

Where knowledge and fun meet

Volume 3, Issue 1

March 28, 2010

Massachusetts Accordion Association

www.MAaccordion.com

It's Spring Time !!!

That's right, this weekend is the vernal equinox and the astronomical beginning of spring. The time when we can now adjust our accordion straps due to the lighter clothing. We were greeted at our February meeting out with many new faces and by friends we haven't seen in a while. Our play-a-long set contained the music of: A Walk in the Black Forest, Schottische Medley, It Was Love and El Rancho Grande. Many thanks to Dan who continually compiles the arrangements and e-mails to all members to practice before the meeting date. All who attend are welcomed to participate.

Many thanks to James Gerke for providing a great sound hook-up that enabled our audience to hear the play-a-long and open mic performances in a new way. If James does continue to provide future hook-ups, I welcome all electronic accordion players in the open mic session to take advantage of the hook-up. The enhancement of the accordion sound to the audience

is amazing and greatly adds to the listening pleasure of the audience.

Dan continued his technical series on the left hand techniques "It's All About the Left Hand, Part II". It is not just a series of buttons, but can be formulated into interesting chord combinations that enhances the harmonies of many songs. Almost like making the left hand accordion play like the left hand on a piano since each individual button under the bass button is the sound of the notes that make up the actual major, minor, 7th or diminished chord. By mixing "buttons", as shown in Dan's handout, the combinations are extremely creative and enhance the melodies.

Dan also handed out the arrangement for the song "Emily" by Johnny Mercer to demonstrate the different chord combinations. Many thanks to Dan for all his efforts and handouts for this great tech tip.

I hope to see you all at our upcoming March 28th meeting.....Bob

Monthly meetings are the 4th Sunday of every month.....

1:30—4:00 pm

Upcoming Meetings:

Ciociaro Social Club

144 Bridge St

Newton

Mark your calendars for another great year!!!!

March 28

April 25

May 23

June 27

July 25

August 22

September 26

October 24

November 21

December 19

Come and enjoy the fun!!!!

No experience is necessary, just a love for the instrument, either playing or listening, or both.

All instrument types, playing styles, and skill levels are welcomed.

The opportunities to perform on a sign up basis

Open forum accordion discussions are chaired to encourage MAAA member participation, involvement and resource sharing



Thank you to the performers at our February meeting!



Pat DeSantis



David Magliozzi



Jerry Tramatozzi



Carmen D'Angelo



Jan Miller



Tony D'Eramo



Dan MacKowiak



James Gerke

Club Officers

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A note from the Prez.....



Since its beginnings over 180 years ago, the accordion has found its way into music heard in almost every corner of the globe. In many cases, the accordion (or its close relatives such as the bandoneon) is the predominant instrument in a style of music. The diversity inherent in its construction, along with the wide variation in the ways it is played, makes the accordion the source of scores of unique musical voices.

At its upcoming get-together on March 28, the MAAA will be demonstrating that very attribute of the accordion. The play-along session will continue to feature world music styles, and the “theme” for the open mic session is also world music styles. I encourage all of you reach into your repertoire for a favorite tune or two with an ethnic twist. It will be interesting to see how many countries and cultures are represented by our selections.

By the way, music for the March play-along session was recently distributed by e-mail: a swing tune with a French flair; a waltz with a European feel; a mazurka; a tango; and a tune with roots in Great Britain, made popular by (non-accordionist) Tom Jones. Sounds like fun – doesn’t it?

The energy level at our meetings is running high! That’s heartening for all of us involved in designing the programs and preparing the activities. Our core group of attendees is at the heart of the matter. In addition, over the past two months, we’ve enjoyed the company of members who have been away for awhile, as well as several new members and guests who have found the MAAA. (I think a number of people had “play the accordion” on their resolution list for 2010 – and are sticking to it.)

Remember to tell your accordion friends about the MAAA...and feel free to invite them for a visit.

How to Learn the Bellows Shake

The following is taken from "First Steps in Bellows Shake" by
Maddalena Belfiore, published by O. Pagani & Bro., 1954:
Compliments of Steve's Accordion Shop (330) 332-1111

The following enumerated practice suggestions emphasize the important details necessary to mastering the bellows shake.

The bass strap must be extremely tight, which makes it possible for the arm to firmly grasp the side of the accordion, and keep the bellows under control.

The left arm should be held close to the body--and held steady.

When starting to play, the bellows should be opened (slightly) at the top and closed at the bottom --fan shaped.

Keep the keys depressed while doing the bellows shake.

Care should be taken to manipulate the bellows in a short, even manner.

Knowing how to relax and remain at ease is of prime importance,
as there is always a tendency to become very tense while executing a bellows shake.

When doing the bellows shake in unison for both hands, it is important to notice that the bellows will expel twice the amount of air than when doing the shake for one hand. In order to control this, check the left arm position and be sure that it is close to the body.

Practice slowly at first, and gradually increase speed.

One of the basic essentials, in bellows shake, is that a repeated note is not struck, therefore sustain the root note of the chord with the thumb, while playing the melody with the other fingers.

Note: This book also includes right and left hand exercises and a number of practice pieces incorporating the bellows shake. (Deffner Publications)

A Brief Guide to Slow Practice

by Gary Dahl

I decided when I started teaching thirty-seven years ago, each student would be required to demonstrate "slow practice tempos" in selected sections of a piece assigned a week earlier. At first, these tempos are rather like slow-motion and gradually increase only when the skill level is ready. I have never regretted this decision because it has produced many confident, satisfied accordionists.

What are the benefits of this kind of practicing?

- The student actually learns the piece faster, having had time to read the correct notes, time values, dynamics, etc..
- Performance slips are greatly reduced. A slip is not a mistake. A mistake is playing the same wrong notes at every performance, while an occasional slip sometimes just happens.
- Slow practice eliminates practice mistakes. Why should we practice a mistake? Not too logical, is it?
- Control, especially in fast, rhythmic pieces is much more secure. This is especially true in long scale-like passages.
- Because dynamics are exaggerated in slow practice, they retain their color at tempo.
- Slow practice and many repetitions of short passages is essential to increase learning speed and eliminate mistakes.

There are many more points I could list, but these are the basics. Together with slow practice, there are many techniques to explore. Occasionally my students think I am some sort of psychic because I can tell immediately if they have not done their slow practice.

If it is a fairly new piece, the fingers are searching everywhere for the notes. Slow practice will enable you to learn quickly while fast practice will produce very slow results or none at all. Slow practice is not particularly fun, but it is part of the discipline we must observe. I tell my students I am not asking them to slow practice because it is fun, in fact it can be boring. You have to bleed a little, pay the price to realize exciting benefits. You can't learn anything in your sleep.

To the Adult Student: Music is for all to enjoy, both for listening pleasure and the thrill of playing the accordion. Music is a way of expressing ourselves. Many people would give anything to play an instrument with authority. Don't let your age get you down. It is literally true: You are never too old to learn. Many adults are happier now and getting more out of life through music...personal enjoyment and the experience of being the "life of the party".

Adult students will learn more at lessons using these suggestions:

- Make believe you are 10 years old again. Forget pre-conceived ideas.
- Don't talk too much-concentrate on listening.
- Let the teacher lead with the best sequence for you to reach your particular goals.
- Don't let your ego get in the way, even if you are an experienced player.
- Study harmony to dramatically enhance your current skills. You will then be able to produce your own arrangements - and this is where the real fun is!
- Don't try to pick pieces way beyond your capability. It is always better to play a less difficult piece well than a more advanced selection sloppily; just experience the pleasure of high-quality music-making!



CORY PESATURO

Blackstone River Theater
March 20th, 2010 | 8pm
Cumberland, RI

Tickets \$12 Advance / \$14 Day of Show



48th Annual Festival April 9-11, 2010 Marriott Hotel, Newton, MA

- * Battle of the Bands
- * ATAM Entertainment Competition
- * Competitions
- * Solos, Duos, Ensembles, Bands
- * Some Non Competitive Categories
- * Cash Awards
- * Over \$3,000.00 in prizes
- * Awards Banquet

Contest Co-chairmen:

Peggy Falcetti and Roger Latulippe

peggy.falcetti@falcettimusic.com

roger@rositalee.com

Some Pennies from Heaven



I was wondering if some of our club members wanted to be part of an email group or forum (not sure what you call it).

I sometimes get these GREAT musical-related links that other accordion people might enjoy.

Members could decide to be part of this or not...

They could enter "looking for this tune" kinds of queries there - or -

"anyone want to go hear___?" types of queries.

These kinds of things build community, I find, and it wouldn't REQUIRE anything...

Personally I have 3 email boxes (this one being my personal one).

I would probably put it on another one till I saw if it turned out to a lot of junk mail...

If it turned out to becoming a community-building communication tool,

I would move it to this email address.

Just a thought..

This idea was submitted from Penny Yunuba for anyone to ponder and if interested is invited to contact Penny and start the new trend for our club's communication amongst members. You may contact Penny with your thoughts or interest at: PYunuba@comcast.net

Where knowledge and fun meet

WWW.MAaccordion.com

4th Sunday of every month
Check the newsletter or
website for locations

MAaccordion phone:
(508) 529-6163

E-mail: use our website for
direct contact

▶ Your music club where
fellow accordionists meet
for an afternoon of music
and discussions.

We're on the web:
MAaccordion.com



Saiterelle Shamrock

Local Resources for New and Pre-Owned Accordions

- [Accordion Connection](#) (Gilmanton, NH)
- [Luca Music](#) (North Providence, RI)
- [Monte School of Music](#) (Wellesley Hills, MA)
- [The Button Box](#) (Sunderland, MA)



Accordion Teachers throughout New England

- [Janet Borelli](#) - 508-752-6213 (Paxton, MA)
- [Donna LaRue](#)—781-646-3013 (Arlington, MA)
- [Paul Monte](#)—781-237-0554 (Wellesley Hills, MA)
- [Joe Maciejowski](#) —508-529-6065 (Upton, MA)
- [Roberto Cassan](#) —617-413-8199 (Roslyndale, MA)
- [A.T.A.M.](#)—Accordion Teachers of Massachusetts
- [CCE Boston Music School](#) Irish B/C Button Box classes at
Boston College & Harvard University

Additional resources for Accordion Music & Lesson Books

- [Accordion Connection](#) (Gilmanton, NH)
- [Mel Bay Publications](#) (Web)
- [The Button Box](#) (Sunderland, MA)



Other New England based Accordion Clubs

- [Connecticut](#) (Cheshire/Plantsville, CT) <http://www.ctaccordion.com>
- [New Hampshire Accordion Assoc](#) (Gilmanton, NH) 1-800-328-5227
- [Central Mass Accordion Club](#) (Rutland, MA) 1-508-885-2083

Mid Atlantic Music Teachers Guild
Presents
Accordion Extravaganza 2010
Saturday - March 27th, 2010 - 7:00 p.m.
Hilton Hotel
3 Tower Center Boulevard - East Brunswick, N.J.
Donation - \$10.00
Leony Feldmann - Master of Ceremonies
featuring
 Billy Leland
 Don Davidson
 E. Allen Montano
 Joanne Dimes
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 Deborah Asselton-Quinn
For More Information
Please Contact
Mid Atlantic Music Teachers Guild
P.O. Box 3790 - Clark, N.J. 07066
www.mamtg.org

Mid Atlantic Music Teachers Guild
Presents
MUSICAL THEATRE 2010
SATURDAY - MARCH 27TH
4:00 P.M.
HILTON HOTEL
EAST BRUNSWICK, N.J.
for more information including Rules & Descriptions
Please Contact
Mid Atlantic Music Teachers Guild - P.O. Box 3790 - Clark, N.J. 07066
www.mamtg.org

from Let's Polka-An Accordion Blog



A friend recently visited the World of Coca-Cola museum in Atlanta and found this vintage advertisement with "internationally known musician and entertainer" Graham W. Jackson enjoying a bottled Coke while playing his accordion: It was Jackson's association with FDR that made him the subject of one of LIFE magazine's most famous photos — and possibly the best-known accordion photo ever taken. This photo of Jackson tearfully performing "Goin' Home" as FDR's body was carried from the Little White House in Warm Springs, GA, where he died, symbolized the nation's grief over the president's passing.



We invite all our members and friends to join in the fun!!!

Remember, our meetings are scheduled on the 4th Sunday of each month.

Special dates around national holidays....

Reminder— NEXT MAAA MEETING: March 28th