SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION

SVSA MUSIC NEWS

JANUARY 2023

WWW.SVSASONGS.COM

JANUARY FEATURE ARTICLE

Recipe for disappointment: Try buying shoes at a taco stand

by Mike Franke

Many years ago, I wrote a parody of the classic song by Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show called *Cover of the Rolling Stone*. You probably know that the song is about the dream of seeing your "smilin' face" on the cover of that iconic magazine — a sign of having truly "made it" in the music business. The original goes something like this:

> Well, we're big rock singers, we got golden fingers
> And we're loved everywhere we go
> We sing about beauty and we sing about truth
> For ten thousand dollars a show
> We take all kinds of pills that give us all kinds of thrills
> But the thrill we've never known
> Is the thrill that'll getcha when you get your picture
> On the cover of the *Rolling Stone*…

My parody switches things up a bit and talks about being an old folk singer rather than a big rock star:

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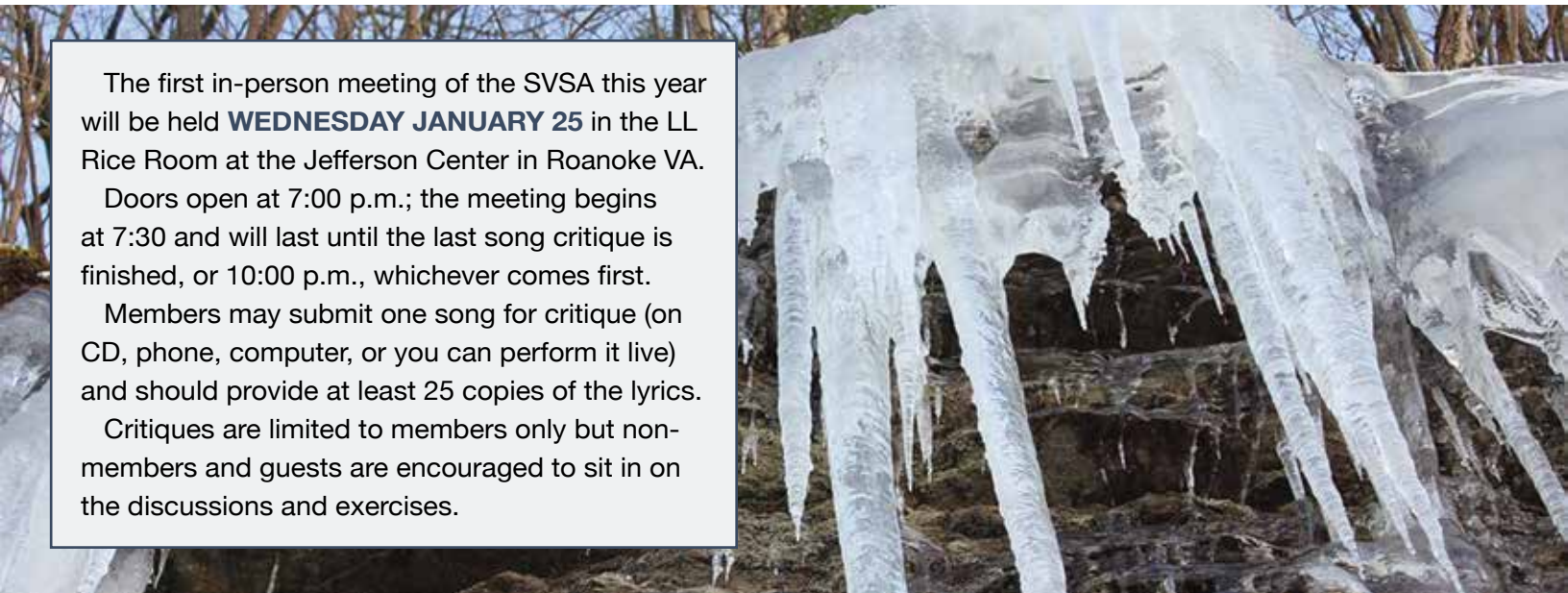

The first in-person meeting of the SVSA this year will be held **WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25** in the LL Rice Room at the Jefferson Center in Roanoke VA.

Doors open at 7:00 p.m.; the meeting begins at 7:30 and will last until the last song critique is finished, or 10:00 p.m., whichever comes first.

Members may submit one song for critique (on CD, phone, computer, or you can perform it live) and should provide at least 25 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.

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I'm an old folk singer and songwriter
I'm shunned everywhere I go
I sing a few covers and originals, too
For ten, twenty dollars a show
I take all kinds of pills for all kinds of ills
And I kill at the nursing home
But I'm feelin' all right, 'cause I got my sights
On the cover of the *Rolling Stone*…

(For more, you'll have to come hear me play at Third Street on Jan 27th.)

But this article isn't about my song. It's about the cover of another iconic magazine this month. It turns out that the January/February issue of *American Songwriter* magazine proudly and loudly features … (wait for it) … KISS!

That's right. *American Songwriter* magazine has put Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley, of the iconic rock band KISS, on the cover of their "Legends Issue."

Wait. What? KISS?! In a *songwriter* magazine? Really?

Fellow songwriter Keith Goggin and I were batting this around before his recent show at the Third Street Coffeehouse (I was the opener). Keith joked that he would never buy the magazine again. "They're terrible!" he exclaimed.

I certainly understand the sentiment. I mean, I was a big KISS fan when I was in high school, but not because of the music — because of the **show**! And because of how my parents reacted to them.

I should mention that I was also a big Rush fan, and therefore of Alex Lifeson, the lead guitar player, who is also a featured "Legend" in this issue (along with Def Leppard, Eurythmics, John Fogerty, Harry Connick, Jr., Sheila E, Wynonna Judd, and Don McLean).

Look. I know that KISS songs don't generally get covered by other artists. As songs, they're nothing to speak of — by most of the measures we use in our group, at least.

You'll never see Rick Beato passionately and reverently analyze a KISS song for melodic magic or chordal complexity the way he's done Sting songs or Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*. You'll certainly never spark a deep debate about the meaning of any KISS lyrics in one of our SVSA meetings.

And yet, KISS has been, and still is, more than a band. Even more than a brand. They are a phenomenon. Even now, 50 years and 100 million records after they started, KISS still has a vibrant and loyal fan base.

In the magazine article, Gene Simmons tells a story of how seeing a father, son, and grandson — all in KISS makeup — in the audience, got him a little choked up on stage, even while embodying his "demon" stage persona, which includes wearing 10-inch gargoyle platform shoes, 40 lbs of costume armor, drooling fake blood… you know the deal. Gene is 72, by the way. KISS is on their farewell tour.

Here's the thing. If you go to a KISS show to hear songs with complex harmonies, beautiful melodies, and touching storylines, you're trying to buy shoes at a taco stand. You go to a KISS show for the spectacle; the party. Period.

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PHOTO BY MIKE FRANKE

FEATURE ARTICLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

And songs are a part of that.

I think it's important to know where you're shopping and what you're shopping for. Sure, part of experiencing good songwriting is not getting exactly what you expected. But if you get something you didn't expect and it's not a good thing, then it's important to know if the problem is your expectations, or if it's the thing.

The other day I absent-mindedly picked up my thermally-insulated coffee thermos, thinking there was coffee in it. I took a sip and was horrified to take a sip of hot chocolate. I mean, it was really good hot chocolate (I'd forgotten I'd made it), but, as coffee, it was horrible!

<Chorus, tag>

Don't look for melody in hip-hop. Don't look for beats and grooves in classical music. Don't look for chordal complexity in bluegrass. Don't look for touching story lyrics in pop music. Don't look for experimental form in blues.

You can't buy shoes at a taco stand.

(I guess now I have to write that song …)

"My goal this year is the same as it was last year – to enjoy making and listening to music."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

New year, new goals, new president

Happy 2023! I hope everyone is ready for a great year. I'm excited to be president of the SVSA at it starts its 42nd year.

It's been 14 years since I was last president of the group or involved in any official capacity except as a struggling songwriter, so I'm sure I'll need some help — not only from the board but also from the members.

As we start a new year, it's inevitable to look back at the past year. Did you have any goals for the past year? Did you achieve them? Hopefully so.

Do you have any goals for this year? What are some goals to achieve? Here's a good one to start — attend and actively participate in as many SVSA meetings as possible. We all benefit from the exchange of ideas from all members.

Also, attend as many SVSA events as possible. I know I'm as guilty as anyone for not always showing up to support my fellow songwriters.

Maybe you'd like to start and/or finish a certain number of songs? A certain number of live performances? Maybe take the plunge and record a full CD? Or maybe release a single through one of the streaming platforms? How about one a quarter? Maybe do a basic lyric video? Maybe learn a new instrument or just strive to be better on your instrument?

My goal this year is the same as it was last year — to enjoy making and listening to music. Even though I wrote fewer songs last year than I have in many years, I still enjoyed my overall music experience.

One highlight for my past year was getting the 1965 Penncrest stereo that I grew up listening to, running again after almost 40 years of being out of commission. I listen to it several times a week and play a lot of the records my parents purchased back in the day. Nat (King) Cole never sounded so good!

I'll be happy to do anything I can this year to help any member. If there are subjects that you want to cover at our monthly meetings please let me know.

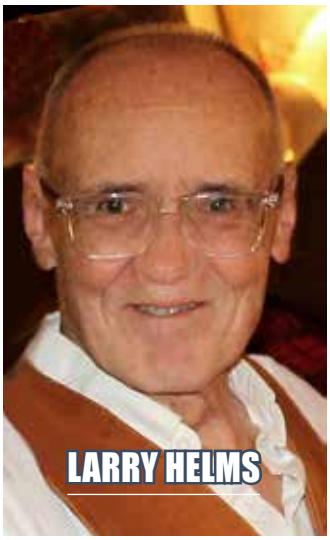
If you have any input you'd like to offer about the meeting or anything you'd like to discuss in general, feel free to reach out. I can be reached at (540) 420-7591 or cdivers07@hotmail.com.

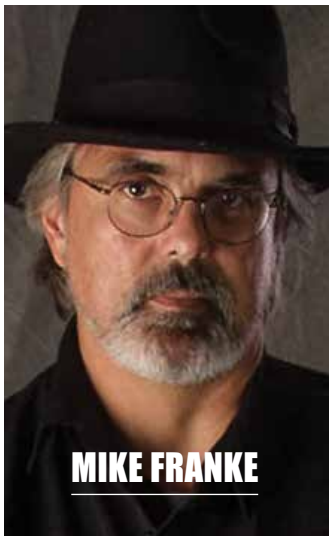
I look forward to seeing everyone at the meetings.

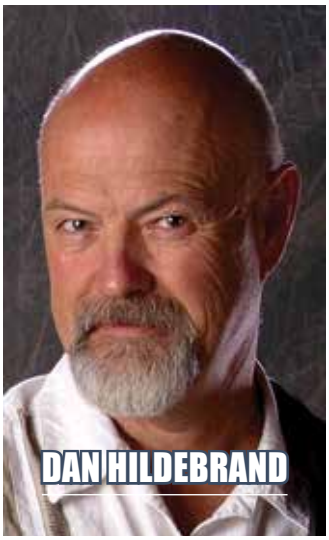
New slate of board members kick off new year

These nine SVSA members will be leading the association for 2023. Some are returning board members, others are new to the board this year. All will be happy to listen to your concerns, your suggestions, your ideas, and your questions. All are pledged to keep the SVSA a relevant, growing, inclusive, and vibrant home for songwriters of every level and genre.

- **Charlie Divers** – President
- **Mike Franke** – Vice President, Webmaster
- **Celie Holmes** – Treasurer
- **Mollye Otis** – Secretary
- **David Simpkins** – At-Large Board Member, Newsletter Editor & Designer
- **Larry Helms** – At-Large Board Member
- **Greg Trafidlo** – At-Large Board Member
- **Bob Schmucker** – At-Large Board Member, 3rd Street Coffeehouse Liaison







A WONDERFUL WINTER SVSA SHOWCASE!

PHOTO BY LINDA PEARRELL

December 16, 2022 was the date for the latest SVSA Songwriter Showcase at 3rd Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke VA.

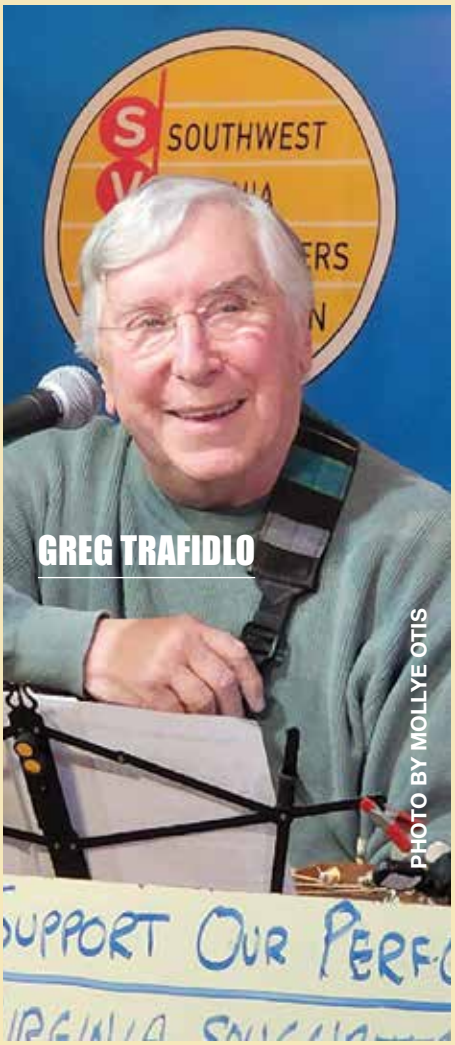
Participants this time were (left to right in the above photo by Linda Pearrell): **Greg Trafidlo, Larry Helms, Celie Holmes**, and **Bill Stanton**. Also, SVSA members **Kathy Acosta** and **Britt Mistele** sat in on backing vocals for several songs.

The event was hosted by **Mike Pearrell**, outgoing SVSA president.

A fair-sized crowd was on hand and the performers delivered an eclectic and entertaining show. The video is available at this link: https://www.facebook.com/3rdStreetCoffeehouse/videos/607333801195617

Bottom two photos by **Mollye Otis**.

More photos next page



GREG TRAFIDLO

PHOTO BY MOLLYE OTIS

CELIE HOLMES

PHOTO BY MOLLYE OTIS

LARRY HELMS

BILL STANTON

BRITT MISTELE

KATHY ACOSTA

The whole gang's here! Left to right: ***Greg Trafidlo, Larry Helms, Britt Mistele, Celie Holmes, Kathy Acosta,*** *and* ***Bill Stanton.*** *(Photo by* ***Bob Schmucker.*** *Top three photos by* ***Larry Sakayama.)***

Outgoing SVSA President Mike Pearrell and his wife Linda enjoy the Iluminights display at Roanoke VA's Explore Park on Dec 20.

Next meeting this coming Wednesday, January 25

The next meeting of the SVSA is this **Wednesday, January 25**.

As usual, we will open the doors at 7:00 p.m. and then begin the meeting at 7:30 in the L.L. Rice Room at the Jefferson Center.

Twenty-five copies of your lyric sheet and an mp3 on your phone or CD are all you need — or bring your instrument if you want to perform your song live.

SVSA board member Bob Schmucker does the "Schmucker Shuffle" with Mrs. Claus at 3rd Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke VA.

Roanoke's Film Lab program is turning out student filmmakers

Edited from an article in *Cardinal News* (11.30.22) by Michael Hemphill

Since 2016, Roanoke's Grandin Theater has been producing its own award-winning movies through its after-school program called Film Lab. Each year, up to 24 students from high schools and home schools throughout the Roanoke Valley are admitted to Film Lab. They start the curriculum learning aspects of filmmaking from local college professors and industry technicians: script-writing, acting, producing, cinematography, lighting, sound, blocking and editing. Each student then has the opportunity to develop her or his own script into a film that is produced by the entire class and premieres at the spring Showcase.

The SVSA's **Alice Black** is currently one of those students.

In just the program's first six years, Film Lab students have been accepted into some of the country's most prestigious film schools, and they have earned three National Student Production Award nominations from the organization that hands out the Emmys and entry into more than 30 national and international film festivals.

Film lab students in action (from left): Carter Crouch, Alice Black (holding slate), and Penelope Holmes (with red hair). Photo by Grandin Theatre Film Lab.

"One day it's our hope to be in L.A. or Cannes or New York and sit in the nosebleed seats to watch a Film Lab graduate be recognized," said Grandin Theatre executive director Ian Fortier. Of all its national and international accolades, however, Film Lab recognition in its home state remains elusive. Fortier says he hopes one day to have a Film Lab student recognized at the Virginia Film Festival.

Fortier credits an editorial in *The Roanoke Times* with inspiring Film Lab. Back in 2015, the Virginia High School League conducted its inaugural student film festival for high schoolers across the commonwealth.

The editorial noted: "Out of 36 finalists, only three … are from west of the Blue Ridge. That tells us one thing: There's clearly an opportunity for student filmmakers in this part of the state."

As the newly hired head of the Grandin, Fortier took the words to heart and used his previous gig at the Jefferson Center's Music Lab as Film Lab's model.

"Instead of putting instruments in their hands," he thought, "why don't we put cameras in their hands?"

Editor's Note: See the unedited article at: https://cardinalnews.org/2022/11/30/roanokes-film-lab-after-school-program-is-turning-out-student-filmmakers/

Here's Alice Black — as the SVSA is more used to seeing her — in a performance photo from 2018.

Trafidlo donates rare poster to music museum

by Greg Trafidlo

Carlton Haney was the promoter of a music festival in 1965. It was held at Cantrell's Horse Farm in Fincastle VA and called "The Roanoke Bluegrass Festival." All the major names in bluegrass music performed at that festival that year.

It was the first time the term "Bluegrass Festival" was ever used! That's the festival my poster came from. Due to the first festival's success, Haney had another one at Cantrell's Farm in 1966.

In the mid-1980s, I was playing mandolin with a North Carolina band, The Bass Mountain Boys. We were performing at Carlton Haney's Bluegrass Festival in Camp Springs, NC. Haney had a print shop on the premises where he would print the monthly newsletter, *The Mule Skinner News*, (based on the song *The Mule Skinner Blues*.)

It was truly a "work space" with an old mimeograph machine, a cold type press, and a floor covered in old copies of the newsletter and posters from the 20 years of festivals Haney promoted.

I was like a kid in a candy shop and blown away when he said, "Take whatever you want." So I grabbed a couple issues of the newsletter and this 1965 festival poster. It is now quite a rarity. I know of only a few other copies. One is in Fincastle VA at the Botetourt Historical Society, another is sadly entombed behind a wall after a renovation at Nashville TN's Station Inn venue, and two others are in private collections.

I recently decided to find a new home for the poster and wanted it to remain in Virginia and available for viewing by country, bluegrass and Old Time music enthusiasts.

Scotty Almany, who is in charge of Exposition Logistics at the Birthplace of Country Music Museum in Bristol was more than happy to receive the poster. The museum is a much better place for it than rolled up in my office closet in Roanoke County.

Left to right: Julia Underkoffler, collection specialist; Scotty Almany, head of exhibit logistics; and Greg Trafidlo. (Photo by Judy Larson.)

Co-write wins 2022 SAW Silver Award

MIKE FRANKE

LARRY SAKAYAMA

SVSA members **Mike Franke** and **Larry Sakayama** co-wrote *Key Lime Pie,* the Silver Award winning song in the Vocal Jazz/Blues category of the 2022 Songwriters' Association of Washington (SAW) songwriting competition. See the full list of winners at https://saw.org/masc

Gold, Silver, Finalist, and Honorable Mention awards are presented in each category, and overall awards include a Director's Award, Young Artist Awards, three Overall Grand Prizes, and other special awards. The MASC is now in its 39th year.

Entrants compete for monetary awards, recording credits, plus performance and promotional opportunities including the MASC Awards Show.

Entry fees fund for educational and networking opportunities in the art and business of songwriting, and support for DMV songwriters, other music organizations, and SAW music events. SAW provides emerging songwriters with performance opportunities, workshops, and peer critique.

Left to right: Steve Cook, Greg Trafidlo, and Richard Hood perform at the Down Home in Johnson City TN.

Holiday get-together

On Dec 18, **Greg Trafidlo** played at a sold out Christmas show at The Down Home in Johnson City TN. Richard Hood and Greg did about an hour's worth of music, stoked by the energy of re-connection after 33 years!

Greg and Richard hadn't seen each other since Richard played on Laura Pole's and Greg's first LP in 1989.

Richard (Santa in the photo above) was the original banjo player and songwriter with the Greater Chicago Bluegrass Band. He hired Greg in 1976, and was partly responsible for the path Greg's been on ever since.

Richard performs regularly in the Johnson City area and once taught bluegrass and old-time banjo at E.T.S.U. He lives near Jonesboro TN now.

Richard Hood and Greg Trafidlo.

It's a good thing that it was New Year's Eve and not Halloween. How'd you like for THIS crowd to come knocking at your door? Left to right: David Simpkins, Mike Pearrell, Judy Larson, Kathy Acosta, Greg Trafidlo, and, in the foreground taking the group selfie, Linda Pearrell.

At this year's SVSA holiday party, Mike DeGiorgi won this ornament for the most irreverant original holiday song, **P.S., I Hate You.** *More party photos on page 19.*

Third Street Coffeehouse was the location for the latest SVSA Songwriters Showcase. The event was held on Dec 16 2022. On hand was an attentive holiday-season crowd. (Photo by Bob Schmucker.)

SVSA workshop features Greg Greenway

compiled by David Simpkins

On Sat Jan 14 from 1-3:00 p.m. at 3rd St. Coffeehouse in Roanoke VA, performing songwriter Greg Greenway presented an SVSA-sponsored songwriting workshop entitled "Turning Ideas into Songs," a topic he presented this past summer for Summer Acoustic Music Week for WUMB in Boston MA.

GREG GREENWAY

Prior to the workshop, on the night before, Greenway performed as the headliner at 3rd Street Coffeehouse. SVSA board member **Greg Trafidlo** was the opener. you can view those performances at: https://www.facebook.com/3rdStreetCoffeehouse/videos/554010839947210

Greg Greenway is an American folk singer-songwriter. He was part of the folk scene in the Boston area. His humorous song *Driving In Massachusetts* was included in an episode of public radio's "Car Talk" program. He has released eight solo albums and three additional albums with the harmony trio Brother Sun. Greenway has played at such notable places as Carnegie Hall, he's been heard on NPR's All Things Considered program, and he has performed for West Virginia's renowned Mountain Stage radio program.

Regarding his workshop, Greenway said, "I have always looked at practical ways to cross that plane from something imagined to something great. And it's the major sticking point for just about everyone. I have specific, concrete ideas of how to convert words into melody, and melody into chords."

SVSA Secretary **Mollye Otis** said, "A big thanks goes to **Greg Trafidlo** for organizing this valuable workshop. Another big thanks goes to 3rd Street Coffeehouse's **Bob Schmucker** for running with the idea and opening up the coffeehouse for the event.

"We had 16 writers attend (the majority from SVSA) and I suspect everyone came away filled up and fueled to try out some new songwriting ideas. Greg Greenway's personal pathways to writing are emotionally inspired and it felt generous for him to share his approach with us.

"Congratulations to everyone involved. Learning never ends!"

Former SVSA President **Mike DeGiorgi** also had some good things to say about the workshop. "I liked it a lot. I wish it could've been a couple of days instead of a couple of hours.

"There were exercises aimed at getting to the heart of what you want to say in a song, in which Greg honed in on a single line in a paragraph/page that captured the essence of a potential tune. He then took that line, counted the syllables, and talked about how a phrase has its own rhythm. We then randomly drew numbers for each of the syllables in the line he'd chosen as an example. Each number corresponded to a note on the scale. He then crafted some chords from those notes and voila ... the beginning of a melody. The point was to get us away from relying on our default chord vocabulary and writing repeated variations on the same melody.

"Greenway also talked a little about tweaking songs based on audience reaction versus the

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Greg Greenway at 3rd Street Coffeehouse.

PHOTO BY JUDY LARSON

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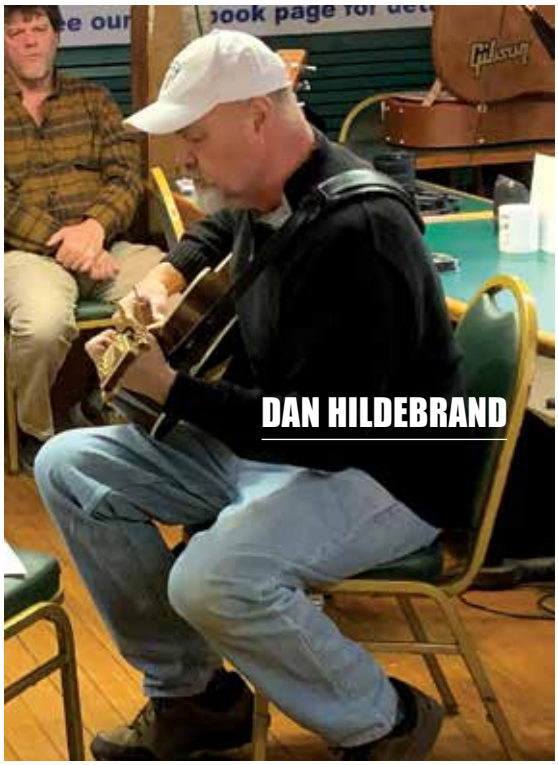
critique process with other writers.

"His message is rooted in the performance of songs we feel connected to and that express a particular truth we want to convey. It was not a workshop designed for writing pop songs or for mastering a formula to win over Nashville producers. It was more about getting to the heart of a song."

GREG TRAFIDLO



DAN HILDEBRAND

SVSAer Bob Schmucker photographed some of the participants at the SVSA-sponsored Greg Greenway songwriting workshop held at 3rd Street Coffeehouse on Jan 14.

SVSA Secretary Mollye Otis attended the SVSA-sponsored workshop given by performing songwriter Greg Greenway. She had this to say about the workshop: "Greg's personal pathways to writing are emotionally inspired and it felt generous for him to share his approach with us." (Photo by Bob Schmucker.)

Someone's off balance here; it's either photographer Mollye Otis or 3rd Street Coffeehouse's Bob Schmucker. You be the judge!

Here's a great photo by Forrest Baldwin of Steve Clark waiting to perform at 3rd Street Coffeehouse last May.

Former SVSA member on the upward path

by Sharayah Spears

I can't believe it ... I moved to Nashville on a whim and met this guy, Greg Hudik (now my manager and producer), in a pizza shop while just minding my own business.

Eight months of jam-packed life lessons and musical experience later — I am achieving something more incredible than I ever could've imagined. It's been a long hard year and I haven't done a whole lot in life that I was proud of unless it had to do with singing or playing out — sharing my voice with those that wanted (or even didn't want) to hear.

Given what the world has been through over the course of the last three years, this is by far a turning point in my life. Thank you to everyone who believed that I could and would get to this point — especially when *I* didn't.

by Greg Hudik

I'm so proud of this young lady. Sharayah has finished her vocals for her first-ever record release on Platinum Records Nashville. It's titled *'Appalachia'* and will be released in the spring of 2023. Her first single will be released Feb 1, 2023.

Sharayah's home was in Virginia and now in Nashville. Sharayah lost her mom to cancer in August of last year. Sharayah is following her mother's last wishes for her daughter to follow her dream as a recording artist. Sharayah's mother was a singer, too.

Sharayah has performed at festivals in her home state of Virginia and also performed with Chance McCoy from the Old Crow Medicine Show, living with him and family when she first came to Nashville.

I wanted to help her bypass a lot of common mistakes that young artists make by mentoring her and signing her after meeting her on just the second day that she moved to Nashville.

I realized after hearing her voice for the first time that in my lifetime in the music industry, I have never heard a voice as distinctive as hers.

Sharayah and I co-wrote her title track *Appalachia*. The majority of songs on her record came out of my 62-song George Strait catalog that I now own. A lot of that catalog wound up on her record with songs that I co-wrote with Kostas.

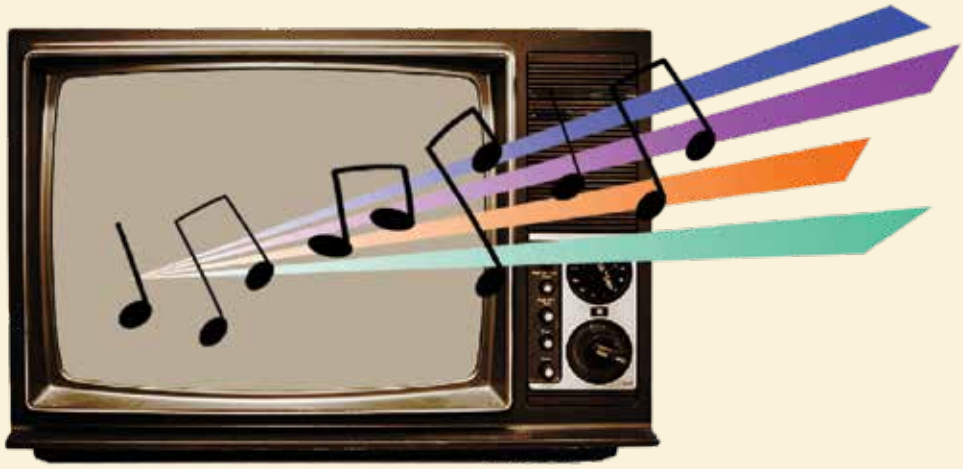
Kostas wrote monster hits like *I Can Love You Better Than That* for the Dixie Chicks, *I'm Not That Lonely Yet* for Dwight Yoakam, and Patty Loveless's *Blame It On Your Heart*. Kostas has written way too many hits and album cuts on big records to mention in one post. It's great karma for the special person that he is.

I also wrote some of Sharayah's songs myself as I was producing her record, specifically for the direction that she wanted to take as a artist. Ironically, Sharayah feels one of my songs will be her first up-tempo single, with its touch of the Eagles, Pure Prairie League, and the Allman Brothers. My southern rock roots blend well with her Virginia Dylan-like folk, country, bluegrass, Americana, singer-songwriter style.

I signed a management contract and a recording contract with Sharayah with the intention of breaking her career and then passing her along to a major label where she will be the superstar she is destined to be. I will continue to mentor and care for this young lady by producing and managing her career.

And now, just eight months after that first meeting with Sharayah, her record is almost finished.

TV a great source for collecting unusual, eclectic music



by Josh Jones

My fellow SVSAers know far more than I do about contemporary and historic popular music. I've gotten lazy about following new music. Retirement and a COVID-fueled TV intake haven't helped.

But around 20 years ago, I accidentally started a surprisingly useful collection of songs I heard on TV shows and movies.

In the '80s and '90s, TV shows like "The Wonder Years," "Northern Exposure" and "WKRP In Cincinnati" assembled great soundtracks with a lot of my favorite songs. Looking back, I know now why I tuned in and kept coming back.

About a decade later, I stumbled onto the Canadian police dramedy "Due South," which used quite a few songs and artists I'd never heard of. I found out Canadian content laws require that "radio and TV broadcasters produce and/or broadcast 40-50% of their content ... by persons from Canada," including music. I collected more than a dozen songs I first heard on "Due South."

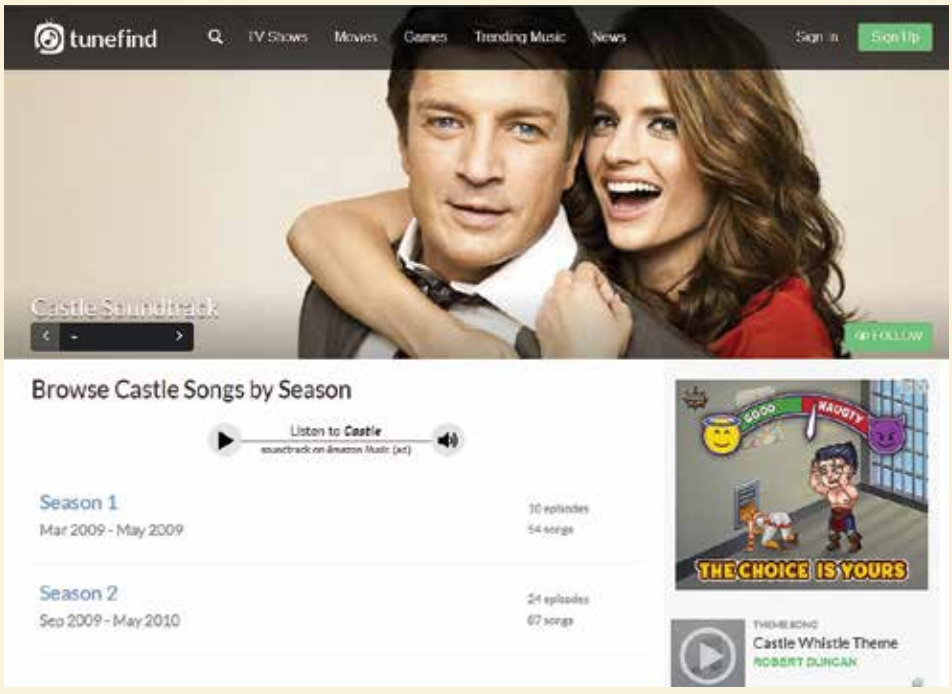
Some shows, including "Heartland," "Chuck," "Scrubs," "Castle," "Smallville," and "Community" consistently played music I liked because I shared the same musical tastes as the people who find, place and license existing and/or contracted songs used in shows and movies.

I clicked with these folks: Sam Feldman and Ron Proulx ("Due South"), Andrea Higgins ("Heartland"), Alexandra Patsavas ("Chuck"), Christa Miller ("Scrubs"), Madonna Wade-Reed ("Smallville," "Castle"), Manish Raval and Tom Wolfe ("Community"), and John McCullough ("Northern Exposure," "The Wonder Years").

All good music supervisors want, as George Costanza once said, "to leave on a high note." They frequently save the best song they've got for the final scene or the credit roll. Those closing songs are rarely heard in their entirety but I have a quick ear for a piece of music I'll like when I hear it again.

It's easy to identify nearly any song used on a TV show or movie. I mostly use Tunefind (www.tunefind.com) to track it down.

See TV Music, page 17



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I like Tunefind because:

• It's music-specific.

• It's easy to navigate and search by artist, show, season and episode.

• Each song has a short audio clip you can listen to.

• It provides links to an artist's placed songs by show, season, and episode.

• You can go on a treasure hunt.

• You can pull up a show whose music appeals to you.

Start with the first episode and audition any clip you haven't heard before.

If you like it, note the name and artist so you can go back later, check out the songs in Youtube videos, and dig up more information online.

Here's how I go about it.

You need the show name, the season number and episode name or number. Streamed shows almost always put this in the episode header. Now that over-the-air stations have switched to digital broadcast, any recent model TV or DVR has it as well.

Open your browser, search the show name, season and episode name / number and add "tunefind," e.g. "scrubs s3 e5 tunefind." If it's in the database, Tunefind will display the song name, artist, and description of the scene where it was used.

Once you've got that, it's easy to find the lyrics online. Search "[song] [artist] lyrics." (Tip: Open lyrics in a separate browser tab if you like to read along like I do. You can also copy, paste, and add a song's lyrics to your songbook if you want to learn it later.)

And of course there's nearly always a Youtube video, even for old and obscure songs. Just search "[song] [artist] youtube."

Years ago, I downloaded most songs from various sharing sites but now when I want one, I buy it. Most times you can find and buy it on multiple websites. (Tip: always download a local copy.)

Music discovery tools are another good way to find a song. Although I don't have personal experience with them, there are apps which will tell you the name of a piece of music if you hum or sing the melody or enter some of the lyrics.

I plan to play with SoundHound or Shazam, two of the most popular music-discovery apps.

Collecting songs from TV and movies has exposed me to unfamiliar and interesting music, artists, and styles. It's entertaining, educational, and free — and I watch TV with a little less guilt. Here are three favorites:

***Ends of the Earth*, Lord Huron**

Western-cinema pop. Lyrics. ("Community," s6 e13; "Longmire," s6 e10). Used as the series finale closing song in two excellent TV shows, this is the cream of the crop. (**Aspen** and **Alice Black** will like this one.)

***Mad World*, Gary Jules/ Michael Andrews**

Alt folk, I guess. Lyrics. ("Smallville" s2 e11, etc, etc ...). This very spare, delicate version of the Tears For Fears song was recorded for the "Donnie Darko" soundtrack. It's been placed in more than two dozen TV shows and movies since.

***Furr*, Blitzen Trapper**

Folk. Lyrics. ("Chuck," s2 e10). This is just a fun, foot tapping tune. I love the story, lyrics, and production.

PS: Composer Andrew Sharpe wrote a marvelous score for the remarkable movie, "The Electrical Life Of Louis Wain" (Amazon Prime). Based on a true story, it's my favorite Benedict Cumberbatch performance to date — and I really like Cumberbatch. Sharpe combined a traditional symphonic score with solos by, among other uncommon instruments, a Theremin, and a musical saw. Check out *Electricity* at 1:17 when the saw comes in. I swear I tear up every time I hear it.

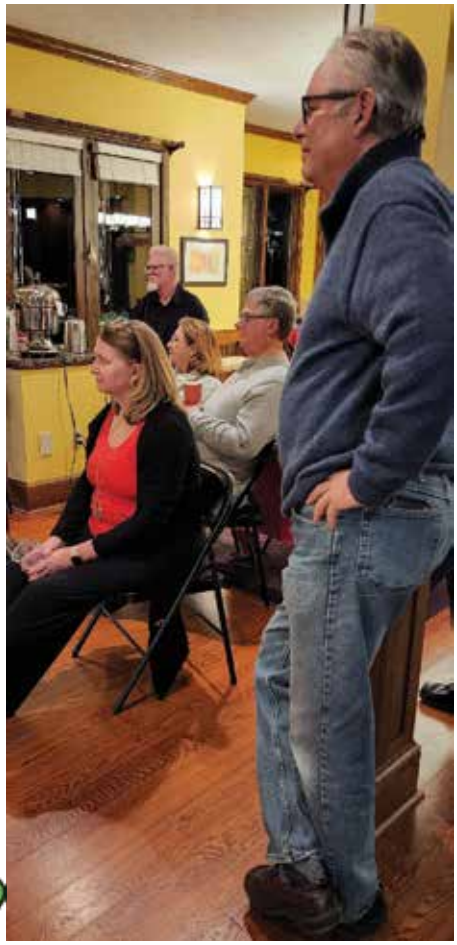
"... closing songs are rarely heard in their entirety but I have a quick ear for a piece of music I'll like when I hear it again."

~ Josh Jones

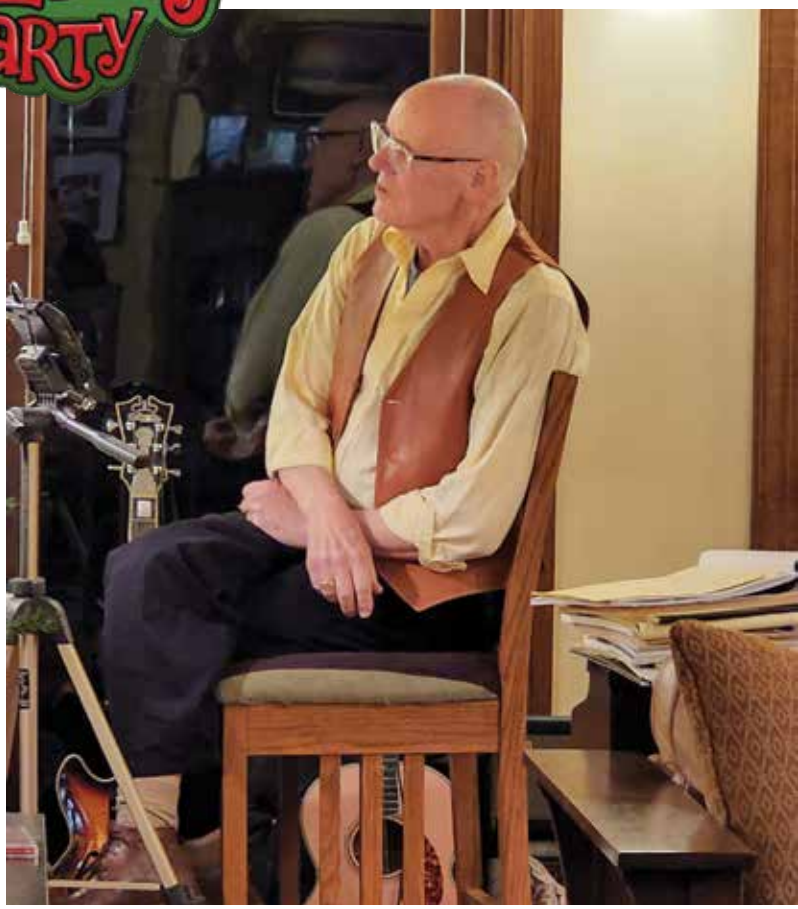
SVSA
SOUTHWEST
VIRGINIA
SONGWRITERS
ASSOCIATION
2022
HOLIDAY
PARTY

Holiday Party

Editor's Note: The SVSA Holiday Party for 2022 was again held in December at the residence of SVSA member Larry Helms and his wife Judy. There was a delightful turnout, wonderful food, bounteous fellowship, and, of course, music. To my great regret, I had to miss the festivities. Luckily, all the sights and action were photographed by SVSA Secretary Mollye Otis. Thanks so much to the Helmses, to Mollye, and to all the SVSA members and their guests who made this year's event so enjoyable. Again this year, I will not attempt to identify everyone in the photos (I'm sure to leave someone out or screw up somebody's name) so please soak in the fun via this collection of photographs. Upon viewing these photos for publication, you can bet that I'm already making plans to attend next year's gala SVSA Holiday Party! ~ David Simpkins



Holiday Party



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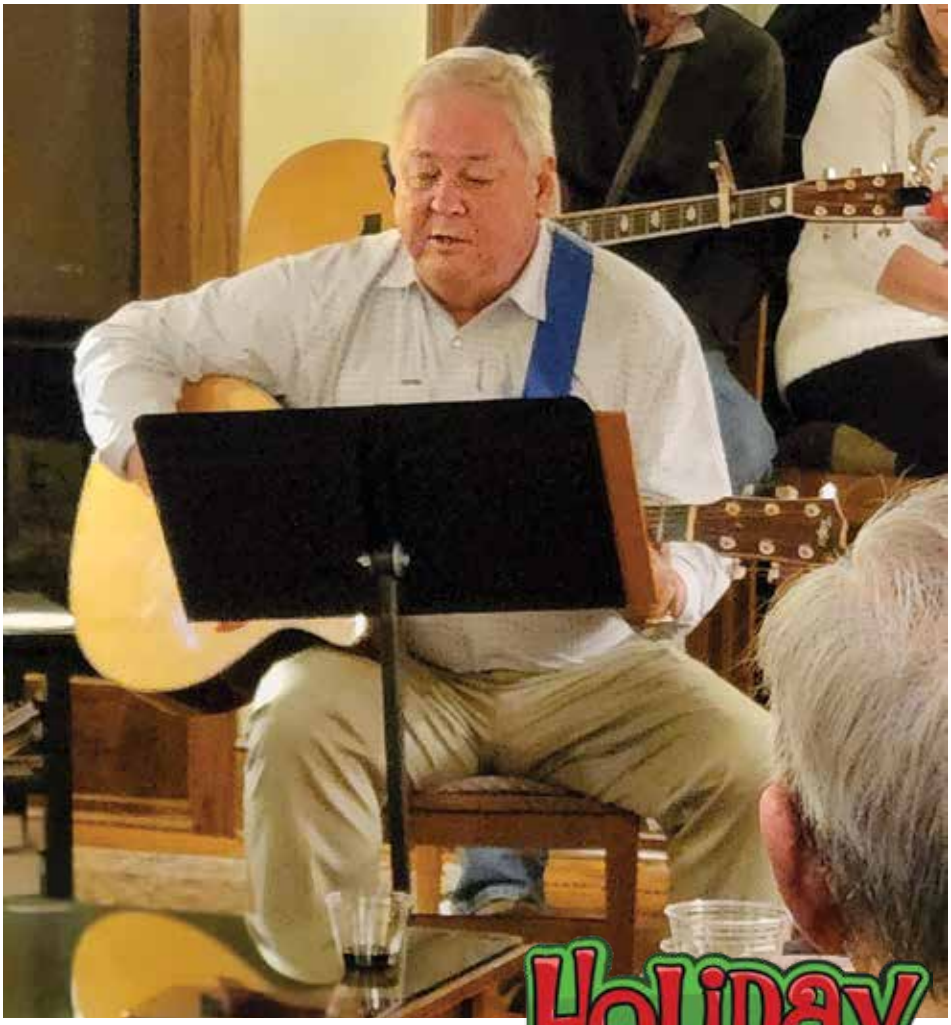
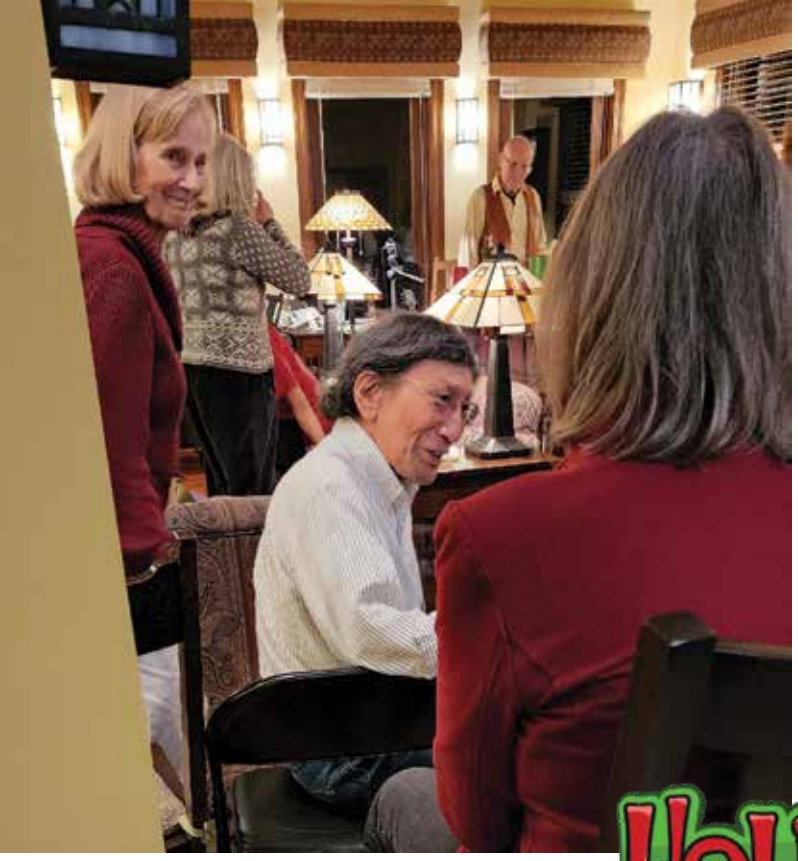


Holiday Party



Holiday Party

Holiday Party

The SVSA Music News functions for members in many ways. One of the most overlooked is the **FREE** classifieds section.

There are two restrictions: One is that all classifieds must be music-related; the other is that classified ads may be submitted by paid members only. And that's it!

Remember: An ad is much more successful when accompanied by a clear photo and a complete and detailed description. The ad must contain a working e-mail or cell number. The SVSA Music News will not forward ad enquiries.

Take advantage of this free service now. Classifieds will run monthly until pulled by the person who submits the ad.

Members, e-mail your classifieds to svsa.songwriters@gmail.com or amosflame@aol.com.

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION

SVSA For Sale

SVSA member **Britt Mistele** is selling an **Emerald X30** carbon fiber six-string guitar. Candy-stripe Paduk top. It has an LR Baggs Anthem pick-up system and plays like a dream. No worries with heat or humidity. Comes with a Hiscox hard-shell case. Mint condition. **$3000.00.** Contact Britt at **276-728-6529.**

3rd Street Coffeehouse is selling a brand-new-in-box (never opened) Insignia™ 55" Class F50 Series QLED 4K UHD Smart Fire TV. Comes with Amazon Fire. It sells at Best Buy for $339.99 plus tax but you can get it for **$300 obo**. Call SVSA board member **Bob Schmucker** at **540-521-4507**.

Help SVSA sustain Jefferson Center Music Lab

by Mollye Otis

SVSA is a sponsor of The Music Lab, a progressive music and production program at the Jefferson Center in Roanoke VA. We are making an annual contribution of $300 to the tuition fund that is distributed to worthy students from the greater Roanoke area who show talent and promise.

The Music Lab presents an extraordinary opportunity to about 30 students each year, offering state-of-the-art production studios, music lessons, and learning alongside professional guest artists.

Mickey Nelson, a longtime SVSA member, astute songwriter, and frequent performer saw the value in supporting the next generation of writers and co-founded The Music Lab. The SVSA created The Mickey Nelson Songwriter of the Year Award in his honor as an incentive to the Music Lab students, a way of "earning" our investment.

Jordan Harman, the Education and Outreach Coordinator for the program will guide and advise the students who will create and submit their work to an SVSA committee for adjudication at the end of the Spring Semester.

A plaque featuring Mickey Nelson is now prominently displayed in the Music Lab Production Room. Another plaque that will displayed will show the names of the winner of The Mickey Nelson Songwriter of the Year Award each year. Then, also yearly, a public presentation will recognize the winner and SVSA's part in this program.

Please consider donating $5 on behalf of the Mickey Nelson Award to help support our commitment.

There are two ways to pay, either by clicking the tab on the pull-down menu within the dues-paying page of the SVSA website or by sending a PayPal payment to **SVSAFunds@gmail.com**. You may also mail a check to PO Box 2901, Roanoke VA 24011.

We value songwriting as we value our organization and its members — and we hope you might make a small donation to help sustain this important outreach.

WOULD YOU "LIKE" TO HELP THE SVSA GET MORE FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK?

That's all we need you to do. Just go to our Facebook page and "like" us. That's it. Your "like" will cause Facebook's algorithms to start considering the SVSA's page for shares, postings, and a greater all-around presence.

Of course, we'd also appreciate your input. You can share things to our page, comment on posts, memes, and images, and generally help make our page become more active and seen by more Facebook users.

As we said, it doesn't take much. Just pop the following URL into your Google (or whatever) search box, go to the Facebook SVSA page, and "like" us. We'd really "like" it if you'd help us out! Thanks!

https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=southwest%20virginia%20songwriters%20association

The ceiling at 3rd Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke VA.

SVSA Secretary Mollye Otis settles in to do some recording at Tribal Sounds Studio, owned and operated by fellow SVSAer Forrest Baldwin.

LOCAL, REGIONAL OPEN MICS

Coming back soon

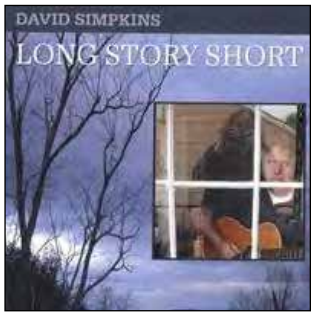
Many local and regional open mics shut down due to coronavirus concerns. The good news is that many of those same venues (and new ones as well) are finally re-opening. Keep an eye out for the return of our comprehensive Local & Regional Open Mic listings. It'll be sooner than later!

www.svsasongs.com

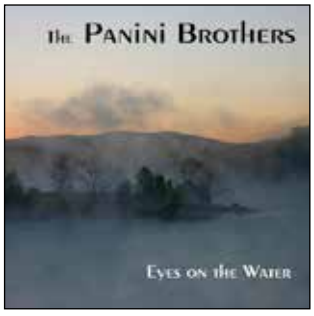
SVSA Members' Recordings

what's done is done

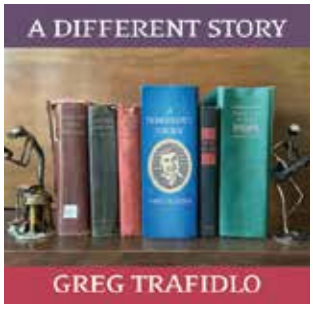
marc with a "c"



long story short

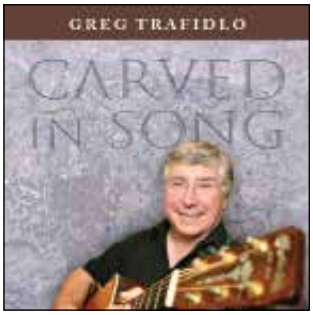


eyes on the water



a different story

the crawlspace tapes



carved in song

folk singular

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.

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.

The Panini Brothers

EYES ON THE WATER — Debut CD from a group comprised of SVSA members Larry Sakayama and Mike DeGiorgi as well as Chip Conway, Mark Earnhardt, and Scott Thomas. Jazzy, bluesey, eclectic, original tunes.

Greg Trafidlo

A DIFFERENT STORY — An eclectic combination of originals and covers featuring old friends and new, competently and professionally recorded and performed. And, as always, straight from the heart.

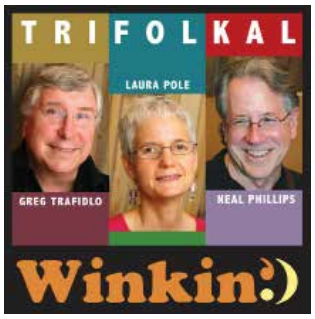
THE CRAWLSPACE TAPES — Greg's most joyful CD is a compilation of all his funny and goofy stuff. Tom Paxton says, "Loosen up, sourpusses. Greg is on the loose again!"

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

FOLK SINGULAR— 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.

SVSA Members' Recordings

silver



winkin'

pacing the moon

cup of contradictions

dimestore detective

dog joggin'

songwriter sessions

tales from the fire pit

Trifolkal

SILVER — The trio celebrates 25 years together with a "fan favorite" collection of covers from the Beach Boys to Tom Paxton.

WINKIN' — This top-notch release from that "trio fiercely dedicated to fun" tempers the fun with poignancy and heart.

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.

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.

Steve Clark

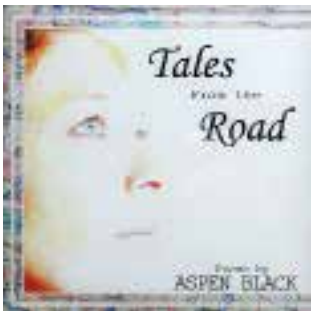
DOG JOGGIN' — Eleven sweet and true amusing tunes comprise this quirky singer/songwriter CD. Available at cdbaby.com.

The Entwined

SONGWRITER SESSIONS — The CD was released at Francis Ford Coppola's Turtle Inn Resort in Belize in 2018. It's a mix of 13 songs written by Dan Hildebrand ranging from real-life ballads to feel-good ditties. Recorded at Blackwater Studios. Percussion and harmony by Adonna Lemon.

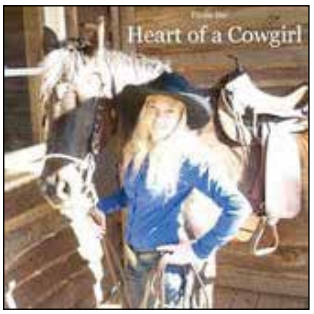
TALES FROM THE FIRE PIT — The most popular CD in Placenia, Belize for one week in 2018, the latest from the Entwined was recorded at Bad Monkey's music studio, located at the couple's home in VA, and features 10 original works.

SVSA Members' Recordings



tales from the road

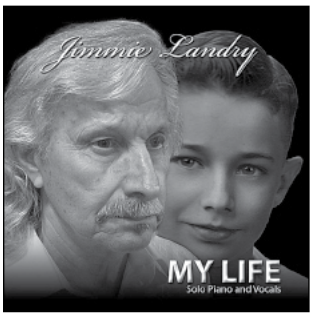
eastern western cowgirl



from the heart of a cowgirl

horsegirl poet

lovin' the west



my life

gumbo

style

Aspen Black

TALES FROM THE ROAD — 15 original poems with musical backup. Every poem has a tie to a road, although the road is never the subject. Either the road runs through it, shows up in a fleeting moment, or the whole story was inspired by, or witnessed "on the road."

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. Available at CDBaby.

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

LOVIN' THE WEST — This is the latest CD released by Western Music Association singer/songwriter – and SVSA member – Aspen Black. It features 10 original selections, seven of which are road-tested favorites.

Jimmie Landry

MY LIFE — Jimmie sings stories about his friends, family, and life on the road. A jazzy-blues New Orleans-style piano and vocals paint a picture of 60 years in music.

GUMBO — Hot and spicy down-home jazz, funk, and soul that goes down easy. Ten originals and three covers.

STYLE — A blend of standards and one original in a variety of grooves like straight-ahead swing, samba, jazz, waltz, and funky second-line blues.

"I believe the fire to create burns so heavily that I am never far from a guitar or a fountain pen."

~ Shelby Lynne

SVSA Members' Recordings

electric bill

acoustic bill

songs for veterans & patriots

eyes on the horizon

kaleidoscope

touch the sky

Bill Stanton

ELECTRIC BILL — Ten original songs of Bill's lyrics and melodies accompanied by former bandmates on electric instruments and vocal harmonies originally recorded in the 1980s.

ACOUSTIC BILL — Ten original songs with lyrics and melodies by Bill accompanied by former bandmates on acoustic instruments and vocal harmonies recorded from the early 1970s through 2000.

Jerry Gilmore

SONGS FOR VETERANS & PATRIOTS — covers topics concerning Vietnam veterans, POW/MIA warriors, the United States flag, military holidays, and the Medal Of Honor. The original compositions are performed in country, bluegrass, and southern rock styles. Available from CDBaby.

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.

TOUCH THE SKY — Swinging acoustic blues and jazz from Barb Martin and Mac Walter.

SVSA **DUES ARE DUE**

Pay $35 on-line on our web site or mail a check / money order to PO Box 2901, Roanoke VA 24011

www.svsasongs.com

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 **amosflame@aol.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. Email articles and information to the Editor, David Simpkins, at amosflame@aol.com

SVSA is a non-profit organization.

2023 SVSA Board Members:

Charlie Divers – President

Mike Franke – Vice President and Webmaster

Celie Holmes – Treasurer

Mollye Otis – Secretary

David Simpkins – At-Large Board Member and Newsletter Editor

Larry Helms – At-Large Board Member

Bob Schmucker – At-Large Board Member, 3rd Street Coffeehouse Liason

Dan Hildebrand – At-Large Board Member

Greg Trafidlo – At-Large Board Member

Southwest Virginia Songwriters Association
101 Church Ave SW
PO Box 2901
Roanoke VA 24011

www.svsasongs.com

THE SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION

WHO WE ARE

The Southwest Virginia Songwriters Association (SVSA), founded in 1981, comprises approximately 40 songwriters from diverse musical backgrounds who share the love of songwriting and interest in developing our craft. Our core mission is to meet monthly, listen to fellow writers' songs, and share feedback with one another in a supportive, encouraging, and engaging process.

The SVSA also offers workshops, social events, and performance opportunities for its members, along with a newsletter, web site, and a Facebook page that focus on members' creative engagement and outreach to Roanoke and the region.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this vibrant songwriting community, we invite you to audit two of our monthly meetings and then decide if you'd like to join the association. Once you've paid yearly dues, you can submit songs and contribute to the feedback sessions, plus participate in all our activities.

The greatest joy we have as a group is seeing writers growing and reaching their potential because of the work we do together. If you would like be a part of this songwriting community, please contact us at **info@svsasongs.com**

A BIT ABOUT OUR ASSOCIATION

We have among us people who range from seasoned professional and semi-professional performers to those have never been in front of an audience. Some of our members have many albums to their credit, while some have never set foot in a studio or on a stage.

Several members have sold songs to famous artists or have film and TV placements. Some play multiple instruments, and most play guitar or piano/keyboard but there are also non-instrumentalist lyricists in the mix. Some are singers, some non-singers, some with extensive music education, many with credits in the school of life experience who play by ear. There are writers who focus more on melody and harmony, and others who focus more on lyrics. Some writers are skilled producers/arrangers with a depth of technical know-how.

Our membership includes people of all ages representing a broad range of musical influences including folk, Americana, blues, gospel, rock, jazz, zydeco, pop, contemporary, country, bluegrass, Celtic, and theatre/cabaret. With this mix of diverse styles, interests, and skills, we share a rich knowledge base and learn through the exchange of expertise from multiple perspectives.

OUR METHOD

Unless otherwise indicated, The SVSA meets in the L.L. Rice Room at the Jefferson Center in Roanoke VA every fourth Wednesday of the month (with holiday exceptions). The doors open at 7:00 p.m. for meet, greet, and catch-up time. At 7:30, we may have business to discuss, then perhaps a brief period of activities such as writing exercises, mini-workshop presentations, videos, or other creative activities. Songs are then presented for listening and feedback sessions. On any given night, we discuss the songs in a robust, healthy exchange of comments and ideas. The meeting ends when all the songs have been presented or we close at 10:00 p.m.

Members and guests are required to submit their Covid vaccine record at check in, or, alternatively, email a photo of your card to: **mollyeotis@gmail.com**

Members may receive written feedback from other members in addition to the verbal feedback at live or virtual sessions.

Members are coached to be honest, thoughtful, and supportive of one another and respectful of the work. Our experience has been that our songs invariably improve after going through the feedback process.

If you would like to hang out with this welcoming group of songwriters, we would love to meet you! You are invited to audit two monthly meetings and then, should you decide to join, pay yearly dues of $35. Once a member, you may submit songs for consideration in our feedback sessions and will be eligible to participate in events and benefits of membership.