

SEPTEMBER 2014

The next meeting of the SVSA will be held **Wednesday, September 24** at Third Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke, Virginia. Doors will open at 7 p.m.; the meeting begins promptly at 7:30 and will last until the last song critique is finished, or 10:30 p.m., whichever comes first. Members may submit one song for critique (on cassette or CD, or you can perform it live) and should provide at least 12 copies of the lyrics. Critiques are limited to members only but non-members and guests are encouraged to sit in on the discussions and exercises.

September Feature Article

Write Songs that Come from your Heart

By Jason Blume

I had a great year in 2013 – with 2 top-ten singles and a “gold” record in Europe, as well as two upcoming single releases, and the publication of my latest book (This Business of Songwriting) – so I know success is possible.

As 2013 wound down – and Grammy nominations and “best-of” lists were announced – I noticed a litany of complaints about the past year’s crop of hit songs. I heard about “the lack of depth” and “the dearth of originality” in mainstream songs and “manufactured” artists. But hands down, the complaint I heard most often was directed at the past year’s country songs, so I decided to address what seemed to be the most common thread:

“Seems like they’re all the same fake, stupid formula about pick-up trucks, girls in painted-on jeans, tailgates, and drinkin’ beer ...”

It’s true, there have been many popular songs about these topics – and apparently, listeners relate to them; otherwise, they wouldn’t be top-sellers on iTunes. No matter how many times a song is played on the radio, you can’t force listeners to plunk down their money and buy it – unless they like it.

If these topics don’t speak to – or come from – your heart, how about

writing something that matters to you? It rarely works to manufacture phony songs anyway, because it's tough to beat someone who's writing about what's real for them and what flows from them naturally.

FYI, I've written four U.S. Billboard country chart singles (two or three more in Canada) – and none of them were about these topics. Also had five album cuts with Colin Raye – and there wasn't a truck, a beer, a tailgate, or a girl wearing tight jeans in the bunch.

If you think “everything” on the country charts is trite, how about studying successful songs like these:

“I Drive Your Truck,” “Drink a Beer,” “All Kinds of Kinds,” “Merry Go Round,” “Wasting All These Tears,” “Red,” “Better Dig Two,” “Highway Don't Care,” “Mama's Broken Heart,” “The House That Built Me,” “Even if it Breaks Your Heart,” “If Heaven Wasn't So Far Away,” ...

George Jones is dead. Sorry, but so are Tammy, Johnny, and Waylon. Dolly, Willie, and Kris are relegated to the Americana/Alt Country/Roots charts along with some other amazing artists. Tastes – and what constitutes current, popular music – change. Am I arguing that country music (or pop music, for that matter) is in the midst of a golden heyday of exceptional creativity? No.

What I'm saying is that spending time and energy pontificating about what's “wrong” with today's music is unlikely to get you what you want – if what you want is to achieve success in the business. Spewing negativity isn't going to make you someone successful writers want to work with – or someone publishers want to sign.

How 'bout taking that energy and writing a lyric that moves you; a lyric that contains lines that are so fresh they make listeners take notice, and has the capacity to touch millions of hearts? Then how about attaching those words to a melody that is fresh, original, and impossible to forget? What have you got to lose? How about creating the next big thing, next year's Grammy-worthy songs – the songs that everyone else talks about, and wishes they had written?

If songwriting has chosen you and embedded itself in your veins, you've been given a gift. “Normal” people don't think of melodies and lyrics. I hope you'll honor your gift, and that you'll write songs that come from your heart – and reach millions of others!

Wishing you the very best on your songwriting journey!

Learn more about songwriter and songwriting teacher Jason Blume at www.jasonblume.com.

SVSA Meeting Notes

At August's regular SVSA meeting, a total of 17 SVSA members were in attendance and we welcomed one guest, continuing the trend of healthy turnouts throughout the summer months.

SVSA treasurer Greg Trafidlo continued our workshop series with a lively and informative talk, asking the musical question: "Why Write Funny Songs?" Greg pointed out some of the positives and negatives of injecting humor into our songwriting efforts. He also performed one of his humorous co-writes, "The Tumbler," based on Don Schlitz's "The Gambler," which demonstrated how parody can be a valuable addition to our storehouse of creative ideas. Our member-generated workshops always generate an enthusiastic discussion.

In addition to the workshop, nine original songs were given the SVSA "treatment" in our regular critique session — an open discussion of each song with comments, opinions, suggestions, and observations aplenty. Original songs submitted for critique get a thorough and focused listen from our membership. Critiques cover lyrics and music; perhaps the most important observations deal with whether or not the song melds the two elements into a successful whole. It's a proven fact: A song comes out stronger when it has gone through the "wringer" at an SVSA meeting. A popular option gives members an opportunity to perform their submissions live and in person.

And, as always, the pre- and postcritique discussions were lively, and a lot of interesting and helpful information passed around the room. The exchange of information, opinions, and ideas is at the heart of what makes the monthly SVSA meetings so worthwhile and interesting. If you haven't been to a meeting lately, plan to make time and bring in a song for critique ... we're always ready and willing to let you know what we think! Or just stop by and join in the discussions. Your two cents is always welcome!

Non-members are encouraged to attend as well. You can sit through a meeting or two and see for yourself whether or not you think the SVSA would be beneficial to your songwriting efforts. The pay-off might not be immediate -- but the long-run benefits are many and valuable. You'll find SVSA members with nearly every level of experience who are willing to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with you on your songwriting journey. So plan to attend next month's meeting and check us out!

– David Simpkins

Concert and songwriting workshop with Don Henry and Sally Barris

Grammy-winning songwriter Don Henry and Grammy nominee Sally Barris are offering a songwriting workshop and concert in Roanoke on the weekend of September 27-28.

Nashville songwriters Don Henry and Sally Barris, two of the three members of The Waymores, will be performing at Antique Blue in Roanoke on **Saturday, September 27**. “A Night of Stories and Songs” starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for the general public, with a special discounted rate of \$15 for SVSA members. Antique Blue is at 12 East Campbell Avenue in downtown Roanoke, Virginia.



On **Sunday, September 28** from 1 to 4 p.m., Henry and Barris will offer a songwriting workshop.

Workshop participants will get advice on the art and craft of songwriting, and will learn to write a song about anything, anytime, anywhere. If you have a song already written, you can play a recording of it (or bring your instrument and play it live) and have it seriously listened to and critiqued.

The workshop is for all ages, all levels, and all styles. Cost is \$30. Participants who are bringing a song for critique should bring copies of the song’s lyrics for the class and the instructors.

Workshop location is Antique Blue, 12 East Campbell Avenue, Roanoke, Virginia.

Please RSVP to antiqueblues12@gmail.com if you plan to attend the songwriting workshop.

Wayne Henderson concert to benefit the Botetourt Resource Center

World-class guitar player and luthier Wayne Henderson will perform Tuesday, September 23 at The Glebe in Daleville, Virginia. Henderson has performed all over the world, as well as at Carnegie Hall and in three U.S. tours of “Masters of the Steel String Guitar.”

The free concert begins at 7 p.m. Donations will be accepted to benefit the Botetourt Resource Center. Reservations are required – call The Glebe at 540-591-2100 to reserve your seat.

The Glebe is located at 200 The Glebe Blvd., Daleville, Virginia. For more information, see www.theglebe.org.



Alice and Aspen Black performing at the Franklin County Ag Fair on Sept. 10 & 13. They played a total of five performances at the fair.

SVSA Performing Members' Upcoming Gigs

Aspen Black

Oct. 28- Ronald McDonald House,
Roanoke, VA 8:00 PM (Aspen &
Alice Black)

Nov. 13- Western Music Association
National Convention- Main Stage
Showcase, Albuquerque, NM-
10:00 AM (Aspen Black)

Nov. 14- Western Music Association
National Convention- Pro/Am
Stage, Albuquerque, NM- 1:30 PM
(Aspen Black)

Nov. 21- Western Music Association
National Convention- Friday Night

Opry, Albuquerque, NM- 8:00 PM
(Aspen Black & Kerry Grombacher)

Nov. 22- Western Music Association
National Convention- Youth
Showcase, Albuquerque, NM - 1:00
PM (Alice Black)

Dec. 5- Come Home to a Franklin
County Christmas- Harvester
Performance Center, Rocky Mount,
VA- 6:00 - 9:00 PM (Aspen & Alice
Black)

Dec. 16- Ronald McDonald House
Christmas Show, Roanoke, VA- 8:00
PM (Aspen & Alice Black)

SVSA Performing Members' Upcoming Gigs

Greg Traidlo

Sept. 27: Lotus House Concert,
Roanoke

Oct. 4: Beckley WV. Rocket Boys
Song Festival. I will perform my
song "Sugar Bowl" live in the
finals.

Oct. 18: Private house concert,
Chevy Chase, MD with Trifolkal

Nov. 28: Two-Way Street
Coffeehouse with Dean Milano
and Tommy Re, Downers Grove, IL

David Simpkins

Saturday, September 27: Vinton
Farmers Market, Vinton, Virginia,
10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (In the round
with Greg Traidlo and Britt
Mistele.)

Friday, December 5: SMAC
Songwriters Showcase, Trinity
Ecumenical Parish, Moneta,
Virginia, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Performing songwriters TBA.

Saturday, December 6, Floyd
Country Store, Floyd, Virginia,
noon-3:00 p.m. Americana
Afternoons in the round with
Greg Traidlo, Mike Pearrell, and
Ron Ireland. (Special guests: Kathy
Acosta and Britt Mistele.)

Acoustic Reset (David Bowen and Jerry Gilmore)

Sunday, October 5, Beliveau
Winery, 3-5 pm

Saturday, October 18, Our Daily
Bread (BBurg), 9:30 am – Noon

Friday, October 24, Attimo Winery,
5:30 – 8 pm

Friday, October 31, Palisades
Restaurant, 6:30 – 9:30 pm

Barbara Martin

Thursday, October 2, 5:30-8 pm,
Barbara Martin & Vince Lewis,
Music and Wine at Sundown,
Louisa Arts Center, 212
Fredericksburg Ave., Louisa VA.
(540) 967-2200 <http://louisaarts.org>

Saturday, October 11,
1:30-2:30-Barbara solo,
3-4-Barbara Martin & Vince
Lewis, Crozet Arts Festival,
Claudius Crozet Park, 1075 Park
Rd., Crozet, VA. crozetfestival.com. Adults \$6, children under
12 free

Upcoming at Third Street Coffeehouse

September 26

Rob Williams

October 3

John Sines, Jr.

October 10

Karl Hepler

October 17

Annalise Emerick

October 24

Bob Schmucker and Jim Page

October 31

The Panini Brothers

November 7

Clinton Collins

November 14

The McKenzies

November 21

Jane Gabrielle

November 28

Closed for Thanksgiving

December 5

Steve and LaWanda Langston

December 12

Lee Robertson and Katy Davidson

December 19

Dogwood Tales

December 26

Closed for Christmas

January 2

Closed for New Year's

Third Street Coffeehouse is open every Friday. Sign up for open mic 7-7:30; open mic performances 7:30-8:15; featured performer from 8:30-10. Third Street is a smoke-free, alcohol-free, no-cover-charge venue.

SVSA Classifieds

FOR SALE

KORG CR4 4-track Recorder.

Used once. Easy to use, great for songwriting! \$175. Contact **Dan Hildebrand**, (540) 765-9104 or danhildebrand@hughes.net.

FOR SALE

Carvin MX842 Stereo Powered

Mixer. \$200. Built-in spring reverb and effects input/outputs for outboard effects unit. 2 band EQ, effects, gain and pan for each channel. **Barbara Martin**, (540) 886-2966, barbara@barbaramartinmusic.com.

DEMO RECORDING AND PRODUCTION

The Shop in Fincastle, Virginia.

Clean, high-quality multitrack recording and mixdown with an all-digital recording system. I can make MP3s and CDs from the mix. I'm a capable session player and can add guitars, keyboards, bass and percussion, as well as arranging and sweetening. \$25/hour for SVSA members. Contact **Josh Jones**, thejonesgroup@rbnet.com, (540) 473-3598.

AUDIO RECORDING, GUITAR LESSONS, MUSIC VIDEOS

Randolph Walker Music.

randolphwalker@cox.net
www.randolphwalker.com
(540) 588-5826

SVSA Music News free classifieds may be submitted by paid members only. All classifieds must be music-related.

SVSA MEMBERSHIP

Paid as of April 2014

Kathy Acosta

Marc Baskind

Dee Bowlin

David Bowen

Steve Clark

Sid Crosswhite (Lifetime Member)

Bob Coulter (Lifetime Member)

Leo Cullen

Mike DeGiorgi

Mike Dittrich

Charlie Divers

Paul Douglas

Suzanne Fortney

Linda Fowler

Mike Franke

Jerry Gilmore

Dale Hamilton

George Harris

Larry Helms

Dan Hildebrand

Bonnie Johns

Mark Laperle

Leigh Littleton

Bob Lowell

Barbara Martin

Robert Matter

Marian McConnell

Britt Mistele

Eric Mosley

David Motley

Mickey Nelson

Jack Page

Mike Pearrell

Larry Sakayama

Connie Sellers

David Simpkins

Andrew Smiley

Greg Traidlo

Tim Wagner

Randolph Walker

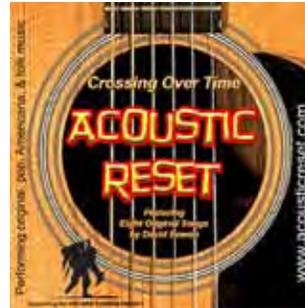
SVSA Members' Recordings



eyes on the horizon



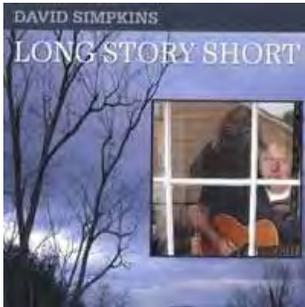
kaleidoscope



crossing over time



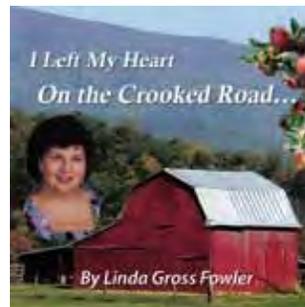
marc with a "c"



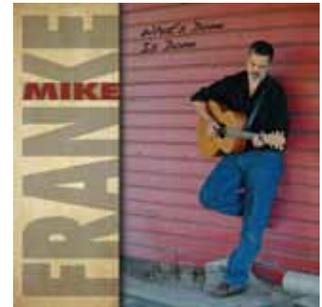
long story short



live from third street
coffeehouse



i left my heart on the
crooked road



what's done is done

Barbara Martin

EYES ON THE HORIZON — Jazz and all originals with Robert Redd on piano, Chuck Redd on drums and vibes, Steve Wolf on bass, Mac Walter on guitar, Bruce Swaim on saxophone, John Jensen on trombone, and Matt Finley on flugelhorn.

KALEIDOSCOPE — Barbara's jazziest CD. All original songs, with co-writes with Joel Evans, Mac Walter, and Greg Trafidlo.

David Bowen (Acoustic Reset)

CROSSING OVER TIME — Featuring folk-pop tunes. Eight originals and eight covers accented by solid guitar licks and accompanying instruments. Available at acousticreset.com.

Marc Baskind

MARC WITH A "C" — Sampler CD of covers and original songs offers a taste of the varied styles of this accomplished guitarist/singer.

David Simpkins

LONG STORY SHORT — Offers 12 original Americana tunes blending rock, folk, blues, and country.

Britt Mistele

LIVE FROM THIRD STREET COFFEEHOUSE — Four original songs and 11 covers, recorded live at Roanoke's Third Street Coffeehouse. With special guest Greg Trafidlo..

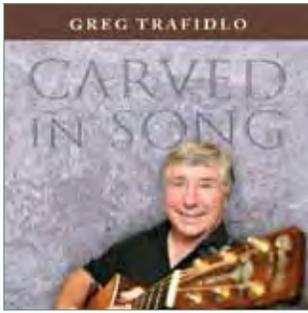
Linda Fowler

I LEFT MY HEART ON THE CROOKED ROAD — Features 12 original compositions.

Mike Franke

WHAT'S DONE IS DONE — A debut release of 14 original folk and blues tunes about everyday life and interesting people featuring Mike's fingerstyle and slide guitar.

SVSA Members' Recordings



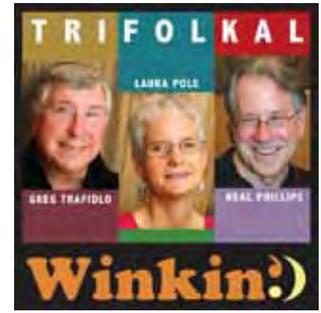
carved in song



pacing the moon



dog joggin'



winkin'



cup of contradictions



dimestore detective



eastern western
cowgirl



from the heart of a
cowgirl

Greg Trafidlo

CARVED IN SONG — Most songs co-written with some of Greg's favorite songwriters. Listen to audio clips at gregtrafidlo.com.

FOLKSINGULAR — Greg's third solo CD reflects the diversity of his songwriting and production skills. With SVSA-ers on background vocals, and Marc Baskind on guitar and vocals.

Josh Jones

PACING THE MOON — Thirteen of the strongest songs Josh has written. For lyrics, short audio clips and additional information, please visit www.jonesgroupmusic.com.

Steve Clark

DOG JOGGIN' — Eleven sweet and true amusing tunes comprise this quirky singer/songwriter CD. Available at cdbaby.com.

Trifolkal

WINKIN' — Newest release from that "trio fiercely dedicated to fun" tempers the fun with poignancy and heart.

Mike Pearrell

CUP OF CONTRADICTIONS — 13 original songs. Lots of SVSA musicians singing and playing.

DIMESTORE DETECTIVE — Mike's first solo CD features 14 original songs. Produced by Greg Trafidlo; with a number of guest SVSA musicians. Available at Mike's shows.

Aspen Black

EASTERN WESTERN COWGIRL — Eight original Contemporary Western songs. Available at CDBaby.com/aspenblack7.

FROM THE HEART OF A COWGIRL — Original spoken word poems adhering to the Western Music Association guidelines for the cowboy poetry genre.

HORSEGIRL POET — Songs and poems about horses, cowboys, and rural life.

A HUNDRED YEARS TOO LATE — All original music for horse lovers and those who yearn to preserve the spirit and lands of the last American frontier.

About Classifieds:

SVSA Music News free classifieds may be submitted by paid members only. All classifieds must be music-related. Members, e-mail your classifieds to svsa.songwriters@gmail.com.

About articles and other written contributions:

SVSA members write feature articles for the SVSA Music News throughout the year. Members can submit other articles and features at any time. Non-members may also submit articles and other written contributions but their inclusion will be subject to time and space constraints. All articles may be edited for space considerations and will be edited, as time allows, for spelling and grammar. E-mail submissions to svsa.songwriters@gmail.com.

About Announcements:

SVSA members may list music-related announcements in the SVSA Music News. E-mail them to svsa.songwriters@gmail.com by the second Tuesday of the month. Announcements from members will be e-mailed to members as soon as they are received and, if still timely, published in an upcoming issue of the SVSA Music News. Announcements from non-members will be held for publication in an upcoming issue of the SVSA Music News.

About Members' Gig Listings:

SVSA members may submit their upcoming performance schedules for publication in the SVSA Music News. The submissions will be printed as submitted; the more information you provide, the more likely the response.

SVSA DISCLAIMER

The ideas and opinions contained in this newsletter are intended to be helpful to songwriters. The companies and organizations mentioned are believed to be legitimate; however, SVSA does not endorse any products or services and offers no guaranteed success based on the content.

We are always looking for articles about SVSA members and articles of interest to the songwriting community. Send articles and information to the Editor, Kathy Acosta, or svsa.songwriters@gmail.com. SVSA is a non-profit organization.

SVSA Board Members:

Larry Sakayama – President
Mike DeGiorgi - Vice President
David Simpkins – Secretary
Greg Trafidlo – Treasurer
Mike Franke - Board Member
Britt Mistele - Board Member
Kathy Acosta - Newsletter Editor



SVSA
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Seen on the Musical Scene

photos of music performances in Southwest Virginia



The Roanoke Celtic group Second Wynde at The Glebe, a retirement community in Daleville, Virginia, on September 6 as part of The Glebe's Medieval/Renaissance Faire event. Photos by Leigh Littleton.





Steve Earle and Shawn Colvin at The Paramount in Charlottesville, Virginia, on September 17. Photos by Leigh Littleton.

