

folk forum

Winter/Spring 2020

“I’m sick and tired of shortsighted, narrow minded, hypocrites...Just Give me some truth...” John Lennon

“We have a mental illness problem in America” Donald Trump speaking on the gun issue

“I hasten to laugh at everything for fear of being obliged to weep” - the Barber of Seville

Hello Travelers and Sojourners,

2020 began very quietly in Oak Center. The lone car going thru this obsolete little town at 4am under the crush of “civilization” - an impedance perhaps to the march of “PROGRESS” for the multi headed Medusa of Industrio-techno-digito Beastio. This car does so each day as it’s driver dutifully goes to work in a job so vital that they make the drive at 4am each day regardless of weather or as in this case, on New Year’s Day. I think, it’s got to be someone doing chores on one of the industrial livestock operations that displaced so many family farms and weakened main street businesses of small towns all across the Midwest. Many of these towns, some 10 times the size of Oak Center, were still too small to be viable in the new GLOBAL ECONOMY. When America WAS GREAT, there were viable diverse small family farms that produced dependable and capable generations with multiple skills and work ethic. With people raising families on these farms, LOCAL businesses were staffed by members of their own communities who knew them and knew enough about the things their business sold to be able to HELP these customers find the things they needed and if necessary explain how to use them. During the course of that discourse, one could sometimes get first-hand wind of issues in the community. Nostalgia may be 20/20 hindsight, but reminds us that not all discarded in the path of “progress” makes quality of life better. Walking endless isles thru toxic indoor pollution emitted by plastics, disposable tools that can’t be repaired, and chemicals designed to kill every thing biological, bug, bacteria, or rodent that may enter the interiors of our largely synthetic castles, makes me DIZZY and NAUSEOUS. On-line or in-line, making America great again conjures a different image for me than the one being sold by the present CEO of These Divided States of America. Ironically, as the Don attempts to overturn a couple hundred years of what may have at times been a contentious democracy, he and the cadre of forever Trumpers who have lined up marching lock-step in the wake, claim it is undemocratic for the democratic process to attempt a correction or recall of a president who was elected with less than a majority in an election process that is increasingly viewed as undemocratic. The mid-term elections were a referendum showing dissatisfaction with the surprise result in 2016 election and the dangerous and shocking executive behavior that was anything but “presidential”. Even if one believes a “benevolent monarchy” would be a superior form of gov’t to representative democracy, Donald T. has demonstrated that he is anything BUT benevolent. What is immediately evident is that self-interest and egomaniacal tendencies are not qualities that help the nation or the world in these times. Volatile knee-jerk foreign policy in the absence

of knowledge or diplomatic skills endangers a world already in turmoil. Undying loyalty to “his base” (extremist elements in America, anti-environmental industrial oligarchs, racists, religious extremists, and jingoistic military hawks to name just a few) have made him a serious danger to the whole planet and all of its living inhabitants. The ramifications of replacing experienced foreign policy members of the state dept. and cutting the budgets for diplomacy have been spread across all aspects of the challenges we need to face in the very near future. Gunboat diplomacy and anti-environmental attitudes prevent essential solutions in this 21st century world. Using the old rhetoric of making the world safe for “Democracy” will not help a world where an increasingly unstable climate requires all people globally to work together to rapidly move toward returning to a sustainable energy, industrial, and agricultural systems. That will requires leaders with integrity and an ability to think beyond personal gain whether ego or wealth. They must have skills and desires to work for the good of all living generations and for generations into the future... IF we have that much time left. Please make a personal review American history if you haven’t done that already.

Our country historically has been very adept at “regime change” outside the democratic consent of our own citizenship, and frequently WITHOUT THEIR KNOWLEDGE. FEAR of communism, FEAR of terrorism, FEAR of the enemy, FEAR the economy will collapse enables the manipulation of public sentiment and overrides thoughtful informed decisions. [Oh yes...”why did God put our oil UNDER THEIR SAND or IN THEIR JUNGLES or in the WATERS OFF THEIR SHORES”? (ans: SHE DIDN’T!)] Regime change used to be a mostly covert operation orchestrated by the CIA with clandestine approval from whichever official was calling the shots from the deep. It seems after 2000 a guy “elected” in our national presidential sweepstakes can impulsively unleash pre-emptive strikes to impress an extremist core or political backers that wag “this BIG dog” by its tail. A ‘doomed to failure’ “Peace Plan” has been conveniently pulled out of the apartheid playbook just in time to rally the base for elections? As distractions from corruption charges? Who are the actual rogue nations in the world today? Who are the biggest bullies in the scenes of this unsettling play? Will we be asking End of Life Questions for Planet Earth? Regime change thru military intervention has been the modus operandi for too long now. Chaos and suffering always result. A “regime change” most needed now is here in our own country...not just the presidency, but all those who held their noses to “support the president” for fear of alienating the tide of an increasingly extremist base. Any politicians who compromised basic decency and principles in these Faustian Bargains with the Devil, taking pay-offs from corporate sponsors, fingers held in the wind to see which way it blows...

Get “big money/dark money” out of politics. Put principle, conscience, stewardship, and ethics back in. To hold the course, we must put our lives on course as well. Shine your lights brightly; live as purely as you can, (we all slip at times, but if we continue to try, we will be forgiven. Hopefully nature will be able to forgive us!) May the long time sun

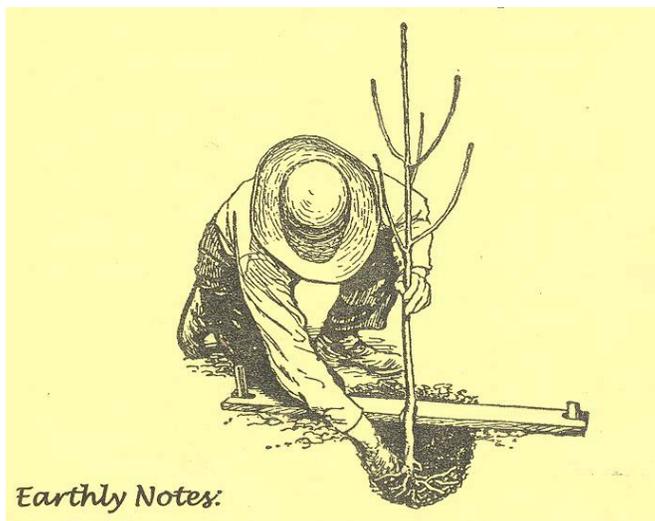
shine upon you and the pure light within you, GUIDE YOUR WAY HOME!

See you in the big room? Let's celebrate life and each other with GREAT MUSIC!

Peace and love,
Maintenance and repair

P.S. Dear God, (I hope she is listening) please bless Mother Nature and all your very imaginative creatures, whether fuzzy or slimy. It's all part of a really great puzzle from which we have received many gifts. Hopefully we haven't damaged too many pieces of that puzzle. We know it took you WAY MORE than 7 days to create it and get it to fit together. We've already lost a few pieces. Sorry...

And oh yeah, bless mommy and daddy and all the other people too...and help everyone get along. They need to know if they love YOU they need to love CREATION!



Earthly Notes:

Thank you

To the many friends and supporters who have helped folk forum get thru the financial challenges we were facing. The generous gifts we received AND the contributions of time, talent, and moral support during and after our December fundraiser appeal gave us a breath and allowed us to get a foot-hold again and continue into the coming season...and hopefully beyond. The outpouring of material and moral support has moved us and inspired us to continue the battle for planet Earth...both physical and spiritual. We have always tried to list the names of all that supported folk forum in the past, and the list got much longer during the past months. In the interest of getting this newsletter out before the spring music season is over, the newsletter thank you is a big THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU WHO KEEP US INSPIRED AND FUNCTIONING!!!

We do need to find a way to make our appreciation visible and enshrined for the appreciation of others that benefit from folk forum's mission(s); Artists and presenters who are guests and beneficiaries of our community efforts have been asked to sign the wall on the back of the stage. We would like to create a similar recognition on one of the other walls of the hall or stairwell. We welcome suggestions and help in creating something to that end...

IF you would like to make a donation, checks can be made out to folk forum and mailed in or dropped off. We are always looking for volunteers and welcome donations of time.

***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 donated recently and didn't receive mailings, let us know and we will lick stamps and send them to you. If you want to be on our e-mail list and would like periodic updates and press releases, please send an e-mail request. We lost our e-mail contact list when the computer crashed last spring and will do our best, with help from a savvy IT person. (Are YOU that person?). Our apologies for any ineptness!!! Doug helps us keep our website updated so you can always check there.

THE MENU

RACHEL KILGOUR

Saturday Feb 1st, 8PM

Lyric Driven Folk

Rachael Kilgour is a Minnesotan songwriter and performing artist whose sincere, lyric-driven work has been called both brave and humane. She has been featured at NYC's Lincoln Center, at The Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. and at the Sundance Film Festival. Her third full-length album, *Rabbit in the Road*, has been called "...a heartfelt slice of master crafted indie folk brimming with the battle-tested capacity to endure the worst in others" by Billboard. In February of 2019, Kilgour follows up with the release of her new EP, *Game Changer*. The aptly titled work examines her tentative first steps into a new existence, post-heartbreak. With a clear head, Kilgour touches on the complicated nature of romance and relationship, sets up a stunning defense of queer love, and reassesses her priorities as a citizen of a changing wider world.

CHRIS SILVER AND THE GOOD INTENTIONS

Saturday Feb 8th, 8PM

Traditional Bluegrass with Roots, Jazz and Blue

The Good Intentions have been playing driving bluegrass music for over a decade. Chris Silver plays fiddle and mandolin with a deep appreciation for traditional bluegrass music. His solos stretch beyond the boundaries of bluegrass including hints of jazz, blues, and roots music. Banjo player **Heath Loy** enjoyed growing up in a "bluegrass music household." Heath's fiddle playing father, Bob Loy, owned a music store in Rochester and was one of the founders of the Minnesota Bluegrass Music Association. Heath's playing is rich with the styles of J D. Crowe, Earl Scruggs, and Ralph Stanley. He also performs with his wife, Becky Schlegel. Guitarist **Mike Cramer's** award winning flatpicking technique has earned him championship titles in both the Minnesota State Fair Flatpicking Competition and Wisconsin's Upper-Midwest Flatpicking Contest. Mike is a four-tool player who is as comfortable playing jazz standards as he is playing instrumentals from Bill Monroe. **J D. Shaffer** holds down the bass role with precision and tone, singing tenor in a clear and powerful voice. He has the unique ability to blend with any vocal style with a limitless range.

RADOSLAV LORKOVIC

Saturday, Feb. 15th, 8PM

Blues, Cajun, Jazz, Zydeco & Folk

As the thirty-something 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, 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

JEFF RAY & THE STAKES with HURRICANE HAROLD TREMBLEY**Saturday, Feb. 22nd, 8PM****Roots and Blues Oddity**

Jeff Ray & the Stakes 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 MPR's Heartland, which was quickly followed by a string of shows that started out as "get-togethers on stage" and quickly developed into full-throttle improvisations. The band reworked the songs as they went along and their music developed naturally and unforced. 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.

BILL STAINES**SUNDAY, March 1st, 3PM****Folk Minstrel**

Anyone not familiar with the music of Bill Staines is in for a special treat. One of the first musicians to play at Oak Center, over 30 years ago, Bill has traveled back and forth across North America, singing his songs and delighting audiences at festivals, folksong societies, colleges, concerts, clubs, and coffeehouses. A New England native, Bill became involved with the Boston-Cambridge folk scene in the early 1960's and for a time, emceed the Sunday Hootenanny at the legendary Club 47 in Cambridge. In 1975, Bill won National Yodeling Championship in Kerrville Texas. Over the decades, you have heard Bill singing on Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion, HBO's award winning series Deadwood, and Public Radio's Mountain Stage. Currently, Bill has recorded 26 albums; The Happy Wanderer and One More River were winners of the prestigious Parents' Choice Award, taking a gold medal and silver medal respectively. His songs have been recorded by Peter, Paul, and Mary, The Highwaymen, Mason Williams, Grandpa Jones, Jerry Jeff Walker, Nanci Griffith, Glen Yarbrough, and many others. Now, well into his fifth decade as a folk performer, he has gained an international reputation as a gifted songwriter and performer.

PISTOL WHIPPIN' PARTY PENGUINS**Saturday, March 7th, 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!!!

ERIK KOSKINEN**Saturday, March 14th, 8PM****Blues /folk/ country/ fusion**

Best known as an ace guitarist and Producer/Engineer of Trampled By Turtles, Erik Koskinen should also be recognized as a masterful songwriter and rousing country singer. His dulcet tone and

demeanor rival artists like Sting and Bon Jovi. Come experience his original brand of American music at Oak Center.

DUSTY HEART**Saturday, March 21st, 8PM****Roots, indie, and folk**

Rich vocal harmonies merge with intimate layers of guitar, fiddle and banjo to define the lush sound of Dusty Heart. Barbara Jean and Molly Dean are two songwriters recognized in their own right for their poetic lyrics and distinct vocal styles that when combined create a powerful and haunting sound that takes on a life of its own. Through their shared wanderlust and love of adventure, a passion for the open road, vast landscapes, and mutual love for musical harmony, the two decided to join forces and craft a sound that bridges together the diverse musical worlds of roots, indie, and folk.

KING WILKIE'S DREAM**Saturday, March 28th, 8PM****Soulful Roots and Blues**

King Wilkie's Dream is a four-piece acoustic band, committed to bringing something new to the music they perform. The band will be debuting some new material to welcome spring at this show. You can expect a mix of original and traditional music, tight vocal trios, and the usual attention to detail. Members of the band are: John Niemann on guitar, fiddle, mandolin & vocals, Robbi Podrug on

DEAN MAGRAW & JOE SCHWEN**Saturday, April 4th, 8PM****Extra-terrestrial folk-jazz**

Composer, arranger, producer, guitarist Dean Magraw has fine-tuned his "Heavy Meadow" approach to music from years of performing and recording with some of the finest musicians in the United States, Europe, and Japan. "Dean Magraw's guitar playing transcends, transports and lifts the soul to a higher level as he weaves, cajoles and entices every note from his instrument. The note, length of note, tone of note, the bending of the note; every colour of the note is explored and delivered with a master's care and love. Just as important are the silences with which he knits his music... these can only come with being at one with one's art.

"Dean Magraw... so liquid, lyrical and effortless it's like listening to a dancer." -Steve Tibbetts

fiddle, guitar & vocals, Shane Zack on mandolin, guitar & vocals and Andy Olsen on bass.

THE CLOSE**Saturday, April 18th, 8PM****Americana Vocal Trio**

The Close is an Americana vocal trio from the southeast based in Nashville, TN. Shannon Walker, Lori J Rowton and James Mckinney are three lead singers, songwriters and multi-instrumentalists whose blend of genres and styles wrap around intricate three part harmonies reminiscent of Fleetwood Mac, The Eagles, CSNY and other harmony focused bands made of multiple writers. They blend together Americana/Contemporary Folk/Country with a commercial Pop sensibility. Currently, they are touring heavily to promote their debut EP release, *Hello Heart*.

SARAH MORRIS, VICKY EMERSON & ANNIE FITZGERALD**Saturday, April 25th, 8PM****Americana & Folk**

Folk-Americana Singer-Songwriter's Sarah Morris, Vicky Emerson & Annie Fitzgerald share their original music in the round, swapping harmonies and bringing the listener into the stories behind the songs. 2018 Kerrville New Folk Contest winner Sarah Morris has spent the last 8 years earning a reputation for engaging performances - with a voice both clear and lush, and a penchant for sharply-crafted songs. Singer/songwriter, Vicky Emerson, has been

heralded by the Minneapolis Star Tribune for her gorgeous, dusky voice and songwriting chops on previous releases but her new album, *Steady Heart*, which she self-produced, firmly establishes her as an essential, strong female voice in Americana music. Annie Fitzgerald’s music has been described as “a blend of Tori Amos’ intellectual appeal, Sarah McLachlan’s mystical charm and Edie Brickell’s baroque spirit” (Jamsphere). Don’t miss their Oak Center Debut!

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

c/o Oak Center General Store
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Lake City, MN 55041



CALENDAR IN BRIEF Fall/ Winter 2018

February

- 1st, Sat. 8PM – Rachel Kilgour
- 8th, Sat. 8PM – Chris Silver and the Good Intentions
- 15th, Sat. 8pm – Radoslav Lorkovic
- 22nd, Sat. 8pm – Jeff Ray & the Stakes with Hurricane Harold

March

- 1st, Sun. 3PM – Bill Staines
- 7th, Sat. 8PM – Pistol Whippin’ Party Penguins
- 14th, Sat. 8PM – Erik Koskinen
- 21st, Sat. 8PM – Dusty Heart
- 28th, Sat 8PM – King Wilkie’s Dream

April

- 4th, Sat. 8PM – Dean Magraw & Joe Schwen
- 11th, Sat. – NO SHOW, EASTER Weekend
- 18th, Sat. 8PM – The Close
- 25th, Sat. 8PM – Sarah Morris, Vicky Emerson & Annie Fitzgerald