinions expressed in this song are those of the song writer and not necessarily those of the Debonairs!'; David singing, with great enthusiasm and in costume the Don Freed song, 'It's All Part of Being A Pirate!' during a Raging

Zephyr show; David singing "Cockroaches on Parade" with his famous cockroach hiss as the chorus. David's sheepish grin when he would forget a lyric or chord; the funny, semi-stern looks he'd give me I'd forget to sing my 'oohs'; carpooling to Tumbleweed last summer with Deb when we were remembering [and singing] some of the worst songs ever written, (according to Dave Barry's book, anyway!); David's pride and exhilaration when he completed, as a songwriter, his first song, 'Independence Day' and performed it for his parents at the open mic. I enjoyed talking to him about Chicago [my home town], the music scene and the love we shared for Steve Goodman, John Prine, Tom Dundee and Harry Waller, among others.

From Stewart Hendrickson:

"I first met David about four years ago when he started coming to the Seattle Song Circle. With his strong voice and the songs that he knew (didn't have to sing from a book!) he made quite an impression, and he was very well accepted. Sometime later I was quite surprised and pleased to see him at the open mic. What has always impressed me was the enthusiasm as well as his ecumenical range of musical tastes from traditional to contemporary folk, music hall songs, and lost of other styles. In January of 2005 he came to my workshop at Rainy Camp and recorded a PNW song (The Old Settler), which was included in the CD that resulted from that project. He was a great promoter of the CD, and at the CD release concert he took it upon himself to organize the closing chorus of 'Roll On Columbia.' But that was the kind of person David was. From the time I first met him and heard him sing until his recent untimely death I witnessed a continual growth in his music and performance abilities. They were good to begin with, but they just got better. So he will be greatly missed."

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But lest we forget how dedicated David was to our particular organization, I want to let the fellow Victory Music volunteer Tom Rawson sum it all up:

"When I think of David, I think of how he is the quintessential Victory Music community member. A cheerful soul who so admired the talents of others and gave selflessly of his own talents. Music straight from the heart into the hearts of others. And he always found just the right harmony to round out the sound. The perfect sideman who was well on his way to being his own riveting act." Amen.

# VICTORY FUTURE

## Passing the Torch!

BY DEJAH LEGER

As the last segment of a three-part series, it is time to examine where the future of Victory lies. We've explored the "shoulders," so to speak, upon which Victory has been founded, and now we're to look at what—and who—will stand upon them. I was asked to write this article because I am a young, twenty-something folk musician who is part of a generation with the responsibility of ensuring that Victory Music Review endures.

music that builds the foundation available to us today. Mandolinist Paul McGowen says, "Folk music is constant, in that it's interactive and for the people. What it sounds like changes with new generations." He adds, "*When we're playing in the Tallboys, I just want to show people that while this music is old, we're still playing it here and now and so it's just being born too.*" By providing a community space for the exploration and sharing of acoustic folk music, Victory can

nurture the appreciation of folk music throughout the generations. "Traditional folk music is an important way to remind us all of our roots," says Victory member, clogger and guitarist Charmaine Slaven. "Playing and sharing music seems to keep all musicians young."

The next question, then, is how Victory can maximize its outreach to a younger generation and remain one of Seattle's top resources for acoustic folk music. "I think, like myself, just finding out about good folk music gets a lot of people hooked. I think a lot of youth get isolated into a world of really heavily commercialized music," says Charmaine. Paul agrees. "Exposure seems like the biggest need. Most people never hear good folk music," adding that he first heard about Victory by attending one of the open mics.

"I recently became a Victory member, and I hope it grows. Seattle needs a good resource to bring the acoustic music community together," says Charmaine. "I think if more youth just knew about the Victory Review, there would be more involvement. Also, more content on younger musicians would help. It might also help to distribute the paper at places where more



Above: Charmaine Slaven (feet), Joe Fulton (fiddle), Charlie Beck (banjo), Paul McGowen (guitar), John Hurd (bass). Photo by Skye McGowen.

But as the previous articles have shown, what can one person say? The past, present and future of Victory lies squarely in the hands of a community. Instead, I turned to a young, local old-time band and Victory music favorite, The Tallboys. Having played venues ranging from punk clubs to Folklife to Victory open mics, I felt they would have valuable insight on where the new folk culture and Victory are heading.

The question posed to our generation is what to do with the groundwork that has been laid for us by the previous generation. Baby boomers revived and recreated much of the folk



Above: Charlie Beck on banjo, Paul McGowen on fiddle, John Hurd on bass.



*Charmaine Slaven on feet, John Hurd on bass, Rob Adesso on guitar, Charlie Beck on banjo. Photo by: Justine Dell'Aringa*

young people hang out, like coffee shops, record stores, and venues in neighborhoods like Capital Hill or the U-District.”

However, distribution isn't possible without the help of volunteers. Victory has relied on plentiful hands to aid in its success. Its perpetuation is not the responsibility of one person, or one generation, but of the community that it unites. Helping with distribution, getting ads, increasing exposure, writing articles and becoming a member are all ways to help Victory's future. Folk music is never as simple as passing the torch. It needs loving banjo-picking, fiddle-bowing, guitar-strumming hands to shape it, and the support of communities and generations to perpetuate it. The past and present of Victory is the result of a group of musicians and music lovers coming together to create a resource that rallied their musical family. The future needs the same enthusiasm and dedication to continue to have this resource available for western Washington's acoustic folk musicians for years to come.

Thanks to the Tallboys for their input, and to the many hard-working volunteers who put so much time and energy into the Victory Review!

*Dejah Leger (dejah\_leger@yahoo.com) lives in Seattle, where she plays music for her most honest audience, her five-month-old daughter. You can check out The Tallboys at [www.thetallboys.com](http://www.thetallboys.com).*

**Editors Note:**

You have read in the past issues on the identity of Victory Music and what it will take for Victory Music to survive. The

bottom line—is Victory must have people involved that will keep it going. Without you – Victory Members and volunteers, we will not continue. YOU are what makes Victory Music. It is YOUR input and volunteerism that keeps us going. Right now, Victory is run by too few people to run like it should. I am responsible for the whole magazine. I couldn't do it without the writers, CD reviewers, Copy Editors and Proof readers.

On the other hand, Victory Music, not to be confused with the Victory Review, needs people to help run the organization. To give you an idea of what we need—I will tell you what one person does and it's way too much.

This person goes to the Tacoma office about once a week. She picks up the mail which includes CD 's, promo stuff, bills etc. She does the billing for the Victory Review, she enters all the information into a data base and keeps the data base purring. Then, when the Review has gone to the printers, she picks up the Review from the Tacoma office, and guess what – she mails it all out – by herself! She has also organized the distribution, and really, really needs help. Without distribution, who can read the Review.?

This is only what I know personally. And do you know who this person is? It's the PRESIDENT of Victory Music. That should be shocking to all of you! There are others out there doing almost as much – by themselves!

Another major need is for someone with Library skills organize a committee of persons to help with the physical work of organizing the CD's at the Tacoma office. It would require a leader – is that person YOU?

You all know the saying, many hands make light work. Well, that's true for Victory Music as well!

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# REVIEWS

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## LOCAL

*Country*

**CREEPING TIME: CHEAP AMERICAN LAGER**  
(self issued)



Just makin' sure nobody in Austin or Athens or St Paul starts thinkin' that they's the center of Alt Country, Creeping Time runs it up the flagpole out here at one of the original *corners* of the No Depression sound. Dang straight. *Cheap American Lager* is one loud record: acoustic instruments played hard, pumped along by the proverbial gorilla-at-the-drum-kit. After the initial shock, though, the quality of the songs comes through. Bassist Ken Nottingham gets most of the songwriting credits, and he has an excellent sense of structure and plenty of imaginative material to share, including a whack at local history, "Lyman Cutler." (Look him up, transplants.) Guitarist Michael Spaly mates some modern themes to good old honkin' country much more successfully than a lot of big name writers these days, too. Bloodshot Records ought to hear these guys, and so should you. (Tom Petersen)

*Old Time*

**THE TALLBOYS: YEAH BUDDY**



No #, self-released, [www.thetallboys.com](http://www.thetallboys.com)

If you live in the Pacific Northwest and haven't at least heard of The Tallboys, you truly need to get out more. Winners of the 2004 band contest at the Northwest String Summit, The Tallboys are all much too young to be playing music this old with that much passion and experience. *Yeah Buddy* is their third release since forming in 2003 (and second in the last year), with plans to release another in 2006. The band is made up of fiddler Joe Fulton, claw hammer and three-finger style banjo player Charlie Beck, mandolin and second fiddle player Paul McGowan, bassist John Hurd, clogger and sometime rhythm guitarist Charmaine Slaven, and former member Rob Adesso adding rhythm guitar. They play together with no one musician overshadowing another. This instrumental harmony gives these mainly traditional tunes a nice polish that many haven't had in a long time, making them at least sound fresh again, since they won't ever sound new again. This is old-time country, bluegrass, and folk music that these boys' great-grandparents would have listened and danced

to, or maybe even played on a Saturday night. They seem to truly enjoy the music, playing together, and that spirit flows through the music and into the listener. Since they play in Seattle often (it is their home), there is no excuse why you can't catch them at Folklife, The Tractor Tavern, Conor Byrne's or a local house party. After just a couple songs, when you walk up to the CD table and the person asks if you want The Tallboys' latest, reply *Yeah Buddy*. (James Rodgers)

*Folk*

**FLAT MOUNTAIN GIRLS: "HONEY TAKE YOUR WHISKERS OFF"**



(self issued; available through CDBaby)

A must-have for the Appalachian folk aficionado. These girls have a good niche carved out, with harmonies that rival the ever-famous Carter Family sound. This is what country music is all about. Before there were concerts and people backed by symphonies there were a lot of small bands that were able to keep people dancing all night long. This group of wonderful ladies is what that is all about. The harmonies are worked out very well and the instruments are used to enhance the vocals. The choice of material is pretty cool as well. There were a



couple of songs here that I had only heard before on old records. This group deserves attention in folk revival circles. I'm not going to pick a best song but suggest that the whole thing deserves your ear. *(Dennis Ray Deems)*

*Folk*

**BROWNSMEAD FLATS: LIVE AT THE LIBERTY, AND ASTORIA**  
(self issued)



Astoria's fun folksters Brownsmead Flats are daring the simultaneous release of a studio album and a live disc. It's a chancy proposition, because there's a one third overlap between the two, which might leave some torn between getting the live record, a de facto Greatest Hits collection, and the new set. Fortunately, you can't go wrong with either disc. Brownsmead Flats knows how to have a good time, and they are exceptionally good at doing topical material that won't become quickly dated: they sing about rain, they sing about their hometown, and both discs have the uproarious "Lewis & Clark Official Bicentennial Song," a timeless tongue-in-cheek take on the crass exploitation of local attractions (and the band's frank willingness to grab a piece of the action). The music is a jaunty, bluegrass-oid hybrid with some hammered dulcimer interjected when it's time to mellow

out. As expected, the studio album is crisp and clean, riding on the strength of the excellent songwriting and interesting material, which includes an ode to Captain Gray and the first US expeditions to the West Coast ("Boston Men," which is also on the live set). The live album, while ragged in spots, is a hoot from start to finish, and may be the pick if you can only get one. The band is bursting with enthusiasm, laughs at itself, and has a great time with its family-friendly material, which includes the old Bill Staines sing along, "All God's Critters." The stage patter (properly recorded, thank goodness and the uncredited engineer) is always funny and charming and informative. Again: you can't go wrong with either disc. *(Tom Petersen)*

*Folk*

**THE PORTLAND COLLECTION, VOLUME 2**  
(BOOK) BY SUSAN SONGER WITH CLYDE CURLEY  
**A PORTLAND SELECTION 2: CONTRA DANCE**  
**MUSIC IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST (CD)**



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

Last year, Northwest Contra Dance pillars Susan Songer and Clyde Curley released the second volume of an extremely thorough collection of music particular to this area, and now they've followed up with an excellent CD that hits the highlights. The book got an enthusiastic thumbs up from the fiddle player in our household for its great clarity and ease of use. The tunes are not oversimplified, but neither are they clotted with every flourish or grace note. The book is petit and spiral bound, making it jam-friendly, and it's a boon to everyone playing folk and dance music. The CD, meanwhile, is its own delight. Songer and Curley, abetted by fiddler George Penk, have cut much more than a tutorial or archival record. It's a listener's treat, bursting with joy, and exceptionally well recorded. The picking is clean without being fussy, and on a few tracks Creighton Lindsay keeps

time with spoons or provides more bottom with guitar. The individual personalities and distinct melodies really come through, so that other musicians will not only *learn* from the CD, but be *inspired* by it as well. This one won't just sit on the reference shelf, it will go into your CD jukebox. Outstanding! *(Tom Petersen)*

*Maritime*

**CONSTELLATION'S CREW/HANK CRAMER:**  
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Hank Cramer has a number of surprises up his sleeve on this fine CD, from poetry reading to spotlighting the talents of his band, Constellation's Crew, to including a music video. This double barreled offering features a DVD of Hank and the Crew performing at Tall Ships Victoria 2005, with lovely shots of Victoria Harbour and stunning views of the sailing there, by videographer Rachel Maskew. Add a salty helping of seafaring and Celtic songs, and you have a sumptuous feast indeed.

Standouts: Michelle Cameron's moving, simple solo cello version of "Amazing Grace;" its author, John Newton, was an ex-slave ship captain who saw the light. Hank takes the mike in a heartfelt recitation of Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem "Old Ironsides," written to save the doughty U.S.S. Constitution from the wreckers. It's easy to see why it worked, and Old Ironsides survives to this day. Mark Iler takes the spotlight on his "Upbound and Empty," a true story of his great-grandfather's riding out a Great Lakes storm that sank 16 ships.

Historical songs are indeed a strong component of this offering, along with traditional fare such as "Garryowen" and the rousing "Johnny Come Down to Hilo." Light the oil lamps, mateys, and break out the fiddles; we're in for a lovely time. *(Wendy Joseph)*

*Singer-Songwriter*

**STEVE JORDAN: SOMEONE TO LOVE**  
(Smuggler's Cove Records SCR-103)



On *Someone To Love*, Steve Jordan boldly goes in some directions way edgier than any tattooed coffee house ode yodeler. The opening cut, "April," is about the deeply meaningful, but firmly platonic love between an older man, a singer, and much younger woman, a regular at his gigs: this man can *walk the line*. He's not through: he goes to "Denver," for other loves to be shared, and no one ends up in bed there, either. Take *that*, all you snivelers who can't get over your last several "relationships!" Jordan has an excellent, almost too-pretty voice, that he balances with blunt, bluesy backing by Orville Johnson. Other tunes on the album sing the praises of a life well examined, and the virtues of tending a home, a yard and a family, but Jordan never lets things get sappy. He's got a good, chooglin' trucker's song, "Rain Fallin' Down," that works fine but which may have even more of a future if some gravelly country outfit turns the Tele's up to 11. Another paean to blue collars, "Building Bridges," needs nothing extra. All in all, Steve Jordan is a lot like Gordon Lightfoot, gentle without being wimpy, with an inner toughness that we used to call character. (Tom Petersen)

## BLUES

**MANTRAS FOR MADMEN HARRY MANX**  
(Dog My Cat Records, DMCR 13982)

"The way I see it," says Harry Manx, "Blues is like the earth and Indian music is like the heavens. What I do is find the balance between

the two." And he does! Where many hybridizations suffer from being too deliberate or self-conscious, *Mantras For Madmen* sounds entirely natural and unforced. The fundamentals of the blues mirror many of the structures of Indian music, with brooding meditations working as the alap of a raga, and the rave-ups sounding like the ghat. Harry Manx is actually achieving what George Harrison and Brian Jones felt and thought might be possible back when they were introduced to Ravi Shankar, making this record a revelation and a milestone. For Westerners, the safe ground is Manx's fine remake of The Band's "It Makes No Difference," which finds that groups cosmic connections, and Manx's own instant standard, "Nothing Fails Like Success." The latter makes clear that the classic laments and contradictions of the great Blues lyrics, in fact, jibe with Hinduism, proving that the Blues is truly universal. (Tom Petersen)

**RENEE AUSTIN: RIGHT ABOUT LOVE**  
(Blind Pig Records, BPCD 5099)

The folks at Blind Pig Records have a great mission: release the baddest, kickin' yo' bee-hind Blues, and they've done it again with Renee Austin. On this, her second album, she releases the full fury of her throaty rasp, making the tragedies of crumbling love and succumbing to the bottle sound awfully real. Austin writes her own material, and whether or not all of it is strictly true, it sounds as if she's paid the dues – she's loaded that U-Haul as one version of life gave way to another. The music itself is crisp and professional without sounding antiseptic; Austin slings a guitar herself and she's backed by a crack band of friends and regulars from her Texas-to-San Francisco axis. Most of *Right About Love* is amplified, but not cranked: it's loud in spirit, thanks to Austin's husky, no bull attitude. A few times the pain quiets her to wistful, muted reflections . . . but don't worry, she's back in your face by the next track! Great stuff, and it'll be a big hit, if there's any justice. (Tom Petersen)

**GUY DAVIS: SKUNKMELLO**  
(Red House Records RHR CD 192)

Guy Davis, by his own admission, is unfashionable. His style of acoustic blues fell out of favor in the Black community once Muddy Waters plugged in and Chuck Berry rocked out. It became "folk music," not a problem, but old fashioned, to African Americans. Well, good thing Davis cares not a whit for fashion: He's got music

for everybody, including the brothers who ended up down rap's blind alley. Skunkmello is a fabulous record. Davis has bonded at a cellular level with the scamps and tramps of the original blues, so that his own songs ("Chocolate Man" "Shakey Pudding") are as classic as his covers ("Natural Born Eas'man," often known as "On the Road Again," and "Po' Boy, Great Long Ways From Home."). "Skunkmello," as he explains in the excellent liner notes, is one of those old nicknames from the Lazy Liars & Loafers Club, a chicken thief, the rascal who'd had no luck at all if it weren't for bad luck . . . all the while he's got a couple of aces up his sleeve. Don't pass this one up! (Tom Petersen)

## BLUEGRASS

**DAVID PETERSON: IN THE MOUNTAINTOPS TO ROAM & 1946**  
(self issued, but universally distributed)

The band with the most audacious claim in Bluegrass – that they recapture and carry on the moment that belonged to Bill Monroe and his Bluegrass Boys, featuring Flatt & Scruggs – largely delivers on its new CD. Now that their reputation is established, 1946 seeks to embrace the wider scope of what was then "uptempo country" or "hot stringband music" in the immediate post-war era, by mixing in several romantic ballads and loping cowboy songs amid the instrumental dazzlers. True to form, Peterson leads off with "I'll Still Write Your Name In The Sand," otherwise a signature tune for Mac Wiseman. Peterson is a strong vocalist, though, and achieves the same spine-tingling thrills of the standard. The "cowboy" tune is "Put Me On a Trail To Carolina," an exquisite rendition of the old theme of moving away from the good ol' mountain home, only to regret it. The rest of the selections are as fine, except for the dopey "1946," yet another poser-nostalgia laundry list that lesser bands have made obligatory of late – of all groups, DP & 1946 shouldn't have to go there! The entire disc has that "retro" feel, though modern production softens and balances things some. Even though the band borrows the actual banjo Earl played in 1946, the result is more "mojo" than actual sonic distinction, as the record doesn't quite have that rude, clangy sound. Still, this is about as good as modern mainstream Bluegrass gets, and *In The Mountaintops To Roam* is definitely a fine, fun listen. (Tom Petersen)

**MIKE COMPTON & DAVID LONG: STOMP**  
(Acoustic Disc ACD-63)

David Grisman's got a superb business model: Release some big name, big hit records each year to finance some very serious preservationist, often arcane, material. Falling in between are albums on which the big stars wax an hour's worth seemingly meant to test music theorists, if not the patience of the general listening audience. Happily, the mandolin study *Stomp*, by the Nashville Bluegrass Band's Mike Compton and prodigy David Long, rarely retreats so far "inside the music" that the audience is ignored. These mando masters play with spunk and warmth, not just for each other (the fault of Grisman's and Sam Bush's *Hold On, We're Strummin'* last year), but for us. The two unearth and tear through some great traditional numbers, and both contribute originals that are astonishingly "old sounding." The album is bookended by Bill Monroe songs, "Evening Prayer Blues" and "Tanyards," and contains several gospel pieces. The originals have a Dawgy aroma, but Compton's got his own sound that leans heavily on the ancient tones. Long, impressively, is working his way into those tones, instead of trying to "bluegrassify" '90s pop and jazz as some of his contemporaries do. Thus, the traditions that Mr. Grisman hopes to keep alive and well are, indeed, alive and well. Thanks, guys! (Tom Petersen)

**DOYLE LAWSON & QUICKSILVER: HE LIVES IN ME**

(Horizon Records, HR10752)

Quicksilver is the supreme vocal group in Bluegrass, as their shelves of Grammys and IBMA awards attest. Last year the group released *You've Got to Dig a Little Deeper*, which served to remind people that they are one of the strongest instrumental groups as well. For this year's *He Lives In Me*, though, Doyle Lawson's band returns to their trademark sound, in which their incredible harmonies on gospel classics and originals dominate against a spare backing. This group is in a class by itself, so it's impossible to say whether this album is better or worse than Lawson's other efforts – he sets the standard, and no one else matches it. *He Lives In Me* is thrilling and moving and astonishing, and Doyle should probably send the tux to the dry cleaner's and ready those acceptance speeches. (Tom Petersen)

## COUNTRY

**BECCA**

(Nari Records NR-C-0001-2)

OK, I confess: writing for a lil' ol' folk magazine, when a record like *Becca* comes in, the hoots of laughter and snorts of derision kick in immediately. Becca Hennesy looks like a young Cher – we know, 'cause she shows us her naval – and she's out gunning for heartland hotties Faith Hill and Shania Twain, right down to the cliché-d pointing-at-you shot on the inside cover. The music is superslick Young Country bombast, under the direction of producer Rick Francisco, who is eager to take the credit. So what's to confess? I, uh, kinda liked it! It's pretty good, as overly-calculated pop goes. Proof that life isn't fair, Becca got the pipes to go with the bod, and far more than her competing country cuties, she has a distinctive down-home yowl that instantly evokes the heyday of Tammy Wynette, Melba Montgomery and Tanya Tucker. The songs themselves (strait up Wynnona) are rendered with fiddle and banjo farther forward in the mix than most popular country allows these days. All other claims by the frenetic Mr. Francisco aside, he just may be right when he says that Becca "[brings] back the warmth and soul of Country Music." So, shame on me. (Tom Petersen)

## FOLK

**BUTCH CAGE & WILLIE B THOMAS: OLD TIME BLACK SOUTHERN STRING BAND MUSIC**  
#9045, Arhoolie, www.arhoolie.com

Fiddler James "Butch" Cage and guitarist Willie B. Thomas were "discovered" in 1959 by folklorist Harry Oster, after decades of playing local house parties, dances, and church services. These 15 tracks, 14 of which are previously unreleased, were recorded in the early 1960's and capture one of the few African-American blues fiddlers to make recordings. These shambling, shuffling tunes blend folk, blues, southern gospel, and even some Zydeco. But this disc isn't for everyone. This is music so laid back, so rough and tumble that it could hurt you if you're not ready for it. Yet, for those with an adventurous ear and a sense of history, you can hear in these traditional songs the early stirrings of R&B and Rock-n-Roll. Listen to "Sneaky Ways" and tell me this old song didn't inspire Chuck Berry to write "Maybelline." Discover these two unknown legends for yourself. (James Rodgers)

## SINGER-SONGWRITER

**WATERBUG: BORN INTO THE WHISPER**

Anthology Eight

(Waterbug: promotional compilation)

As regular readers of these reviews know, Waterbug is one of those great independent labels that doesn't play by the corporate rules. They put out CDs by people who make no compromises to fit some slick, radio-ready image. The Waterbug stable is filled, then, with far more interesting and challenging artists than most labels, and while a few do manage to crack the big time, most end up flying just below the radar. Which is why collections like these are great, and at the givaway price, you can't lose. The purpose is obviously to let you in on some people you'd have trouble hearing about otherwise, but everyone on this collection is a fine, intriguing performer that you *should* know about. Give it a try! (Tom Petersen)

**DESPITE THE CRUSHING WEIGHT OF GRAVITY RAINA ROSE**  
(self issued, www.rainarose.com)

Forthright young Raina Rose, half of The Gypsy Moths, has herself as solid a solo debut as a new artist can hope for. There's plenty here that ought to garner attention, and with particularly relentless touring, word will get out. Cumbersome album title aside, Rose is a precocious and interesting writer, able to put herself in other's shoes and in other eras, as when she imagines life as the daughter of a WWI-era communist. This sets her apart from a lot of her contemporaries; when she does get around to kissing off former lovers, she doesn't whine about it. Rose has a sense of humor and a muscular approach to the acousticguitar, and the best cuts on this record are those she does alone. She's backed by a band on about half the cuts, but with the exception of the all-strings "Nameless Ship," featuring celeb mentor Tracy Grammer, things get a tad shrill . . . at this early stage, Rose is still exploring, looking for her particular groove. While she admits to following Grammer's example (fine idea, that!), this album is strongly reminiscent of the first couple of Dar Williams albums, which is great, too! Rose currently calls Portland home, so watch for her, go see her, get this record, and look forward to more good music in the years to come. (Tom Petersen)

# VICTORY CALENDAR

JUNE 2006

*To make a calendar submission go to:  
www.victorymusic.org (go to calendar page)  
Enter your data by the Second Monday of June for July listings.  
This is the only way your calendar events will be listed.*

**06/01-04/06 Dee Dee Bridgewater** Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave Seattle call 206-441-9729 varies Acclaimed veteran jazz vocalist & two-time grammy winner. 206-441-9729

**06/01/06 Jorge Zorro and Patric Davidson** C and P Coffee 5612 California SW Seattle 6 PM FREE!! Originals with spice. And beans. www.jorgezorro.com

**06/04/06 Dan Carollo** (Irish and American finger-style guitar) The Mandolin Cafe 3923 S 12th St. Tacoma 11:00am-1:00pm FREE Dan Carollo performing solo acoustic guitar for Sunday brunch. www.celtograss.com

**06/04/06 Mike Buchman** Ahmad Babahar and The Lunabees Allegro Cafe 4214 University Way, enter from the alley to the east Seattle 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Pass the hat Original folk and blues and covers drenched in honey-sweet harmonies. 206-694-6802

**06/25/06 Dan Carollo** (with Eliot Grasso, uilleann pipes/flute) Sammamish Presbyterian Church 22522 NE Inglewood Hill Road Sammamish 2:00pm-4:00pm Donations welcome Acoustic guitarist Dan Carollo performs with uilleann piper Eliot Grasso www.celtograss.com

**06/25/06 Dan Carollo** (with uilleann piper Eliot Grasso) Sammamish Presbyterian Church 22522 NE Inglewood Hill Road Sammamish 7:00pm (corrected time) \$5 suggested donation Acoustic celtic guitarist Dan Carollo performs with uilleann piper Eliot Grasso (7pm. NOTE: previous time was incorrect) www.celtograss.com

**06/30/06 Dan Carollo** (with Eliot Grasso, uilleann pipes/flute) Victor's Celtic Coffee Company 7993 Gilman St Redmond 8:00pm-10:00pm FREE Acoustic guitarist Dan Carollo performs with uilleann piper Eliot Grasso w

"Fingerpicking the Blues" Workshop Dusty Strings Music 3406 Fremont Ave. N Seattle

## Wednesdays

**Every Wednesday** Columbia Street Irish Seisium Tugboat Annie's 2100 West Bay Drive Olympia 8 - 10pm free An open, intermediate Irish session. Tune list available: <http://home.comcast.net/~burtdabard> 360-866-4296

**Every Wednesday** Floyd Standifer Quintet New Orleans Reataurant 114 First Ave S Seattle 7:30-11:30 A jazz legend in Seattle . 253-622-2563

**Every Wednesday** Malcolm Clark Acoustic Open Mic The Shire 465 NW Chehalis Ave Chehalis 7-9pm free Acoustic open mic, singer/songwriters welcome 360 740 4312

**Every Wednesday** Mid-Week Jam Laurelwood Event Center 123 North Blakeley Street Monroe 7:30pm-10pm Donation Jam- live & on-stage! Any genre. Smoke free

## WEEKLY VENUES

**06/06-07/06 Maria deBarros** Jazz Alley 2033 6th

**06/08-11/06 Robbin Ford** Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave Seattle call 206-441-9729 res varies Blues roots guitarist call 206-441-9729

**06/13-18/06 Diane Schuur** & the Caribbean Jazz Project Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave Seattle call 206-441-9729 res varies Three-octave vocalist with Island Flair 206-441-9729

**06/15/06 Christie Aitken** Richard Hugo House 1634 11th Ave. Seattle 6:30-9:30pm free Come celebrate Christie Aitken's debut folk-pop CD release 06/15/06

**06/16/06 Michael Guthrie and Friends** Sandpoint Education Center 6208 60<sup>th</sup> Ave NE 7:00 - 9:00 pm Anita LaFranchi's North Seattle Community Dance Class Graduation Dance Swing, Ballroom and Latin tunes. Cost - Donation

**06/18/06 Mighty Aphrodite** Mountaineers Club 300 3rd Ave W Seattle 1:00-5:00 \$13. & \$10. Young vibrant trad band 425-776-5072

**06/20-21/06 Andy Bey** Jazz Alley 2033 6th Ave Seattle call 206-441-9729 res varies Baritone vocal jazz legend. 206-441-9729

**06/23/06 06/24/06 Seduce and Betray** Crown Plaza Hotel, Regatta Room 6th and Seneca Seattle 9:30 - 12:00 free 7-piece all girl band (with Victory Music member Willow Treeland) playing blues and jazz standards. And special guests seduceandbetray.com

**06/24/06 Michael Guthrie** Pegasus Coffee House 131 Parfitt Way SW Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 7:30 - 9:30 pm Phone: (206) 842-6725 www.moorafa.com

**06/24/06 Dan Carollo** (with Eliot Grasso, uilleann pipes/flute) KBCS "Saturday Tradition" live radio concert KBCS 91.3 FM (www.kbcf.fm) Bellevue 11:00am-12:00pm N/A Live radio interview and concert for "Saturday Tradition" on KBCS www.celtgrass.com

## Sundays

**Every 1st & 3rd Sunday** Victory Music Open Mic Alderwood Mall, next to the fireplace at the Food Court 3000 184th Street SW Lynnwood Sign-up 4:30pm, music 5 - 7 Free victory@nwlink.com

**Every Second Sunday** Cape Breton/Scottish Traditional Session Celtic Bayou (see celticbayou.co 7281 W Lake Sammamish Pkwy NE Redmond 4 p.m., Second Sundays free Monthly Cape Breton traditional session open to players at all levels; dancers or singers welcome. Susan M Burke (susanmcburke@msn.com)

**Every Sunday** Irish Music Session Fado First Street and Columbia Seattle 4:00 free Beginning to Intermediate Irish Music Session. Come join the fun! marygrider@yahoo.com

**Every Sunday** Island Music Guild Open Mic Pegasus Coffee House 131 Parfitt Way Bainbridge Is 7:00-9:30 donation. 2 songs sometimes more it time permits. 206-842-6725

**Every Sunday** Scotty Harris/ Mark Whitman the J&M Cafe 201 First Avenue Seattle 9pm R&B jam Maridel Fliss - Mfliss@aol.com

## Mondays

**Every Monday** Singer/Songwriter's showcase The Hopvine 507 15th Ave E Seattle 7:45 free 3 different singer/songwriters...come in and enjoy

## Tuesdays

**Every Tuesday** Malcolm Clark Acoustic Open Mic Kit Carson's 107 Interstate Ave Chehalis 7-10pm Free Bring you axe. Acoustic blues and singer/songwriter. 360 740 4312

**Every Tuesday** Victory Music Open Mic Ravenna 3rd Place Books & Honey Bear Cafe 6504 20th Ave NE Seattle sign 6:00-6:45 music 7:00 donation 253-428-0832

**Every Tuesday** Victory Music Open Mic The Antique Sandwich 51st & North Pearl Tacoma (Ruston) 6:30 Music 7:00-10:00 \$3. \$2. members The grand-addy of them all. A piano & sound system provided.

**Every Tuesday** holotradband New Orleans Restaurant 114 First Ave S Seattle 7:05/14/05 Eric Madis

## Thursdays

**Every 1st & 3rd Thursday** Victory Music Open Mic Crossroads Shopping Center 15600 NE 8th Street Bellevue sign up 5:30 Music 6:00-9:00 free Food Court Market stage has a piano & great sound system

**Every 1st Thursday** S.O.N.G.meeting NW St John Vianney Parish 12600 84th Ave NE Kirkland 7:00-8:30 Address change from Mills Music (I'd check the phone # to be sure, please!) 425-806-0606

**Every Thursday** The Fourth Ave. Celtic Session Plenty Restaurant/Pub Fourth Ave. and Columbia St. Olympia 7:30p until 10:00p no charge An open session where Celtic, Folk, & Old Time music is played & sung. Good food, spirits. <http://home.comcast.net/~onebutch>

**Every Thursday** Giants Causeway Irish Session Giants Causeway Irish Pub 201 Williams Avenue S. Renton 7ish - 10pm FREE Giants Causeway is the most welcoming Irish Session in the Northwest. Free food and drink if you can play!

**Every Thursday** Ham Carson Quintet New Orleans Restaurant 114 First Ave S Seattle 7:00-10:00 no cover Swinging hot jazz for listening & dancing. 206-622-2563

**Every Thursday** Out of Tune Open Mic 15th Avenue Bar 7515 15th Ave NW Seattle Sign up 8 Show starts 8:30 Open mic music and poetry 208-3276

## Fridays

**Every Friday** Open Mic Wired and Unplugged Internet Coffee House 717 First Street Snohomish sign up 6:00 pm; 6:30 pm music Free Courteous crowd 360-568-2472

## Saturdays

**Every 1st and 3rd Saturday** Tacoma Celtic Players Open Session Spar Tavern 2121 N. 30th St. Tacoma 2 - 4 pm free free beginner/beginner-friendly session Tune list on [www.sessionsnw.com/washington.html](http://www.sessionsnw.com/washington.html)

**Every 1st and 3rd Saturday** Tacoma Celtic Players O'Farrells' Restaurant 1100 N. Meridian Puyallup 2pm-5pm free This is an open Irish/Celtic session for beginner and intermediate players. Non-smoking venue, Jamie Marshall : [lowellirish@yahoo.com](mailto:lowellirish@yahoo.com)

# FESTIVALS, CONFERENCES AND CAMPS

BY JANET HUMPHREY

*Compiled from letters, flyers, phone calls, Festivals NW Directory etc. To the best of our knowledge, this information is correct, but please call ahead before you leave home! Dates & places change. We'd love to help you publicize your event. If you would like to have your event featured as a Recommended Road Trip, or would like to add to the festival postings, be sure to let us know well in advance. Send available information, as well as a contact number, address, date and event line-up to Victory: POB 2254 Tacoma, WA 98401-2254. E-mail preferred at victory@nwlinc.com or contact Janet directly; humphrey@musician.org. We do not have the space to list every activity in the area, but please call us if you are looking for something to do in your neighborhood. We can help!*

**6/3 The Maritime Gig** - Gig Harbor, WA. Music, regatta, storytelling, boats, boats, more boats and art. Your favorite activities and events are back, including the Bartell Drug Fun Run, the "Unity in the Community" Parade, Regatta, the Gig Harbor Historical Society's Round Rock Contest, Music and Entertainment, food vendors, historic boat displays, the Farmer's Market with arts and crafts, salmon bake, and the Blessing of the Fleet. Bring the kids! [www.maritimegig.com](http://www.maritimegig.com)

**6/2 - 4 Townsend Cowboy Gathering** Townsend, MT. Cowboy poetry, music, arts crafts and wildlife exhibits. Artists include Mike Logan, Wayne Nelson, Wyoming Red and many more. Check out the comedy venue. [www.cowboyentertainer.com](http://www.cowboyentertainer.com)

**6/3 - 4 Bellingham Highland Games** Bellingham, WA. Scottish Clan reps, food, dancing, band competitions, piping and vendors. Camping available. [www.bellinghamhighland.org](http://www.bellinghamhighland.org)

**6/3 - 4 Lewis and Clark Days** - Walla Walla, WA. Reenactments of 19th century activity. Drum and fife corps, dancing, period dress, games and storytelling. Historical locations. [www.fortwallawallamuseum.org](http://www.fortwallawallamuseum.org)

**6/3 - 4 SCA Mediaeval Faire** - PT Gamble Park, WA. Knights, jousting, artisans bards and more. Participatory games and lords and ladies in period garb. [www.medievalfaire.org](http://www.medievalfaire.org)

**6/3 - 4 Horseshoe Banjo Festival** - Horseshoe Bend, ID. 5th annual event. Pickers contest, arts and crafts, fair at the park and wild west train rides (banjo players sit in rear) [www.horseshoebendchamber.com](http://www.horseshoebendchamber.com)

**6/10 Washington State Square Festival** Ephrata, WA. Square, round and international dancing with excellent callers. Clogging and teen activities. Appropriate dancing attire requested. [www.squaredance-wa.org](http://www.squaredance-wa.org)

**6/9 - 11 Wallowa Valley Festival of the Arts** Joseph, OR. Annual event with live music, cowboy poets and art demonstrations. 1-800-585-4121

**6/9 - 11 Meeker Days** - Puyallup, WA. Pierce County's largest street fair. All kinds of music, children's activities, street dancing and vendors. 253.840.2631

**6/9 - 11 Lewis and Clark Bluegrass Festival** Pasco, WA. A great event held at Sacajawea State Park on the Columbia River in Pasco WA. Jamming, Band Scramble, and loads of parking lot picking. Camping available. Performers include Zach Driscoll and Three Quarter Time, The Hakanson Family, Prairie Flyer, and more. [www.lewisandclarkbluegrassfestival.com](http://www.lewisandclarkbluegrassfestival.com)

**6/9 - 11 Marysville Strawberry Festival.** Stretched over several weekends this event hosts music, kids' activities, a talent show and vendors. [www.strawberry.festival.com](http://www.strawberry.festival.com)

**6/9 - 11 Pt Angeles Renaissance Faire** - Port Angeles, WA. Renaissance-themed event with the Seattle Knights and Heather Alexander. Ale garden, jousting and a renaissance ball. [www.portangelesfaire.org](http://www.portangelesfaire.org)

**6/9 - 9/10 Britt Festivals - Jacksonville, OR.** Terrific concert series - forty six concerts in three months! Jazz, blues, folk, country, pop and bluegrass. [www.brittfest.org](http://www.brittfest.org)

**6/15 - 17 Fiddlers Country Music Jamboree** Burns, OR. 16th annual event. Camping, lots of old-time fiddlers, country and bluegrass musicians as well. Player and singers welcome. Jam sessions. [www.highdesertfiddlers.com](http://www.highdesertfiddlers.com) 541.573.1323

**6/16 - 18 International Jugglers Festival** Seattle, WA. Okay, so there's no music here, but this looks fun anyway. Held at Seattle Center, this event offers juggling performances, workshops and lessons. [www.cascadejugglers.org/festival](http://www.cascadejugglers.org/festival)

**6/16 - 18 White River Bluegrass Festival** - King Co, WA. Located on the White River at Pacific City Park. This is a third annual event. Bands include Zach Driscoll and 3/4/ Time, Runaway train, Cow Chips and more. Lovely outdoor stage, tent and RV camping on grass. [www.whiteriverbluegrass.com](http://www.whiteriverbluegrass.com)

**6/16 - 18 Wenatchee River Family Bluegrass Festival** - Wenatchee, WA. Great festival! Annual event with jamming, workshops and more. Performers include Perfect Strangers, Knaughty Pine, Prairie Flier, Catch and Release and others. Camping available. [www.wenatcheeriverbluegrass.com](http://www.wenatcheeriverbluegrass.com)

**6/17 - 18 Manly Man Festival** - Roslyn, WA. Founded in 1995 this quirky event is a must do! Dancing, live music, jams and that's only the start. Spam cook-off, tool contest, flexing contest, a cowpie fling contest, tool belt contest and more. Saturday before Fathers Day—hey, why not? 888-481-2468

**6/17 - 18 Fremont Fair** - Seattle, WA. The Fremont Fair is a celebratory community event which features crafts, food, music and entertainment. Over 100,000 fair goers will join together and enjoy Seattle's Best Street Event. Solstice parade kids activities, theater, dance and a kids stage. Brief case relay. [www.fremontfair.com](http://www.fremontfair.com)

**6/17 - 18 Northwest Garlic Festival** - Ocean park, WA. Annual event. Each participant offers something for the garlic aficionado. Music and folk arts round out a garlic lovers weekend. 888.751.9354

**6/19 - 24 National Old-Time Fiddlers Contest** Weiser, ID. THE annual event for bluegrass country and folk fiddlers every where. This is the super bowl of fiddling and musicians from across the country jam on every corner of this small town. Family activities, band scrambles and great vendors round out the event. [www.fiddlecontest.com](http://www.fiddlecontest.com)

**6/22 - 24 International Accordion Festival** Leavenworth, WA. Where else but Leavenworth? Concerts, competitions and historic accordions. Squeeze box aficionados unite! [www.leavenworth.org](http://www.leavenworth.org)

**6/23 - 24 Milk River Gospel Jamboree** - Matta, MT. Annual gospel jamboree with a variety of gospel styles featured including southern gospel, country western, contemporary, and inspirational. jams, free parking, youth concert and more. [www.milkrivergospeljamboree.com](http://www.milkrivergospeljamboree.com)

**6/23 - 25 Summer Solstice Festival** - Calabasas, CA. The CTMS Solstice Festival is unlike most other folk music gatherings. In addition to concerts, jam sessions, and story swaps, the CTMS Festival is a "teaching festival." Musicians Everywhere!

Musicians, dancers, singers and storytellers from all over the world come to share their knowledge and experience with you. You will find classes on everything from playing fiddle to vocal warm ups to contra dancing and more! Workshops and family activities. [www.ctmsfolkmusic.org](http://www.ctmsfolkmusic.org)

**6/23- 25 Breakout Bluegrass Camp-out** Garrison, MT Music Camp for grownups! Annual event with heated jam tents, crafts and food. Camping all weekend, great fun. 406.846.1843

**6/23 - 25 The Kate Wolf Memorial Festival** Laytonville, CA. Held on the Black Oak Ranch in Laytonville California, this may be the best acoustic music festival on the west coast. This year's lineup includes Greg Brown, Rosalie Sorrels, Bruce Cockburn, the Roches, Ruthie Foster, Steve Earle, Arlo Guthrie, and more. [www.cumuluspresents.com](http://www.cumuluspresents.com)

**6/24 Tacoma Highland Games** - Tacoma, WA. Annual celebration of Celtic culture and history. Pipe bands, dog competitions, live music and period dress. [www.tacomagames.org](http://www.tacomagames.org)

**6/24 SummerFest** - Prineville, OR. Held in conjunction with the Crooked River Round up this event hosts two stages of live music and comedy. Children's activities by the Shriners and vendors round out a great weekend. 541.447.8633

**6/24 - 25 Salem World Beat Festival** - Salem, OR. Music, food, ethnic dress and activities. Nine stages of live music, fireworks, and a parade. [www.worldbeatfestival.org](http://www.worldbeatfestival.org)

**6/24 - 25 Ye Merrie Greenwood Ren Faire** Richland, WA. Elizabethan-era celebration with live entertainments, jousting, games and pageantry. Gorgeous location on the Columbia River. [www.wizkeep.com](http://www.wizkeep.com)

**6/25- 7/1 Lady of the Lake Music and Dance Week** - Coeur d'Alene, ID. Hosted by the Spokane Folklore Society, this event is held at camp N-Sid-Sen, an idyllic setting. Dancing, jams sessions singing, campfires and a kids program make this a terrific getaway. [www.spokanefolklore.org](http://www.spokanefolklore.org)

**6/30 - 7/2 Wheeler County Bluegrass Festival** - Fossil, OR. In its 3rd year, this little event has grown and matured. Regional bluegrass bands, family activities and loads of parking lot picking. [www.wheelercountybluegrass.org](http://www.wheelercountybluegrass.org)

**6/30 - 7/4 Waterfront Blues Festival** - Portland, OR. Great music with 80 bands. This event has it all. Workshops, excellent food, super location and all the blues you want. Don't miss the Oregon Potters Empty Bowls project and the Women in Blues showcase. [www.waterfrontbluesfest.com](http://www.waterfrontbluesfest.com)

## Recommended Road Trip

**Lewis and Clark Bluegrass Festival and Dutch Oven Rendezvous June 9 - 11, Pasco, WA.**

Lewis and Clark were the first to bring fiddle music to the Northwest as they traveled down the Snake River to the Columbia River with two fiddle players in their expedition party. This gem of a festival, now in its 3rd year, celebrates their adventure with a high-energy bluegrass weekend.

Sited at Sacajawea State Park in Pasco, Washington, this event is rapidly developing into one of the Northwest's favorite bluegrass festivals. The spacious park has beaches, trees and grassy lawns for jams and relaxed festival listening. The park is at the confluence of the Snake and Columbia River and the stage is "fish off the edge" close to the water.

Bands include Prairie Flyer, Zach Driscoll and 3/4 Time, Top String, Camaraderie, Lost in the Fog and local favorites The Badger Mountain Dry Band featuring the winner of this year's National flatpicking championship. The event will offer workshops, a band scramble, open mic stage and festival food vendors. Dry camping is available on site, but be sure to make advance reservations as space is limited. Hot showers are available at the park—don't forget your quarters!

Don't miss a Dutch oven culinary demo with the Three Rivers Cast Iron Cookers and historical re-enactors in period dress at their encampment on the river bank. The event begins on Friday and ends with a Sunday morning gospel show. For more info visit [www.lewisandclarkbluegrassfestival.com](http://www.lewisandclarkbluegrassfestival.com)

## Meet the author...

Janet Humphrey lives in Richland, WA and may be contacted at [humphrey@musician.org](mailto:humphrey@musician.org). She is half of the song writing duo Humphrey and Hartman and performs at festivals across the Northwest and Canada. For more information visit her on the web: [www.humphreyandhartman.com](http://www.humphreyandhartman.com)

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# KIDS KORNER

## Music Center of the Northwest

BY HILARY FIELD

Since 1989, Seattle and the Puget Sound region has been blessed with a Community Music School dedicated to teaching students of all ages and abilities, from the recreational learner to the serious student, from infants to octogenarians and beyond.

Janice Gockel, the Founding Director of the Music Center of the Northwest, came to Seattle in 1981. She is an accomplished violist who performs in ensembles such as the Philharmonia Northwest and the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, as well as playing fiddle in the Allspice International Folk Dance Band. Along with music making, her passion is music education, and bringing music to all with the desire to learn. She believes that music teachers have "an obligation to help every individual achieve as much as his or her interest and aptitude will allow."

That certainly is true at MCNW, which has grown from 60 students to more than 700 students each year. The children's programs include Suzuki instruction in recorder, guitar, and violin, and Music Together for infants and toddlers. The school also has a strong tuition assistance program. "If a student is serious about making music, we'll find a way to make it happen!" exclaims Gockel. MCNW is also a great place for kids to learn to listen, with numerous family friendly student recitals and ensemble concerts.

Regarding practicing, Gockel enumerates the fine line between encouragement and force: "Do everything you can to make it a positive experience. Find something good to say-even if it's just that they got through it again! Practice time is a time to learn that even if things aren't the way we (or someone else) want them, there's still good on both sides. If we can discover the good, we can build on that, and life will be better."

Children gain so much when they are involved in music making, whether in private or group instruction, ensembles, workshops, or as the youngest music explorers in parent-child Music Together classes. "We are giving kids tools to give meaning to the rest of their lives," says Gockel. "When I think of my own family, I am certain that our shared musical experiences are an important part of our bonding together." Gockel acknowledges the side benefits of a music education such as discipline, teamwork and

creativity, but she feels something even deeper in sharing musical experiences. She performs, teaches, and brings music to the community "because of the joy I see it bring to people's lives-especially as participants." She summarized the feeling in this statement she once heard, "you can't hate someone if you sing their music with them."

Christopher Maddock, the Executive Director of Music Center, is committed to realizing Gockel's and the founders' mission of providing exceptional music making for as many people as possible, regardless of age, ability, and economic means. "It is my responsibility and great joy to maintain and advance their intent and the promise this nonprofit organization holds. We are very proud that in 17 years, we have never turned anyone away who qualified for tuition assistance and we certainly plan to increase this philanthropy," she says. The following is excerpts from a recent interview.

**Victory:** Please talk briefly about the programs MCNW offers especially for children and teens.

**CM:** Children from six months to age four can participate with a parent or adult caregiver in our very active Music Together classes. This provides some of the most age and developmentally appropriate experiences for toddlers and preschoolers available. The musicianship of the teachers is outstanding and the level of fun is very, very high. For older children there are opportunities to learn in traditional type private lessons, or in our Suzuki programs for beginning violin, recorder and guitar.

We also offer traditional type piano instruction and Dalcroze piano lessons, where the students gain an ability to understand the music from kinetic movements that beautifully illustrate the energy and motion of the music. It is amazing how beautiful the music making is in these programs for young people. The kids have a great deal of fun in all the instruction here.

Teens tend to continue in private lessons, but also take advantage of playing in Jazz Improvisation, Chamber Music or learn a new instrument from a different teacher right here at Music Center. We also teach singing, and regardless of the style, many young people are

taking voice lessons and classes at Music Center.

**Victory:** Please explain the "Petting Zoo" and how it benefits children and families interested in music lessons.

**CM:** Petting Zoos are a lot of fun for anyone. How many times do you get an opportunity to try playing a dozen different instruments in one visit? The instrument petting zoos are not just for the curious, but also for those who are also undecided about which instrument they want to really begin playing. Since it takes place here at Music Center, potential students can talk to some of our teachers and staff about lessons or camps and what learning the instrument involves.

**Victory:** How does music instruction enrich a child's musical experiences at home, at school, as part of a community, and as a concert attendee?

**CM:** Music making and learning activates a level of thinking that is similar to reading and math, but at a much higher level of aural and physical involvement. The ear is stretched "aerobically" with the rhythm and beat while the heart and mind are physically and emotionally involved. That can only open new horizons in cognition and perception.

Music provides a unique socialization that we find nowhere else. I often wondered why so many computer programmers and scientists are such active musicians. There are volumes of conclusive medical studies that bolster the case for music learning and performance opportunities in everyone's lives. The benefits never end. The latest medical research supports the incredible health benefits for our senior population.

We started a new program for older adults this year - an instrument ensemble and a choir. There are many older adults here for lessons or rehearsals during those hours before the kids get out of school, too. It's never too late to get started or start again! Music has become so readily passive - you can turn it on, turn it off, download it, copy it buy a ticket to a live performance, but fewer and fewer people actually make music. What we professional and amateur musicians experience is too precious and life giving to allow our musical cultures to become merely an object of consumption.

You find a very dedicated teaching faculty, corps of volunteers and students who continue to benefit from music education and performance opportunities we provide. This is our place in the community. Making music in lessons and rehearsals create a micro-community where the most engaging experiences and learning is nurtured and shared. Students take that home with them, and to school to share.

*Continued on Page 19*



# MUSICAL TRADITIONS

## The Walt Robertson I Knew (Part 1)

BY GUEST COLUMNIST BOB NELSON

Walt Robertson (1928-1994) was known as the “Dean of Northwest Folk Singers.” His impact on the Northwest folk scene was immense and spanned nearly 50 years. Starting in the early 1950s with his television show *The Wanderer* on KING-TV, Robertson introduced folk music to an entire generation of followers.

I met Robertson in Seattle when I was 16 and he was 25. Little did I suspect that he and I would become lifelong friends. It was not a smooth journey as we both had lots of rough edges, which needed softening. In the 12 years since his passing I realize just how much I learned from this man.

It was always amazing to watch Robertson take over a ‘hoot’ (hootenanny, first used in Seattle for a folk song session). He would arrive late, hang in the background to pick his spot, sit down next to a pretty girl, strike a chord on his guitar, throw back his head...and the performance was on!

To understand the impact Robertson had on Seattle, you have to understand what Seattle was like in the early ‘50s. We were still just a friendly community of neighborhoods. World War II, with all its deprivations, had recently ended. The air was full of promise and hope. Jobs and growth were everywhere. And Seattle nightlife was exploding. Supper clubs, after-hours clubs, coffee houses and new restaurants were beginning to appear. All these places needed entertainment and we were the folksingers to provide it.

Folk music was in. By the late ‘50s we were all performing around town. If it wasn’t at this coffee house, it was at that college concert. While we competed for these gigs, we were also fast friends. And we hung out together at hoots.

These hoots became legend. They were invitation-only gatherings, usually in someone’s living room. It was here we practiced our best songs and performing skills. They often started well after midnight on a Saturday night, after we finished our earlier club dates. We let our hair down and sang our best songs for our best friends. Then we would often all go to breakfast together as the sun came up. It was during those days that I often found myself studying Robertson, trying to understand just what made him so magical.

It certainly wasn’t his appearance. He was a small man, thin and kind of frail looking. He

was more striking than handsome. But it was the look in his eyes and his powerful voice that grabbed you. He certainly had a presence. And time and again I noticed many of his performing tricks. He would keep his guitar tuned a little lower than standard pitch to prevent other guitars from playing along. If he wanted you to join with him, he’d let you know. He had impeccable diction. And he was dramatic. When he sang “Rich Gal, Poor Gal,” you knew exactly who was his favorite...“My gal!”

In 1959 I had many chances to watch him perform in the San Francisco area. One night he joined Jesse Fuller on stage at The Blind Lemon. It was a fascinating performance that clearly showed his past acquaintance with the likes of Josh White, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger and many other giants of the day.

It was during the late ‘60s and through the ‘70s that Robertson came into his own as a stage and film actor. Seattle had developed a vital and active legitimate theater scene. He starred in many roles and I could see just how seriously he took his art. I saw the intense work and preparation he did. It was also during the ‘70s that his years of smoking started to catch up with him, “hissself” as he used to say. I watched his health start to decline.

At one point he took “hissself” to Tonga to die on a warm beach. Then his health improved and he returned to Seattle for another couple of years. During his last summer here, he starred in a film titled *Island Bound*, then he left for Honolulu.

There he continued to have success on stage while working as an editor for the University of Hawaii. By then he had developed emphysema and required oxygen therapy. Even so, he danced the role of Alfred Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, while ducking behind a stage set to suck oxygen. When I visited him in Honolulu I was aware of just how much of his energy was spent in just staying alive. But he kept his struggles to himself.

Robertson returned to his beloved Northwest in 1993. One year later he told me that he had a diagnosis of terminal pancreatic cancer. When he told me, I found it interesting that his concern was for me, not for himself. He knew that I’d lost two friends in the previous year. He said, “Sorry,

but you’re ‘gonna lose another friend.” I found that very telling.

He asked me to help prepare a list of the things necessary to do before he passed on. We spent several days working on that list. One of the first items was to re-establish a relationship with his daughters. This he did with great satisfaction. I was again amazed as he spent that Summer tying up the loose ends of his life.

On the day of my last visit with him, I brought a \$100 bill with me. This was a “marker” that had floated back and forth between us for many years. We’d lost track of exactly who owed it to whom, but I thought I owed it to him. On his deathbed, he got very upset with me, saying that he was certain that He owed me. I let the matter drop.

As I remember his life today, I am struck by two things: his astounding talents and his complete loyalty to his friends. He was a very private person and he liked it that way. And he was a true Scotsman in that he never wanted his left hand to know what his right hand was doing. Yet, if he accepted you into his life as his friend, his generosity and loyalty knew no bounds.

Robertson died at his home in Kingston on September 23, 1994. He had said all his farewells to his dearest friends and his family. At his passing, he was in the presence of two of his most loyal friends. That was as it should have been. Walt wrote his own epitaph:

*“Sing raucous, Sing Joyful,  
Sing sad and lonely,  
Sing work and play and sweat and love,  
Sing raunchy, sing sweet, sing hard, sing gentle,  
Sing sea and sky and bucking broncos,  
Sing quiet nights, sing rivers and dams,  
Sing children asleep and lovers awake,  
Sing battles and heros, betrayals and faith,  
Sing mountains and valleys and mules and ships,  
Sing wars and reunions and faery queens,  
Sing bosses and flea and impertinent cats,  
Sing life, my friend, sing life  
Don’t mourn for me, Sing!  
And join in on the choruses!*

Don Firth wrote about his remembrance of Walt in the April, 2002 issue of Victory Review. For more reminisces about Walt see Tales of Walt Robertson at Mudcat.org: <http://www.mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=30285>

Walt recorded two LPs (now available on CD):  
1. American Northwest Ballads Smithsonian Folkways FW02046 (1955)

Track list and sound bites are available on the internet: <http://www.folkways.si.edu/search/AlbumDetails.aspx?ID=154#>

*Continued on page 19*

# ACCENTS ON MUSIC THERAPY

## Arts-Based Research

BY BARBARA DUNN

When I began my formal education in music therapy more than twenty-five years ago, my research courses focused exclusively on quantitative methodologies. Quantitative methods strive to be objective, work with very specific interventions and then examine the effects of the interventions. Although studies of this nature provide us with valuable information, they can sometimes miss vital parts of the picture. Thus, while the trees are being examined, the forest can be lost to the viewer. This can happen in music therapy research that analyzes only a small part of a session or isolates one component and then *verbally* examines that component.

Alternative options for research methods have grown exponentially over the past several decades. Qualitative research methodologies provide an option to create a more complex picture of the subject or situation under study. In *Music Therapy Research, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (2005), Barbara Wheeler (Ed.) identifies twelve different types of qualitative research designs that can be applied to music therapy research. Some of these include Phenomenological Inquiry, Narrative Inquiry, Ethnographically Informed Research, and Arts-Based Research. It is the Arts-Based Research that has captured my interest and enthusiasm.

Arts-based research uses the arts as an integral component of the research process. In Wheeler's chapter on arts-based research, Austin and Forinash explain, "Arts-based inquiry is a research method in which the arts play a primary role in any or all of the steps of the research method. Art forms such as poetry, music, visual art, drama, and dance are essential to the research process itself and central in formulating the research question, generating data, analyzing data, and presenting the research results."

Arts-based research puts the art (music) back into the process and uses it to achieve goals related to the research. Too often, academics get caught up trying to *verbally* explain and justify what we do in the process of music making. Yet words can be woefully inadequate both in the explanation and process of studying a music related subject.

In Shaun McNiff's book *Art-Based Research* (1998) he states, "Art-based research

includes the use of the creative process as a way of understanding experience". He goes on to explain that it "is a way of constantly returning to the phenomena of our discipline with a desire to find new ways of reflecting upon them."

McNiff goes even further to challenge the claim of "objectivity" in scientific research that utilizes quantitative methodology: "Scientific descriptions have assumed for many years that they give objective accounts of observations and experiments, but we are now realizing that any interpretation of phenomena changes and transforms what is observed. In this regard the artistic perspective may be more honest about what it does to phenomena; how it sometimes twists, exaggerates, and distorts while at other times viewing moments with the utmost lucidity."

Arts-based research that focuses primarily on music might include songwriting to reflect upon whatever is being studied. It might include improvisation to process information collected in a study. Music might be used in the presentation of the data collected for the study. Music could also be used in the initial formation of the research question. Simply using the arts to explain or further exemplify the results of a research study is not arts-based research. For example, a research study looking at the effects of music therapy on patients undergoing chemotherapy would obviously have music as part of the study. If the presentation of data from the study included examples of the music used this would not be considered "arts-based research." The collecting and processing of the data did not include music in a way that informed the research. For a study to be truly arts-based, the artistic activity needs to have a key role in the research itself. As stated by Diane Austin and Michele Forinash: "Arts-based research places a primacy on the arts at any step of the research process as a way of gaining information that would otherwise be unavailable."

Grace Street

At a recent conference of the American Music Therapy Association, I attended a session presented by Diane Austin and Michele Forinash on arts-based research. They described the

process of the research method and then presented us with a play called "Grace Street" that exemplified an arts-based research study. The study was conducted by Diane Austin and involved her exploration of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings. The study is explained in detail in Austin and Forinash's chapter "Arts-Based Research" in *Music Therapy Research* (2005).

Initially, Austin's question was simply "What's going on here?" Her research question was further defined through her process of writing poetry and rap music around her initial inquiry. Through this process she moved to "What keeps people coming back to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings?"

Austin attended four months of AA meetings. She used a variety of arts-based processes to assist with her research. One example is described in an interview of a recovering alcoholic. Before transcribing the interview or listening to the tape, she wrote a poem. "The artistic response at this step in the research process yielded an experience of the interview process from Austin's perspective. It allows us to gain access to some of her feelings that were evoked as part of the interview process." In addition to her poetry, "she kept a log that contained a transcription of her interview with Harry and one with Pam, a record of her experience of the meetings she attended, and analytic memos. She wrote about her personal feelings and reactions in a reflexive journal. Categories, bins, and themes emerged from the notes, memos, poetry, songs, metaphors, collage, and layered stories in her log."

Austin's play "Grace Street" serves to "further analyze the data and present her findings in a dramatic form. Rather than [*sic*] representing specific individuals, she created four composite characters from the interviews, along with her own experience of being a participant-observer for 4 months. These characters gave voice and breather life into the research findings."

During the play presented at the conference session we could see, hear and experience an AA meeting. The results of her study were not presented dryly with a great deal of professional jargon. Thus, Austin's research came to life for us in the play: we saw, felt and heard the results of her research efforts.

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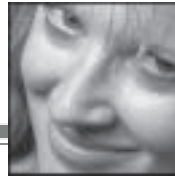
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*Continued on Page 21*



# GALLOPING GOSSIP

June 2006



BY DEB SEYMOUR

Greetings all from Gossi-land, where we are still rather saddened and shocked by the recent passing of Victory musician **David MacAuslan**, also known as David Michaels. Details are covered in the cover issue, written by Yours Truly, so I won't go on and on right here. However, *one IMPORTANT detail to remember*: THIS IS NOT PT. TOWNSEND HARPER DAVID MICHAEL! (no "s") who wrote a plaintive e-mail to the Victory Office: "I'm still alive!" Yes and we are **very** glad, as we've been a fan here at the Barn ever since your album *New Zealand* came out a decade ago. Back to the other David: I know personally he was glad to have met you the one time he did and to be able to tell you that he had, in fact, changed *his* last name to MacAuslan so as to try and quell all confusion! \* But then again, the Gossip is always a little confused: changing seasons, changing band personnel, changing offices... no one ever said home remodel was easy... well, it's just been that kind of spring and I am SURE GLAD IT'S SUMMER! "Amen," says the Horse-With-No-Name, the Gossip's sidekick in musical snooping. "I'm all over the grass!" Ahem. \* Speaking of changes, more change will be in the air as **Stanislove**, the intrepid leader of both the **Emerald City**

**Jug Band** and **Teeth, Hair and Eyeballs** is making plans to move to Los Angeles in the Fall to join his new sweetie. But 'til then, he's here, so catch as many ECJB concerts as you can. Meanwhile, we hear that **Kathe Davis** is joining T.H.& E... "and will she be the teeth, the hair or the eyeballs?" queries Miss Sweet Pea, the Gossip's very toothy, hairy (and yes, eyebally) cat. Dunno, my Foolish Feline, you'll have to ask Ms. Davis yourself! \* And it *is* the **myspace.com** revolution: all sorts a folks out there on my space: A few Victory-ites to note: **Jorge Zorro, Ron Dalton, Alan Kausal, Kathe Davis, Hans York, Christie Aiken, Paul Hanover, Michael Carlos**... well, ok.... There's too many of you! So, gentle reader, just go to the Gossip's own "My Space" space and click from there: <http://www.myspace.com/debseymourmusician>. Feel free to join and leave a comment! \* **Scott Miles**, performing musician, says that "There's a wonderful community spot in Tacoma: **The Mandolin Cafe**. Last time I played there, I really enjoyed the atmosphere, the crowd, and especially the great owners. If you're down south, you should stop on in; hey, you should stop on in any-hoo \* BTW STILL NO GOSSIP FROM YOU ACTUAL TACOMA MUSICIANS!

HELLO OUT THERE! WE MISS YOU! \* Just went and checked out Jorge Zorro's regular website: it says: "Jorge Zorro: Originals with spice. And beans." Gotta like that! We hear that **MJ Bishop**, performed with **Eva Tree** and **Val D'Alessio** at Café Bella last month in a songwriters in the round and that they had a great time! People also oughta check out **Café Bella's Tues Evening Open Mic**... We'll be doing songwriters in the round and five bucks will get you some fine entertainment. Did I mention in addition to coffee and pastries, they have beer and wine? Mmmmm... \* **Alicia Healey** is on the go... she just did a live recording of a house concert on April 29. Rumor has it that this recording will be turning into a CD soon... \* Congrats to **Barbara Buckland** for her new **Monday Showcase at the Rainbow!** Also kudos for the hard-working Ms. Buckland on grabbing some R&R time in her new used van and cruising down the coast to do her own music! We can't wait to hear about her trip and her musical meanderings! Maybe some new songs m'dear? \* Any, to y'all:

Keep happy, keep healthy, brush your teeth and don't forget to smile! \* Happy June- GG & Co.

SEND IN YOUR GOSSIP!

victory\_gossip@yahoo.com

Deb Seymour is a Seattle singer-songwriter whose "wry musical humor" has kept people smiling for over two decades. You can catch Ms. Deb at the Cascade Coffeehouse Saturday June 10 in East Wenatchee.

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## Kids Korner Continued from page 16

Students also spend constructive hours after school working with non-parental adult role models engaged in rewarding musical experiences and skills. Music students make the best audiences. We have a listening advantage. At the performance, we can learn from it, apply it in some manner to our own music - inspiration, and appreciate the performer's art and effort with the empathy of our own experience.

Maddock also noted that tuition only covers a percentage of what it costs to teach a student at Music Center. "We work hard to make up the budget difference with fundraising and still provide for more each year for financial aid and scholarships. A very helpful volunteer 'working'

board of directors governs us and leads the charge in that important work." In order to support MCNW in it's quest to offer exceptional music making for all, there are opportunities to contribute through volunteer work, donations, and fundraising. For more information about this as well as private and group lessons, summer camps, workshops, ensembles, instrument petting zoos, and more, please visit their web site at [www.mcnw.org](http://www.mcnw.org) or call (206) 526-8443.

*(In addition to serving on the faculty at Music Center of the Northwest Hilary Field is a classical guitarist, recording artist, and private teacher. She may be contacted at (206) 686-2201 or at [hilary@mulberrybushmusic.com](mailto:hilary@mulberrybushmusic.com))*

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## Musical Traditions - Continued from page 17

### 2. **Walt Robertson, Smithsonian Folkways** FW02330 (1959)

Track list and sound bites are available on the internet: <http://www.folkways.si.edu/search/AlbumDetails.aspx?ID=196>

Next month I will tell more about Walt as a performer and how he created his special magic.

\*\*\*\*

*Bob Nelson was a Seattle folksinger in the '50s and '60s. He now lives in Everett, WA. Contact him at the [deckman@verizon.net](mailto:deckman@verizon.net) for comments and more information on the early folk music scene in Seattle.*



## FOLKING AROUND

Joe Jencks

BY PERCY HILO

The key to the perpetuation of any culture is to be found in each new generation, a portion of which will acquire a natural interest in the particular area of endeavor and take it on as a profession or primary hobby. They take their place in the natural order of life by learning from their predecessors. Then they add their own personal touches, pass them on the next generation and cultural survival is assured. In the area of singer/songwriter in American folk stylings we are fortunate to have the emergence of Joe Jencks as one of the leading young practitioners in recent years. Because I've become a fan of Joe's work and find him to be among the more likeable and compassionate of the younger players, I wanted to find out how he evolved from his beginnings to his current status as an artist whose work is touted by Pete Seeger, Holly Near, and Sing Out Magazine.

It turns out that Joe's creator gave him a double blessing at birth. He was the youngest of seven children in a family where love and caring for one another came with the territory and in which singing wasn't a luxury but an important part of their lives.

His parents sang (his mother had a bottomless song collection covering all occasions) and his much older siblings created beautiful harmonies that inspired him; they also played a variety of instruments. In this manner Joe became acutely aware of the true meaning of music as culture as opposed to business before he was old enough to understand it in intellectual terms. In addition, Joe was endowed with a truly beautiful and full vocal instrument. His voice provides him with an

immediate ability to communicate and establish a rapport—although Joe has expended considerable effort to cultivate his gift.

In his early teens Joe was fortunate



Above: Joe Jencks

(destined?) to benefit from the guidance of his church choir director. The work of a woman named Cerise Reed (one of the unsung working class heroes who mold the future in obscurity) revealed to him the power of music as ministry in universal healing and bridge-building terms. He also began connecting with the work of socially relevant Catholic churches, Pete Seeger, Holly Near and his own hometown revolutionary, Stan Campbell, who encouraged him as a

musician, educated him about social issues and introduced him to other voices in the musical/activist community. With these influences in tow, Joe began walking the folk music/higher consciousness path that provided the foundation for who he is today.

Then, in his late teens and early twenties, Joe was thrown for a very big loss by the untimely deaths of both his parents. Grieving and in an emotional fog, he embarked on a period of searching and experimentation (which he refers to as losing the thread) in which he tried to be more trendy and commercial and his music took

on a folk/pop/rock feel. He also began drinking way too much, ingesting a variety of other substances and acquiring a sense of futility over the state of life on the planet. He was feeling lost and confused, and wondered if it was really worth it to put out so much effort when everything's going to end anyway. He was still writing and making music; he even put out a CD, *The Phoenix*, which was pretty good in the aforementioned lighter vein (pleasant songs and arrangements) but was all about a young man in search of himself. One of his lines, "Looking for the reasons why I do the things I do" says it all. Joe looks back on this time as a largely wasted and irrelevant period, but in this instance I believe he's wrong. Sometimes the wisdom of the ages isn't enough. You have to go through it yourself, learn about different paths, find out what you're not as well as what you are and answer some serious questions. But then it's time to move on.

A major tool in Joe's turning his life around was the practice of co-counseling (re-evaluation counseling), which

allowed him to sort out his mind, reprioritize and get back to being the person and artist he felt he was meant to be. He broke with his bad habits (including smoking, which is especially bad for a singer) and co-founded the Irish band Cunla, whose work brought him back to the idea of service through music. He also began to craft intelligent songs about societal problems and people working together for the healing of the planet. These new positive elements led him to

the Puget Sound Guitar Workshop in 1988, where an epiphany of healing and community found fresh relationships (Flip Breskin, Marie Eaton, Bob Franke, etc.) and new cultural experiences at a time when he really needed them. And most of all, he met his wonderful wife Lynn around this time, whose love and support have helped smooth over the rough and rocky and kept him firmly grounded under all circumstances. (And although Joe wouldn't say it, I think he's undoubtedly had the same affect on her.) The confluence of these four new aspects of life brought a whole new and improved Joe Jencks into the world, and he was only going to get better.

In the year 2000 Joe released his second CD, *What Kind Of Brother*. Oh, what a difference a few years made! A dozen mature, well thought-out and carefully wrought songs that are rich in the language of their subjects and that feature melodies that are creative and yet singable within the folk tradition. "Song Of The Rails" is a husky song concerning the hard choices of a union man, and "St. Christopher" a rugged tale of maritime adventure. In the title cut Joe chooses to confront sexism, and "We Cry Out" is the story of a courageous war resister. The recording is rounded out by mature sensitive love songs to his wife, male friends and nieces, and is a joy to the ear. The arrangements are fully appropriate, the cast is stellar (including Orville Johnson, Cary Black, and Mark Iler) and Joe's voice and guitar capture the feeling of each song perfectly. This grown-up work announced the emergence of an important new artist on the folksinger/songwriter scene.

It was about this time that Joe made the decision to begin a career as a performing artist. I had the pleasure of catching one of Joe's sets at Folklife in 2001 or 2002. Just him and his guitar, standing tall and erect, he sang beautifully and told stories that were rich in experience and the history of common people working with hope through the complications of life. He put forth the persona of one who genuinely cared about the planet and his audience; we felt it was real, and we hung on every word and eagerly sang along. It was a well-rounded set that sent us out feeling much better than when we came in and knowing we'd just seen a real pro in action.

Joe has crafted his career carefully, and over the last five years he has succeeded in entertaining and (hopefully) enlightening audiences across the country. It's always an unpredictable road for a touring artist, especially one who refuses to stand still and is always looking to grow and expand in repertoire and performance. This can be challenging for audiences who want to hear their old favorites, but it is necessary for an artist who wishes to remain creative and vital. This need

was underscored in 2003 when Joe released *I Hear Your Voice*, a collection with a more contemporary bent than previously revealed. But the meaning remained, and another great supporting cast helped Joe deliver the goods. "Rise As One" is a song about union solidarity; "You Don't Have The Right" is a funky R&B tune that chastises corporations and government for oppression and the decline of civil rights; "Saro Wiwa" is an emotional tribute to a hero in African rhythms; "Men Are Good" is a music hall-style humorous ode to progressive men; and "Singers Of Life" is a beautiful anthem that has classic written all over it. The album includes eight more winners as well.

Joe soon followed up with a short five-song CD, *The Wonder Deep Within*, in which he gives voice to spiritual feelings in a truly impressive solo performance where it's his voice and guitar against the world—and the music wins. In "Prayer Of St. Francis" he sings, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace," and I believe the request has been granted. These various paths of expression reveal a more complete musical personality that always has more to give and that audiences will increasingly enjoy.

Life at it's best is still a difficult road to negotiate, and we need all the assistance and street-level education we can get. It's a sign of character and enlightenment to remember our benefactors and to express gratitude, and in this area Joe really shines. His latest and most folkloric project, a live recording called *Rise As One*, is an excellent example of this feeling. Joe sees himself as a working man like any other, and on this set (recorded in April, 2005 in Washington, D.C.) he pays tribute to past heroes/heroines who built the labor movement and to some musical friends who exemplify the labor movement in song. It's all Joe on this one, singing with and without guitar and rousing the spirits of his working-class audience. Joe is a union man himself (AFM Local 1000, set up by and for touring musicians—next to quitting smoking he considers this his finest career move) and he knows of what he speaks as he sings Jon Fromer's "We Do The Work," union-building classics like Florence Reese's "Which Side Are You On," or in telling the story of the Everett Massacre followed by close friend Brad Warren's "The House That Jack Built" (about the massacre's last survivor). Joe also delivers Woody Guthrie's continuously relevant "Deportee," an emotionally charged a cappella version of Linda Allen's "Rosie The Riveter Revisited" and many others before closing out with a group sing on the title song. It's a grand statement full of community feeling, natural singalongs and the indomitable

human working-class spirit that almost always finds a way. The cost of this recording (and his others) will not begin to equate with the amount of listening pleasure you receive.

Currently, Joe spends about eight months a year on the road (though he is considering cutting back a bit), and so there's a good chance he'll be near enough for you to hear him perform. What you'll hear will be the voice of the American spirit in song—not the dreamy voice of ignorance that bought into an America that never was, or the angry voice of bitter, dogmatic leftists who often sound like the people they oppose. Joe's is a loving, caring voice that believes in the basic decency of people in a realistic and constructive way. Joe understands that no group has the patent on right or wrong, and that we need to move away from who is at fault to how do we fix it. Joe can listen to his niece, Thich Nhat Hanh, Allah, union leaders and Dorothy Day and realize that they all represent signposts along the path to where we'd all like to arrive. Joe paints a complete picture, allowing access to the full scope of feelings and choices. In other words, Joe is someone we need to hear more of and more often. His fellow musician/unionist Charlie King says it well: "Listen to Joe! A clear tenor voice, a heart that's in the right place (close to the skin) and a sense of justice tempered by a sense of humor. How can you go wrong?" Well, the answer is, you can't.

All comments welcome. Percy Hilo, PO Box 21761, Seattle, WA. 98111-3761.  
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