



Dedicated to the preservation of folk, traditional and acoustic music.

Quarter Notes

www.plankroad.org | fall 2008

Plank Road's Regular Events



SING-A-ROUND

Two Way Street Coffee House
1st and 3rd Saturdays - 2-4:00pm

BLUEGRASS JAM

Two Way Street Coffee House
4th Saturday - 2-4:00pm

PLANK ROAD ALL VOLUNTEER STRING BAND PRACTICE

Jones Family Music School
630-916-1356
2nd Saturday - 2-4:00pm

LAST THURSDAY: "It's Our Turn!"

Two Way Street Coffee House - 7:00-9:30pm

Last Thursday of every month.
A monthly unplugged open mic for high school and college age students only.

Go to www.plankroad.org and/or www.twowaystreet.org for full details!

Upcoming Events

OLD TIME BARN DANCE PARTY

November 15, 2008
February 7, 2009
April 4, 2009
8:00pm

See page 7 for details.

CAROLING PARTY

December 11, 2008
Two Way Street Coffee House

PLANK ROAD ANNUAL MEETING PARTY & JAM

January 17, 2009 8:00 p.m.
Old Log Cabin, Lombard

For details, check out our website at www.plankroad.org

Mark Dvorak eager to play a benefit for Roscoe Champ October 30 in Downers Grove.



President's Message

I can't think of a better place to be writing this than sitting at the Plank Road Folk Music Society Music Stage at the Danada Festival. It's a beautiful fall day (which actually feels like summer), the leaves are starting to change and there are many Plank Roaders here to support our members and friends who are playing on stage. The Danada Festival is bittersweet since it is the end of the outdoor festivals until next spring...but what a summer we had!

Heritage Festival and Music by the Yard provided everyone with chances to listen to music and play music. And, it was so nice to be back at Fox Valley Folk Festival following the great flood of 2007; we are extremely grateful the great flood of 2008 waited a week and did not affect this year's festival. Just as we transition through the seasons, we also have transitions in our membership - and we are sad to say fare-thee-well to Judy Mayorga as she heads back to Salt Lake City. We will miss her fiddling at our events and at music venues around the area.

Our organization continues to evolve as well. We are now recognized as a 501c3 Non-Profit organization, which means your contributions are tax-deductible. Additionally, some companies will match donations or match volunteer time with a cash donation to PRFMS. If you and your company can support PRFMS in this way, please let us know (yes, can you believe my company is paying PRFMS to have me to serve on the board - what a deal!). We have also reorganized to be able to run PRFMS events more efficiently... but we still need our membership to step up and volunteer to help support our events to be successful into the future. We are also still looking for new faces to serve on the board.

Our winter events are lining up with Barn Dances, Christmas Caroling night, and of course the members-only annual meeting in January; more details are in this issue. So as we get ready for the winter, remember to join us for some heart and soul-warming music and dance get-togethers soon.

—Cheryl Joyal

Benefit House Concert featuring "...modern day troubadour and Chicago folk treasure..." MARK DVORAK with Marianne Mohrhusen.

You are invited to a very special Plank Road house concert to benefit Roscoe Champ. Roscoe has been a friend to many in the western suburbs for more than 25 years. He has been a resource for the old time style of singing and picking and a model of courtesy and musicianship. At 87 years young, Roscoe has endured several on-going health problems, along with the medical bills that keep accumulating. Please join us to lend him some support.

Thursday, October 30 at 7:30 p.m in Downers Grove

For Reservations and Directions Email: carol@sommersolutions.com or Phone: 630-852-8009. Listen to Mark Dvorak at www.markdvorak.com.



Judy Mayorga enjoying the Two Way Street Stage at Fox Valley Festival.



Interviews at Fox Valley

by Tricia Rush

Tricia Rush interviewed some of the performers at the 2008 Fox Valley Folk Music and Storytelling Festival; their conversations focused on changes, in their lives since becoming immersed in music and in the genre of folk music, over time. She also asked the musicians if they had learned any lessons they would like to share with us.

Tricia is a PRFMS member and plays hammered dulcimer with the All Volunteer String Band.

Judy Cook

JUDYCOOK.NET

"It is much easier to picture my life a year or two from now, since I am booking tours that far in advance. I am also happier because I am singing more. I have lost that desperate feeling at the end of a song swap which came about from fear of it being my last chance to sing. I now have plenty of opportunities to share songs I love." One thing that has changed in Judy's life since she started singing professionally is that she has more friends because of the bond of shared songs. Her first professional gig was in 1991 soon after her husband retired. (She and her husband used to fly private airplanes!)

Side note: Judy Cook's first tour began with a concert at Phil Cooper's house in 1998. Margaret Nelson started singing with Phil in 1982. Seems that Phil is an instigator...

Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen

COMPASSROSEMUSIC.COM

Steve and Cindy have been together for 20 years. Since 1988 they have seen many changes in the folk community, but have noticed continuity with every generation to keep folk traditions going. Folk music is a community that allows you to grow and change. It's about community. They think young people have a harder time now starting out in music than they did 20 years ago. "It is more difficult for them to get airplay and the financial strain of traveling with the current gas prices is harder, though word of mouth is easier than it once was." One lesson they have learned through time is, "It's a living, not a killing."

Lou and Peter Berryman

LOUANDPETER.COM

Lou and Peter's full-time career in music began when they realized 30 years ago that the music they'd been playing together for the 15 or so years before THAT was actually bringing in enough money to live on.

The advent of computers - with online listening, email and web sites to connect the folk music community, has revolutionized the "business" of music. "Booking tours and staying abreast of changes in our small market is much, much easier. Making music is as much fun as ever, and we're grateful every day for this small career. Our advice to others seeking this job: Keep the overhead down--living simply makes this all work!"

Pete Norman

OTCBBR.BLOGSPOT.COM

Pete always loved music. He saw Ken Perlman playing a clawhammer banjo and became fascinated with his style of playing. However, "It was a Cathy Fink album that I used to get the clawhammer sound in my head and heart so I could then let it come through my fingers." Although he plays a wide range of instruments, the banjo is now his favorite instrument. Pete earns his living as a carpenter and has triumphed through many of life's changes. A heart attack six years ago woke him up to what is important in life: "Life isn't arriving at a destination, it's the trip. It's the exploration that makes life all worth it."



Cindy Mangsen and Steve Gillette



Below left to right:
Judy Cook,
Phil Cooper, and
Margaret Nelson



Lou and Peter Berryman

Photos by Tricia Rush

Playing the 5-String Banjo

By Greg Cahill, Special Consensus



Playing the 5-string banjo is my profession and my hobby; playing the banjo has brought great joy into my life for nearly 35 years and my enthusiasm for playing the instrument has only increased over the years.

Learning to play the banjo is both genuine fun and a rewarding experience. The immediate gratification of hearing notes, phrases and melodies as one learns to play is sure to bring a smile to the face of the player (and hopefully the faces of all within earshot). I always find it enjoyable to pick up the banjo, even if there are only a few spare moments to play, just holding the instrument makes me smile (most of the time).

There are countless instructional books, videos and DVDs on the market today to help anyone learn to play the banjo and age is truly not a factor. The main issue is learning what and how to practice, the rest is up to the individual person. Web site addresses for two excellent sources for instructional materials are www.musicians-workshop.com and www.homespuntaapes.com. I have four instructional banjo DVDs available on The Special Consensus web site at www.specialc.com.

I firmly believe the first step in the learning process, once one has become familiar with the instrument itself, is learning to play some of the various roll patterns for the right hand and learning how to form and move comfortably between the basic left hand chord positions. Although it is difficult to be patient enough to practice the rolls until they can be played smoothly, it will make for better playing in the long run and will make playing songs and tunes up to speed much easier. Learning the basics well is imperative to playing cleanly and in time.

Banjo tablature is an excellent learning aid and is easy to read, it is basically a music notation shorthand that enables a player to learn a tune from the paper. However, listening to the music is essential. One cannot fully appreciate all the nuances and feel for the music without consistent listening to the music. It is important to get the music into one's ears in order to truly capture the essence of the music when playing an instrument and learning to play by ear (the aural tradition) is perhaps the most common way to learn to play a bluegrass instrument. I intensely studied the playing of J.D. Crowe and then Earl Scruggs when learning to play (and I continue to study their playing and to see them play whenever possible); my learning process began over 30 years ago by slowing recordings down from 33 1/3 to 16 speed and dropping the needle on the stereo player hundreds of times to get the exact lick being played into my ears and under my fingers. The only good instructional book at that time was the Earl Scruggs "How To Play the 5-String Banjo," and I used that as my study bible along with learning the tunes from the Flatt & Scruggs "Foggy Mountain Banjo" album by ear (by dropping the stereo needle, as described above).

I also listen to Bela Fleck, Alan Munde, Pat Cloud and Bill Keith for a variety of styles and approaches to playing the in the bluegrass and jazz styles. We are very fortunate today to have so many great players to learn from and to see in live performances. For the more advanced beginner and intermediate players, next steps include practicing with a metronome and playing in different keys.

A suggested way to count the four beats in a measure of a 2/4 time tune or song is one and two and. The "ones" and "twos" are the onbeats, played by the bass, and the "ands" are the offbeats, played by the mandolin chop in a bluegrass band. The metronome can be set at any speed while the player counts the measures in this manner. This means that eighth note roll patterns will have two of the eighth notes per beat, and I strongly recommend practicing playing very slowly at first with every note played cleanly and in time with the clicks of the metronome. More sophisticated metronomes and even drum machines can provide various sounds that simulate bass notes for onbeats and snare drums or cymbals for offbeats, which may help a player better hear the different beats.

Learning to play tunes in the key of D and the key of C without using a capo will enable a player to play in virtually every key with the use of a capo. I suggest learning Soldier's Joy in the key of D and Home Sweet Home in the key of C (with the banjo tuned in drop C tuning = lowering the fourth string from D to C, as indicated in the Earl Scruggs "How to Play the 5-String Banjo" (publication). Make sure to have the HO gauge train set spikes placed on the fingerboard at the 7th and 9th frets (and perhaps the 8th and 10th frets if so desired) to use to raise the 5th string when using a capo. A sliding 5th string capo is another option to capo the 5th string and I recommend having a professional luthier or banjo repair person install either the spikes or the sliding 5th string capo.

Using the capo at the second fret enables one to play in the key of A (F position = G licks), D (C position) or E (D position); capo at third fret enables playing in Bb (F position), Eb (C position) or F (D position); capo at fourth fret enables playing in B (F position), E (C position) or F# (D position). We rarely capo on the first fret which enables playing in G# or Ab (F position), C# or Db (C position) and D# or Eb (D position).

Continued on page 6

The Roots of the Plank Road Folk Music Society

Help is needed for our first name's sake, The Old Quarter!

The following is an excerpt from an email from Tina Dodaro, edited and used with permission.

Some of you may know me from years past (so many years have passed), when we---Mark Dvorak, Paul Klonowski, Lisa Lilly, Therese Rerhucha and a host of many others---started the "The Old Quarter" in Brookfield at St. Barbs. We decided on the name from Townes Van Zandt's "Live at The Old Quarter" album-which had previously been in Houston, run by Wrecks Bell and his friend Dale Soffar. As you may know, our own Old Quarter (of Brookfield) started in St. Barb's gym, which was later torn down, and then moved into the basement across the street---thank you, Father Don. A few us wanted a place to listen to and showcase local talent and have an open mike venue. It grew from that point to the Buedel Family adding that "something special" in joining in our efforts -to the club Dave (doowop) and Barb Reynolds unselfishly ran with heart and soul. Along the way that grew to be the "Plank Road Folk Music Society."

As most of you know: "The Old Quarter Acoustic Café" in Galveston, TX was one of many hit by Hurricane Ike. (The Old Quarter Acoustic Café showcases local music, has open mikes, a tribute to Townes Van Zandt yearly (and then some) and Wrecks' motto "where lyrics still count.") Wrecks Bell - the proprietor- was the long time best friend of Townes Van Zandt, bass player for his back up band and bass player for Lightin' Hopkins. Wrecks luckily evacuated and made it to Houston with his dogs. The club was the worst hit and took on 9 feet of water.

I know these are hard economic times and some of you may have even been hit by the aftermath of Ike here in Illinois---yet even a little help will help. NO donation or kind word is too small-I am appealing to your folk hearts - pay it forward-just because.

If you want to donate directly to Wreck's Old Quarter Acoustic Café, go to his site <http://www.oldquarteracoustic-cafe.com>.

Therefore, a final plea for kinship from Old Quarter to Old Quarter - lets help!!

Thank you. Tina

Whos been seen and heard?

Members and friends making music...





Lame Jokes heard at Bluegrass Festivals

*Why do chicken coops have two doors?
If they had four, they'd be chicken sedans!*

*What do you call a beautiful woman on the arm of a
banjo player?a tattoo!*

Readers Write!

We have instituted a Readers Write area on our website. Thank you to **Bruce Holmes** for kicking off the column. Bruce has written a couple of great articles on Performing that you won't want to pass up, whether you play to audiences or not.

If you have something you'd like to share with the membership, submit your article to Vicki Ingle at vingle@comcast.net for consideration by the newsletter committee. *The opinions of our readers are wholly their own and not those of the organization.*

You can find the Readers Write column on the website at www.plankroad.org and click on Favorites

Check out these articles in Readers Write!

“Performing Gigs” & “Performing Well”

by Bruce Holmes

www.plankroad.org click on Favorites

Thank You to our Sustaining Artists

February Sky

Phil Cooper & Susan Urban

Traditional, Modern and Original Folk & Celtic Music with Guitar, Cittern, Mountain Dulcimer, Banjo & Percussion



For details and touring schedule, see:

www.februarysky.com or
www.myspace.com/februaryskyfolk

Greg Cahill, Playing 5-String Banjo Continued from page 3

There are countless instructional materials and numerous banjo and bluegrass related instructional camps throughout the USA which provide players at all levels the opportunity to study with professional players. I teach at NashCamp (www.nashcamp.com), housed in the Nashville, TN area, for the first of two weeks of instruction offered every June and usually at the Midwest Banjo Camp (www.midwestbanjocamp.com), housed at Olivet College near Lansing, MI, in early June.

I wish you all well with any musical endeavors you may pursue and hope to hear many of you playing the 5-string banjo somewhere down the bluegrass trail!

Greg Cahill The Special Consensus (Leader/banjo player) & International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) President/Board Chair

BruceHolmeS

...looks at our human foibles with a clear eye, no illusions and a loving sense of humor. Banjo-Jim Foerch,

Grand River Folk Arts

The
Old King's
Reel

Just Released

Great stuff. Like it a lot!!!!

Martin van der Laan, Radio Compagnie

LIFE'S AN
INTELLIGENCE
TEST

On over 200 radio stations

A masterpiece of acoustic music!

Radio Teutoburger Wald, Germany

14 great tracks with some excellent folk songs.

James Pearson, BBC Radio

www.BruceHolmeS.com

On the Radio

90.9 FM, WDCB, PUBLIC RADIO from College of DuPage

For a program guide, call (630) 942-4200

FOLK FESTIVAL WITH LILLI KUZMA,
Tuesdays 7 to 9 pm

STRICTLY BLUEGRASS WITH LARRY ROBINSON
Wednesdays 7 to 9 pm

Banjo Tabs and Instruction Material

Greg Cahill has made available some beginning bluegrass banjo materials that include explanation of how to read banjo tablature, basic roll patterns, the three basic chord positions and tablature for the tune Cripple Creek. Remember to wear a thumb pick and two (metal) finger picks on the right hand index and middle fingers to play the 5-string banjo in the bluegrass style.

These materials are available on the Plank Road website at www.plankroad.org/Favorites

Already a member?

How about volunteering for the PRFMS Board?

We are already looking ahead to 2008 and will need some support from the membership to fill vacant board positions. Please call Cheryl Joyal at 630-357-6905 for more information.

A Special Thanks to our Membership Contributors!!

Sustaining Artists (\$200 - \$399)

Benefits: Feature article and picture in one newsletter; 1/4 page reserved space in four newsletters for name(s), contact information and upcoming performances; individual membership(s) in PRFMS.

- ◆ Bruce Holmes
- ◆ February Sky
Phil Cooper and Susan Urban

Supporting Artists (\$50 - \$199)

Benefits: Line listing in four issues with name of group, name(s) of member(s), contact information; individual membership(s) in PRFMS.

- ◆ Natural Bob and Micky Holdsworth
www.naturalbob.com
- ◆ Comfort Food
Vicki and Rich Ingle
708 795-0695

◆ Supporting Members (\$50 - \$199)

John J. Allan, Romaine Burelbach, Lauretta (Dolly) Connors, Lilli Kuzma, Troy and Susen LeValley, Andrew Malkewiez, Gregg Morton, Cheryl Joyal,

Special thanks to Charley Smart for filling in for Jennifer Shilt and preparing the graphic layout for this issue of QuarterNotes.

PRFMS Events

Fall Old Time Barn Dance Party

Saturday, November 15, 2008 8:00pm - \$5.00 admission

Two Way Street Coffee House,
1047 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL
(Across from the Public Library)

Enjoy a fun-filled evening of music and dancing for the entire family. Dance the night away and/or play with the Plank Road All Volunteer String Band. Dances are informal, with no costumes needed. In fact, you don't even need to bring a partner! Refreshments available.



I'll Fly Away

Nick Reynolds (tenor guitar) of The Kingston Trio passed away peacefully at 10:05 PM, Wednesday, October 1. Nick was the soaring tenor and high baritone with the Kingston Trio and shared in lead duties from 1957-1967, and again from 1989-99. Bob Shane, best friend to Nick and the only surviving member of the original Kingston Trio, said that *"he will be with me the rest of my life."*

2008 Plank Road Folk Music Society Officers

Cheryl Joyal

President, Quarter Notes ~ cheryl.joyal@bp.com

Vicki Ingle

Vice President, Quarter Notes Editor ~ vingle@comcast.net

Cathy Jones

Treasurer ~ cathy@jonesfamilymusic.com

Bob O'Hanlon

Secretary

2008 Board Members

Jeanne Halama, Dave Humphreys, Chris Kuhn, Dave Reynolds, Jennifer Shilt, Charley Smart, Carol Sommer



Jan Smart, Kristen Shilt and Jennifer Shilt renew George Mattson's PRFMS membership at the 2008 January meeting. They will be ready to renew your 2009 membership at this year's event.



PRFMS Membership

Please check your Membership Expiration Date (on the right side of your mailing label next to your name)
 Your Annual PRFMS Membership expires December 31 of each year.
 Membership forms can be downloaded from the website at www.plankroad.org, or by contacting Charley Smart at plankroad.comcast.net for email form, or Cheryl Joyal at 630-357-6905 for snail mail form.
 You can also join or renew at the annual meeting on Saturday January 17, 2009 (see page 1 *Upcoming Events*)

P.O. Box 176, Downers Grove, IL 60515

PRFMS Contact:
 Cheryl Joyal 630-357-6905
 Email: clmjoyal@aol.com or
info@plankroad.org



Folk Resources Next Door

Plank Road Folk Music Society
 PO Box 176, Downers Grove, IL 60515
 (630) 357-6905 www.plankroad.org

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

Jones Family Music School
 Lombard (630) 916-1356
www.jonesfamilymusic.com

Maple Street Chapel
 Main & Maple, Lombard, 60148
 (630) 627-0171 or (630) 434-4423
maplestreetchris@yahoo.com
www.maplestreetchapel.org

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

Fermilab Art series
 Kirk Road & Pine Street,
 Batavia, IL 60510-0500
 (630) 840-2787
www.fnal.gov/culture/NewArts/gen_info.shtml
 Email: audweb@fnal.gov

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

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

Fox Valley Folklore Society
 755 N Evanslawn Ave, Aurora, IL 60506
 (630) 897-3655 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 <http://thelakecountyfolkclub.org>

Northern Illinois Bluegrass Association
www.nibaweb.org

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

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

WDCB, Public Radio, 90.9 FM
 from College of DuPage
 For a program guide, call (630) 942-4200

Tuesdays 7 to 9 pm
 and Strictly Bluegrass with Larry Robinson
 Wednesdays 7 to 9 pm

FARM (Folk Alliance Midwest Region)
www.farmfolk.org



Get the latest information at
www.plankroad.org