

SQUEEZINS

"Our squeezin'...is pleasin'"

Don Lipovac, an accordionist extraordinaire, passed away on April 26, 2014. The *Kansas Arts Council* described him as a "cultural treasure."

His career in music started in childhood playing Slovenian songs on the button accordion that his grandfather used to sing. Through classical training, he developed into a renowned accordion artist, winning the national virtuoso competition at Carnegie Hall in 1958, going on to represent the United States in the world competition in Brussels, Belgium. Don studied the piano accordion under Alfred Vacca of Kansas City, Missouri, and earned degrees in music theory and music education at the *Kansas City Conservatory of Music*.

He also gave solo concerts around the country and performed as a soloist with the *Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra*. Don leaves a great legacy in his hometown, where he developed a deep appreciation and love for the folk music of his Slovene and Croatian neighborhood,



that extended to the other ethnic groups.

He taught and directed over 200 students of *St. John's School Tamburitzza Orchestra*. The *Don Lipovac Polka Band* and their records are well-known and appreciated around the world. Don's polka style was inspired by his friend, Frank Yankovic. The band became frequent performers at local events and festivals around the country. Their popularity has earned

recognition and induction in the *National Cleveland Style Polka Hall of Fame* and *Iron World USA Polka Hall of Fame* in Chisholm, Minnesota.

Don will be remembered for his contemporary style of music. However, his main love was folk music. For his life-long dedication to folk music, he was inducted into the *Tamburitzza Hall of Fame*.

He will be missed, but his many accomplishments will keep him alive for

June Meeting

2:00 pm	Meet & Greet+Orchestra Rehearsal
3:00 pm	Business Meeting
3:15 pm	Individual and Group Performances
5:00 pm	Jam Session

The **June meeting will be held on Sunday, June 8, at 3:00 pm**. As usual, the meeting will be held at the Messiah Lutheran Church, located on the southeast corner of Northwest Expressway and Portland in Oklahoma City.

Everyone is encouraged to come, and everyone

is encouraged to perform. If you are shy about playing alone, some of us will play with you.

After the individual and group performances, we will have a Jam Session.

All are welcome to join in on the fun!



The Prez Sez

Barbara Duer

Our meetings have been fantastic. We've had lots of people and groups playing, and that's what makes the meetings so enjoyable. Please, please, everyone play for us.

We started signing up and rehearsing for the August concert at the May meeting. It was fun. We have at least ten groups and soloists signed up. Now we just have to keep practicing.

Below, I included an article on Zydeco music this month. There's a group that plays every year at the Dallas convention, and they are very entertaining group. There's always an accordion and a washboard. I thought the history of that area was interesting. It was very isolated for a long time.

• Barbara



Zydeco

Zydeco is a genre that has become synonymous with the United States. This southern black music tradition has also now achieved much wider appreciation of the cultural and musical identity of Louisiana because of the migration of the French-speaking blacks and multiracial Creoles, the mixing of Cajun, and the *Zydeco* festivals throughout America and Europe. *Zydeco* music is performed at festivals, schools, performing art centers, and large corporate events. It is performed for presidents and celebrities, heard on cinema soundtracks, and used to advertise everything from vehicles to toothpaste to antacids, pharmaceuticals, and candy bars. *Rolling Stone*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Time Magazine*, among many others, have featured it. It is played on radio stations around the world and on Internet radio.

The original French settlers came to Louisiana in the late 1600s, sent by the Regent of France, Philippe d'Orléans, Duke of Orléans, to help settle the Louisiana Territory. Arriving in New Orleans on seven ships, the settlers quickly moved into the bayous and swamps. There the French culture permeated those of the Irish, Spanish, Native Indian, and German peoples already populating the area.

For 150 years, Louisiana Creoles enjoyed an insular lifestyle, prospering, educating themselves without the government, and building their invisible communities under the *Code Noir*. The French created the *Code Noir* in 1724 to establish rules for treatment of slaves, as well as restrictions and rights for *gens de couleur libres*, a growing class of free people of color. They had the right to own land, something few blacks in the American South had at that time.

Zydeco's rural beginnings and the prevailing economic conditions at its inception are reflected in the song titles, lyrics, and bluesy vocals. The music arose as a synthesis of traditional Creole music, some Cajun music influences, and African-American traditions, including R&B, blues, jazz, and gospel. It was also often just called French music, or *le musique Creole* known as "la-la." Amédé Ardoin made the first recordings of Creole music in 1928. This Creole music served as a foundation for what later became known as *Zydeco*. Sometimes the music was performed in the Catholic Church community centers, as Creoles were mostly Catholic. Later, it moved to rural dance halls and nightclubs.

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100010 Hefner Village Terrace
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BDuer@sbcglobal.net

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accordion_karen@yahoo.com

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Dick Albreski

Oklahoma City, OK

juaccord@hotmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Frank Gesinski

8035 South Irvington
Tulsa, OK 74136-8404
918/492-1715

OKAccordionClub@sbcglobal.net

WEBMASTER

Diana Richard

Diana.l.richard@gmail.com

WEBSITE

<http://www.okaccordions.com/>

The Treasurer Sez

Milo Shedeck

- Here is a good accordion website:
www.accordionusa.com
- No birthdays in June.
- Dance every Saturday night at the Yukon Czech Hall, featuring Dick Albreski and Milo Shedeck.

- See www.czechhall.com for the schedule of bands
- We still have a positive balance in the treasury.
- Hope everyone had a great Mother's Day, and may you all have a great Father's Day.
- Milo



Mark Your Calendars

Dick Albreski

Les Grande Dames of Springfield Missouri will present "An Afternoon of Fun" at the *Library Center* in Springfield, Missouri on June 8, 2014. The event presented by our own OAC's Lou LeBrun, along with Sharon Fox, will feature an exciting repertoire of accordion music. The event will start at 2:00 pm, and the public is cordially invited. See the invitation on page 7 in this newsletter.

The Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration will be held from June 19 to 22, 2014 in Leavenworth, Washington. The many headliners include Tony Lovello and Cory Pesaturo. Here's your chance to see the WORLD'S LARGEST ACCORDION. This event, sponsored by the *Northwest Accordion Society*, will be their 21st annual meeting. For more information, visit www.nwasnews.com.

The American Accordionists' Association (AAA) will host their 2014 Festival from July 9 to 13 at the *DoubleTree Hotel*, 445 South Tarrytown, New York, NY. Some of the guest artists include: Vladimir Mollow, Dallas Vietty, and Frank Carozza. For more information, visit www.ameraccord.com.

The Accordion Teachers Guild (ATG) will hold their 74th Festival from July 23 to 26, 2014 at the *Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel* in Burlingame, CA. The featured guests will be Stas Venglevski and Frank

Petrilli. For more information, visit www.Accordions.com/ATG.

The Oklahoma Accordion Club will have their annual Free Concert on August 10, 2014, at the *Norman Depot*, 200 South Jones Avenue, Norman, OK from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. No reservations required, but come early because of open seating. This is your chance to hear international music performed by the OAC accordionists.

The 24th Annual Cotati Accordion Festival will be held on August 16 and 17, 2014 in Cotati, California. The *Cotati Festival* was started in 1991 to support local youth organizations. Dick Contino and Bruce Gassman will be two of the many performers. For more information, visit www.cotatifest.com.

The Chapel Creek Winery will host a weekend of wine sampling on September 6 and 7, 2014 at their winery, located at 5005 Darlington Rd. in El Reno, OK (south of El Reno on Route 81). OAC member Dick Albreski will perform from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm on Saturday and Sunday. For fun, good food, great wine, and terrific accordion music, don't miss this event.

The 67th Coupe Mondiale will be held in Salzburg, Austria from October 27 to November 2, 2014. Make your reservations early.



Honor Role of Lifetime Members

- Janet Haskin
- Roland Lohmann



- Tom Phillips
- Phil Scibelli



May Minutes

Maggie Abel

Minutes of OAC Meeting May 11, 2014

President Barbara Duer called the meeting to order. There were 19 members and three guests present.

Vice President Tom Phillips offered a prayer. Then we all enjoyed the special refreshments: pizza and soda pop. Roland Lohmann provided the drinks.

As we ate, we listened to music played by Roland, Bob Mansfield, and Rob Murrow — “Schnee Walzer,” “Blue Skirt Waltz,” and other German songs.

The music performances that followed were mostly selections that players are working on for the August 10 concert:

- Steve Scott, Wayne Turgeon, Myke Dixon, and Tom Phillips played “The Indian Song.” Barbara Duer accompanied them on a hand-held drum.
- Roland and Rob played “You’re Sixteen.”
- Tom gave us his version of “Old McDonald” — “Old McCongress Had A Farm Bill.”
- Karen West played “I Wanna Be Around.”

- Barbara played “Czardas” and “Rustic Dance.”
- Dick Albreski played “Moonlight in Vermont.”
- The Accordionaires (Dan Orza, Karen West, John Buchanan, and Lois Roth) performed several pieces, including “Paragon March,” “Lady of Spain,” and “Popeye the Sailor Man.”
- Bob, Roland, and Rob played “You Needed Me.”
- Dan soloed with Sousa’s “Semper Fideles March.”
- Dick played “Accordiana.”

Dick said the youth group will perform at the concert. Barbara said that she, Lois, and Anne Lopez are working on a medley, with Barbara playing banjo.

Roland told us that he plays with an accordion group that meets in Alva almost every week and has a great time.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, June 8. Come and play your accordion, or just listen to the music.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Roth for Secretary Maggie Abel



May Meeting

Diana Richard



Mr. Smarty Pants Accordion Facts

- The word accordion comes from the German word "akkord," which means "agreement, harmony."
- "Weird Al" Yankovic got his first accordion at age 7 from his parents, who promptly enrolled him in the Famous Zoum Academy of Music.
- His grandmother would subsequently pay him a dollar every time he came over to visit and play his accordion.
- On April 18, 1939, Joe Biviano, Abe Goldman, and Gene von Halberg became the first people in history to play the accordion in Carnegie Hall
Their selection, but of course, was an eerie selection--Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor."
- There used to be a game show/talent contest on television in the Soviet Union that was called "Play Your Accordion!"
- Stanley Dural, otherwise known as Buckwheat Zydeco, refused to play the accordion as a child because he considered it to be the instrument of his father and grandfather.
He stuck to the piano and organ until the mid-1970s after playing organ for Clifton Chenier.
- Professor Willard Palmer is credited with having the longest continuous master's degree program in accordion ever (it was at the University of Houston).
- Palmer also appeared on the television show, "America's Funniest Videos" playing the "Beer Barrel Polka" on the accordion.
It fell apart in the middle of the song.
- The first color documentary about accordion production was released in 1954.
- Accordionist Myron Floren joined the Lawrence Welk Orchestra on March 7, 1950, in St. Louis after being asked by Welk to sit in during Welk's first set on the songs "Roll Out the Barrel," "Lady of Spain," "12th Street Rag," and Welk's own "Baby Medley"; by intermission, Welk offered him a job.
- An accordionist since the 1930s, Floren first played on the radio in 1939 on KSOO in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
- Floren had been an accordion teacher, a member of the country western band the *Buckeye Four*, and an entertainer for the troops in World War II.
- Even though Welk retired in 1981, Floren played 150 dates a year for 25 years in a row. He once performed at Wursthfest in New Braunfels, Texas.
- In 1990, there were an estimated 75,000 accordionists in the United States.
- Pietro Deiro, known by all accordionists as "the Daddy of the Accordion," was born in Saito, Italy in 1888.
- Eventually, he established a vaudeville career in San Francisco and got signed to RCA Victor Records.
- He died Nov. 3, 1954.
- Former Boston Celtics player Tony Lavelli used to play his accordion at half time.
- Debra Peters (of Debra Peters and the *Love Saints*) started on the accordion at age 4 after being convinced by a guy who was selling lessons door-to-door. After two weeks of persistent requests, her mom finally agreed to buy her one.
- Peters, a veteran champ of several Kiwanis club-sponsored accordion contests, once was a member of a winning orchestra that had 50 accordionists.
- Deborah Norville (formerly of NBC's *Today Show*) is a closet accordion player.
- Tchaikovsky used the accordion in his "Suite No.2 in C major" in 1883.
- Prokofiev used the accordion in his "Cantata for the 20th Anniversary of the October Revolution," Opus 74.
- In 1990, the city of San Francisco designated the accordion as its official instrument.
- The cities of Detroit, Skokie, Illinois, and St. Paul, Minnesota eventually did the same.
- The "Golden Encyclopedia of Music" by Norman Lloyd describes the accordion as "an organ-like piece of furniture (that was) dear to the Victorians."
- The accordion was used extensively in the score of the television series "Wagon Train."
- In China, the accordion is known as the "Sun-Fin-Chin"; in Russia, it is the "Bayan"; in Norway the "treks pill"; and in Italy, the "fisarmonica."
- In 1929, Joseph Falcon became the first popular Cajun accordionist to get a recording contract.

An Invitation

Les Grande Dames will present an accordion concert in Springfield, Missouri on Sunday, June 8, at 2:00 pm in the *Library Center* at 4653 S. Campbell Ave. (James River Freeway to Campbell, south one mile to the Library). There is no charge for this afternoon of fun.

Our own Dick Albreski will be the featured accordion performer, and there will be "Fun for Everyone," including Comedy, TV Theme Contest with a prize, and soloists Sharon Fox and Lou LeBrun

(Oklahoma City Club member). The quartet *Gentle Squeeze* and duet *Les Grande Dames* will also play a variety that is sure to please all. Seats are limited so be early. BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!!!

For additional information, contact:

• Sharon Fox: 417/839-9210,
sharlfox@yahoo.com

• Lou LeBrun: 417/890-0878,
loulebrun@hotmail.com



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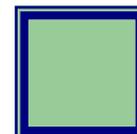
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