

folk forum

Winter/ Spring 2015

You are the Light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify God in heaven

Matt: 5:14-16

Hello Sojourners, Pilgrims, Hobbits, and Elves,

I'll bet you're all wondering if there was going to be a newsletter this spring. The folks here at folk forum have been wondering the same! I had hoped to be able to create a worthy piece that would once and for all inspire and give direction to help us understand and save the planet. Should be easy enough, right? How long have humans been hoping for, looking for, waiting for a "messiah" to come...and then after killing more than one of God's servants and messengers...waiting for them to come again. We do the same hoping for kings, queens, and presidents to rise above corruption and self interest. And how long will humans claim to be the 'chosen,' or chosen species for that matter, having a mandate to take the land from others who are already there, to exploit or even kill "the heathen", the gentiles, the infidels, or the unbelievers? And ultimately how long will they believe that the earth and all that is in it was created for humans to consume, hoard, and control. Creation was not created for us...we were created within it. The process took literally billions of our human contrived years and is much more complex and dynamic than our little knot of neurons and cerebral fat can appreciate. It was a gift that should have lasted a million or two more years. Thousands of years of cerebral fixation and chatter have frequently obliterated our primeval bonds to creation and the ancient songs and rhythms that allowed us to come into being. Heart and spirit connections, overpowered by ego, insecurity, or the need to dominate led to an earth harnessed, exploited, desecrated, and now precariously out of balance.

It is important to ask bigger questions and make fewer assumptions. Does God exist outside of and beyond planet earth? Does God exist outside of nature, incarcerated in the intellect and politics of humans? Did God create man in God's image or did man create God in man's image? Were nature and the whole universe created in God's image as well, and are nature and the universe-mankind included- a more complete image of God? Perhaps the "lithonizing" of early theological writers and early descriptions of man's relationship to God are attempts to contain God, making "God" more manageable. Have the Bible, the Talmud, the Qua'ran, and other inspired works become fossilized

remnants of a once vital and living God that is still constantly creating in the present? Are future and past a continuum with NOW, ever spinning and rambling, replaying and revealing infinite possibilities in a kaleidoscopic journey toward balance and harmony? How do we view the dark disturbances and threats to harmony that occur among humans with increasing regularity and intensity in the human world? Mankind's escape into the virtual realities of a techno world and economy divorced from the real economy of Planet Earth's savings account not only threatens the survival of all flora and fauna, it is an estrangement from God. Will the prodigal children find their way back? Does God care? Or does God patiently observe, reserving judgment, letting creation and mankind dance and struggle to the as yet unseen conclusion. Which raises the question, does God exist if mankind does not? Perhaps it is only mankind that has imagined God as a separate entity and when mankind has destroyed the possibility of mankind...there will just be God and the rest of awesome creation. If a tree falls deep in the forest and there is no one to hear it...

When you have the answers to all these questions, please write them down on a clean 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper double spaced in large bold font, laminate it and mail it in to:

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

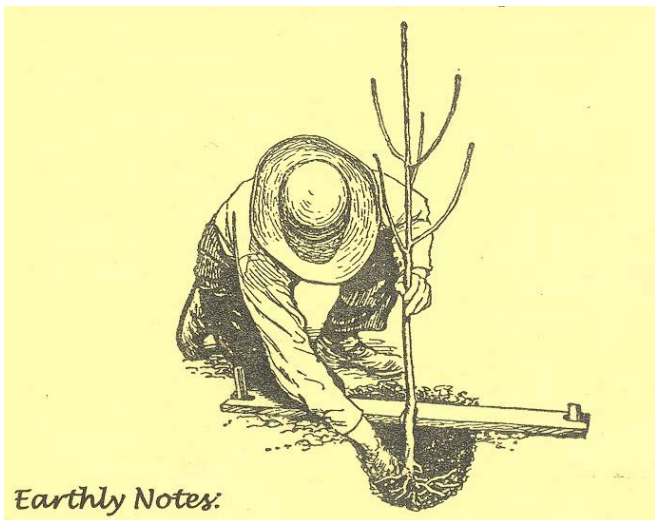
If you have difficulty finding words to adequately and definitively answer the above quiz, and you still want a passing grade...the next time you find yourself immersed in the awakening spring, lose your sense of self and feel as if you are an extension of it all...or perhaps while hearing laughter of children, comrades, and elders, sensing that time has fallen away and become irrelevant...in the experience of giving love, receiving love... becoming at once both infant and ancient...just say **WOW**. You just got kissed by God.

Love and peace,

Maintenance and repair

p.s. we can always use some help here!

***Mailing List:** If you would like to be on it, please make a small donation of ~\$5/yr or more and fill out the form on the insert in this newsletter. If you have donated recently and didn't get on it, please let us know. Our apologies!!



Earthly Notes.

Thank you

Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help us keep folk forum alive with your time or donations. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Lynn, and Austin, for your dedicated support and “in the nick of time” help. A huge thanks to Mariposa, (a.k.a. Kathy), Mandy, Margaret, Mary Emma, Laurie, Grace, and Hope for putting together the great food and jumping in wherever needed. Thank you Gus, Isaiah, and Gary for helping with everything from keeping fires going, hauling wood and beverages up the stairs to sweeping floors. And to Dr. Todd “Oz”, the dedicated and capable ticket taker extraordinaire, you are a blessing in a million ways. May you and Kathy always find mushrooms. In the face of a few challenging cold months, thank you Joe and Becca, Sam, Jesse, Dana, and Gary for lending backs, muscles, and time to help get wood in. It warms heart and soul to know you care and helps keep fannies of patrons and musicians alike from freezin’ up. If anyone would like to sign up as a regular volunteer to help us keep hosting these events, WE NEED YOU! A special thanks to Lawrence and Mary Schwanke, and Alan and Judy Hoffman for your constant and very generous support. And to Ron and Carolyn Drude, Michael Perry, Cy Champa, and everyone else who sent in donations of any amount to cover mailings and other costs. We know from all the thank you-s we receive from our patrons and visitors to the community that your support for this magical shared journey is appreciated.

Building needs/Volunteers/SOLAR PROJECT

We have an opportunity to take advantage of federal and utility incentives to help Oak Center renewably produce the energy required to continue running these programs. The process has been initiated due to application deadlines and due to the necessity to act. Folk forum has always been run on a lean budget with generous help from volunteers and subsidized from the farm. We have kept the admission costs affordable and provided some great food most times below cost. It was not a goal with folk forum to make a lot of money...and we didn't. We do not have enough cash to complete these necessary upgrades without your help. it is a difficult act to do all these fine programs without the generous help from you. Please consider donating money and/or time to help sustain the future of folk forum. Solar, wind machine repair, replacement of wood boiler, new roof, and a lot of weatherization/ and windows are all still on the list and have become more crucial to the continuation of THE OAK CENTER. **IF you would** like to make a donation, checks can be made out to folk forum and mailed in or dropped off. (507)753-2080, e-mail: folkforum@riverland.org. Thanks for being part of this.

Concerts: \$5-\$15 pay what you're able; kids freewill donation

THE MENU

SAWTOOTH BROTHERS

Saturday, Feb. 7th, 8PM

Bluegrass

In the tradition of classic bluegrass brother harmonies, the Sawtooth Brothers, with **two** sets of musical brothers, melds the sounds of the original bluegrass masters with the fresh sounds of today. Tight vocal harmonies and precision picking are getting them recognition, as well as numerous accolades & awards. Combining close harmony vocals, driving instrumentation, and a sense of fun and high energy, they have a stage show that has audiences wanting more.

THE PISTOL WHIPPIN' PARTY PENGUINS

Saturday, Feb. 21st, 8PM

Midwest-stylized, blues/country/rock/bluegrass

Straight from the great Mill City comes the Pistol Whippin' Party Penguins. Don't let the name fool you! This is not a violent group of flightless aquatic birds looking for a party, but rather 5 self proclaimed gentlemen, 2 guitars, a mandolin, a bucket of fiddles, an upright bass, a banjo, and a 4 part vocal harmony that will make angels cry. This quintet from Minneapolis strives to maintain the original spirit of the "string band" while continuing to play new original music and creative cover songs. The combination of folk, rock, blues, bluegrass, and the occasional stage banter will create an experience that anyone can enjoy! Don't miss this night of music!!!

RADOSLAV LORKOVIC

Friday, Feb. 14th, 8PM

Blues, Cajun, Jazz, Zydeco & Folk

Radoslav comes again to do his amazingly diverse and artistically performed collection of originals in all the musical genres of the planet. Great voice, incredible piano, and other worldly accordion, it just gets better every time. Come share the love at Oak Center this Valentines Day!

BRIAN WICKLUND AND THE BARLEY JACKS

Saturday, Feb. 28th, 8PM

Acoustic Alchemy and Fiddle Wizardry

The Barley Jacks sing original vocals and play jaw-dropping instrumentals in a spirit of excitement and fun. They are masters of the fiddle, guitar, bass and drum who meld their divergent backgrounds of blues and bluegrass, classical and Celtic, R & B and bebop to inspire each other and create something entirely new. Frontman and fiddler Brian Wicklund is joined by Joe Cruz-guitar, Kevin Rowe-bass, and Joel Arpin-percussion. These Minnesota-based veterans of years in the musical trenches enjoy making music together so much that they sometimes giggle like little kids completely lost in a moment of play. Virtuosity, magic and a little danger combine to make every performance unique

BILL STAINES

Sunday, Mar. 1st, 3PM

Traditional and original folk

With “a sense of timing to match the best stand-up comic,” Bill Staines’ music is a slice of Americana, reflecting with the same ease on the prairie people of the Midwest and the adventures of the Yukon. Between original songs, Bill includes traditional folk tunes and more contemporary country ballads. Bill delights in having the audience participate in many numbers and never fails to please.

JILLIAN RAE BAND

Saturday, Mar. 7th, 8PM

A rollicking mix of folk, rock and bluegrass

Jillian Rae is a multi-talented performer with an assured stage presence. The Star Tribune calls her “A triple treat on vocals, fiddle, and composition, she also surprises by showcasing snarling guitars and rock 'n' roll rhythms, along with some country-western

seasoning. The songs are so bright, and Rae's singing so hopeful, that it takes a few moments to realize her songs are mostly about the vicissitudes of love" A heavy hitter in the Minnesota music scene for years, she had been known to lend her fiddle chops in the Duluth-based band Two Many Banjos, and also spent some time fronting the local pop country staple, The Killer Hayseeds. She brings her own brand of Americana to Oak Center tonight with Eric Martin on guitar & backup vocals, Josh Kaplan on drums, Reed Pagal on bass and Justin Nellis on keys.

BARBARA JEAN MEYERS AND BAND

Friday, Mar 13th, 8PM

Authentic country, banjo and blues

Calling the rugged grandeur of Lake Superior's North Shore home for the better part of the last decade, Barbara Jean has developed her craft as a singer and multi-instrumentalist through constant live performance, sharing bills with notable acts such as Leon Russell, Kathy Mattea, Low, Junior Brown, The Pines, and more... Her second album, *Darker Than Blue*, has received notable reviews. Rich Larson of the Southern Minn Scene says "Meyer has assembled a backing band worthy of Emmylou Harris or Loretta Lynn. A true triple threat of instrumentalist, vocalist and songwriter, Meyers' talent stands as tall as anyone else you'll hear. A virtuoso on the fiddle, the viola and the banjo, she's been writing music since she was 13. And somehow amid all of that, she has developed an impossibly beautiful voice." She is joined tonight by legendary guitarist of Trampled by Turtles fame, Erik Koskinen.

BARRA

Saturday, March 14th, 8PM

Traditional Irish and Celtic Music

One of Minnesota's longest-running traditional Irish bands, Barra has been thrilling audiences with its high energy performances since 1999. The band's repertoire features the old favorite traditional dance tunes and songs, rarer pieces collected on trips to Ireland, as well as material from related Celtic traditions. Barra performs on stages across the Upper Midwest for concerts, festivals, ceilis, and private events, sharing the sheer fun and vitality of a musical tradition loved the world over. Members of the group include Dave Cammack (bodhran and accordion), Paul Garding (guitar and vocals), John McCormick (accordion and vocals), Amy Shaw (flute), and Beth Vance (fiddle). No better way to get ready for St. Patty's day at Oak Center!

BOILED IN LEAD

Saturday, Mar. 21st, 8PM

Rock'n'reel, Punk folk, Country music

For over 30 years, BiL have been innovators in bringing "folk music" kicking and screaming to rock audiences (& rock music to screaming folk audiences)! A Boiled In Lead concert is a combination of darkly-tinged folk ballads and originals alongside instrumental dance music from Ireland and elsewhere. With the return of original lead singer Todd Menton and the addition of world-travelling eclectic instrumentalist Marc Anderson, they move forward with a fresh approach to a classic style. Enthusiastic, powerful, technically brilliant, playing a wealth of instruments with extreme dynamics, Boiled In Lead routinely demolishes genres with its highly-identifiable sound. Catch them at Oak Center!

DEAN MAGRAW AND FRIENDS

Sunday, March 29th, 3PM

Extra-terrestrial folk-jazz

Celebrate Palm Sunday and Spring with an intimate performance kickin' out the geetar jams and laughin' away your blues. Dean Magraw unveils soulful melodic grooves intricately designed to heal the broken dancer, confuse the boldest mathematician, and eradicate

ennui in our lifetime. His musical passion transcends all boundaries, yet the essence of his distinctive style remains. Get tickets early!

MONROE CROSSING

Friday, April 10th, 8PM

Bluegrass

Monroe Crossing dazzles audiences with an electrifying blend of classic bluegrass, bluegrass gospel, and heartfelt originals. Their airtight harmonies, razor sharp arrangements, and on-stage rapport make them audiences' favorites across the continent.

Get tickets early...

STEVE KAUL AND THE BRASS KINGS

Saturday April 11th, 8PM

Blues and folk with international influences

Your favorite Alt Folk Trio is mutating... growing extra limbs, gestalt phenomena and more... Steve Kaul and the Brass Kings featuring Brad Ptacek, Mikkel Beckmen, & Jillian Rae play their old-time instruments in very unexpected ways. With metal-bodied resophonic guitars, washtub bass & washboard they chart the bermuda triangle of old-time, middle-eastern and bluegrass music. Shifting from jug-band chugging into wild improvisational ragas they blend folk music traditions into a pulsing groove. The energy and drive is impossible to ignore. It will be a very special night.

CHAD ELLIOT

Friday, April 17th, 8PM

Americana, Roots & Country

Chad Elliott bought his first guitar at an Omaha pawn shop, a dreadnought next to the used guns and knives. He took it home, slowly taught himself to fingerpick and began transposing his poetry writing into original songs. Averaging over 150 shows per year, Elliott has been on the road for more than a decade performing a blend of Americana, roots and country music. He has shared the music stage with greats such as: Eric Church, Lonestar, Counting Crows, Brantley Gilbert, R.L. Burnside, Odetta, Tom Paxton, Loudon Wainwright III, and others. Todd Partridge of NoDepression.com says, Chad Elliott stands out as a timeless and genuine musical poet with supple-strong roots like the bluestem and buffalo grass of Iowa prairie." Don't miss him at Oak Center.

SWITCHBACK

Saturday, April 18th, 8PM

American Roots & Celtic Soul

For over two decades, Brian FitzGerald and Martin McCormack, known as Switchback, have entertained crowds with their unique blend of music. Brian and Martin play an exciting mix of mandolin, guitar, and bass. Their harmonies have won them comparisons to famous duos, such as the Louvin Brothers, the Everly Brothers, and Simon and Garfunkel. Music Connection Magazine said of them: "The words 'American Roots & Celtic Soul' only begin to describe this unusual act, whose vocal prowess is as pure as it is unique... there is no denying the stunning vocal blends that are achieved by this duo."

ANDRA SUCHY & FRIENDS

Saturday, April 25th, 8PM

Country, rock, folk and blues

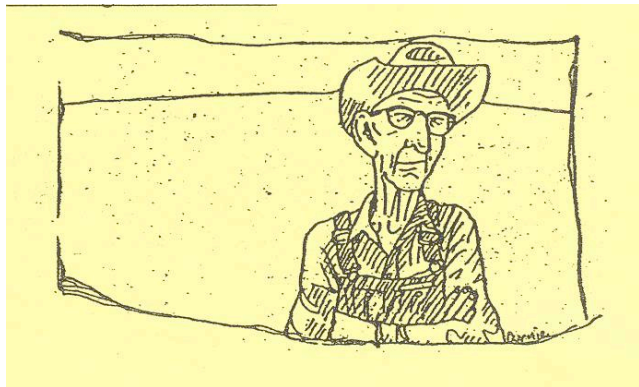
Raised on a beef and wheat farm in North Dakota by folk musicians, Andra Suchy began touring and performing at festivals at a young age. Classically trained and a veteran of musical theater, the guitar-playing singer moved to Minneapolis in 1996, where she has gone on to make a name for herself as one of the finest vocalists around. A regular performer on A Prairie Home Companion, Andra has performed around the world, singing with such artists as Brad Paisley, Mindy Smith, Emmylou Harris, Chris Thile and soprano Renee Fleming. Although mainly known as a vocalist, Andra has been quietly honing her songwriting craft, self-releasing a solo

album in 2006 called Patchwork Story. Signed to Grammy-winning label Red House Records, she released her album Little Heart in March, 2012. Full of infectious originals, the album is a twang-tinged mix of country, rock, folk and blues.

For further information, please call The Oak Center General Store, (507) 753-2080 or email folkforum@riverland.org.

Thank you for your friendship and participation. New ideas are welcome; please contact us with your thoughts.

www.oakcentergeneralstore.com



folk forum CALENDAR IN BRIEF Winter/ Spring 2015

February

- 7th, Fri. 8PM Sawtooth Brothers
- 14th, Sat. 8PM Radoslav Lorkovic
- 21st, Sat. 8PM The Pistol Whippin' Party Penguins
- 28th, Sat. 8PM Brian Wicklund and the Barley Jacks

March

- 1st, Sun. 3PM Bill Staines
- 7th, Sat. 8PM Jillian Rae Band
- 13th, Fri. 8PM Barbara Jean Meyers and Band
- 14th, Sat. 8PM Barra
- 21st, Sat. 8PM Boiled in Lead
- 29th, Sun. 3PM Dean Magraw and friends

April

- 10th, Fri. 8PM Monroe Crossing
- 11th, Sat. 8PM Steve Kaul and the Brass Kings
- 17th, Fri. 8PM Chad Elliot
- 18th, Sat. 8PM Switchback
- 25th, Sat. 8PM Andra Suchy and friends

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