

SQUEEZINS

"Our squeezin'...is pleasin'"



The Oklahoma Accordion Club Newsletter

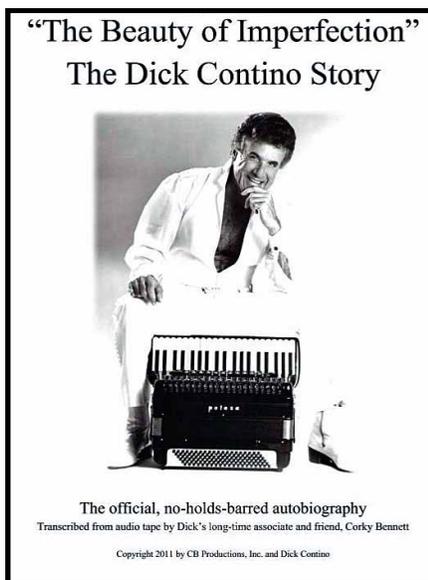
Dick Contino Autobiography

This is the autobiography of legendary superstar accordionist Dick Contino, transcribed from audiotape. This no-holds-barred accounting of his life reveals his history, thoughts, and anecdotes. The book also reveals his battles with extreme phobias, incarceration, gambling, drinking, and indiscretions. The story also includes his current life with his lovely wife, Tonia.

Dick Contino has led a very interesting life, to say the least. He became a superstar on the *Horace Heidt radio show* in the late '40s. His subsequent Army problem and prison

sentence made major headlines. He became a household name. He was honorably discharged as a staff sergeant and received a presidential pardon. Many people, still, do not believe he served his country.

Dick is not only a world-class musician, but also one of the premier entertainers of our time. He is absolutely magical on stage, garnering standing ovations every show. He exudes warmth and passion beyond belief. He performed on the *Ed Sullivan Show* more times than any other entertainer. This is a very interesting, intriguing, and compelling story. Dick Contino may be the most misunderstood celebrity of all time.



May Meeting

The May meeting will be held on Sunday, May 14, at 3:30 pm.

As usual, the meeting will be held at the Messiah Lutheran Church. The church is 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.

Members are invited to bring snacks for everyone.

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

Hello everyone. It's that time when we start preparing for the concert in August. This is our fifth concert. Our concerts have all been successful, allowing members an opportunity to play for a larger audience, and to share our accordion music with the community.

Please be prepared to sign up at the May meeting if you plan to play in the concert. If you are not at the May meeting, please call me at 405/205-6565 to sign up. Be prepared to play at the June and July meetings to practice and get tips for your performance.

This month, I thought I'd write about Dick Contino, since Dick Albreski brought my attention to him when he died recently:

Dick Contino (January 17, 1930 – April 19, 2017) was an American accordionist and singer. Contino was born in Fresno, California. He studied accordion primarily with San Francisco-based Angelo Cognazzo, and occasionally with Los Angeles-based Guido Deiro. Early on he exhibited great virtuosity on the instrument.

Contino got his big break on December 7, 1947, when he played "Lady of Spain" (his signature piece) and won first place in the Horace Heidt/Philip Morris talent contest in Fresno, which was broadcast on national radio. Contino also won first place in subsequent competitions in Los Angeles, Omaha, Des Moines, Youngstown, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and New York City. Contino's song "Yours" was his first hit single. The song reached #27 on the U.S. pop charts in 1954. His second and only other hit single was "Pledge My Love." It reached #42 on the U.S. pop charts in 1957.

Dick Contino playing "Lady of Spain": https://youtu.be/I9_2EkxIIY

Dick Contino playing "Arrivederci Roma": <https://youtu.be/MJWI85JHVQ8>

• Barbara



A group of terrorists hijacked a plane full of accordion players.

They called ground control with a list of demands.

Then they told the negotiator that if their demands weren't met, they would release one accordion player an hour.

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Mark Your Calendars

Dick Albreski

Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration will be held June 15 to 18, 2017 in Leavenworth, Washington. Stas Venglevski, Kim and Dan Christian, and the *Northwest Accordionaires* will be some of the many great performers. This event includes accordion competitions, concerts in the *Festhalle*, free accordion lessons, and an accordion parade. For more info, go to <http://www.AccordionCelebration.org>, or call 206/622-4786.

American Accordion Association (AAA) Festival will be held at the *Westin Princeton Hotel* at Forrestal Village, New Jersey, July 12 to 16, 2017. Accordion star performers, exhibits, banquets, competitions, plus workshops are planned. Mark your calendars.

Accordion Teachers Guild (ATG) will hold its annual meeting in Lisle, Illinois, July 19 to 23, 2017. Concerts, banquets, exhibits, workshops, and competitions will be featured. Mark your calendars.

Annual OAC Free Concert will be held on August 13, 2016, at the *Czech Hall* on Czech Hall

Road in Yukon, Oklahoma from 2:20 to 4:30 pm. The talented members of the *OAC* will perform for your listening pleasure.

Yukon Czech Days will be held on October 7, 2017 in downtown Yukon, Oklahoma. Festivities start at 11:00 am with a massive parade, followed by traditional Czech music and dancing throughout the day. *OAC* member Milo Shedeck will direct the *Bohemian Knights Band* in performing familiar polkas, waltzes, and schottisches. That evening there will also be a grand ball in the *Czech Hall* located on Czech Hall Road. This is one event you should mark on your calendar.

Las Vegas International Accordion Convention, October 23 to 26, 2017, at the *Gold Coast Hotel & Casino*, Las Vegas, Nevada. They will feature Joey Miskulin, Stas Vengleski, Mary Tokarski, and Pete Barbutti, just some of the many featured accordionists. There will be workshops, concerts, and a youth competition. For more information, go to <http://www.AccordionStars.com>.

Look for more accordion events in future issues of *Squeezins*.



Happy Birthday Wishes to
the following OAC members:

William "Rusty" Dolton, May 2

Phil Scibelli, May 16

Colleen Rettman, May 18

Barbara Mahar, May 30

Your birthdate is collected from your OAC membership application, if you have chosen to include it. If your birthdate is not listed on our newsletter birthday page during the year, please contact Karen West at 405/949-0394, or at accordion_karen@yahoo.com.



April Meeting

Maggie Abel

Pizza Party Meeting April 9, 2017 Oklahoma Accordion Club

Pizza was served to the Club's 16 members and two guests before the meeting. Anne Lopez entertained us with Italian songs as we ate. President Barbara Duer introduced a guest, Pat Biggers, an accordionist. Anne's mother, Cassie Radicelli, also attended as a guest.

- Barbara said that last year's August concert was an hour too long, and noted that some guests left during the intermission. This year, additional advanced players will be placed in the first segment. Other suggestions were offered to move performances along more quickly.
- Secretary Maggie said handwritten thank you notes were received from the youth who received Club funds to attend last March's convention in Texas.
- Barbara is soliciting feedback on the possibility of videotaping the August concert. Who is okay with being in the video, and who is not?
- Bob Mansfield played on his small, free-base accordion, first the traditional Jewish wedding song "Mazel Tov," and then a medley from "Fiddler on the Roof."

- The *Oklahoma Accordion Band*, directed by Past President Dick Albreski, played "When You Wore a Tulip," "April Showers," and "Easter Parade." Players included Lois Roth, Toni Paulding, Barbara Mahar, Beth Henson, Maggie Abel, Jim Woolly, and Mike Clark.
- Dick demonstrated single notes, block chords, and inversions in his presentation of "The Best Things in Life are Free." Next, Dick played snippets of songs from various countries to demonstrate that "music can take you all over the world." The "[Easter] Bunny Hop" and the "Chicken Dance" were accompanied by spontaneous dancing from Club members.
- The popular trio of Barbara, Lois, and Karen West played "More," "The Old Piano Roll Blues," and "Waltz Across Texas."
- Anne and Lois followed with their duets of "Return to Me" and "Maria Elena."
- Barbara requested that members choose their concert music early, and let the Club know their titles by the May meeting. During the June and July meetings, members should practice those pieces before the Club.
- Maggie Abel
OAC Secretary



A very senior member of our Club, Barbara Perderson, performed a concert at the *Baptist Village* in Ada, Oklahoma in celebration of the *World Accordion Day* on May 6, 2017. Barbara, who is 90+ years of age, plays in a *Baptist Gospel*

Music Band. You will never see dust on her accordion.

Barbara, we salute you for your contributions to the accordion world.



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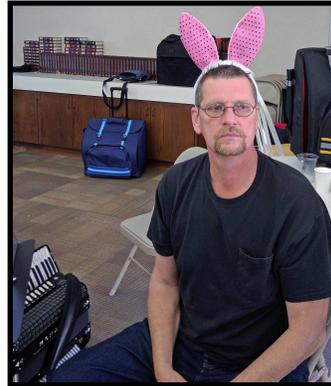
April Pizza Party Meeting

Diana Richard & Maggie Abel



April Pizza Party Meeting

Diana Richard & Maggie Abel





Oklahoma Accordion Club Membership Form

Name _____ Date _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone (____) _____ Birthday (mm/dd) ____/____ (optional)

Newsletter

I prefer to receive the monthly newsletter, the OKLAHOMA SQUEEZINS, by:

E-mail at address (above) or at _____

Conventional post

Membership Dues

The OAC membership year runs from January through December. Membership cost is prorated quarterly for new members.

Primary Membership is \$20.00 per year per individual.

Family Membership is \$10.00 per year for each additional family member when accompanied by a Primary Membership.

Lifetime Membership is a one-time fee of \$300.00.

Youth Membership is complimentary for accordion-playing youth through age 18.

Your Status (please check all that apply):

Professional Semi-Professional Amateur Student

Associate Hobby Teacher Repairman/Repairwoman

Other (specify) _____

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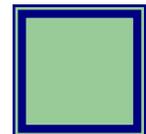
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