



Volume 24 Issue 1

Quarter Notes

Winter 2006

Plank Road's Regular Events:

- **SING-A-ROUND** (Two Way Street Coffee House) 1st & 3rd Saturdays: January 7 & 21, February 4 & 18, March 4 & 18, April 1 & 15.
- **Plank Road All Volunteer String Band:** January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8.
- Old Time Dance Party January 28 & April 1.
- **BLUEGRASS JAM** (Two Way Street Coffee House) 4th Saturday: January 28, February 25, March 25, April 22.
- **LAST THURSDAY: "It's Our Turn!"** (Two Way Street Coffee House) Last Thursdays: January 26, February 23, March 30, April 27.
- Go to www.plankroad.org for full details!

In This Issue:

<i>Down The Plank Road</i>	2
<i>Take a Bow!</i>	2
<i>Resources</i>	3
<i>What's Playin'?</i>	4
<i>Email Memories</i>	5



Help us celebrate 24 years of acoustic music in the Western Suburbs!

Folk Alliance Region Midwest (FARM) Award

Dave Humphreys Honored for Lifetime Achievement

At the Folk Alliance Region Midwest (FARM) Conference in Kalamazoo, Michigan (Oct. 2005) FARM presented Plank Road Director and long time friend Dave Humphreys with the 2005 Folk Tradition in the Midwest Lifetime Achievement Award. Dave's musical resume is impressive. In addition to serving on the Plank Road Board since its inception, Dave is:

Founder and Director of the Two Way Street Coffee House, which has been presenting weekly concerts for 35 years (Happy Anniversary, by the way!).

- A founding member of the North American Folk Alliance and former President.
 - A performing and recording artist on string bass in folk, pop, jazz and classical genres.
 - A promoter/producer of concerts and festivals.
- Recipient of the 1999 Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award. In his acceptance speech, Dave said, "I am most honored because the award was given by my peers - the people I love and respect."

Congratulations, Dave!



Sunday Afternoon Concert Series- January 29th



Field of Crows is the latest CD from a man living one of the most fascinating and beautiful artistic evolutions in American music, Texas singer-songwriter Darden Smith. *Field of Crows* alternates between hope and despair, which Smith says is a reflection of troubled times. Most of the songs came together over the past year, and were highly colored by the war in Iraq, the 2004 election, and the Tsunami in Southeast Asia.

"It always strikes me that in times like these, with all the craziness in the world, all the personal loss and tragedy, that hope holds a high value," Smith explains, "We crave connection. It calms us and can drive us mad at the same time. The songs on 'Field of Crows' are about our connection with others-- finding it, holding it, losing it, and the never ending desire for more." Plank Road presents Darden Smith in Concert at the Ballydoyle Pub & Restaurant (5157 Main St., Downers Grove, IL in a non-smoking room). Doors open at 2:30pm Music begins at 3:00pm. General admission is \$15, PRFMS Members admission is \$12. Reservations are accepted. Call Dave at 630-964-0305

Calling All Plank Road Folk Music Society Members, Fellow Travelers, Pickers, Music Lovers and Friends!



The Annual PRFMS Annual Meeting is upon us and we'd love to hear your voice lifted in song or watch your fingers flying across a fret board, hammering strings or your lips pursed around a tin whistle! Saturday, January 14 with Jammin' and food sharing' at 7:30pm. Where: The Log Cabin, Four Seasons Park- Between Roosevelt & 22nd, Finley & Highland on 16th in Lombard. Bring a desert, your instrument, voice and/or interest to share!



From The PRFMS President

Goin' Down The Old Plank Road

As I'm writing this 2005 is rapidly drawing to close. My term as President is also coming to a close and I want to thank you for allowing me to occupy this position for the past two years. I especially want to thank all of our volunteers who have so faithfully given their time and talents.

Plank Road has a small but vibrant membership. Our challenge will continue to be the promotion of folk and acoustic music. There are many activities and interests competing for everyone's time. I think our music offers more than entertainment. It provides a foundation for community and offers an alternative to the music industry. It's also a heck of a lot of fun!

In 1981, almost twenty-five years ago, a group of people decided to start their own concert series in an old church school in Brookfield, Illinois. They were somewhat naïve but were focused and had a dream.

Let's not stop dreaming.

See you down the Old Plank Road.

-Dave Reynolds

Take A Bow!

Where PRFMS can thank and recognize you!

- Congratulations to the staff and patrons of The Two Way Street Coffee House on its 35th Anniversary. The Celebration took place November 12th. What a party!
- Thanks and banjos to Paul Vander Woude and his family. Paul hosted our monthly bluegrass jam in his home for the past four years. We can't thank Paul enough for his generosity and persistence. Thanks, Paul!
- Thanks to Two Way Street for helping us host the bluegrass jam at the Coffee House every fourth Saturday from 2pm to 4pm.
- Thanks to Dave Reynolds for his two years as the Plank Road Folk Music Visionary and Chief Cook and Bottle Washer. We're very glad Dave's staying on to coordinate the concert series.

Resources You Should Know About

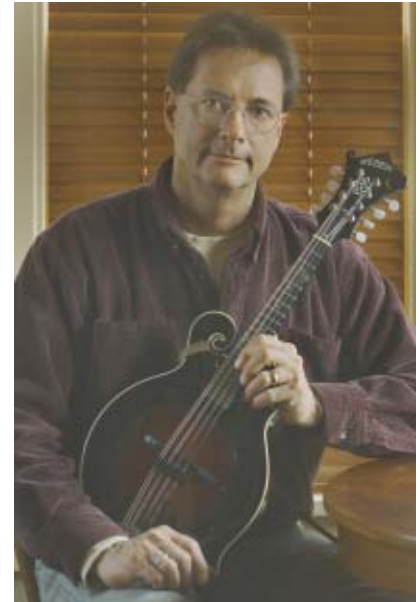
Someone You Should Know

As my interest in old time fiddle tunes grew over the last couple of years I took up fiddling itself as a way of enriching my participation in the Plank Road All volunteer String Band. My search for an old fiddle began, and someone recommended that I visit a lady in Wheaton to restore a wonderful instrument I had found. I headed off to the Master Hand Violin Shop at 611 W. Front Street. There I met proprietor Betty Ecklund. That meeting began a wonderful relationship which I hope to enjoy for many years to come.

Betty Ecklund has been selling, repairing, and restoring violins, bows and most other instruments in the violin family for decades. What sets her apart is her personal and honest attitude to her customers and their needs. She won't pull any punches about junk fiddles, so be prepared to face the facts when you bring her your family heirloom in order to ascertain its value and cost of repair!

In the last year, I brought five fiddles to Betty's shop - some "wall hangers" and a couple of good ones, too. She has always been very straight forward about whether to put any money into an instrument and, sentimental value having its place, Betty will let you know if the restoration cost exceeds the return in quality of sound and playability.

A visit to Betty's shop is also worthwhile if you want to purchase a quality violin in a variety of price ranges. She has an extensive collection of instruments from which to choose with an equally impressive number of bows. She offers used and new instruments and accessories. I was able to try out several different bows with Betty's participation and suggestions before making my final selection, and was allowed to play a few fiddles as well. All the other fiddlers in the band have had the pleasure of Betty's acquaintance and none of us left her shop with anything less than complete satisfaction. You can reach Betty Ecklund at 630-665-4290.



-Bob Smith

Old Time Dance Parties!

Join The Plank Road All Volunteer Band and Caller Marianne Mohrhussen for the first PRFMS Old Time Dance Party for the 2005-2006 Season on Saturday, January 29th and April 1st at the Two Way Street Coffee House (1047 Curtiss Street, Downers Grove) at 8pm both evenings. Don't Dance? Marianne will teach you every step of the way! This dance is for EVERYONE!

Pléráca, noun (Sounds like play-rocka); **1.** Derived from Irish classical harpist Turlough O'Carolan who used the word in the titles of various tunes to mean a tribute, or planxty to a particular person. Planxty is believed to be a corruption of the Irish word and popular toast slante, meaning good health. Others believe the word comes from the Latin, planagere, meaning to strike or beat. **2.** An Irish folk music band created in the 1970s by Christy Moore, Donal Lunny, Andy Devine and Liam O'Flynn. **3.** The brand new band created by students of the Academy of Irish Music returning for its second performance for the Plank Road Folk Music Society. **4.** Be there.

This exciting group is made up of senior members of the Academy of Irish Music-Chicago. If you were fortunate enough to experience their performances at the Fox Valley Folk Festival the past couple of years you know what intensity they bring to traditional tunes. Their performance can at times be as impressive as a symphony concert and as driving as the best rock and roll band.

Noel Rice began the Academy with the desire to create a community of young musicians dedicated to playing and sharing traditional Irish music. Pléráca is an amazing creation.

PRFMS' Sunday Afternoon Concert Series is held at the Ballydoyle Pub & Restaurant (5157 Main St., Downers Grove, IL in a non-smoking room. Sunday, February 19th. Doors open at 2:30 pm. Music begins at 3:00. Admission: \$10 General - \$8 members. Reservations are accepted. Call Dave at 630-964-0305



PLANK ROAD MEMBERSHIP & ORDER FORM

Cut out the order form and send to address below. Please make checks payable to the
Plank Road Folk Music Society
 Post Office Box 386, Downers Grove, IL 60515

***Please include \$1.50 shipping/handling for t-shirt**

Memberships

I'm interested in helping with:

- \$10 for 1 year/Individual
- \$20 for 1 year/Family
- Other: _____

- Events (ticket sales, concessions, set-up, take down, hosting, etc)
- Workshops, Community Appearances, Sing A Rounds
- Dance Band
- Nitty Gritty: Promotion, Publicity, Finance, Archive

PRFMS T-shirt: \$12 each
 (Yellow/Orange Logo)

PRFMS T-shirt: \$12 each
 (Blue/Purple Logo)

- M** Yellow/Orange
- L** Yellow/Orange

- M** Blue/Purple
- L** Blue/Purple

I would like my Quarter Notes sent to me:

- Don't bother, I'll take it off the website
- By e-mail
- By regular mail
- Email and regular mail

Total Order: \$ _____

Total Postage*: \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

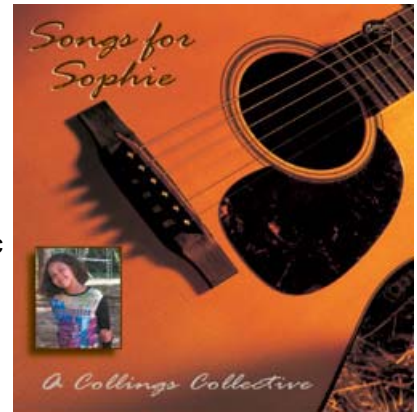
Email _____

Phone _____

What's Playin'?

Songs for Sophie: A Collings Collective

I'm writing this shortly before Christmas listening to a wonderful CD that seems more than appropriate in this season of giving. "Songs for Sophie is a special recording project whereby some of the most talented musicians in acoustic music have volunteered their time and talent to help a very special girl, Sophie McCreary, and her family. Sophie is currently ten years old and has early onset bipolar disorder. (For more information about Sophie, please visit: <http://www.anm.com/sophie/whattodo.html>. Sophie's dad, Steve McCreary is the general manager of Collings Guitars, Inc. of Austin Texas.



Dan Miller of Flatpicking Guitar Magazine (www.flatpick.com) organized this effort resulting in a marvelous collection of guitar styles, tunes and songs. You may be familiar with some of the musicians such as Tim O'Brien, Chris Hillman and Steve Kaufman.

The CD, which contains fifteen songs, also includes contributions by others who you should get to know, Brad Davis, Mark Cosgrove and many others. Each musician that contributed to this project owns and used Collings instruments –guitars and mandolins— on this recording.

All proceeds from this recording go directly to help offset the high cost of Sophie's care. Do Sophie and yourself a big favor and buy this CD.

You can find it at www.fgmrecords.com and also locally at www.midcontinentmusic.com.

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|---|--|--|---|---|
| 1. Sophie - Brad Davis 3:45 | 4. In His Eyes - Kenny & Amanda Smith 3:30 | 7. The Geese in the Bog - Tim O'Brien 4:24 | 10. Whispering Hope - Rich Brotherton 3:52 | 13. McCreary's March - Steve Kaufman 3:02 |
| 2. Burdock Root - Matthew Arcara 4:06 | 5. Good Medicine - Mark Cosgrove 6:10 | 8. You've Got So Much Love - Jim Lauderdale 3:01
Written by Jim Lauderdale | 11. Old Bud - Cody Kilby 3:12 | 14. Complementary Pillow - James Nash 4:10 |
| 3. Guardian Angels - Keith Sewell 3:09 | 6. Missing You - Chris Hillman & Herb Pederson 3:58 | 9. Late At Night - Dan Miller & Brad Davis 4:27 | 12. Tous Les Deux - David Doucet & Scott Fore 3:05 | 15. Around the House - Chris Newman 2:53 |

-Dave Reynolds



The Unreconstructed Folksinger

Email Memories of The 1970s Chicago Folk Scene

Editor's Note: Art received an e-mail from one of his legion of web-column readers recently, prompting this interesting return to Chicago's folk revival of the 1970's.

Dear Art,

Your story about you, Fred and Johnnie traipsing around in the wee hours rang some bells. Around 1972-74, I worked for Dan Johnson at Orphans as floor man, ID checker and "bouncer." What a lot of memories I have of those times. Richard Harding, Earl and Dan were friendly competitors. Richard would come in some evenings and sit at the far end of the bar, quietly having whatever he drank. He wanted to be thought of as the common man, in his blue denim suit. But the small fortune in turquoise he wore gave him away. When Earl came in, trailing his usual entourage, all I heard was, "Get him one, get them one, etc." Ed Holstein was my favorite enigma. Who knew what went on in his head. One of the few times he played in Orphan's back room, I introduced him as appearing either by popular demand or because the rent was due. At least I was slightly kinder than Earl's tough-as-leather floor man whose name escapes me.

I had become aware of Steve Goodman around 1970. Then in '71 I moved to Minnesota for a year. One day, while sitting in a cafe in a remote part of the state I noticed in the paper that Steve and John Prine and Bonnie were going to perform in Minneapolis. I expressed surprise to my friend. At that point, the teen-age waitress said, "Do you know Steve Goodman?" Now, I am surprised again, in finding out that he was known out in the real boonies. Orphans being a two a.m. bar, I would sometimes ride with Dan, after closing, down to Earl's. Those late-night sets were the best. The date crowd was gone, the guest musicians joined in and what a time that could be.

I could go on and on but I won't. I remember seeing and hearing you perform. In my spare time I trekked all up and down Lincoln avenue, sampling the varied types of musical offerings available. Thank you for what you added to the music scene. And thank you for the above-mentioned story.

-Web Column Reader

Dear Reader:

Thanks to you, too---for those memories!! Where did you find what I wrote about the night Fred H. and I ran into Johnny Cash?

To see and read more of my memories, ones that coincide with yours pretty well, here is an idea!----All during those times I often carried my camera with me around the scene. All the good photos of Earl and Steve G. and the Holsteins and so many more are now on line at http://rudegnu.com/art_thieme.html. TO GET IN: When asked, you will have to enter the lower case word 'mudcat' as both the USER NAME and the PASSWORD. Clicking the thumbnails will enlarge the photo and allow you to read what I've written about the person or whatever.

The Smithsonian Institution in Washington found the photo site and has asked me to consider allowing them to have and archive the original slides which were the source of my photos. If you look in there on the web, let me know if you enjoy 'em?! And if you run into Dan Johnson, give him my best. I played at his club on Lincoln, Orphans too!

There were several folk clubs on the 2500 block of Lincoln Avenue. The club the e-mailer mentions, ORPHANS, was owned by whom the e-mailer names, Dan Johnson. The back room was the music room. It was a nice enough place---but it was more of a regular bar than an actual folk club. The music was singer/songwriters more than was the case at Holsteins club next door. Holsteins had what I thought of as actual folksingers more than Orphans did---unless, of course I was playing at Orphans. THEN it had folksingers!! ;-)

First, though, the place that was Holsteins was RATSOS---a pass-the-hat eclectic music place where it was common to go home with fifteen dollars or less. The food was the feature there. One night during the Viet Nam war, I was playing and the place was jammed. I was hoping for a big pay night as I'd amassed a whole ten dollars after having an amazing hooker off Lincoln Avenue pass the hat for me following my first set. A group came in to eat and they asked management if they could do street theater to collect money for the anti war movement. No way could they say no to them: It was Tom Hayden, Donald Sutherland, Jane Fonda and some recently released U.S. prisoners of war. I gave five of my \$10.00 to them. When they were done, the place emptied out -- and I never got a chance to do a second set.

Down the street in Lincoln was a bar that had failed several times under many different owners. Steve Goodman, Fred Holstein and I were driving around one night and Steve said that he and Fred and Bill Redhed were thinking of opening a bar folk club to be named after Steve's song called Somebody Else's Troubles. Steve wondered where I thought they were going to put it??! I told him, "I would do it right where all those other bars had failed!! It really would be somebody else's troubles.----Well, that is exactly where that venerable folk music institution went. And the rest is history...

-Art Thieme



**Post Office Box 386
Downers Grove, IL
60515**

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PRFMS Communications Questions:

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Plank Road Folk Music Society

Dave Reynolds, President
Cathy Jones, Immediate Past President
Troy LeValley, Vice President
Scot Witt, Secretary, publicity, website
Carol Sommer, Treasurer
Joel Brossard, Board Member
Jeanne Halama, Board Member
Dave Humphreys, Board Member
Bob Smith, Board Member
Marianne Mohrhusen, Board Member
Jennifer Shilt, Board Member
Denise Davis, Volunteer Coordinator
George Mattson, Singarounds

Folk Resources Next Door:

Plank Road Folk Music Society, PO Box 386, Downers Grove, IL 60515. (630)889-9121 or (708)442-0823 Web: www.plankroad.org

Two Way Street Coffee House 1047 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515. (630)969-9720 Website: www.twowaystreet.org

Jones Family Music Studio, Lombard. (630)916-1356. Web: www.jonesfamilymusic.com

Maple Street Chapel, Main & Maple, Lombard, 60148. (630)629-2630 or (630)964-4871 Web: www.tccafe.com/msc

Acoustic Renaissance Concerts Unitarian Church of Hinsdale. (708) 802-0236 Web: www.acousticren.com

Folk Lore Center & Acorn Coffee Bar, 29W140 Butterfield Rd, POB 762, Warrenville, IL 60555. (630)393-1247

Woodstock Folk Music/Festival (815)338-4245 Website: www.woodstockfolkmusic.com

Fox Valley Folklore Society, 755 N Evanslawn Ave, Aurora, IL 60506 (630)897-3655. Web: www.FoxValleyFolk.com

Warrenville Folk Music Society, POB 248, Warrenville IL 60555 (630)717-8495 e-mail: Warrenvillefolk@aol.com
Lake County Folk Club, Box 847, Mundelein, IL 60060, (847)949-5355

HANDS (Hammers & Noters Dulcimer Society), Box 181, Morris, IL 60450(708)331-6875 Web: www.gwdf.org

South Suburban Dulcimer & Folk Music Society, P.O. Box 455, Park Forest, IL 60466. (708)756-3857

"Folk Festival" with George Brown Tuesdays 7 to 9 PM and "Strictly Bluegrass" with Larry Robinson Wednesdays 7 to 9 PM on WDCB, Public Radio from College of DuPage. For a program guide, call (630) 942-4200.