

folk forum

Winter/ Spring 2017

One of the greatest lessons from history, is that men do not learn from history. Alduous Huxley

Hello fellow Earthlings,

I apologize AGAIN for not getting this spring newsletter written, printed, and mailed out in a timely fashion. Thank you, Kathy, for heroically taking the ball to the one yard line and doing the descriptions of the shows coming up. I have been struggling for 2 weeks trying to come up with a positive inspiring message. The difficulty perhaps has been in thinking I needed to say something nice about Donald Trump and the ongoing, shameful corporate cronyism and racist UN-PRESIDENTIAL behavior the whole world is witness to. Unfortunately he does not display a visible moral center. There is little evidence that he will be a president for ALL Americans. Each “tweet” from this flamboyant bird amounts to cannon-fire across the bows of just about every boat in the water save a few luxury liners. Many of us feel as if we are on the Titanic and have just heard the hull tearing and felt the shudder on the good ship lollipop. Most of life-boats are being jettisoned and the price of life-jackets is being set by the corporate raiders.

I have been consuming gallons of coffee in this quest for inspiration, and admittedly, for an induced mood boost,,,even knowing it will be as short lived as the time it takes for my body to metabolize caffeine. When I look Donalds and the Corporate Raiders, as a Christian and a Mennonite, I feel compelled first to understand them as the first step to forgiveness. I ask myself, “how did they get to this point, is there an opening for enlightenment and metanoia?” Experience in raising my own children has shown me that gaining too much money or possessions too easily, without earning it, will lead to poor stewardship of those things gained. Dishonesty, if not checked in formative years can lead to permanent disfigurement that spills over into the lives of those around them. It is self-delusion of our “Prez” if he believes his own claim of standing for the working class. The claim is proved false by past business practices and becomes more evident with each appointee to the Corporate Board of America that he is assembling. In the bridge game being played, the chosen suit for the Trump card is not Hearts...in fact, it looks like it will be BOTH Diamonds AND Clubs. In this game, there are a whole lot of cards being played that don’t belong in the deck...

The “Great” America promised in this **LATE GREAT CON**, includes parts of America that were broken and needed fixing. To be fair, it is maybe impossible to make laws that will be perfect for all time and this was acknowledged by one of the most articulate of the founders, Thomas Jefferson. Some of what Trump’s America disliked needed more work. Some of what Donald Trump’s America thinks was great, was

not great. It took a lot of sacrifice, sound conscience, and moral guidance of generations of patriotic citizens to fix those obvious broken parts. From the beginning, the founders and future generations of our nation knew that some people’s “pursuit of happiness” prevented that of others...or destroyed the land, water, and resources and/or allowed some to gain disproportionate control denying fair access of it to others. The Earth should be our Commonwealth. Commonwealth is a concept rooted in most ancient of faiths and traditions. In the Judaic tradition, Jubilee recognized the eventual acquisition/possession of land to become distorted. Scriptures state that we are all “strangers and guests” in God’s creation. We are reminded to be good stewards of Creation. We are also reminded to share these blessings from God. Unfortunately, the early “immigrants” to both the Holy Lands and America, viewed indigenous peoples living on the land they desired, “the land of milk and honey”, or “New World” as being in the way. God was promising it to his “chosen people” over God’s other children who were already living there. That rationale for conquest over land is bankrupt when held up to a more whole picture that sees the necessity, both spiritually and materially for humanity to learn to live in harmony with each other AND IN BALANCE with the Creation. The BATTLE OF ARMEGEDDON, of JIHAD...has always been the battle within for each individual soul and to enact it live on this earth...at this juncture, won’t be just one more human/environmental tragedy in a long string.

These Corporate Raiders have breached the wall and the Robber Barons are on the loose. “Religious” extremists of all ilk are raising the specters of their demons and throwing gasoline on smoldering coals. Will the Religious Right continue to worship at the Tower of Trump having promised the loyalty of their single issue religion. Will they be seated on the conservative right of the throne even if all the comfy seats are taken and they must sit on a “Baal”? Will the Republican Party continue to hold their noses to support the plunder and burning of the village because they have been promised the worldly realm without the constraints of conscience? Hey “Christian” brothers and sisters, does Satan tempt you at the top of the (Trump) tower?

Serious walls have already been constructed. Economic class, religion, race have all been issues to break up the human family. As the fires heat up, remember that there are a lot of good people all around us. Perhaps some have become temporarily deluded, but we are here to work it out. We do not have to surrender our consciences and who we are. We are measured by what we do and the strength of our consciences. I hope Christian brothers and sisters will remember the scripture “even as you do to the least of these, you do unto me” when there is confusion about where to go.

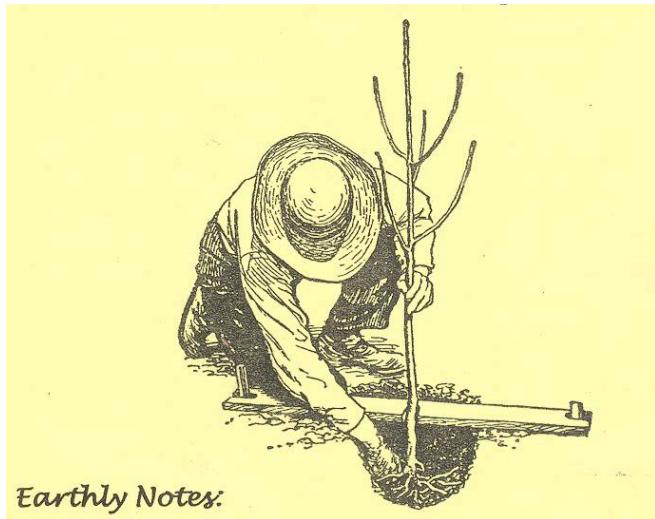
The darkest hour is just before the dawn. The lowest ebb is

the turn of the tide. Keep the fires going as long as needed to hold the wolves at bay.

On this cold day the sun shined brightly and felt very warm! All you Earth-keepers, Peace-makers, Justice-seekers, and Water-protectors are the sun rising up again after the darkness, the rainbow after the storm. The Creator gave us a beautiful planet to take care of...help everybody to love it...and order your seeds for SPRING IS COMING! 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... when you sense that time has fallen away and become irrelevant...in the experience of giving love, and receiving love...just say **WOW**. You got kissed by God again.

LOVE AND PEACE, Maintenance and repair

p.s. we still need some help!



Earthly Notes:

Thank you

- Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help us keep folk forum alive with your time or donations. A HUGE thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Lynn, Austin and Sierra, to Mariposa, (a.k.a. Kathy), Todd, Matt, Doug, Mandy, Margaret, Mary Emma, Laurie, Nikki, and Hope for helping to cover all the bases. Thank you Gus, Isaiah, Andy. 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. To: Ron and Carolyn Drude, Theresa and Sam Hurne, Michael Perry, Cy Champa, Nate U., Stephen B., Gayla G., Marsha S., Amanda D. MaryS., and to all who sent in donations or donated unused tickets to help cover mailings and other costs. Your support for this magical shared journey is vital and appreciated.

Building needs/Volunteers/SOLAR

PROJECT —We took advantage of federal and utility incentives to help Oak Center renewably produce the energy required to continue running these programs. The bill is still being paid and lots still due. During times when the sun normally shines brightly...lots' of rain, clouds, and snow/ice sticking to collectors has slowed the pay-back. Folk forum has always been run on a lean budget utilizing generous help from volunteers and subsidies from our farm.

We have kept the admission costs affordable and provide some great food with a donation bowl. We appreciate those that donate to the bowl generously enough to meet costs. It was not a goal with folk forum to make a lot of money...and we didn't. We still need cash to complete necessary upgrades and repairs...it is an endless battle, aye? Like Sisyphus? without your help. It is a difficult act to continue all these fine programs without generous help from you. Please consider donating money and/or time to help sustain the future of folk forum. Finishing the solar goals, wind machine repair, replacement of our old wood boiler, leaking roof, LOTS of weatherization and window installation, is the reason for this whimpering and begging. It is an unending challenge!

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.

***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!!

THE MENU

ROOT RIVER JAM

Saturday, Feb. 4th, 8PM

Bluegrass Fusion

Root River Jam, a bluegrass "fusion" band, will be serving up a menu of "Original music" that will surely feed your creative appetite and have you coming back for seconds. Second set that is! Based in Rochester, MN. Root River Jam has been working on their self-titled album and will be performing their new material at the show. In the words of music blogger Jeff Hansel, "*Root River Jam will take you into the clouds and beyond with incredible instrumentals and joyous singing that's downright fun to hear.*"

"Songwriter/guitarist Dave Wilson says, "we put 'jam' in our name and after listening to us you'll understand why."

RADOSLAV LORKOVIC

Saturday, Feb. 11th, 8PM

Blues, Cajun, Jazz, Zydeco & Folk

As the thirty year anniversary of my performing at folk forum approaches, I stand humbled by the incredible people I have been lucky enough to perform for. I have never missed a year. Many times I was lucky enough to perform 3 times! I hope to hit the century mark. I am over halfway there. The real blessing is the phenomenal artists I have been paired with: Greg Brown (first show), Dave 'Snaker' Ray, Dean Magraw, Andy White, Kristina Olsen, Joe Price, Willie Murphy, Barbara Jean, Bo Rasmsey, and the list goes on. See you all there?

My Valentine to You... Radoslav

MONROE CROSSING

Saturday, Feb 18th, 8PM

Classic Bluegrass, Bluegrass Gospel

Named in honor of Bill Monroe, 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 audience favorites across the United States and Canada. Since the year 2000, Monroe Crossing has released 13 CDs and a live concert DVD and has made more than 1500 concert appearances throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. In 2007, they were selected as an Official Showcase Band at the International Bluegrass Music Association's

World of Bluegrass Convention in Nashville, and later that year, they were inducted into the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame. Buy tickets early!

BILL STAINES

Sunday, Feb. 26th, 3PM

Americana & 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.

HURRICANE HAROLD, JEFF RAY & THE STAKES

Saturday, March 4th, 8PM

Roots & Blues

A “roots and blues oddity” is a very deserving description for the Minnesota-based acoustic roots and blues musician Jeff Ray. His quartet materialized in the Minneapolis area over the past 6+ years with no formal rehearsals and no pre-determined musical ideas. Their first gig together was on Minnesota Public Radio’s Radio Heartland. The gig was quickly followed by a string of shows that started out as “get-togethers on stage” and quickly developed into full-throttle improvisations. Their music developed naturally and unforced, something that is rare and hard to find these days. The musical oddity of this band becomes clear when you realize how much rhythm is pounded out with every note played: Mikkel Beckmen’s one-of-a-kind syncopated washboard foot-stomp combo, joined with Nick Salisbury’s homemade foot shaker contraption and 60’s soul-style bass, Hurricane Harold Tremblay’s pulsing train style harmonica, joined with Jeff Ray’s thumb thumping alternate-tuning east-meets-west fingerstyle resonator slide-guitar. The band is definitely an earful and a true musical oddity; but they are strangely fun, sometimes confusing, and always inspiring.

CHRIS SILVER AND THE GOOD INTENTIONS

Saturday, March 11th, 8PM

Traditional Bluegrass with Roots, Jazz and Blues

Led by Chris Silver, The Good Intentions are inspired by the sounds of Hot Rize, Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, Tony Rice, and JD Crowe. They deliver traditional bluegrass with polish and drive and play songs from the bluegrass masters to material penned by Silver. Silver plays fiddle and mandolin with a deep appreciation for traditional bluegrass music, but it doesn’t stop there. His solos stretch beyond the boundaries of bluegrass including hints of jazz, blues, and roots music. Soulful original arrangements of their songs have already established the band in the hearts of the Midwest bluegrass community. Their success is based on the complimentary picking and singing skills of some of the best-known names in the area’s bluegrass scene. Always an Oak Center favorite.

PISTOL WHIPPIN' PARTY PENGUINS

Saturday, March. 18th, 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!!!

DAN NEWTON-DADDY SQUEEZE & CAFÉ ACCORDION

Saturday, March 25th, 8PM

French Musette, vintage swing, Euro-Latino dance music

Dan Newton, aka Daddy Squeeze and his Café Accordion Orchestra (CAO) performs an eclectic mix full of French flare, Latin heat and Bohemian attitude. The heart of the CAO repertoire is the romantic, gypsy-influenced valse-musette. The group complements the musettes with swing, ballads, tangos, cha chas, rumbas, and cumbias to create a wonderfully varied show. They inject their music with good humor and expressive abandon. Their highlevel of musicianship and passion for performance makes them an entertaining oncert act as well as a great dance band! Move some chairs and take a turn on the floor at Oak Center!

KATEY BELLVILLE

Saturday, April 1st, 8PM

Americana/ Bluegrass

Katey grew up with a bluegrass and old-time music soundtrack playing in the background. Singing has always been very natural to her and she sing songs all day long about everything from putting on her socks, to what she’s going to eat for breakfast. She won her first music competition singing at the Boyceville, WI ‘Pickle Festival’ when she was five years old. Soon she began singing harmony with her dad Rod Bellville, a popular fixture in the Westbank Old Time Music Scene, and eventually performing on her own. She still loves the old tunes, but now mixes them up with her original songs, and those of contemporary songwriters like Gillian Welch. She released her first full-length album in 2013. It was partially recorded in Nashville, finished in Minneapolis, and has received countless amazing reviews by listeners. Fans frequently describe her songs as ‘unforgettable’ tunes, blending modern pop sensibilities with fundamental bluegrass instrumentation.

THE BARLEY JACKS

Saturday April 8th, 8PM

Acoustic Alchemy and Fiddle Wizardry

“Synergy is the interaction of forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual parts.” – an apt description for The Barley Jacks. They sing original vocals and play jaw-dropping instrumentals in a spirit of excitement and fun. 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. Front-man and fiddler Brian Wicklund is joined by Mike Cramer-guitar, Jim Chenoweth-bass, and Joel Arpin-percussion. Virtuosity, magic and a little danger combine to make every performance unique. The first thing an audience notices is how much fun the Barley Jacks have when they perform. 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.

PETER OSTROUSHKO & DEAN MAGRAW

Saturday, April 22nd, 8PM

Extra-terrestrial folk-jazz

This team was one of the early duos that started folk forum off in this fabulous musical journey. Peter was well known back in those days as the best fiddle mandolin player in the country as a regular on Prairie Home Companion. He brought Dean Magraw with him for his first appearance at folk forum. Not only did Dean’s skill on guitar match and compliment the exquisite instrumentals of Peter...the combination of their two personalities and senses of humor infected all of us with unbridled laughter that still rings in memory. They are still great, they still do an exceptional show, and

last time I checked...they were still gut-rippin' funny. I think maybe they sing more and their voices have only improved with age.

JOE AND VICKI PRICE

Saturday, April 29th, 8PM

Homegrown, Get-down Blues

Vicki and Joe Price are a husband and wife blues duo from SE Iowa. They do some dynamite blues in the old traditions as well as a good measure of high-powered originals. Vicki's exemplary guitar playing and smooth vocals perfectly compliment Joe's raspy voice and mean slide guitar. They have a well earned following who come again & again to see the incredible energy that comes alive on the stage in this quiet like-able guy that Greg Brown at times has called the "Buddha". Scene Magazine says " Vicki's powerful bluesy voice evokes an image of a woman in a 1920's speakeasy singing her heart out. If you like upbeat, straightforward blues, you can't go wrong with what the Prices are laying down." Come feel the music and shake them bones...

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 2017

February

4th, Sat. 8PM Root River Jam

11th, Sat. 8PM Radoslav w/ Barbara Jean – Valentines Show!

18th, Sat. 8PM Monroe Crossing

26th, Sun. 3PM Bill Staines

March

4th, Sat. 8PM Hurricane Harold, Jeff Ray & the Stakes

11th, Sat. 8PM Chris Silver & the Good Intentions

18th, Sat. 8PM Pistol Whippin' Party Penguins

25th, Sat. 8PM Dan Newton, Daddy Squeeze & Café Accordion

April

1st, Sat. 8PM Katey Bellville

8th, Sat. 8PM The Barley Jacks

22nd, Sat. 8PM Peter Ostroushko and Dean Magraw

29th, Sat. 8PM Joe and Vicki Price

folk forum

c/o Oak Center General Store

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