



# Newsletter

A bi-monthly publication of the American Accordionists' Association

November-December, 2016



**American Accordionists' Association**  
www.ameraccord.com

## SAVE THE DATES Carrozza Scholarship Fundraiser

Villa Barone Hilltop Manor  
Mahopac, NY  
Sunday, April 30, 2017  
Noon until 5:00  
\$75.00 per person  
\$45 children under 10

## AAA Festival 2017 The Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village (New Jersey)

Wednesday, July 12 through  
Sunday, July 16, 2017

Room Rates: \$129  
Plus Free Parking!

Sponsored by the  
American Accordionists' Association

### From the Editor

Welcome to the November/December edition of the AAA Newsletter.

As 2016 draws to a close, we can reflect back on a year of magnificent accordion activities. We hope you have all had the chance to enjoy the variety of accordion happenings, and if not in person, by reading about them in this Newsletter.

Once again my sincere thanks to the AAA Second Vice President Linda Reed and Board of Director Rita Davidson for their kind assistance with the AAA Newsletter. Linda will be moving to Florida very soon, and we wish her well as she begins her retirement. Luckily for us, this Newsletter and its production is worked via electronic networks, so we will be able to continue benefiting from her expertise, even from afar.

Items for the January/February 2017 Newsletter can be sent to me at goaccordion@yahoo.com or to the official AAA e-mail address at: ameraccord1938@gmail.com Please include 'AAA Newsletter' in the subject box, so that we don't miss any items that come in. Text should be sent within the e-mail or as a Word attachment. Pictures should be sent as a high quality .jpg file, and the larger the file size the better. We can always reduce/crop the picture if necessary, however we are unable to increase the quality from smaller pictures. The deadline for the first Newsletter of 2017 will be the end of December 2016.

We look forward to hearing from you all soon with all your news, and meanwhile on behalf of all the team at the AAA, a very happy and healthy Holiday Season!

Sincerely,  
Kevin Friedrich – AAA Newsletter Editor



### Message from AAA President - Mary Tokarski

#### Looking Ahead to 2017 . . .

I am absolutely amazed at how quickly this year has passed. So many great things are happening for the accordion, our instrument is gradually taking hold on the young people of America, and all that is thanks to each and every one of our members and performers who are out there letting the general public hear great music from our fantastic instrument.



Last weekend was our Valtaro Celebration at the Magnanini Winery in Wallkill, New York - the music was great, the food was abundant - the afternoon was fantastic. If you missed this one, be sure to keep your eyes open for the next Valtaro event, and join the fun!

On April 30th, the AAA will host the Carrozza Scholarship Fund Raiser at the Villa Barone Hilltop Manor in Mahopac, New York. Don't miss this opportunity to hear our upcoming young artists perform . . . Nathan Chapeton and Cody McSherry (winners of the Carrozza Scholarship Competition in 2015) along with Will Comer (one of our Bennett Composition Competition winners for 2016), Carmen Carrozza's grandniece Gia Ciccone, and lots of our "seasoned" performers too! Don't miss it!

Plans for the 2017 SqueezeFest in Princeton, New Jersey are well under way too. The competition will include special categories for our young participants, special "Fast Track" events for young and seasoned alike, workshops par excellence, and concerts not to be missed. The Carrozza Scholarship Competition will be a highlight of the festival. Check out the AAA website at www.ameraccord.com for music requirements and plan to attend. Rules and regulations for all categories will be posted shortly, along with hotel and registration details.

A special "Welcome" to all our new members. It is exciting to see our organization grow, and to draw great ideas from people in all walks of life who are accordionists, or just love and support the accordion. We have YOU to thank for our growth . . . remember, the association lives only through its membership . . . great members equal a great organization!

Our Youth Promotion Program is quickly gaining momentum. We continue to have numerous instruments donated by individuals, and even a major donation from the WQXR radio station in New York City. The programs are scheduled to continue throughout this school year, and great strides have been made by the Connecticut Accordion Association's Marilyn O'Neil in receiving a major grant to promote the accordion in the Waterbury area. Information will be documented, and the "how to's" for the

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## From the President, cont'd from page 1

grant writing process and the youth promotion pilot programs will be forthcoming, so we can ALL bring the accordion to our local elementary and high school students!

One of the other challenges that the accordion faces in this day and age is the lack of accordion teachers. The AAA is building a program to prepare our young people for a career in music education (or a fun extra-curricular activity), revamping our Certification System for instructors, and introducing the unique qualities of our instrument to music educators who can use the accordion in the classroom!

We are making a difference – keep up the good work everyone! ■

## Mike's Place -

### *A new dimension in accordion education*

Michael Schimmel is an accomplished painter, an artist who has had two major shows and is published in a compendium of Artists - published by Woodbine house - who have disabilities. Michael just turned 36 and has Down Syndrome. He lives with his parents, Dr. William Schimmel and Micki Goodman-Schimmel. Every Monday, their home becomes MIKE'S PLACE - a virtual club for musicians who have disabilities. Their first rule of thumb: TAKE THE DIS OUT OF ABILITY.

A band was formed - and it is called MIKE'S PLACE - with Michael on drums, his buddy Keith on Bass (Keith is Autistic) Tony on Harmonica (Tony works with Keith) Naaya makes the videos (Naaya works with Michael) and Dr. Schimmel plays the Accordion and other electronic instruments. His mom Micki Goodman-Schimmel joins in on various hand percussion instruments. Micki facilitated MIKE'S PLACE - organizing members of JOB PATH to join in.

Each week the group focuses in on a particular type of music - which include discussions on style, repertoire, mood, vibe, and other performance factors. One week was a Blues session, another an Italian cinema session, another an American roots session, another a Duke Ellington session, another Cajun, another Free Jazz (Albert Ayler), another Electronica, another Reggae, another Broadway - and sure enough, Classical - and of course mixes of all the above.

Guests join them for jam sessions - Performance Artist Brian Dewan joined them recently. Brian is an accordionist and also is an inventor. He and his cousin Leon invented the Dewanathon, an electronic 8 note instrument that was used in the recent film, The Social Network. Brian played Accordion on one of the sessions and brought his Dewanathon - played it and taught others how to play it, enabling a Free Form session.

MIKE'S PLACE has become a weekly session that has been in progress since last February.

So far they have worked on hundreds of songs and compositions - the Accordion being a major part of every one of them.

MIKE'S PLACE sets a precedent of how the Accordion works in group situations in any style, genre or mix of all the above. It also sets a precedent of how the accordion can be the ultimate catalyst for the education of Special People with Special Needs. ■



## Dr. Robert McMahan Keeps Busy Schedule

Dr. Robert McMahan, AAA Board of Director and accomplished accordionists and author, has kept a busy schedule as he continues his specialty of working with contemporary music, assisting composers, presenting workshops and performing new works for accordion.

In recent times, he presented an educational workshop "Radio Days Accordion: A Sampling of Once Popular Accordionists Composers of the Past and an Examination of Their Music." The workshops included accordion duet performances by Dr. McMahan and Albert Schlisserman of "The Rooster," by Joe Biviano

and "Allegro," by Gene Von Hallberg. In Alexandria, VA in 2015, his workshop was titled "Playing Between the Cracks: The 'Rubbery' Accordion and its Place in Tuning Experiments in Modern Music, both Western and Middle Eastern" where he was assisted by accordionist and Middle Eastern music specialist Melody Ben Flah. The previous year in Tarrytown, Dr. McMahan's workshop was "Scales, Your Favorite Subject!" an analytical look at scale, mode, and/or set applications in contemporary classical accordion works.

On the literary front, Dr. McMahan has written several articles including information on the 25th-31st works commissioned by the AAA's Composers Commissioning Committee:

- 31st: Alexander Tcherepnin: Tzigane
- 30th: José Serebrier: Passacaglia & Perpetuum Mobile for Accordion & Chamber Orchestra"
- 26th: Carlos Surinach: Prelude of the Sea
- 27th: David Diamond: Introduction and Dance
- 28th: José Serebrier: Danza Ritual
- 29th: William Grant Still: Lilt
- 25th: Alexander Tcherepnin: Invention

In addition, he wrote and collaborated with noted American composer and author of The Study of Orchestration, Samuel Adler, in creating the first entry ever of the accordion in the Keyboard Instruments chapter of the new 4th edition, published in 2016.

On his busy performance schedule, Dr. McMahan has performed several World Premieres, including Romp 4, for viola, vibraphone, and accordion (Premiere: August 3, 2014, New York, NY, with Sarah Sutton, viola, William Wozniak, vibraphone); Miscellany, for theremin and accordion (Premiere: August 8, 2015, New York, NY with Elizabeth Brown, theremin); Three Whims, for bassoon and accordion (Premiere: July 29, 2016, New York, NY, with Devon Tipp, bassoon).

Other performances include: Dave Soldier: Sontag in Sarajevo, for Accordion, and freely chosen Melody, Chordal, Bass, and Percussion (optional) instruments (AAA Commissioned work) with William Schimmel (piano), Denise Koncelik (flute), Devon Tipp (bassoon); New York and world premieres respectively of two works by Devon Tipp: For Dean Drummond, for accordion and Kussi Palaa, for two accordions with William Schimmel; Le Grand Tango for cello and piano by Astor Piazzolla, arranged for cello and accordion by McMahan and Introduction and Allegro, for cello and accordion by Matyas Seiber with Cecylia Barczyk (cello); Acco-Music for accordion by Ernst Krenek (ATG commission where Krenek consulted with Dr. McMahan in writing the piece in the



## Dr. Robert McMahan, cont'd. from p. 2

1970s.) and he played in für Hans Landesmann, by Georg Friedrich Haas; and Mouthpiece XIXb, by Erin Gee.

This year Dr. McMahan has recently taken a sabbatical from his position as Prof. of Music and Coordinator of Music Theory and Composition studies, and the Accordion Major at The College of New Jersey to edit and orchestrate part of Act 1 of The Sunken Bell, an unfinished opera by American composer Carl Ruggles (1876-1971) based on the play by Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946). The source is a number of the composer's better-developed piano/vocal sketches of that act from the ca. 1000 surviving opera leaves preserved in the Carl Ruggles Papers at Yale University. This is an extension of work done in his doctoral dissertation at the Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, completed in 1990. ■

## Acme Accordion Day in NJ

The Acme Accordion School recently hosted their annual Accordion Day on Sunday, November 6, 2016 at their headquarters in Westmont, NJ.

In addition to their traditional grand photo event, the festival included performances by Tom Groeber and Dallas Vietty. Tom Groeber performed literature from the folk repertoires of Austria and Germany while Dallas Vietty performed Jazz repertoire.

Other performers included the Westmont Accordion Club performing a Medley from Fiddler on the Roof, Joanna Darrow playing the music of Massenet and Gart and the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra who performed the Ukrainian Variations featuring Wayne Huntsinger.

For information on upcoming events please contact Joanna Darrow at: 856-854-6628. ■



## Long Island Accordion Alliance

The October 5, 2016 Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) meeting at La Villini Restaurant (288 Larkfield Road, East Northport, NY 11731) saw the installation of two new members, Frank Scardino and "Papa" Joe DeClemente, into the ensemble. This addition of two more fine accordionists to the Alliance Orchestra added an extra lift, "umph" and vigor to the various selections the orchestra performed. Not only was "Papa" Joe DeClemente formally initiated into the group but he then proceeded to be featured guest artist for the evening. He delivered a very entertaining set of instrumental and vocal selections that only "Papa" Joe can deliver. The LIAA November meeting featured German - American entertainers Bud and Linda Gramer.

The LIAA 2017 line-up includes: January 4th: Manny Corallo and Frank Toscano; February 1st: Paolo Belanich; March 1st: Mario Tacca & Mary Mancini; April 5th: Fabio Lucarrelli; May 3rd: Mary Tokarski and Nathan Chapeton; June 7th: Peter Stan Duo; August 2nd: Mario Balestra; September 6th: Emilio Magnotta; October 4th: Joe DeClemente and November 1st: Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini.

All events take place at La Villini Restaurant, 288 Larkfield Road, East Northport, NY 11731. For reservations, please phone: 631-261-6344. ■



(left to right) Bob LaBua, Frank Scardino, "Papa" Joe DeClemente, Santo Endrizzi, Greg Zukoff, Phil Prete, Dominic Karcic and Ray Oreggia.

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DETAILS ON  
THE  
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FLYER

## CARMEN CARROZZA MEMORIAL AWARD COMPETITION

Prizes funded by the Carmen Carrozza Scholarship Fund

To further popularize the AAA-Commissioned repertoire, the Carmen Carrozza Scholarship Committee is offering \$8,000 in cash prizes to the winners of this competition for all acoustic accordionists (piano and button keyboards). Over the years, Maestro Carrozza himself premiered most of the AAA-commissioned works and he was most familiar with this important legacy to the accordion world.



### PRIZES:

Open Division (up to 32 years of age):

1st prize - \$3,000    2nd prize - \$1,500    3rd prize - \$750

Junior Division (up to 15 years of age):

1st prize - \$1,500    2nd prize - \$750    3rd prize - \$500

## NYC WQXR Radio Station Awards Accordions to Outreach Program

Last year, the New York City Classical Radio Station WQXR initiated their Radio Instrument Drive with the modest goal of collecting 1,000 gently used instruments to distribute to New York City Public School music programs. New York's only classical music station exceeded its aim spectacularly, collecting 3,000 instruments, triple its initial goal! This year, the accordion was added as part of the type of instruments collected through the WQXR program.

AAA Board of Director Don Gerundo and Dallas Vietty volunteered their time and travelled to New York on July 1, 2016 to help WQXR personnel inventory the instruments.

Don Gerundo is Chairman of the AAA Youth Promotion Committee and is assisted by Dallas Vietty and Marilyn O'Neil. The goal of the Youth Promotion Committee is to increase the number of youth that are playing and learning the accordion. To date the committee ran a successful pilot program in May at a Bethlehem, PA Public School and is working on bringing more outreach programs to the NY, CT, NJ, PA areas.

As the program has developed, WQXR has now awarded 10 of the accordions for the AAA Outreach Program and Don and Dallas have picked up the instruments from the WQXR warehouse in Long Island City. The instruments must be used in a program that takes place in New York City, and the goal is to institute a program in the Third Street Music School in the near future, where negotiations are being conducted with their Board.

For updates on this exciting program, please look out for more information in upcoming publications. ■



Don Gerundo demonstrates The Roland to some of the band members who are participating in CT's Great Squeeze Project at Wolcott (CT) High School.

## Dominic Karcic Performs at Octoberfest Celebration and Tilles Center Anniversary

On Friday, October 14, 2016 accordionist and AAA Board of Director Dominic Karcic supplied the musical entertainment for the "Octoberfest Celebration" at the Central Island Healthcare Facility in Plainview, NY. His one hour performance of mostly German music was very warmly received by the residents and also the staff. Some of the German melodies played included his "stylistic and lilting arrangements" of Ein Prosit, Blue Danube, Tales From the Vienna Woods, Happy Wanderer, Schneewalzer, In Munchen steht ein Hofbrauhaus, Die Dorfmusik, Du Kannst Nicht Treu Sein and more. A fun afternoon was had by all!



Left to right: Accordionist Dominic Karcic, Christine Cardinali (Directory of Recreational Therapy, CTRS), Alan Johanson (Recreation Leader) at the Central Island Healthcare Facility in Plainview, NY.

Tilles Center for the Performing Arts (Brookville, NY) is the premier venue for the performing arts on Long Island and on Saturday evening, October 22, 2016 it celebrated its 36th anniversary with its "Annual Gala." The event was a benefit in honor of Lisa and Rob Arming.

The multi-phased evening began with a cocktail reception followed by dinner in the beautiful Tilles Center Atrium, in which the almost two hundred guests, dined to the music of accordionist Dominic Karcic and vocalist Cheryl Spielman. Their forty-five minute set included music from Broadway with selections that included composers Irving Berlin, Leonard Bernstein, George Gershwin, John Kander, Jerome Kern and Richard Rodgers.

After dinner entertainment in the main concert hall included the New York Pops Orchestra (under the direction of Steven Reineke), Brian d'Arcy James and Megan Hilty which was then followed by a cabaret performance with Carole J. Bufford in the Tilles Center Atrium. ■



Left to right: Mr. William R. Biddle, executive director of the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts (Brookville, NY), vocalist Cheryl Spielman and accordionist Dominic Karcic.

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## Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini

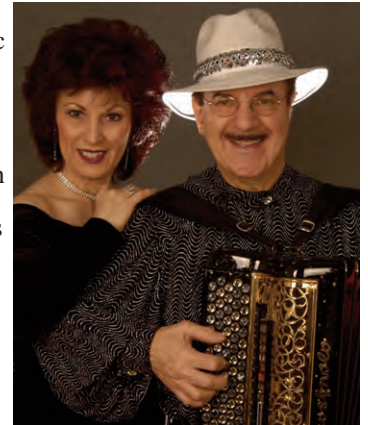
Accordionist Mario Tacca and acclaimed vocalist Mary Mancini will bring in the New Year with music and song. Attendees are invited to celebrate New Year's Eve day with a special luncheon show with Mary and Mario! The gala will take place on December 31, 2016 from 11:00 pm-3:00 am at The Royal Manor, 454 Midland Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026.

Mario Tacca, a Board of Director for the AAA, was born in Italy. During his childhood, his family moved to the Alsace Lorraine region of France where he began his musical studies. This is where his love and intense desire to play the accordion began. He loved the sound! He would pick up the accordion and imitate some of the songs his mother used to sing. The desire and love never diminished, despite having to walk three miles weekly to his teacher with his instrument strapped to his back!

While in France, he was the winner of many regional and national accordion competitions. He went on to become a world champion, winning the World Cup of Italy, the Grand Prix of Paris, the US National Competition and the International Accordion Competition held at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Internationally acclaimed vocal artist Mary Mancini has been featured in the New York Times, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and the Journal News and has performed in a variety of venues around the world. Able to sing in eight different languages, Mary draws from a

deep repertory reservoir. She is adept at pop, show tunes, operatic arias, and sacred music and has received worldwide acclaim. Le Republicain Lorrain, in Alsace-Lorraine, France, writes that the "purity of her voice, the ease with which she interpreted the most difficult pieces showed that she is a great artist." The Spring City Evening News in Kunming, China, writes that "audiences were greatly impressed by Mary Mancini's singing ability... Through her music, we see her heart is smiling."



As a dynamic and popular performing duo, they have completed two concert tours of China. As guests of the China Ministry of Culture, they toured five cities in three weeks and performed with three symphony orchestras. Those wishing to attend the end of year celebration are invited to make their reservations now by contacting Ace in the Hole Productions at 1-800-831-9801. Attendees are invited to bid 2016 farewell with fabulous singing and music! ■

## Guinness World Record for Largest Accordion Orchestra

AAA Board of Director Kevin Friedrich was one of a total of 1,517 accordion performers who combined to break the Guinness World Record for the largest Accordion Orchestra during the 1st Tacheng Accordion Art Festival, in Tacheng, China.

The official Guinness World Record was achieved by the Propaganda Department of Tacheng Prefectural Party Committee of CPC, People's Government of Tacheng Municipality, Accordionists' Association of Chinese Musicians Association and Tacheng Zhiyuan Cultural Development Co., Ltd. (all China) in Tacheng, Xinjiang, China, on August 20, 2016.

An invited International guest of the festival, Kevin was joined by CIA General Secretary Kimmo Mattila (Finland) and five other International artists from Russia, Italy, Ukraine and Kazakhstan who performed with local Chinese accordionists ranging in age from 7 to 69 years of age. The seven minute work, performed by memory, broke the previous record, also set in China of 1,361 people in Shenzhen in 2013.

The event comprising concerts, competitions and lectures, was designed to promote cultural exchanges among the countries along the "Silk Road Economic Belt". In December 2015



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## Largest Accordion Orchestra, cont'd. from p. 5

a new accordion museum opened its doors in Tacheng. The collection includes over 350 accordions from 10 countries, such as China, Russia, Germany, Italy and Ukraine, with the oldest accordion being 103 years old. A new Museum facility is currently being constructed, and will display more than 2,000 instruments as well as house facilities for seminars and concerts.

Tacheng, located at the border of China and Kazakhstan, is a trans-cultural city which has been greatly influenced by Russian culture. Dubbed in China as the "City Of The Accordion", Tacheng has a rich history and legacy of the instrument. The accordion is a symbol of the city and it is said over 30% of the population can play.

The Closing Ceremony concert included the Guinness World Record performance. Angela Wu, (Adjudicator and Content Director for Greater China from Guinness World Records, Beijing) introduced the performance and with a team of Marshals, conducted the official attempt at 9:00 pm, confirming its success at the conclusion of the closing concert.

To prepare for the challenge, the training started six months earlier, when large performing teams were established in various regions in Tacheng, and in addition to the International guests, the performers were from 17 ethnic groups including Han, Kazak, Uyghur, Hui, Mongol, Daur, Tatar and others.

The 1,517 performers were directed by Mr. Chen Guoqing. An Associate Professor of Urumqi Vocational University Art College, he acquired his Bachelor of Music Education Degree and worked as an accordionist in the Tacheng Art Troupe from 1978 to 1992. Since 1994, he has been serving as a professional teacher at the Urumqi Vocational University Art College. The record breaking group performed his work Capriccio Ta, based on a famous Kazakh song in the Tacheng area 'Beautiful Tarbagatay'.

Written in five parts, the work performed for the record breaking event was as follows. The 1st part introduces the theme of the work. It depicts Kazakh girls who are dancing on the grassland like white swans. The 2nd part highlights the theme again, and shows a grand spectacle in which the kind



and honest people of Tacheng are singing and dancing happily. The background idea of this part is the natural environment of Tacheng. Tacheng is located in the Tarbagatay-Dorbiljin Basin of Northwest Xinjiang, where there is the famous wind zone "Maytas wind zone", commonly known as "old outlet". During the deep winter season, the land is covered over by heavy snow. In order to express the harsh natural condition, this part used the air button and bellows to imitate the roaring of the North wind, which showcases the bravery and perseverance of the people of Tacheng.

By patting the bellows and the cover to create the quick and lively rhythm, the 3rd part depicts the people of Tacheng singing and dancing joyously after they overcame difficulties. The subdominant tune in the 4th part uses the chord to create a harmonic sound effect with a slower speed, eulogizing the glories created by our people and implying the prosperity and development of their hometown. By combining the high-pitched voice of lead part with the main melody, and using the technique of a buffeting wind box with increasing speed, the 5th part represents the wonderful vision of our people and their courage to create greater prosperity. ■



## Acme Accordion School Supports Angels of God Program

Acme Accordion School Supports Angels of God Program by promoting and selling a wonderful Christmas CD, which is now available in limited quantities (90 remaining). A portion of the proceeds from this CD will go to Angels of God Clothing Closet in Pitman, NJ, and a portion will also go towards the Acme Scholarship Fund.

Just in time for the Holidays, this CD is a great one to add to your personal collection, or use for a gift for this year or next. Performed by a multi-instrumental trio, The Tantara Trio, the group comprises violin, accordion and string bass, and sure to be enjoyed by accordionists and non-accordionists alike. The accordionist - "Skeets" Langley represented the United States in Prague, winning a Silver Medal, and then won the coveted Coupe Mondiale World Accordion Championship title Gold Medal in Baden-Baden, Germany.

The Angels of God Community Outreach's mission is to give a hand UP to those in need. They accomplish this by providing clothing, toiletries, food and more at no cost to those financially in need. They respond to basic human needs, promoting dignity and hope. Their goal is also to provide social activities and holiday

events to children in need. Their programs have grown to include more than just a Clothing Closet. They have become a community outreach providing the following programs amongst others: Clothing Closet, Food & Toiletry Bank, Bless This Dress Prom Dress Drive, Easter Baskets Project, Annual Holiday Parties for Kids in Need, Back to School Project and Angels of God "Toes and Tushies" Campaign.

The fundraising CD includes the following tracks: It's the most wonderful time of the Year, Winter Wonderland medley, Christmas Is, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, We Three Kings, What Child is This, Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer, Santa Claus is Coming to Town, The Christmas Song, Skaters Waltz, Jingle Bells, Sleigh Ride, Parade of the Wooden Soldiers, We Need a little Christmas, The Christmas Waltz, Dreaming of a White Christmas, O Holy Night, Silent Night.

CDs are \$14.98 (includes NJ sales tax), \$1.00 per CD will go towards Angels of God Clothing Closet and \$1.00 per CD will go to the Acme Scholarship Fund. For more information, please contact Joanna Darrow at 856-854-6628 or [acmeaccordion@gmail.com](mailto:acmeaccordion@gmail.com) ■



# AAA Festival 2017

**The Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village (New Jersey)**



**Save the dates:  
Wednesday, July 12 through  
Sunday, July 16, 2017**

**Carrozza Competition  
\$8,000 in cash prizes  
and much more!**

**Room Rates: \$129 – Plus Free Parking!**

### The Accordion at Gracie Mansion in NYC

On the evening of October 6, 2016, Mayor Bill Di Blasio welcomed members of New York City's Italian American community to the official residence of the New York Mayor, Gracie Mansion for a reception celebrating Italian Heritage and Culture Month in New York City. This event is the precursor to the Annual Columbus Day Parade held on 5th Avenue.

The Mayor was joined by nearly 1,000 guests, including representatives from Italian American business, civic and cultural groups, as well as visiting dignitaries from Italy.

Entertainment at this spectacular event, highlighting the contributions of the Italian American community to NYC and America, was provided by Emilio Magnotta. Emilio played many beloved Italian classics along with folk music native to specific regions of Italy, much to the pleasure of his audience.

From the moment an accordion was placed in his hands at the young age of 5, a passion awoke in Emilio to play it. He studied the accordion for 18 years under the accomplished accordion player Cliff Scholl, who himself was a student of Pietro Frosini.

Today, in addition to performing, Emilio is the owner of a thriving accordion repair and sales business, serving accordionists in the Tri-State area and beyond. Emilio Accordions specializes in repairs and state-of-the-art installation of microphones, midi systems, and upgrades to existing electronics. Currently, he is also collaborating on several projects with Paul Ramunni, Director of the New England Accordion Museum.

For more information, please contact Emilio at [www.emilioaccordions.com](http://www.emilioaccordions.com)



Emilio Magnotta

### CIA News

The Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) held their 2016 Winter Congress from December 2-4, 2017 in Nuremberg, Germany.

Normally held in February/March, at the invitation of the German CIA member Deutsche Harmonika-Verband (DHV), the Winter Congress was changed to December 2016 to allow delegates to attend the Gala 70th Anniversary Concert of the renowned 'Nürnberger Akkordeonorchester' directed by Stefan Hippe. Not only will delegates be able to attend the two scheduled milestone performances, delegates are also invited to attend one of the world's most famous Xmas Markets in the beautiful Old Town area of Nürnberg on the same dates.

One of three founding members of the CIA in 1935, the Deutscher Harmonika-Verband e.V. (DHV) will also host the 74th Coupe Mondiale in 2021 in Bruschal, Germany to coincide with their 90th Anniversary Celebrations.

The 2017 Coupe Mondiale World Accordion Championships will return to Italy, just five years after the CIA Member, the Italian Accordion Culture (IAC), hosted very successfully the 2012 Coupe Mondiale, in the beautiful medieval city of Spoleto.

The IAC extends a warm welcome to accordionists from around the world to come to Osimo (AN), from September 5-10, 2017. The Mayor of Osimo, Simone Pugnaroni "is happy to host an event that will bring worldwide attention to the cultural attractions of the city of Osimo."

Located just a couple of kilometres from the world renowned accordion manufacturing city of Castelfidardo, Osimo is an ancient city with excellent competition venues and Concert Halls renowned for good acoustics. It regularly hosts International cultural events including a major International piano competition scheduled just one week before the 2017 Coupe Mondiale.

The entire area of the southern Ancona area includes the neighbouring towns of Camerano, Castelfidardo, Filottrano, Loreto, Numana, and Sirolo. All these cultural centres will be involved hosting a series of promotional concerts to create awareness of the accordion and the 2017 Coupe Mondiale. For more information, please visit [www.coupemondiale.org](http://www.coupemondiale.org).



### BELLOWS OPEN: THE GREAT SQUEEZE PROJECT

It wasn't only lots of bellows that were open on October 13 and November 17. Wolcott High School seniors are greeting the accordion with open arms and open minds! This program has been made possible by a grant supported in part by the Arts and Culture Collaborative, Waterbury Region, in partnership with the Connecticut Department of

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Wolcott Seniors pose for year book picture.



Justin Clement



## Pauline Oliveros, Composer Who Championed 'Deep Listening,' Dies at 84

Pauline Oliveros, a composer whose life's work aspired to enhance sensory perception through what she called "deep listening," died on Thursday at her home in Kingston, N.Y. She was 84.

Her death was confirmed by her spouse, Carole Ione Lewis, a writer and performance artist known as Ione.

Early in her career in the 1960s, Ms. Oliveros avidly adopted cutting-edge technologies, working with magnetic tape and prototype synthesizers at the San Francisco Tape Music Center.

Already active as an improviser, she approached electronic music with a performer's instincts; to make "Bye Bye Butterfly" (1965), which John Rockwell, The New York Times music critic, called "one of the most beautiful pieces of electronic music to emerge from the 60s," she manipulated a recording of Puccini's opera "Madama Butterfly" on a turntable, augmenting its sounds with oscillators and tape delay.

The resulting piece, Ms. Oliveros wrote, "bids farewell not only to the music of the 19th century but also to the system of polite morality of that age and its attendant institutionalized oppression of the female sex."

Gender inequality would be a theme that she addressed repeatedly and tenaciously. An essay she wrote for The Times in 1970 started with a provocative question – "Why have there been no 'great' women composers?" – and then enumerated reasons, including gender bias and societal expectations of domestic complacency.

Ms. Oliveros said in a 2012 Times profile that in 1971, after a period of intense introspection prompted by the Vietnam War, she changed creative course, eventually producing "Sonic Meditations," a set of 25 text-based instructions meant to provoke thoughtful, creative responses.

See complete New York Times article on Pauline Oliveros at:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/27/arts/music/pauline-oliveros-composer-who-championed-deep-listening-dies-at84.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/27/arts/music/pauline-oliveros-composer-who-championed-deep-listening-dies-at84.html?_r=0)

Pauline recently performed in "Bang on a Can" on November 10, at the Jewish Museum in New York City.

"Bang on a Can" and the Jewish Museum presented the second concert of their 2016-2017 concert season featuring seminal American composer Pauline Oliveros. Accompanying the exhibition, Take Me (I'm Yours), the concert featured Oliveros performing 'The Sound of Meditation' on V-Accordion, an instrument that produces both accordion and orchestral sounds. Like the exhibition, the concert also blurs the boundary between the performer and the audience by asking the listener to participate in the making of music.

Since the 1960s Pauline Oliveros has influenced American music profoundly through her work with improvisation, meditation, electronic music, myth and ritual. In the 1950s she was part of a circle of iconoclastic composers, artists, poets in San Francisco.

She is the recipient of the John Cage award for 2012 from the Foundation of Contemporary Arts, and serves as Distinguished Research Professor of Music at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY and Darius Milhaud Artist-in-Residence at Mills College. She has been as interested in finding new sounds as in finding new uses for old ones - her primary instrument is the accordion, perhaps an unexpected visitor to the musical cutting edge.



Pauline is the founder of "Deep Listening," which she describes as a way of listening in every possible way to everything possible to hear no matter what you are doing. Such intense listening includes the sounds of daily life, of nature, of one's own thoughts as well as musical sounds. "Deep Listening is my life practice," she explains, simply. Oliveros is the founder of the Center For Deep Listening at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, formerly the Pauline Oliveros Foundation.

"Take Me (I'm Yours)" at the Jewish Museum, on view through February 5, 2017, is an unconventional exhibition featuring artworks that visitors are encouraged to touch, participate in, and even take home. Forty-two international and intergenerational artists are featured, many of whom are creating new and site-specific works for the exhibition. In a traditional museum visit, people may experience art by looking at the paintings, sculptures, or photographs on view. You are not usually allowed to touch the works, and certainly not able to take them home.

"Take Me (I'm Yours)" aims to create a democratic space for all visitors to take ownership of artworks, and curate their personal art collections by subverting the usual politics of value, consumerism, and the museum experience. Visitors constantly transform the landscape of the galleries, bit by bit, through direct engagement.

Located on Museum Mile at Fifth Avenue and 92nd Street, the Jewish Museum is one of the world's preeminent institutions devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, offering intellectually engaging, educational, and provocative exhibitions and programs for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Jewish Museum is located at 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street, New York City. Museum hours are Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11:00 am to 5:45 pm; Thursday, 11:00 am to 8:00 pm; and Friday, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. ■



**Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA)**

Member of the International Music Council, an NGO official partner of UNESCO

Welcome to the 70th Coupe Mondiale in Osimo, Italy

hosted by the Italian Accordion Culture (IAC)



## Announcing – Second Publication of “An Accordion! What Is That?”

If you missed this engaging accordion book for young readers the first time around, here is your chance to “spread the word” and get it into the hands of children everywhere!

Author Karen Malan-Uribe, Illustrator Joan Geller Grauman, and Accordionist/Narrator Mary Tokarski announce the second printing and re-release of their book “An Accordion! What Is That?”



The book will be ready for distribution within the next few weeks, just in time for Christmas! Books can be pre-ordered, and they will be shipped as soon as they are completed, which means you should have them in time for Christmas giving.

Books can be pre-ordered at \$17.95 each (PLUS a shipping charge of \$4.00 for up to 4 books to one address in the US). Orders of 10 or more books to a single address will receive a 20% discount. Contact Mary Tokarski at mary.tokarski@comcast.net for information on additional shipping charges or for orders outside the US.

To order your copy, contact Mary Tokarski at 15 Maplewood Lane, Northford, CT 06472, or by email at mary.tokarski@comcast.net

Spread the word about the accordion to all your grandchildren and all the young people you know! It is a gift that will give joy for years to come! ■

## The Great Squeeze Project, cont'd. from p. 8

Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Instructor/CAA member Peter Peluso introduced the students to accordion basics and Marilyn O'Neil acted as instructional assistant. In the first 90 minute session, they learned the basics of the right hand. They played simple songs in unison. Peter demonstrated the various kinds of music that the instrument can play. In the first session, band teacher Justin Clement (pictured on previous page at far right) tried on an instrument himself! Seniors asked for a picture to put in their yearbook. They begged us to leave one of the instruments there, which we did, and they enjoyed playing it in the band room whenever they got the chance.

The second session built upon the first. They were taught fundamentals of the left hand. They played both hands in unison, again using simple arrangements.

After the formal instruction, the kids were treated to a demonstration of the Roland Accordion by guest artist, AAA Board Member Don Gerundo. The kids were mesmerized by it!

We introduced the idea of having some of them join the CAA in concert on their own instruments in the spring and one of the students showed up at a CAA rehearsal the following Saturday to check out the scene! A concert has been scheduled for Sunday, May 21, 2017 at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, CT.



Pete Peluso one-on-one with Wolcott band student

## From the Archives....

by Joan Grauman, AAA Historian

I plan to post interesting articles, advertisements and photos from our Archives in our AAA Newsletters from now on, so please send me ideas or articles that you would like to share with our AAA members!

For the first entry, I decided to share a letter written by Eugene Ettore, who was the AAA President in 1963, the year of the organization's 25th anniversary. This open letter was in the Festival Journal from 1963. Ettore spoke about the reasons for creating the AAA, how it functions, a little about the Governing Board, and about how the organization was planning for the future of the accordion and accordionists.

I also included a small section of a photo from the AAA Annual Dinner-Dance, November 20, 1966 that was held in the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York. How many folks from the accordion world do you recognize in this picture? I recognize eighteen of them.



### AN OPEN LETTER

from EUGENE ETTORE, President  
American Accordionists' Association

c. 1963

### Why Was The A.A.A. Organized?

Twenty-five years ago a group of successful gentlemen who were involved in the accordion field, got together to discuss the need for an organization that would be devoted to guiding the cultural and industrial development of the accordion. Only in this manner, they felt, could the accordion someday become both an extremely popular instrument with the public, and a highly respected instrument in the concert world. These past twenty-five years have proven the wisdom of these charter members. The accordion today is an accepted part of the world's musical culture, and ranks amongst the top three most popular instruments in America.

### How Does The A.A.A. Function?

The simplest way to answer this question would be to refer the reader to the "Articles of Association" of the American Accordionists' Association. However, on the first Tuesday evening of each month, September through July, some twenty-five men and women, who represent a thorough cross-section of the accordion field, meet to discuss a variety of subjects that range from A to Z in the interest of the accordion, the people involved with it.

The subjects discussed at meetings are assigned to committees to put into action and ultimately result in an area of improvement for the benefit of all concerned with the accordion. To specify certain areas would be impossible in this article, however, there is available literature which explains all of the A.A.A.'s past accomplishments, and its future aims.

### Why Such A Varied Governing Board Membership?

The varied membership of the A.A.A. Governing Board was intended as such by the very charter members who first organized the Association. The A.A.A. was not intended to serve only one facet of the accordion domain. It was speci-

continued on page 11

*From the Archives...cont'd. from p. 10*

cally designed to serve the entire kingdom of accordiandom. That is why, on the governing board we find artists, teachers, manufacturers, publishers, studio directors, arrangers, composers, and business executives who in their own rights, are known and function on a world-wide scale.

These men and women donate their time, energy, and abilities and contribute many material factors for which they pay out of the generosity of their hearts, for the benefit of the entire accordion industry. The one and only main interest of these people is the accordion, and those involved with it.

**What Does The A.A.A. Mean To The Accordionist of Tomorrow?**

Here again it is impossible to answer justifiably in a short sentence. The A.A.A. means to the individual accordionist or business man, exactly what our government means to each citizen. In unity we gain recognition and strength. Through recognition and strength we gain successful access to the avenues that were once a

dream. Our success brings us a profitable, happy and secure future. More than this – the accordion and its patrons have gained respect.



AAA Annual Dinner and Dance – Statler Hilton Hotel, NYC – November 20, 1966

**Elsie M. Bennett Composition Competition  
New Awards!**

The AAA announces the 2017 Elsie M. Bennett Composition Competition with a \$500 cash award for the winning composer in the Open Division, and \$250 for the winning composer in the Junior Division. Below is an overview of the basic rules of the competition. Entry forms, a full set of rules and composition guides are available on the AAA website at [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com).

The general purpose of this competition is to add to the solo concert repertoire of the acoustic accordion. There is no directive for the style of the composition. Refer to the guide for composing for the standard piano accordion and links to other helpful websites posted on the AAA website [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com). There will be two divisions – Junior Division for composers up to the age of 18, and an Open Division for composers of any age.

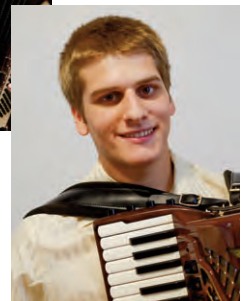
There will be first, second and third place awards presented when entries merit them. A cash award in the amount of \$500 (Open) and \$250 (Junior) will be presented to the first place winners.

Pictures are of the 2016 winners – Will Comer, Junior Division and Emmanuel Gasser, Open Division

Start Writing!



Pictured left:  
Will Comer  
Below:  
Emmanuel  
Gasser



*Thank You...*

**To all the wonderful musicians who performed at the  
2016 Valtaro Celebration  
November 26th at Magnanini Winery**

**Mario Tacca & Mary Mancini • Anita & Bob Siarkowski  
Domenic Karcic • Ray Oreggia • Beverly Roberts Curnow  
Emilio Magnotta • Frank Toscano • Eddie Monteiro  
Gia & Reagan Ciccone**

**Dr. Joe Ciccone, Dr. Bruce Naylor, Bruce Nielsen & Fred Schwinger**



## Coast to Coast

*...a sampling of accordion events across the USA!  
Contact the individual organizations for updates.*



### Portland, OR

Accordionist Elizabeth Wisler entertains passengers from all parts of the globe each week at the Portland International Airport as part of the Port of Portland Musical Entertainment group. Since 2009, Elizabeth has been performing her "Music Around The World" repertoire for travellers from all parts of the globe. Every Saturday, she volunteers and plays her accordion in the secured area of Concourse D and the ABC Lobby. People stop to listen, chat, and learn about the accordion.

Her repertoire includes "Music Around the World" with French, Italian, German, Spanish, Latin, Bossa Nova, Jazz Standards, 50's and 60's Rock and Roll, light Classical, and Ethnic. Elizabeth has been playing the accordion most of her life. She studied with Luigi Rangan for many years. For twenty years, she was an employee of the state of Oregon as an insurance claims adjuster. Her greatest joy, however, is playing the accordion for people. For further information: elizabethwisler31@gmail.com

### Minneapolis, MN

Dan Newton's Cafe Accordion Orchestra will perform on January 14, 2017 at the Cedar Cultural Center, 416 Cedar Ave S, in Minneapolis, MN. Doors open at 7:00 pm for the 8:00 pm show. Tickets are \$18 in advance and \$20 on the day of show.

Dan Newton's Cafe Accordion Orchestra (CAO) has been delighting concert audiences and dancers alike since 1995. They have appeared in New York at the Lincoln Center's Midsummer Night Swing series, the International Akkordeon Festival in Vienna, Austria, the Minnesota State Fair, as well as festivals, theaters and dance halls across the United States. CAO has just released their tenth full-length album, CAO 10, a display of the diverse musical influences that have shaped the band's repertoire over the past 22 years.

### Williamsburg, VA

On Sunday, January 8, 2017, accordion lovers will be treated to a concert/workshop in Williamsburg. The Accordion Renaissance Concert/Workshop will offer a concert featuring the accordion in various genres with other instruments as well as accordion solos and duos. Additionally, a workshop for accordion musicians and an orientation for interested youth and music teachers will be delivered.

Tickets are \$10.00 and open to the general public from 12 noon - 5:00 pm. The event will take place at the Williamsburg Regional Li-

brary, 515 Scotland Street, Williamsburg, VA. For information, please contact:

### USA Tour

The hugely popular Irish Christmas in America show, now in its 12th season, features top Irish music, song and dance in an engaging performance rich in history, humour and boundless energy. Produced by Oisín Mac Diarmada of award-winning Irish group Téada, the 2016 tour brings back the amazing accordionist Séamus Begley along with the immense vocal talents of Sligo's Niamh Farrell. This family-friendly performance features evocatively-sung Irish ballads, lively instrumental tunes and thrilling Irish dancing, while evocative photographic images provide a backdrop to some of the rich historical traditions. Take a memorable glimpse into the enchanting spirit of Christmas, as the finest traditional artists from Ireland bring you on a fun-filled start to the holiday season of 2016.

Séamus Begley comes from the Irish-speaking region of West Kerry and is a member of one of Ireland's most musically-acclaimed families. Famous for his heartfelt singing, Séamus is equally brilliant on the accordion, which he plays with astonishing energy and spontaneity belting out jigs, slides and polkas with rapid sprays of ornamentation. Dates are:

12/13/16: The Ware Center Millersville University, Lancaster, PA 7:30pm

12/15/16: Stargazers Theatre, Colorado Springs, CO 7:00pm

12/16/16: Armory Performing Arts Center, Brighton, CO 7:30pm

12/17/16: Broomfield Auditorium, Broomfield, CO 7:30pm

12/18/16: Abbey Theater of Dublin, Dublin, OH 5:00pm

12/19/16: Irish Heritage Center of Greater Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 7:00pm

For more information, please visit: <http://irishchristmasinamerica.com/>

### Peekskill, NY

A joyful Candlelight Christmas concert featuring Internationally acclaimed soprano Mary Mancini, world renowned Accordion Virtuoso Mario Tacca, and The Victor Lioni String Quartet performing favorite Christmas Hymns and Carols, as well as stunning pieces from Bach, Vivaldi, Handel and Mozart will take place at the Church of the Assumption, 131 Union Avenue, Peekskill, New York. The con-

cert will take place on Friday, December 9, 2016 at 7:00 PM. Tickets are \$17.00 for Adults; \$15.00 for Seniors and \$7.00 for children under 17. Light refreshments will be served after the concert in the Fr. Wilson Hall beneath the church.

### Westmont, NJ

In a Multi Studio Collaboration Recital, Air Accordion (Dee Langley), Rebel Reed Accordion Studio (Dallas Vietty) and Acme Accordion School will have a multi studio recital which will take place on location at Acme Accordion School, 322 Haddon Ave., Westmont, NJ via on location performances plus performances from all 3 studios via Skype.

All performers on location as well as Skype performers will be able to view each other in their own locations via computer and on location at Acme Accordion School via a 10 foot screen projection. Refreshments to follow. All are invited to attend. Friday - December 16, 2016 - 7 PM Eastern Standard Time.

### Washington Metropolitan Accordion Society (WMAS) Holiday Happenings

On Saturday, December 10, from 1 to 3 pm, members of the Potomac Accordion Ensemble, under the direction of WMAS Music Director, Joan Grauman, will play seasonal music at the beautiful Dublin Roasters Coffeehouse in Frederick, Maryland. This is the seventh season the group has played at this venue, and this event always attracts a large audience. If you are in the area, please come out to hear us (and sing-along!) and enjoy great soup, sandwiches and, of course, coffee!

The WMAS annual Holiday Concert and Potluck Dinner will take place at 4 pm on Sunday, December 11 at the Sleepy Hollow United Methodist Church in Falls Church, Virginia. All are welcome for this festive concert which features the WMAS Holiday Orchestra, the Potomac Accordion Ensemble, and solos performed by members of the club. After the concert, join us for a wonderful potluck dinner as accordionists stroll through the festively decorated church hall.

*WMAS wishes the  
American Accordionists' Association  
members a very happy holiday season!*