SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION

SVSA MUSIC NEWS

APRIL 2023

WWW.SVSASONGS.COM

APRIL FEATURE ARTICLE

Expanding vocabulary results in expressiveness

by Barbara Martin

I remember writing my first song. I had taught myself how to play the $35 Sears guitar that my older brother and I bought. I was playing around with a D chord. I moved my finger from the third fret of the second string down to the second fret of the second string. I was thrilled with the chord that was created! It was many years later until I could identify it as D Major7.

I was so excited about the sound of moving from D to D Major7 that I wrote my first song featuring this chord movement. I played it at my high school talent show to good applause and the student rock band asked me afterwards if they could cover it!

I've always been fascinated with different genres of music. I started out playing from the Joan Baez songbook, then got into Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell, who was especially fascinating with her open tunings.

I wound up in Virginia in 1986 and embarked on my professional music career. I barely knew how to play the bass, but talked myself into a job as bass player for a country band. Four-to-five hours a night of playing at Moose Lodges taught me about the country music genre. I began writing country songs and my band, Diamonds and Denim,

See Feature Article, page 2

The next in-person meeting of the SVSA this year will be held **WEDNESDAY APRIL 26** 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.

It's called a "QR Code." Turns out the new version of InDesign that I'm now using generates them as one of its new bells and whistles. Just scan it with the camera on your phone and it will link you to the SVSA website. It's magic! Try it!

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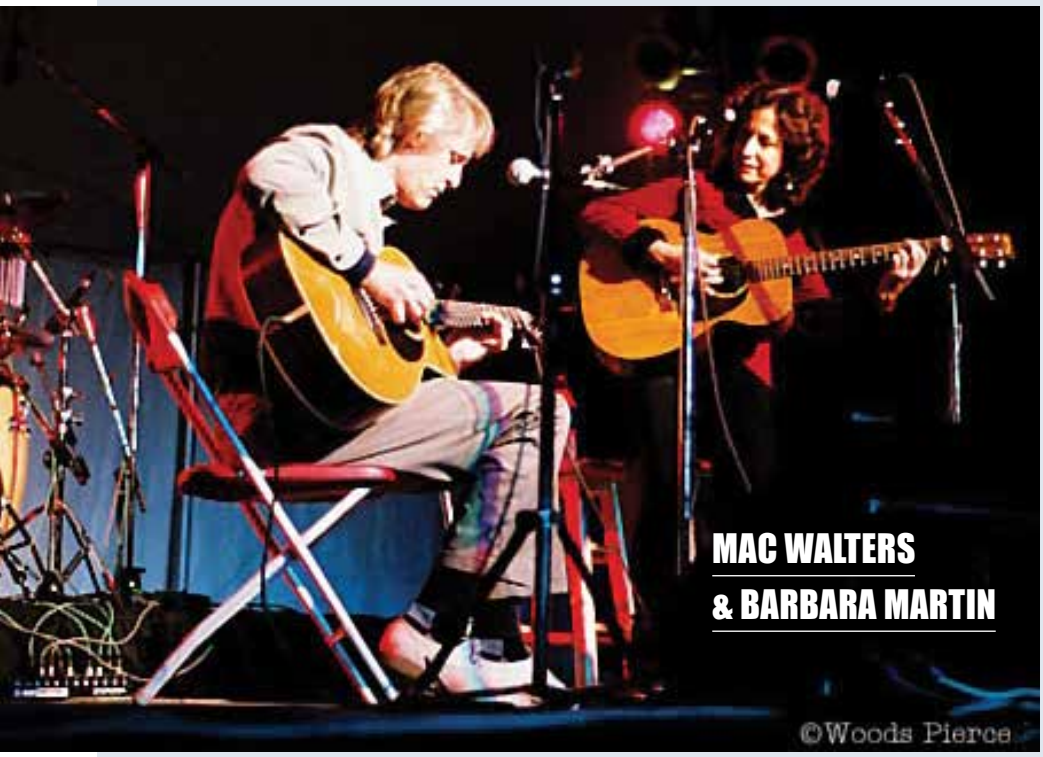


performed two of the songs and encouraged me to write more. I listened to a lot of Patsy Cline and learned the current country songs.

Eventually, I wanted to play more of my original songs and delved into the singer-songwriter scene, which, in the 90s, was enjoying a heyday.

I began touring from New England to North Carolina. I was still writing country and going to Nashville with **Greg Trafidlo** to pitch my songs.

During this time, I began to hear a familiar refrain from venues and publishers. Folk venues said, "You're not really folk." Country publishers said, "You're not really country." I felt pressured to make a choice, but I didn't want to! I wanted to perform and write in *both* genres.

Then one day while browsing in a record store, I bought a Bessie Smith CD. I fell in love with the music of the Empress of the Blues of the 1920s. I bought more music of this style, including the music of Sippie Wallace.

I learned how to play fingerstyle and started playing this music, as well as writing in this style. I began playing at blues venues and festivals with my music partner and incredible guitarist, Mac Walter.

Once again at some blues venues I heard the familiar, "You're not really blues." By then I could clearly see that I needed to move toward

venues that welcomed a variety of styles of music.

A few years later, I dug out a jazz standard torch song book and began playing these songs on the piano. Once again, I fell in love with the rich, expressive chord progressions of these songs. Mac Walter introduced me to the 12 need-to-know jazz chords and I was off on another exploration of a musical genre.

The new chords thrilled me and I began writing songs in this style. As I learned more, I heard jazz musicians refer to their musical vocabulary. Learning more chords and progressions increased their vocabulary and therefore their ability to express themselves musically.

Learning jazz chords enabled me to name the chords I was discovering and to know why moving that one finger on the D Major chord made it a D Major7 chord!

Today, when I sit down to write a song, I think about the emotion and theme of the song and which genre would best suit this emotion. Sometimes it takes me a while to figure out which genre will work best, but it's so much fun playing around with it.

I've also started experimenting with mixing open chords with jazz chords in songs. Why not?

Now that I'm semi-retired and honestly not worried about whether anyone thinks, "You're not really...." I enjoy the freedom of playing whatever I want and writing whatever I want in the vocabulary that I am so grateful to have learned from the generous musicians I have worked with.

Next meeting is this coming Wed, Apr 26

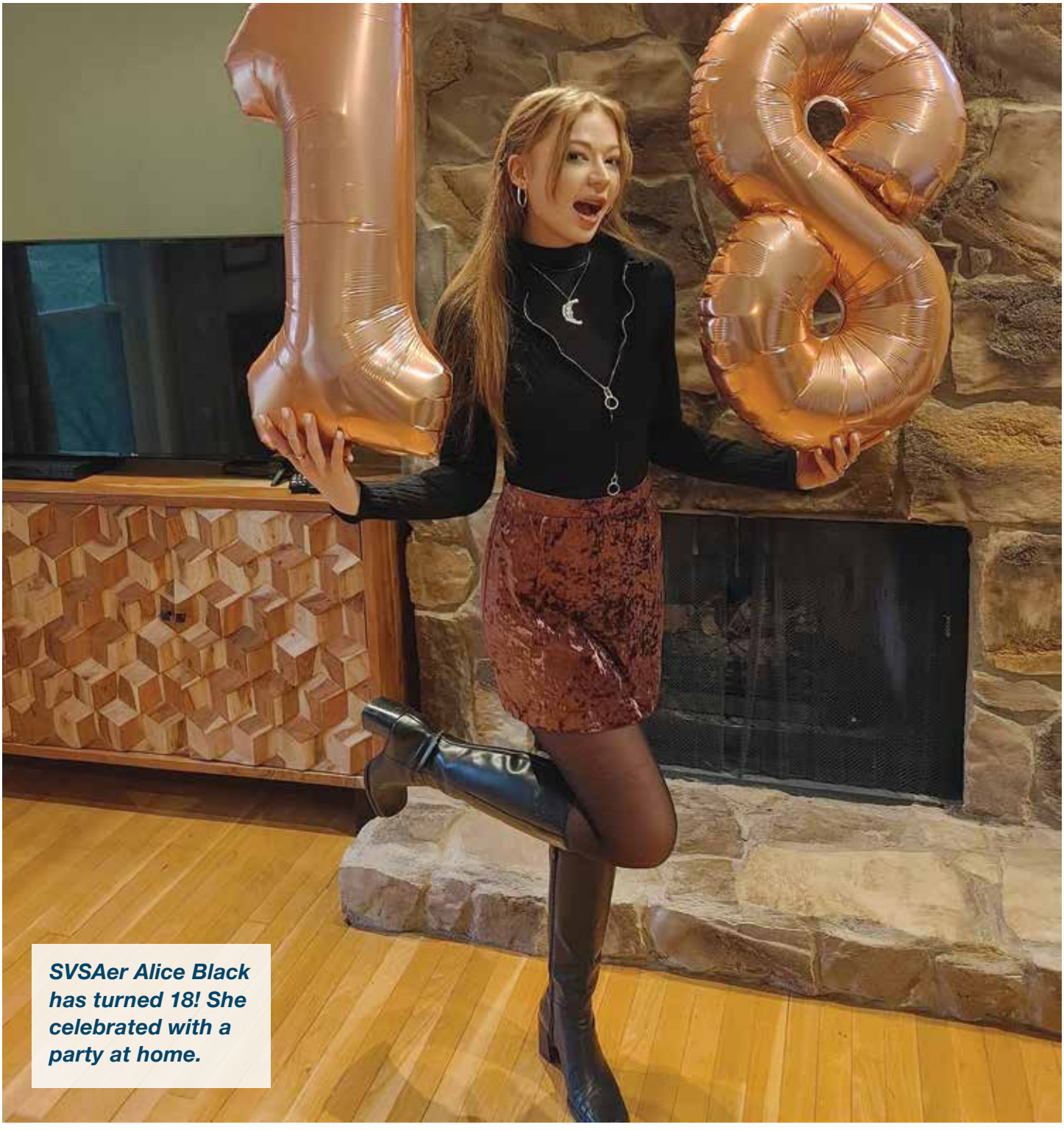
The next meeting of the SVSA is this **Wednesday, April 26**.

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 a CD or an mp3 on your phone are all you need — or bring your instrument if you want to perform your song live.

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 welcome to sit in on the discussions and exercises.



SVSAer Alice Black has turned 18! She celebrated with a party at home.

Jones' newest release, '*Jigsaw Star,*' is now streaming on Soundcloud

by **Josh Jones**

'*Jigsaw Star*' is my fifth _____ . I'm not sure what to call it these days. I think of it as an album.

Recorded music's been referred to by its physical medium since the days of wax cylinders. When I was a kid, we had records: 45s (singles), LPs (albums), and EPs. Then 8-tracks and cassettes made music portable — and we could make our own mixtapes, demos, etc.

I distributed my first album on a few dozen cassettes. CDs had hugely improved sound quality and perfect copies, so I put Albums Two through Four on CDs. Now I'm going to try streaming Album Five and see how it goes.

I'm using a music streaming service for independent artists called **Soundcloud**. I've uploaded all the songs to **Soundcloud**, along with a playlist with all songs in order. You don't need a **Soundcloud** account to either play or download songs as high quality (320kbps) MP3s.

You'll sometimes have to listen to ads before a song is played, much like YouTube. **Soundcloud** uses "fan-based royalties" which means the number of times a song is played by listeners determines what, if any, cut of the ad revenue I get. (I'm not holding my breath, mind you, but there's always hope.) Oh, please like and share if you're so moved. I believe they count that as well.

Thanks for taking the time to check out my **Soundcloud** page, and I hope you hear something you enjoy and come back to play again. Any questions, comments, suggestions, threats, etc. email me at thejonesgroup.jj@gmail.com. In particular, please let me know if anything doesn't work correctly.

P.S. I'm aware that the printed lyrics don't exactly match what I sang. My song lyrics often change, especially newer ones. Leonardo Da Vinci said "art is never finished, only abandoned." I have abandonment issues.

Beta 1.2, 4/17/2023 © Josh Jones 2023, all rights reserved.

Jigsaw Star

Josh Jones

Track Order

1. Sunspot Baby 3:39
2. Abide Love 3:28
3. Can't Get There From Here 2:48
4. Homer And The Boys 7:00
5. Disappointment Room 5:22
6. Ol' John Glenn 2:57
7. Karma Sings The Blues 3:30
8. On The Borderline 4:38
9. In The End 4:21
10. Need To Know 4:43
11. High Road Or Low 3:08
12. My Curtain's Last Call 5:03

LISTEN HERE:
https://soundcloud.com/josh-jones-895324133/sets/jigsaw-star/s-0iFeHbr8nxm?si=64e641f7de5f4942908e79da4b6abc33&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

Better late than ...

by Bill Stanton

Easter came late this year and Skip Brown and I just finished putting the final adjustments on our latest video called *He Is Not Here,* which depicts the women who came to the tomb to administer to their beloved Master.

The song, critiqued by SVSA in the Spring of 2020, follows the progression of these women who learn that something incredible has happened. The huge stone that sealed the tomb has been removed, they are told by an angelic emissary that "He is not here," which is the first line of the chorus of the song. It says, "He is not here / He is not here / Love has done away with fear."

The women are concerned that those responsible for the execution will want to know what happened to the body and where it is hidden. All the women can do is echo the angel's words: "He is not here."

So, even though it's a little late to present this song in the *SVSA Music News,* I wanted to direct you to YouTube where you can see a video of the song. *He Is Not Here* is an attempt by me to express the true meaning of the Easter experience.

Thanks to Skip Brown for his help in coordinating the visual images with the lyrics to the song and thanks to Martin Scudder for the amazing violin accompaniment and solo.

Here is the link to *He Is Not Here* on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOTJuJ_o2UY

Check one off the ol' Bucket List

by Jerry Gilmore

My Bucket List goal/prayer this year was to get an original song recorded by another artist. Well, guess what! A major record producer is working on a CD project for Guitars 4 Vets / Tunnel To Towers with songs for veterans and first responders.

I got several tunes to him and he selected *The Healing Power Of Music (In The Hands Of Our Heroes)* from my CD *'Songs For Veterans & Patriots.'* The song will be re-recorded in bluegrass style.

Other Nashville artists are to be determined. I do know that John Schnider is on board. Recording starts in May-June, with mixing and mastering following. The CD is scheduled to be released this fall. All proceeds go back to G4V / Tunnel 2 Towers.

I'm honored to be a part of this project. *Side note:* The inspiration for this song happened @ the 3rd Street Coffeehouse during the G4V Graduation (David Bowen, Instructor) way back in 2014. A graduate, Dan Simkins, gave a heartfelt testimonial about how this program saved him from the darkness of PTSD. As I recall, there was not a dry eye in the room.

Photo by Linda Giuliano Pearrell

SVSAer Mike Pearrell opened for Trifolkal at 3rd St Coffeehouse in Roanoke VA on April 7th.

SVSAer Julie Kinn makes a new friend during her recent trip to Ireland.

The HARDBEAN & McHONZIK Show Band:
39 YEARS STRONG!

SVSA Board Member **Dan Hildebrand** and Adonna Lemon made their annual St. Patrick's Day pilgrimage to Wisconsin this past March to perform in the HARDBEAN & McHONZIK Show Band.

The band includes Pete Honzik on guitar and vocals, Jim Van Lanen on violin, Adonna Lemon (the "Stump Fiddle" playing wench), Hildebrand on guitar and vocals, and a half dozen lovely, dancing wenches.

The group performed five times in four days to rowdy and enthusiastic St. Patrick's Day revelers.

The grand finale included a standing-room-only theater performance at the historic "Forst Inn" in Tisch Mills WI.

This was Hildebrand & Honzik's 39th year in a row (must be some kind of record somewhere?!) performing as the Hardbean & McHonzik Band They are looking forward to number 40!

Left to right: Neal Phillips, Laura Pole, Greg Trafidlo. (Photo by Judy Larson.)

Trifolkal headlines 3rd St with CD-release event

On April 7, Trifolkal was the headliner at 3rd Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke VA. Local songwriter, performer, and former SVSA President **Mike Pearrell** opened the show to an enthusiastic and attentive audience.

Trifolkal (SVSA Board Member **Greg Trafidlo** plus former SVSA members Laura Pole and Neal Phillips) is known for outstanding harmonies and a wide range of original songs.

The group is highly regarded both locally and nationally and has recorded six CDs along with numerous solo projects by each of the members.

Celebrating their 30th anniversary, they have recently released their seventh album, *'Virginia Morning.'* The album offers a mix of songs old and new, including some of their own as well as favorites from Tom Paxton, Robin & Linda Williams, Steve Goodman, Kate Wolf, Chet Powers, and Laura's sister Gigi.

Check them out at https://trifolkal.com/

Trifolkal backs Mike Pearrell. (Photo by Linda Giuliano Pearrell.)

Black's new CD to be released in May

Born to Be a Cowgirl, the first single from SVSAer Aspen Black's upcoming CD of the same name, was released to western radio earlier this week and is getting great response from the DJs.

The CD is scheduled for release in late May.

At left is Aspen in the pasture with Roxy (AQHA name Two D Docs Bueno Pep).

The SVSA meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month in the LL Rice Room at the Jefferson Center in Roanoke VA.

Holmes unleashes luthier skills in DIY guitar project

Editor's Note: *SVSA Treasurer* ***Celie Holmes*** *has been keeping her Facebook friends up to date on her recent guitar-building projects. This article, describing Celie's first guitar build, is edited from her Facebook page. She is currently working on a* second *electric guitar.*

by Celie Holmes

Several weeks ago I bought a couple of "fixer-upper" electric guitars. After learning a lot (thanks YouTube!) about guitar electronics and soldering I was able to fix both of those.

With those successes under my belt, I decided to embark on a mission to *build* a solid-body electric guitar.

I had some furniture grade 5/8" thick boards of cherry and poplar that I wanted to use for the body. They were not thick enough, so I knew I would have to glue them flat together to make a double-layer, two-wood body.

So, I sat down to draw ideas for a shape that would be comfortable to hold, not too heavy, and would accommodate the various electrical components. I decided to buy a prefab neck, though, since trying to build one from scratch was overwhelming.

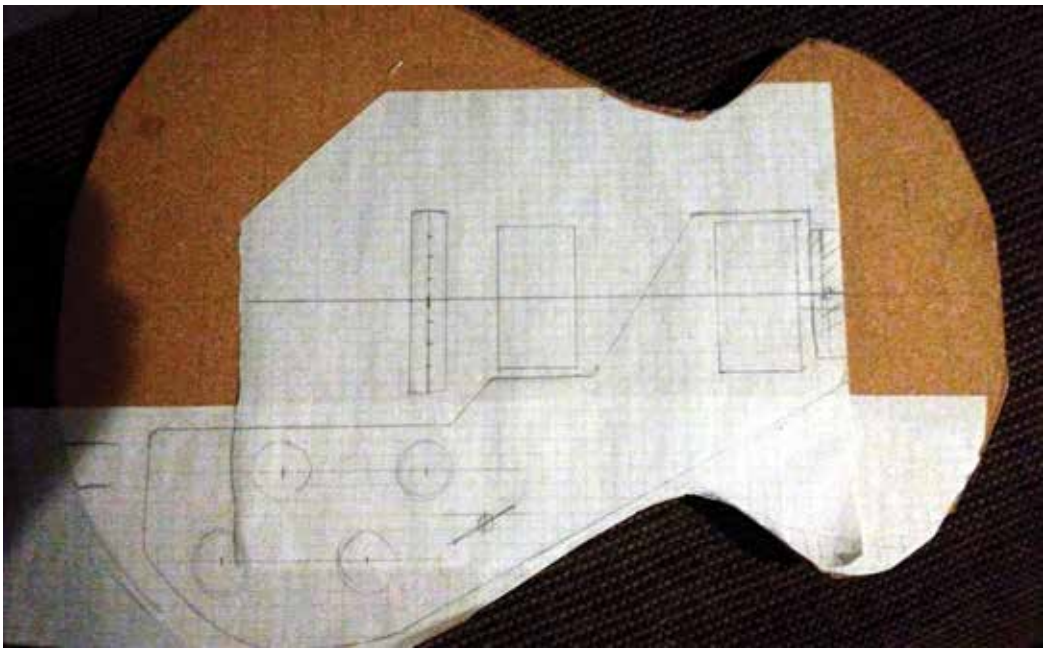
I bought two P-90 pickups, bridge hardware, tuning knobs, a sheet of pick-guard material from which to cut the guard, rear access and truss rod covers, and all the other internal bits n' pieces and got to work, initially making both an MDF, and a plywood template for the guitar body.

I re-visited YouTube many times to learn about proper wood-routing techniques.

I also went through many iterations of pickguard shapes using cardboard templates.

Below (and on the next page) is a pictographic journey through the main stages, including the (ugly, but functional) wiring on the inside. I learned a lot, especially what *not* to do next time.

I was ecstatic when I plugged it in and everything worked just as it should!



More Holmes DIY photos, page 11

Still have a long way to go ...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

More Holmes DIY photos, page 12

Still more work to be done ...

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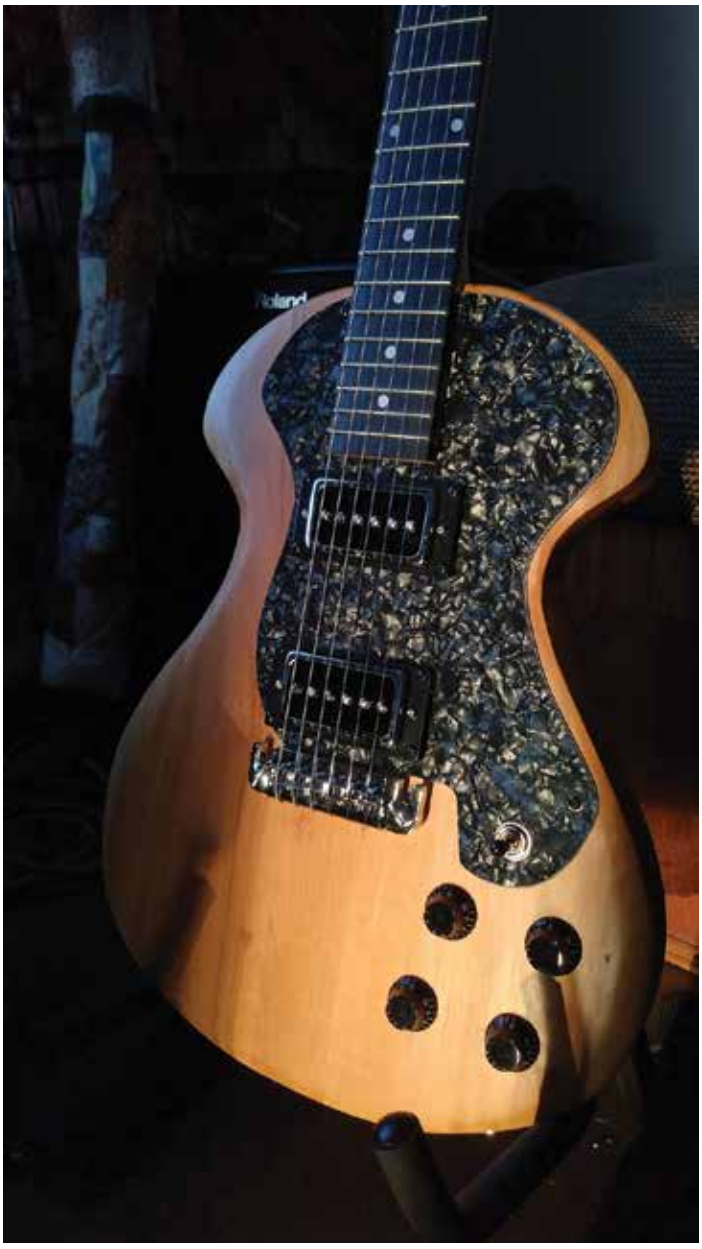
At last!
Below is the final product — all strung up and ready to play!



NEWS & NOTES FROM

3RD STREET COFFEEHOUSE

Exciting music lineup characterizes upcoming month

by **Bob Schmucker**

3rd Street has continued to see successful shows full of happy faces during the month of April so far. We are really pleased with the support that we are getting from the local community of songwriters and fans of Folk and Americana music!

On April 14th, we had a special night honoring SVSA member **Josh Jones** and his wife Robin for his many contributions as booking agent and equipment manager for 3rd Street Coffeehouse. Honoring Josh with songs and stories were **Bob Schmucker**, **Greg Trafidlo**, **Marc Baskind**, **Aspen Black**, and **Dan Hildebrand** and Adonna Lemon.

Several others honored Josh with words of thanks and appreciation. Josh was presented with an old Epiphone guitar that was signed by many of Josh's 3rd Street Coffeehouse and SVSA friends. The highlight of the evening was Josh taking the stage to play a number of his highly requested story songs and a cut from his new album *'Jigsaw Star.'*

May is **Mike Franke** Month and starts out with a doubleheader. On Friday, April 28th, we'll have Durham NC-based singer-songwriter Ruth Wyand with Ken Currier opening. Our friends at the Americana Community Music Association (ACMA) have this to say about Ruth: "To sit and listen to Ruth Wyand is the opportunity to experience the best of americana, blues, jazz, and folk along with her great style of storytelling."

On April 30th, Canadian singer-songwriter and house favorite Scott Cook returns with partner Pamela Mae for a special Sunday afternoon show starting at 3:00 p.m. after finishing up a three-month tour of Asia, New Zealand, and Australia (he does get around). I literally can't say enough good things about Scott. He's a modern day Woody Guthrie if there ever was one. **Mike Franke** will be opening.

On Friday May 5th, **Mike Franke** returns as opener for Texas singer-songwriter Randy Lewis Brown. Randy

See 3rd Street, page 14

Josh Jones and his wife Robin are having their cake and eating it, too!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

falls into the category of "house-favorite." He's not only a terrific performer, he's also a columnist for Americana Highways.

On Friday, May 12th, **Mike Franke** will be our featured performer with Christopher Hammock opening.

On Saturday, May 13th, **Mike Franke** will be playing at Solstice Farm Brewery in Catawba VA because, after all, it's **Mike Franke** Month!

On Friday, May 19th, the great Ron Fetner returns with NC based J. Candeed opening.

Winding up the month on May 26th, Josh and Julie Kinn — Kinnfolk — return to our stage with local folkie Betsy Biesenbach opening.

Also in May, our Guitars Under the Stars guitar pull will be held on the first and third Sundays by the lower observation deck on Mill Mountain starting at 2:00 p.m.. If it is raining (not too hard), we'll relocate to the shelter that is just behind restrooms, by the star (the red brick building). Hopefully, the weather will cooperate. See our Facebook page for any changes. Bring something to sit on and a song in your heart!

This month's 3rd Thursday at 3rd Street Open Mic with host and SVSA member **Aspen Black** will be on May 18th from 7-9:00 p.m.

Trinity UMC is still holding discussions about merging with Greene Memorial UMC in downtown Roanoke VA. Kids Soar, the after-school reading program that uses Trinity as its headquarters, will likely make an offer to buy the building.

As of this time, 3rd Street Coffeehouse will remain in the building and continue to be the best listening room in Southwest Virginia!

Looks like the graffiti people got to Josh Jones's new guitar before he could play it! Handing the presentation gift over to Jones are Bob Schmucker and Greg Trafidlo.

Martin to play in DC

SVSAer **Barbara Martin** will be performing as part of the Library of Congress Veterans History Project's three-day event commemorating the Vietnam War in Washington DC on the Mall on May 11. Admission is free, but registration is required.

There will be a screening of a documentary, "The War and Peace of Tim O'Brien." Prior to the film there will be live music from Martin. Vietnam-era collections will be on display in the Great Hall. After the film, there will be a Q&A session with the film director.

Get your tickets at https://loc.usedirect.com/LOC/ For more information, visit https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/

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. **$2600.00.** 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**.

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.

SVSA SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION

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

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.

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!

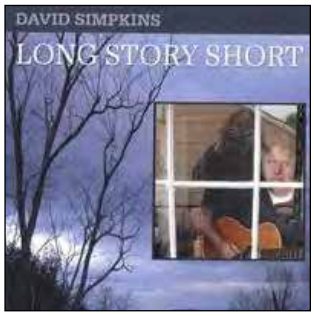
ABOVE

On April 15, SVSAer Aspen Black did something new. Let's let her describe it: "I marched, while singing and playing ukulele, in the Daisy Art Parade in Roanoke VA with my friend, Simone Paterson as members of Ukestra. It was quite the experience, awe-inspiring and lots of fun, with costumes, paper maché masks, theatrical props, and giant puppets. The purpose was to express the various forms of art within each of us and build community. Our art form was music."

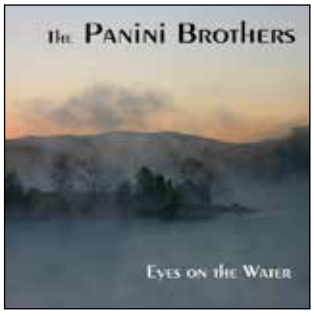
SVSA Members' Recordings

what's done is done

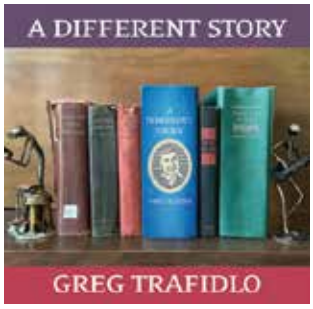
marc with a "c"



long story short

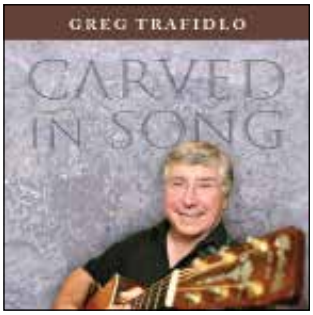


eyes on the water



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.

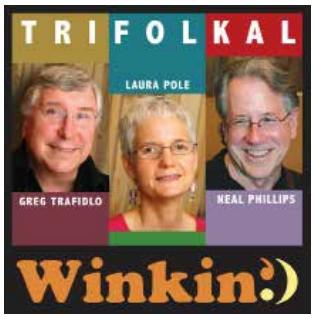
THE CRAWLSPACE TAPES — Greg's most joyful CD is a compilation of all his funny and goofy stuff. Tom Paxton says, "Loosen up, sourpusses. Greg is on the loose again!"

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

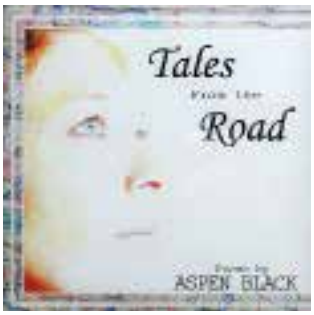
DOG JOGGIN' — Eleven sweet and true amusing tunes comprise this quirky singer/songwriter CD. Available at cdbaby.com.

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.

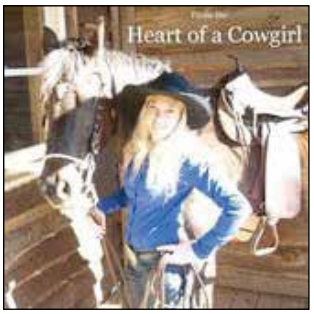
TALES FROM THE FIRE PIT — The most popular CD in Placenia, Belize for one week in 2018, the latest from the Entwined was recorded at Bad Monkey's music studio, located at the couple's home in VA, and features 10 original works.

SVSA Members' Recordings



tales from the road

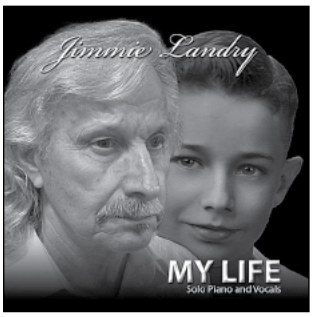
eastern western cowgirl



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'll choose lyrical content from a list of concepts I have in my phone, and whenever I think of one, I write it down. I choose a word, one solid concept. So say I see a chandelier, I think 'Oh, how can I use that?'... There's a lot of strategy that goes into it."

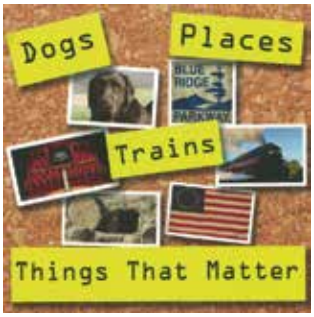
~ Sia Furler

SVSA Members' Recordings

electric bill

acoustic bill

songs for veterans & patriots



dogs, trains, places and things that matter

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 US flag, military holidays, and the Medal Of Honor. The original compositions are performed in country, bluegrass, and southern rock styles. Available from CDBaby.

DOGS, TRAINS, PLACES & THINGS THAT MATTER — A "Baker's Dozen" of original tunes on a wide range of subjects in the traditional country format. Available at CD Baby and all the major platforms for download.

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.

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.