



Silver Strings Dulcimer Society

Soundboard

May 2007

Year 24

Issue 5

WEBSITE: www.ssdsociety.org

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hi Everyone,

Spring has finally arrived. We are entering the 5th month already. The year is moving fast. Next month, (June) we will hold our **annual campout** at Myers Lake. Please register soon, so we can reserve the sites. Remember the potluck Friday night, pancake and sausage breakfast Saturday, and swiss-steak dinner Saturday night. There'll be jamming all weekend. If you are a non-camper, come up for the Saturday events. It is only an hour drive.

As usual, there will be a **board meeting** at 6:00 pm on the first Thursday of the month (May 3rd) prior to the jam. As always, all members are welcome.

On that night, we will also have a **musical garage sale**. Bring any music related items you want to sell (instruments, hammers, music books, etc.). Identify your items with your name, and put a price on the tag.

We held our first **workshop** on April 19th, conducted by Jane Chevalier. We were kind of cramped because the church rummage sale filled the upper and lower hall, and the gate to the room we expected to use was locked. We got through 'The Red Haired Fiddler' and 'Larry's Waltz' a few times but found that we had differences in sheet music. We are resolving that issue with Jane and we will try again on May 17th at 6:00pm.

May also presents **another variety night** on the 31st. That means more pizza, more goodies, and more of your hidden talents. Tune up and get ready to entertain. Open jamming will follow the entertainment, so bring your instruments. Hammer on ! Bob Hlavacek

MEDIC REPORTS :

Bonnie Ream reports her recovery from knee surgery is coming along nicely. She expects to be back with us in May.

Alice Avery continues to improve after her surgery for a brain aneurism. She is **extremely happy** she will be coming back to us. She & Terry are looking forward to the campout.

PLAYDATE CHATTERV.P. BUSINESS

When I first starting participating in playdates 3 years ago, my intent was to entertain people with the sweet sound of the dulcimer and harmonica. But now I've come to realize that there is more to a playdate than just the music. It is what happens after the music stops, when the people in the audience come up to see our instruments and talk with us. With this being said, I would like to share some of the memorable experiences I have encountered.

Just a few weeks ago after we were done playing, a lady rushed up to me and put her hand on her heart and said: " I can't begin to tell you how many wonderful memories this music has brought. My father played the fiddle in the Henry Ford Orchestra, and all these songs were very familiar to me."

At a Christmas playdate last year, a lady came up to me and wanted to give me her harmonica because she didn't have a family member to give it to and she wanted someone to continue to play it. At the same playdate, another lady wanted me to come back to her table to meet her. On arriving at her table, she held my hand for a long time and told me how she played the harmonica when she was younger.

My most memorable experience to this day actually occurred in the middle of a playdate at a Retirement Community. A man was sitting in the front row and looked very sad with his head hung down. When I started playing my harmonica, he slowly raised his head. As our eyes made contact, a smile came across his face.

I know for a fact these encounters are not just happening to me. I see it happen to others in our group. If you have never been to a playdate, consider trying one, and experience the twinkles you can put in people's eyes.

If you would like to attend a playdate, please sign up at meetings, email me at karenturner@comcast.net or call me at (734) 455-4085. KT

V.P. PROGRAMS

Think summer! Think camping! It's time! I need you to let me know if you are coming to the catered Saturday night dinner... \$10 for adults, and \$5 for children. I must send in half of the money for the catered dinner soon.

Camping is Friday and Saturday night, or just one night, at \$25 per night. Let me know your plans. There is a small possibility that one cabin might be available (\$70 per night), but I can't promise it.

There is a tent (sleeps 4-6) with a queen sized air mattress available for anyone who might want to try it for the SSDS campout, the Uncle Carl's campout, Evart, or Midland festivals. Each facility has very good public restrooms and showers available. The only time you'll need the tent is if you are sleeping (which will probably be minimal). Contact me if you are interested.

Registration forms are in the March and April Soundboard, on the website, and on the table at jam sessions. Anyone interested in teaching a workshop, please see me. There are always forms at the jam sessions for anyone who wants to sign up for any of the above mentioned activities..... Linda Losse

April 5th Board Meeting

We need to have reservations in for camp sites, cabins, the Saturday dinner, and people willing to teach a workshop at the camp out.

Jane Chevalier will give a workshop for all instruments for "The Red Haired Fiddlers Waltz", and "Larry's Waltz", on April 19th at 6pm, before the regular jam.

Phil Chen explained the process of making another CD and the cost. We discussed what tunes to play, and the legal issues of copy-righted tunes. We will consult the membership for a decision.

The church informed us that on April 19th they plan a garage sale. The rooms upstairs and downstairs will be filled with tables of sale items, but we may use a double classroom in the hall. The gate in the hallway will be unlocked for us to use the other room.

Luke asked if we would give a free concert for the IHM sisters at the convent in Monroe in May or June. Karen will follow up with Luke

We have a collection of left-over mugs, notebooks, t-shirts, and license plate frames. We may try to sell these items at a meeting in May.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Losse

NOTES FROM YOUR SECRETARY

Our secretary, Bonnie Ream injured her knee last month, and had repair surgery on April 18. Minutes from the board meeting are submitted by Linda Losse, (VP Programs) in her absence. Bonnie has forwarded a message from Bob Ewald, who narrowly missed surgery last month

"Many thanks to Silver Strings for the great flower-plant you sent me. Not ever having a serious illness, accident or being in the hospital, it was the **first** time in my life I received flowers !
Thank You ! Bob Ewald"

HARMONICA PLAYERS & "WANNA-BEES"....A group is forming to learn & to play, on the 1st & 3rd Mondays at the Garden City Senior Center. Call Walt at 734-422-8803.

BANKER OURS

My family went down to Dollywood this month. This is when Dollywood celebrates the Festival of Nation's. This festival draws international performers from around the world. Many groups also sell native handicrafts and souvenirs. This year's festival celebrated Ireland, with the National Dance Company of Ireland presenting traditional and contemporary Irish music and dance. Ireland also provided a marketplace where they had Irish made products such as Donegal Tweed Hats, Galway Irish Crystal and knitted woolen goods along with imported food products. We had dinner in a restaurant where we ate Shepherd's Pie. Several of the restaurants featured Irish Cuisine. There were even introductory classes on the Bodran.

Other performances were by the Trinidad Steel Band, "Stix on Steele", the Russian National Theater Dance Company, Zambia Vocal Group, Swiss Streichmusik Alder (Featured Swiss Instruments including a dulcimer and Alp horn.

This was the opening weekend for Dollywood, and we saw the big parade. It was over and hour long with lots of floats, bands, miniature cars and trucks, and of course Dolly Parton. Next year, maybe more of us should attend this event. It is a lot of fun, and it's only a one day drive away.George Gonyo



For those who have turned in a list of music you are missing from the repertoire, your music is now available for pick-up at the meetings. We apologize for the wait. We had no idea how many masters were missing from the file or how many long lists people were going to submit. Contact Bob or Sandi Hlavacek to pick it up. **If you are missing music**, you may (at any time) list the songs on a card or paper, sign your name, and send to **5598 Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor, 48105**, or **leave it in the suggestion box**, or send it e-mail to **datadoc@sbcglobal.net** We will try to have it for you at the next meeting. If you live outside the metro Detroit area and need it mailed to you, that can be arranged.

IT'S MAY...LET'S CELEBRATE

- 5.....Dave Matthews.....Happy Birthday
- 7.....Ron O'Dell.....Happy Birthday
- 15...Ron & Ida O'dell....Happy 36th Anniversary
- 27...Dawn Hayes.....Happy Birthday (sweet 16)
- 26...Derek & Lynn Channing.....Happy 40th Anniversary
- 29...Tom & Sharon Meggison...Happy 31st Anniversary



What is “Contra Dancing” ???

If you would like to know what “contra dancing” is, check the video on this web link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsvBiTFY711&NR>

SSDS MAY 2007 Play List

Key	Tune	Play	first note
G	Westphalia Waltz	2 x	I D
D	Chinese Breakdown/Nelly Bly	2/3 x	I A/F#
C	Black Velvet Waltz	3 x	I G
D	John Ryan's Polka	5 x	I D
G	Southwind	3 x	I D
D	Beaumont Rag	3 x	I G
G	Down Yonder	3 x	I B
Em	Road-Lisdoonvarna / Riding-Load-Hay	2/2 x	I D/E
D	Harvest Home	3x	I A
D	Hey Polka	4 x	I A
D	Sandy River Belle	3 x	I A
G	Columbus Stockade Blues	4x	I B
C	Five Foot Two	4 x	I E
Am	Katushka	5 x	I A
D	Flight of the Haggis	3 x	I D
Em	Dancing Bear	3 x	I E
G	Maggie	4 x	I B
Em	Tamlin	3 x	I B
D/A	Maple Sugar	4 ½ x	I F#
	Endless Medley		
D	Ragtime Annie	2 x	I F#
D	Soldier's Joy	2 x	I F#
D/G	Golden Slippers	2 ea	I D/G
	Extras		
G	I'll Remember you Love in	2 x	I B
C	Tennessee Waltz	3 x	I C
G	Folk Medley (Red River Valley, Coming Round The Mountain, You Are My Sunshine)	2 x ea	I D I D I D

Great find on YouTube. . .

Free tin whistle lessons. Type in :

Fordham University Introduction to the Tin Whistle, Then click on **return**. You will find excellently presented lessons with a four out of four star rating. . .by Larry Allen

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 3.....	SSDS BOARD MEETING	before jam
May 11.....	SSDS Playdate	7:30pm
	Newburgh United Methodist Ch.....	Livonia
May 17.....	SSDS WORKSHOP	before jam
	“Red Haired Fiddler”	All instruments welcome
May 31.....	SSDS VARIETY NIGHT	7:pm
June 8.....	SSDS Playdate	2:30pm
	American House.....	Royal Oak
June 15-17.....	SSDS Campout	Meyers Lake, Byron
June 22-24.....	Uncle Carl's Campout.....	Coldwater
June 28.....	SSDS Playdate	2-4:00pm
	Hope Clinic.....	Ypsilanti
July 19-22.....	Evert Funfest.....	Evert
Aug. 23-26.....	Midland Dulcimer Fest.....	Midland

Michigan's best learning opportunities

Evert Funfest

For the benefit of newcomers to the dulcimer world, Evert offers the absolute biggest bargain in the country for musical training. It is always the 3rd week in July (Thursday-Sunday), and for \$3 per person registration, one can pick and choose from over 220 workshops which teach techniques and new songs for an amazing variety of acoustic and folk instruments. Workshops extend from pre-beginner through advanced. Many of the instructors are well known around the U.S. and around the world. This is an event nobody goes to “just once”. For complete information, check on the internet with “**Dulcimer Funfest, Evert Michigan**”

Midland Dulcimer Festival

The Midland festival is the second greatest bargain in musical training. It is somewhat like the Evert Funfest in July, but on a smaller scale. Midland also offers many excellent workshops for a variety of acoustic and folk instruments. Instructors are also excellent, many are very well known in the music world. It is always held in late August, this year the 23rd (noon) – 26th (noon)...Full admission costs \$7 per person. Friday or Saturday only is \$4 per day...Camping is \$14 per night with electricity... check www.folkmusicsociety.org for complete information.

Jam Session Books

contributed by Marie Naster

For anyone interested in source books for traditional, fiddle, and dance tunes, here is a list of the most popular ones used in this area. This music is played in the after hours jams, campout jams and Evert jams.

First, of course, is the **Ruffwater Fakebook**. The club is ordering some, and you can order through any board member or the suggestion box.

Next, are the **Waltz Books**, number **I, II, and III**. Number **I** has 52 waltzes (\$12), number **II** has 74 waltzes (\$15), number **III** has 67 waltzes (\$15). These can be ordered from the author :

Bill Matthiesen, 33 Sormview Rd, Lanesboro Ma, 01237.

The **Portland Collection**, volumes **1 and 2** have about 400 songs total. These are mostly peppy, dance type tunes that lend themselves well to hammered dulcimer and traditional jams. They can be ordered (\$25 each) from **Susan Songer, PMB # 242, 6327-C SW Capitol Hwy. Portland, Or. 97239-1937.**

Last, is the **Fiddlers Fakebook**, (about \$25), compiled by David Brody, Oak Publications. It contains 500 jigs, reels, hornpipes, etc.

All of these, except the Ruffwater can be ordered on line from Elderly instruments in Lansing. (Elderly.com). Buying all at one time is quite an investment, but there is more traditional music in this group than you will find anywhere else for the money, and chances are good you will not need to buy any more for a very long time.

DULCIMETIQUETTE or

“How to avoid a bum rap”

Excerpts from “Jam Session Etiquette” by Paul Goetz

“The intent of this piece is to raise the awareness of hammered dulcimer players, so all can make better music together. Jamming with old and new friends is what “folk music” is all about.”

It is offered here, because we will have many great opportunities to jam with new people during the coming campouts and festivals. As we enter these new experiences, it’s good to know how “not to offend”. (editor)

What is a jam session ?

It is a group of musicians who may or may not know each other, playing together for their own enjoyment.

Open vs. closed jam sessions ?

Some jams are not intended for all to enter. They may be trying to establish a particular style or mood, and cannot accomplish that with excessive numbers. Use discretion if you:

- a).don’t know anyone in the group
- b).don’t know their tunes
- c).find them in a remote location or a tightly closed circle
- d).note the session may be rehearsal for performance
- e).note the skill level is considerably above yours.

In those situations, listen but don’t set up. If your instrument is visible, you might be invited to join in.

Jam vs. Performance :

Some sessions are, in fact, “mini-performances” and may not be receptive to “foreigners”.

Musical Styles :

The hammered dulcimer, no matter how well played might not be welcome in a string band group, or funky blues. Consider the type of music festival you are at.

An “old-tymee” string festival (like Wheatland), is attended by “purists” who might prefer their percussive sound to the sustained sound of a hammered dulcimer.

At a mountain dulcimer event, (like Buckeye), most players appreciate a hammered dulcimer, but wish it would try not to be over-powering.

Remember, you are there not only to share the love of music, but to be a part of the process of creating music. Be sensitive to the end result... listen.

If I don’t know the tune ?

Play softly till you can play something appropriate. Chords or harmony can be appropriate, but be cautious.

If I do Know the tune ?

Enter cautiously. Try to blend with the others, not overpower. If it is a “full-blast-Evart-Saturday-night-up-all-night-under-the-tin-roof” session, have at it... and may the loudest dulcimer win.

If I’m not the only dulcimer ?

Watch the reaction to the other dulcimer. If it is being integrated into the group, join in and remember your manners. If it’s being ignored, follow the ground rules and observe whether there is a reason. If you see no reason, try another jam.

How loud is loud enough ?

Listen !!! If your sound blends into the session, you might be a bit soft. Your soundboard faces you... not the audience. Adjust your volume so it sounds balanced to you, and be mindful of those around you.

Tuning etiquette :

“In tune” might mean “with the other musicians”. Theoretically, everyone should be tuned to A-440. But if you join a jam, it would be impolite to expect them to re-tune to match you (unless they offer). If they have been playing in high heat and or humidity, they may be unanimously off, and they were there first. Remove yourself to tune. Do not play out of tune !!!

Suggesting tunes :

Tunes are usually chosen by one and played by all. You might ask if others know your tune, then start it, or simply start it.

Familiarity... It helps to pick a tune at least 1-2 others know. It is a good idea to listen to several selections first, to get a feel for the type of music the group likes to play. It’s better to pass, than to suggest “Golden Slippers” in a blues group jam.

Tempo... If others are playing “up to speed”, don’t ask for a tune you can’t play that fast. Also, don’t start a song too fast, and run away with it.

Key... There is no “correct” key. There is, however, a “customary” key. You may start it there, or request an alternative key for a fun challenge (if you know the group).

Westphalia Waltz is usually played in “G” in Michigan, and rather fast. Elsewhere, it may be slower, in “D”.

If a key has been settled on, it’s kind to choose other songs in that key for a while. Some instruments are difficult to change from key to key. They may have to re-tune.

How do I know when to stop ?

Jam tunes are usually played 2-6 times. Longer runs are for less familiar tunes, so the players have a chance to “catch on”.

How do I stop ?

There are several ways to stop a tune. The one who starts it might raise a foot, to signal the end. One may also yell “Last time”, or “Going out”, or “Out”, or suddenly play an obvious variation on the “B” part during the last few notes to signal the end.

HAPPY JAMMING !!!!!