

Folk Forum Newsletter

September, 2003

Hello Friends,

When I started writing this, it was September 11, 2003. I was afraid to turn on the radio. All week long we have seen extra police and sheriff cars on the cruise looking for “suspicious” activities. There were a dozen or so with flashing lights setting up check points and blockades at Koch refinery in Rosemont two days ago as I drove past with a load of veggies bound for food co-ops in the Twin Cities. I always feel guilty as I drive past holding my breath, rolling the windows up tight to avoid breathing the foul air. I am, on delivery days, part of that endless stream of air conditioned machines racing on massive concrete highways into and out of the city. As a people who claim to love the natural world and desire peace, we should not be living like this. We should not be doing this to our planet. I have driven for miles past parched fields. I know some of our produce will go to feed some of what Thorstein Veblen called the “Leisure class” practicing their art of “conspicuous consumption.” But I take comfort in knowing much of it will go to people working toward change, for a peaceful world, and for sustainable lifestyles. If, instead of guarding the oil supply, our extra homeland security police were riding bikes to jobs researching fuel cell vehicles, renewable energy applications for meeting domestic needs, or teaching in the overcrowded schools helping kids learn skills and values for living in a more ideal world...things would be different. We are allowing ourselves to live the bad dreams of fallen people, people consumed by their consumption, seeing the world through tinted glasses of political and religious extremism manufactured to support their underlying need for political power and excessive wealth. Enslaved by dependence on jobs and money, seduced by gadgets and luxuries many of our

people have lost their spiritual center and the strength to resist. They no longer have a healthy skepticism backed up by stubbornness and rooted in principles, tradition, the land, family and culture.

When I rise up above our planet and look down on it, I see a ball with a thin, rocky crust floating on liquid cushions of oil and underground water giving some buoyancy to that crust and insulating it from Earth's molten core. Perhaps there is some contribution in a gyroscopic way toward maintaining that balance that gives our planet the "wobble" on its axis and keeps our seasonal fluctuations within tolerable boundaries. I cannot imagine a bunch of dinosaurs and plants melting down and finding their way deep down into those seas of oil, but think it more likely our "cushion of oil" was formed as the Earth condensed and came into orbital and geological balance, providing for the possibility of life on this thin fragile biosphere crust. I also see a species growing on this crust that has learned to organize and build machinery capable of pumping millions of barrels of this oil from beneath this crust each day and burning it in their machines, changing the atmosphere, changing the climate, and as part of their organizational method, sending machinery up in the skies so they can monitor and control what is going on down Earth. In the meantime, they are encountering resistance from others of their species and must convince a good share of their work force to carry guns and drop bombs to keep the rest in line.

How did they accomplish all this? These guys (and gals) must be descendents of snake oil salesmen, Nazi propagandists, those that created the Titanic and sold the tickets for its ill-fated voyage. These people are slick! They can sell anything. They have broken through the defensive perimeter in our own household in a plot to fill our house with plastic using our children as a conduit. Giving them a free subscription to a Lego magazine, they have infected them with consumer viruses of the "New," "More," "Bigger," and "Better" strains. One of the not too subtle ploys in the catalogue was Yoda saying "now you can hold the power of the Force in the palm of your hand." Perhaps we can also hold the kingdom of God in our hands by owning a gold-

plated cross, or hold democracy in our hands by waving little flags around at \$10,000 per plate banquets singing “God Bless America” with other diamond-studded millionaire patriots. From the palms of our hands, we can click on our choice of realities with our VCR/DVD remotes, manipulate the world’s people and resources with our palm pilots, open new frontiers with the keys to our 4 x4 SUV’s unbounded by the constraints of formal roadways. CRASH! Power Outage! Hello?

You can’t buy me love. Happiness is not in things. We can’t solve our problems with democracy by buying new voting machines. These snake oil salesmen need to be tarred and feathered. (They produced the tar afterall!)

Well, right now, as we write this newsletter, we are in the midst of a drought and we are watching our little part of the planet dry up. In Cancun, Mexico, in the next round of the WTO talks, trade ministers discuss global trade around negotiating tables while around kitchen tables, we discuss global warming and worry not just about oil and who controls it, but about water and the ability of our planet to survive. It’s all about money and control. Always has been. Even back before there was money, when it was land and flocks of animals. Chosen people, Aryan Nation, Manifest Destiny. Somebody thinking they had a right to land and resources that somebody else was living on. Never being satisfied. Contriving religions to rationalize their self interests. It is a wee bit of irony that there is such a flap going on about the ten commandments being introduced by conservatives into a state capitol in the south. It seems like a great opportunity for opponents of this stone monument to point out instead the flagrant disregard of so called “compassionate conservatives” for key elements of these commandments, namely:

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

(including capitalism or other ideologies.)

Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, ox, ass or oil.

And maybe we should request the addition of Jesus' response when asked which commandment was the greatest. That response was, "The greatest of these is love."

We are all on this planet together. It is finite and its delicate balances can be upset. Excessive consumption, excessive wealth and abuse of power are sins against humanity and against God. Throughout history, humans have invented mechanisms to correct these injustices from the Jubilee laws of Leviticus, to the Magna Carta, French Revolution, American Revolution, Boleshevik Revolution, Simon Bolivar, Zapata, Sandino, Land reforms and Liberations movements to the New Deal and Glasnost. Removing the progressive income tax is regressive and creates a society that is oppressive. Liberating a wealthy elite class from their responsibilities to conscience and to the world from which they extracted their wealth is unconscionable and must be ended. We need to be talking fair trade not free trade. Parity not charity. We need to fill the moral vacuum created by these Houston Oilers from the Nationalistic Fundamentalist League with honest, responsible people willing to build a sustainable world ruled not by ruthless military might, but by just dealings with all people throughout the world. We need to confiscate their spoils of war and make them pay to fix what they have spoiled. If our world is to heal and go on into a millennium of peace, they must recant, repent and do restitution. If not, they must be held to their own system of justice and be locked away for an example to all who would follow in their footsteps and to those who have suffered and wait for redress. We need to rebuild our own confidence in the ideals of this nation and the confidence of others across the world that we can indeed have responsible democracy in the US. It begins with the choices we make internally. The fruits of that must be how we live in the world. The elections coming next year are only a piece of that puzzle. Hopefully, the democrats will stop blaming the Nader voters for "losing" the election and

blame themselves for cowardice and not fielding a candidate who stood for something. I hope they are listening now to all those who are jaded and don't vote. I hope they don't think that Bush/Cheney/Rummie/Brashcraftie and Wolfie are so bad that the people of America will take anything they can get as an alternative. In the meantime, we have a lot of work to do on fair trade, the environment, rural economies, agriculture, living wages (globally), maximum wages, and health care. Mars is in Recession, so...roll up those sleeves, get out in the world for some.....

maintenance and repair,

love and peace,

the janitorial staff



Thanks folks,

We are fueled by the community—by you. We are blessed by all the gentle souls who have come forward to dedicate time, a visit, kind words, hugs, on this journey. We are grateful for all of you who have made donations so that we may continue keeping folkforum going. JoeDan, John, Beany, Joanne, Mike, Aaron, Courtney and the gang, Daniel, Carl, Sherry, Sarah, Henry, Kerry, Dave, Paul, Andrew, Kathi, Pam, Anne, Sherry, Rich, Mary, Bill, Dawn, Susan, Carolyn, James, Rob, Meesh, Mic, Dave, Joanne, Liz, Moms and Dads, brothers and sisters, everyone--we love you and we thank you all for your continual support.

- ◆ We have a new flush toilet in the Big Room (music hall)! After ten years, the composting system wore out and has been replaced by a Vacuity low flush toilet. (Susie is extremely happy with this!) Thanks Carolyn and Jeff for the consulting!
- ◆ Rochester folks vigil at the corner of 2nd and Broadway on **Tuesdays from 4:30 to 5:15 PM.**
- ◆ Red Wing folks vigil on **Fridays from 4:30 to 4:45 PM** at Rich Park.
- ◆ **People for Peace and Goodwill** in Northfield, MN meet **Thursday nites** at the Village School (1100 Bollenbacher Ct.)

for conversation/education and **every Saturday at noon** at Bridge Square for a 15 silent peace vigil. 130 people attended the vigil one fine and chilly Saturday in January.

- ◆ **Southeast MN Alliance of Peacemakers** has been formed to facilitate and network peace and justice efforts in our part of the state. A lot of work to do and much need for support either as members or active volunteers. Membership is \$5/year. Contact:

SEMINNAP@ aol.com

- ◆ Remember Rachel Corey and all the brave peace-makes who place themselves between the “stone throwers” and the victims.
- ◆ September 25th, Lt. Col Bob Bowman, speaks in Rochester at Assissi Heights at 7:00 PM. Retired Lt. Colonel Bob Bowman, president of Institute for Space and Security Studies, and presiding bishop of United Catholic Church, 101 combat missions in Vietnam, former director of Star Wars programs, recipient of the Eisenhower medal, several peace awards and other honors. He will critique US foreign policy and unilateralism.
- ◆ Sept. 11th, 2003 was the 30 year anniversary of the US backed coup in Chile. Salvador Allende was assassinated by Augusto Pinochet and other US backed terrorists.
- ◆ September] 28th, Freedom Ride to DC and NYC to attend protests for immigrants’ rights.
- ◆ US Land Ownership: all 833 million agricultural acres owned by 3 million people; ½ of this total is owned by 124,000 people; 75% of the total is owned by 05%, and 40% of all ag land owners are absentee!
- ◆ Learn about the Preston tire burning plant and petition to stop it. Call your representatives.
- ◆ Order a portion of organic lamb, beef, buffalo, poultry or pork from your neighbors and help build homeland security by rebuilding a strong local economy. No hormones, antibiotics or GMOs. Order here at the Oak Center General Store. (507) 753-2080 info@oakcentergeneralstore.com
- ◆ “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” Ghandi
- ◆ “We can have democracy in this country or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can’t have both.” Louis Brandeis, US Supreme Court Justice, 1916-1939“

◆ **Live at Oak Center General Store/folk forum Volume 1 Compilation CD on *New Folk Records*** is available now at the store or online. Please support the continuation of programs and contribute

to the building preservation fund by purchasing the first in a series of live compilations recorded during the 2003 concert season. Cost is \$15. Check it out. Come to a concert or go to www.oakcentergeneralstore.com

◆ **Volunteers**—We can't do all these fine programs without the generous help from the community that is folk forum....Volunteers who lend a hand are truly the lifeblood of folk forum and keep things going....smoothly. We invite you to plug in prior to, during, or following programs and concerts with a variety of tasks or during the week helping with maintenance and repair or cutting and stacking firewood. Be adventurous, meet interesting people with values and good spirits similar to your own, hear inspiring music, and have fun, because we are.... all one. Contact us if you are moved to help (507)753-2080 or folkforum@lakes.com. Thanks!

LOTS of new music and the good ol' stuff, too, ...we are proud to feature a Women in Folk series at Oak Center as well within the regular fall series.....come on down!

Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman

Saturday, September 20th, 8PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Bluesy folk rock--WOMEN IN FOLK SERIES

How can we not be excited? The first ever WOMEN IN FOLK SERIES kicks the folk forum season off righteously with Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman an upstate NY duo who with their elusive mix of modern folk influenced by soul, rock, jazz, blues and everything in between have taken the western hemisphere by storm? They recently produced and recorded on Greg Brown's Milk of the Moon and often tour with Brown's band. Karen Savoca's voice and songwriting "defies pigeon-holing, save to say that all her songs are drenched with soul..." and as Greg Brown has said about Karen years ago, "If she were a Native American, her name would be Sings Like Two Birds." Though she'll haunt you with a moving ballad, most of her narratives are "grounded in optimism and playfulness..." Savoca writes on a variety of instruments, but in live performance prefers to play conga and hand percussion and loves to make people dance. Pete Heitzman is an innovatively funky and bluesy guitar player who plucks, bends and thwaps some astonishing textures and soundscapes from and acoustic guitar and longhorn bass. Face it, this get-down bluesy duo don't sound like anybody else. Following the all day statewide Green Party

meeting here, help us get back into the groove and come on down to the first folk forum concert of the fall season. What better way to do that than with two grooving performers, Karen and Pete?! We can't wait...

Stacey Earle and Mark Stuart

Sunday, September 28th, 2PM

\$10; seniors and kids freewill donation

Country folk—WOMEN AND FOLK SERIES

Ok. It is an early fall Sunday afternoon and we can't think of a better way to make the day nice and special than by listening to Nashville based singer songwriter, Stacey Earle and Mark Stuart—her husband--on guitar. Stacey grew up in a musical family (her older brother is Steve Earle) and played guitar when she was young for fun. By the time she was 20, however, she was the mother of two boys living in San Antonio, Texas, had little spare time to play music. Mark Stuart, meanwhile, growing up in and around Nashville, took to the guitar and got into the band scene. Stacey moved to Nashville in 1990 and joined up with her brother, Steve, singing back up vocals and touring with him. Throughout the '90's, she worked on her songwriting playing Nashville bars and openstages. Eventually Stacey and Mark met at an openstage and have been together ever since. After a spell of focusing on their individual music careers which took them in two different directions, Stacey and Mark ended up finding the desire to perform as a duo. Their latest collaboration "Never Gonna Let You Go," was born with what they feel has greater breadth and appeal than anything they've ever released individually. With two songwritings coming from their unique perspectives, this duo offers something for everyone. As an exciting facet of our WOMEN IN FOLK series, come and check them out!

The Mike and Amy Finders Band

Saturday, October^{11th}, 8 PM

\$5-10, pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Acoustic country folk

An Iowa City acoustic band with an funky country rock beat and superb vocals, Mike and Amy Finders (pronounced Fin derz) achieve the seemingly unachievable. . . the kind of music you'd want to hear while lying on your back in tall, too-green-to-be-real grass after some life-changing event. Their music is soulful and sweet. Singer-songwriter Mike Finders' pedestrian sounding lyrics strike a deep emotional chord and Amy Finders, an exceptional vocalist, could be number one anywhere if the scouts ever catch up with her. Their perfect harmonies are awesome

and give America what it needs RIGHT NOW- some honest, truly excellent lyrics and melodies with outstanding vocals with fiddle and dobro playin' mixed into the equation. Let us get together and have some Midwestern rockabilly fun with the Finders!

Joe Price with Radoslav Lorkovic

Friday, October 17th, 8 PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$ 10 at the door

The Blues

Deep root blues breaks it down, wakes it up and releases it. The blues' has got two heads, a growl and a whisper, a holler and a sweet moan. This is the way it gets us from ahead and from behind, in the exact center and far off beyond the light of the river moon. Joe Price has himself tucked in, a bullfrog's voice from the Mississippi, just outside the boathouse and lumber-barge town now called Lansing, Iowa. Walk in and there's an old National Steel hanging on the wall, resting "Grandma," she's called. "Seen it all," she says. Joe Price has shared the stage with countless blues, folk, and root legends like Muddy Waters, KoKo Taylor, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, and John Lee Hooker. But then there's this story that takes place in Louisiana, way before all that, when Joe bought a Stella 12 string at a gas station for nothing. Roadburned and leaning on the counter, inside from the heat of Ascension County's summer sun, an exchange was made and floodgates were opened. The blues knew about Joe long before the stage did, and this particular day it just decided to reach way down and grab him out loud. Joe Price is "seriously plugged-in." He's a one man steam engine coal cars full, running the rails and pushing the workboot blues. Radoslav Lorkovic is a regular to the Oak Center stage coming down to accompany Joe and charge up the event on the baby grand piano, which Radoslav knows very well in a very boogie woogie, bluesy kind of a way. We are lucky to have these guys comin' in on a Friday nite in October, mid-fall and all—so come on down and take 'em in. Let's get recharged!

Laura MacKenzie and Brian Miller

Sunday, October 19th 2PM

\$5-10, pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Traditional Celtic—WOMEN IN FOLK SERIES

"Celtic music wizard," Laura MacKenzie returns as part of the Women in

Folk series. She performs with virtuosity music of Ireland, Scotland, England, Central France and Northern Spain, traditional and new, on wooden flutes, whistles, concertina, Scottish smallpipes, border pipes, medieval greatpipes, French cornemuse, gemshorn and voice

“A performing artist of astonishing versatility, singing and playing with skill and emotion a splendid repertoire” (*American Association of University Women*), Laura MacKenzie has learned from many noted tradition-bearers on both sides of the Atlantic, and has herself been recognized as a Master Folk Artist (Minnesota State Arts Board). Of distinctly Scottish heritage (through Rankins and MacKenzies), her people came to the United States by way of Nova Scotia and Northern Ireland. It was, however, the Irish American community of St. Paul, Minnesota that bolstered Laura’s leap into Irish music. She began playing traditional music at ceilis (dances or social gatherings) around St. Paul and Minneapolis and soon became immersed in both the music and dance. Her best education has always been with her comrades and favorite “teachers” — the players of traditional music — in kitchens, pubs and dance halls, across Ireland, Scotland and the U.S. Accompanying Laura on guitar, harmony vocals, Irish flute and whistles, is St. Paul based Brian Miller of celtic duo “Five Mile Chase” fame. Brian switched from garage rock bands to Irish music as a high schooler in Bemidji, MN and eventually studied Irish music during his college years in Cork, Ireland. As of late, Brian Miller has become the top choice accompanist for many premiere Irish musicians passing through Minnesota. We are in for an afternoon of traditional Celtic music at its finest. Join us!

Gary Holthaus

Readings from his book, [Farm Stories](#)

Sunday, October 19th at 4:30PM

Discussion and potluck follow

Freewill donation, bring a dish to pass and your own plate and silverware

Please join us to honor Red Wing author and poet, Gary Holthaus as he reads from selections of his latest work, *Farm Stories*. A panel of local farmer activists will participate in a discussion that follows.

HALLOWEENO!

Saturday, October 25th 4:30PM

\$3.00 kids; Families \$10.00

They’re back for the third year in a row at Halloween time because a) we love Halloween and so do our kids, and b) we all love the song and puppetry tradition Barb Tilsen, Gayla Ellis, and puppeteer Margo McCreary have created. Halloweeno! Promises to be a fun-filled non-

scarey celebration for kids (babies to 12 yrs.) with music, puppets, slide shows, and more. Barb Tilsen is a singer/songwriter who has been performing for audiences of all ages since 1971. Her children's performances are a delightful mix of sing-alongs, story songs and celebrations of ourselves, and our interconnectedness with the Earth. Photographer Gayla Ellis has been highly praised for her work which brings to it a sense of fun, and a window offering an enticing view of our world and the dynamic relations of living things that fill it. Combining their talents, Barb and Gayla's musical slide shows combine visual and lyrical imagery in an imaginative, entertaining performance. Margo McCreary's wonderful skills as a puppeteer have enchanted audiences for many year. Her hilarious larger-than-life puppet, Ollie McNut, always makes an appearance at Haloweeno! Plan on a creative mix of these artists' talents, for a great afternoon of costumed family fun. Stay on for the Celtic concert by Todd Menton at 8PM....

Todd Menton

Saturday, October 25th, 8 PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Acoustic Celtic folk

Singer/songwriter, Todd Menton, has been playing Irish, folk and original music for over 25 years. A legend in the pub scene, this is his first appearance at Oak Center. From 1985—1993, Todd was leader singer for folk-punk band, Boiled in Lead, Menton has played folk festivals and gigs all over the globe. His wry humor, high energy, and edgy manic vibe delights audiences as diverse as his music. Whether playing an Irish pub or concert hall, Todd delivers an evening of raucous rhythms and endearing melodies punctuated by a sharp wit. A multi-talented musician, Todd is adept at playing guitar, mandolin, bouzouki, bodhran, penny whistle, harmonica, and if we're lucky, kazoo. After leaving Boiled in Lead, Todd hit the Irish pub circuit. This guy has a voice and an energy you won't want to miss!

Eliza Gilkyson

Sunday, October 26th, 2PM

\$5-10, pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Singer/songwriter—WOMEN IN FOLK SERIES

Well, well, the WOMEN IN FOLK series continues with Eliza Gilkyson, Austin, TX based and Red House Records artist who being the daughter of successful songwriter, Terry Gilkyson, is a third generation poet/musician. “The breathy, lingual folk-poetry of Suzanne Vega, the humanistic personal-politic of Joni Mitchell, and the emotive torch of Billie Holiday....accessible work with heart” best describe Eliza Gilkyson. High caliber guitar playing and breathtaking gutty vocals are Eliza. She has appeared on the *Tribute to Greg Brown* compilation as well as the tribute to Bob Dylan *A Nod to Bob* compilation both put out by Red House Records. Her loyal fan base in the SW and Texas proven by the success of all her recordings makes her worthy as any woman in the folk genre. For this reason, it is an awesome thing to present Eliza Gilkyson at Oak Center. Join us on this fine fall Sunday afternoon.

Omar Jamal—Struggles of the Immigrant Since 9/11 and the War on Terrorism

Saturday, November 1st, 4:30 PM; Potluck follows at 6PM

Freewill Donation

Omar Jamal is Executive Director of the Somali Justice Advocacy Center in Minneapolis. He will give an update on the struggles of the immigrant community. Having traveled from coast to coast in support of Somali rights this past winter as well as being jailed himself on immigrant status issues, he will share his own experiences with the US legal system post 9/11. Disussion and potluck follows. Please join us for a stimulating and informative talk by Omar Jamal.

Monroe Crossing

Saturday, November 1st, 8 PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Bluegrass

Tight and powerful vocals, first-class instrumental work, upbeat and fast along with swinging gospel, this is MONROE CROSSING, Minnesota’s ever popular and on-the-national-bluegrass-map bluegrass band. Bluegrass through and through. We can’t emphasize this point enough. And we can’t encourage you enough to come and have some serious fun. Art Blackburn on guitar and vocals, Lisa Fuglie on fiddle and vocals, Mark Anderson on bass and vocals, Graham Sanes on banjo, and Matt Thompson on mandolin, fiddle and vocals. Wow is all we can say. Celebrate the band’s third release, “The Green Mossy Ground.” Tickets

fly so act now!

Lehto and Wright

Saturday, November 8th, 8PM

\$5-10, pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Celtic/Americana Folk ROCK

Oak Center has presented every kind of Celtic music from traditional to eclectic and now at last, brings to the stage some avant garde Celtic rock! Taking cues from Irish, English and American folk traditions and melding them with modern guitar based arrangements, rich and haunting harmonies and percussive accompaniment, something refreshing is happening. This music is an artform--to be experienced live is to really experience it. As a trio, Lehto and Wright push the boundaries of Celtic rock utilizing all the tools of a rock band to achieve the effect of a six-piece band with three players. A force to be reckoned with, Steve Lehto on guitar, mandolin and harmony vocals displays impressive versatility and range matched only by the emotion he puts into his playing. John Wright is aggressive yet tasteful in his guitar, bass guitar, bass pedals and vocal work, and Matt Jacobs reflects talent to the nth degree on trap kit, bodhran and assorted percussion. Lehto and Wright have been traveling the Midwest sharing their exciting and eclectic live performances for all to hear getting sweet sounds, effects and harmonies out of their instruments and voices. They'd be featured in the music for a "Lord of the Rings" movie if the producers ever got wind of their Celtic angle on things, no doubt! Come ye all to what deems to be an arty musical treat.

Café Accordion Orchestra

Saturday, November 15th, 8PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Euro/retro

Café Accordion Orchestra (CAO) performs an eclectic mix of French Musette, vintage swing, Latin and European dance music styles. Their repertoire is that of the "Bal Musette" orchestra, through which they recreate the music that was popular in Parisian dance halls, cafés and bistros in the 1920's through 1950's. In addition to the valse-musette, CAO's repertoire includes foxtrot, swing, tango, paso doble, polka, bolero and rhumba selections. CAO injects their music with good humor and

expressive abandon. They play it for what it truly is - dance party music!

Café Accordion Orchestra is lead by Daniel Newton on accordion and vocals, with Brian Barnes on guitar and vocals, Eric Mohring on mandolin, fiddle and vocals, Erik Lillestol on bass violin, and Joe Steinger on percussion. The members have a combined total of over a century of experience with the likes of Stoney Lonesome, the Bone Tones, The Nationals, Jumbo YaYa, Prairie Home Companion, the Ethnic Dance Theater and the Laketown Buskers. Extremely enjoyable and equally fun to listen to and dance to, don't hesitate to come on down!

Maggie and Suzzy Roche

Sunday, November 16th, 2PM

\$10; kids freewill donation

Acoustic Folk—WOMEN IN FOLK SERIES

The Roches are New York City based trio of singing sisters, namely Maggie, Terre, and Suzzy Roche. Presently on tour and recording artists with Red House Records, Maggie and Suzzy Roche will do to us their eclectic blend influences of from church choir music, traditional Irish folk, contemporary folk, rock, country, and pop with their own innate musical sensibilities to produce what can only be called Roche music. Each sister has her own distinct musical talents which can be appreciated in their own rights, but they can also blend their voices together into a single instrument of awesome harmonic beauty. Whether they are singing Handel a cappella or a song of their own creation, they rarely fail to transcend mere singing. In a world where so much music is commercialized crap, the Roches create a refuge for the soul. Don't miss your chance to see the talented and zany Roches from NYC! Tickets are going....

The Plight of the Immigrant Worker and Strategies to Help

Sunday, Nov. 16th, 4:30PM

Freewill Donation; Potluck follows discussion—bring a dish to pass and your own plates and silverware

Two great folks from the Resources of the Americas in Mpls., Teresa Ortiz and Jorge Flores, will discuss immigrant worker rights and the issues facing MN immigrants today. Teresa and Jorge are veterans at helping to empower the vulnerable. Join us for an educational discussion. Remember, knowledge is power.

Cam Waters

Saturday, November 22nd, 8PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Jug Band Blues

Cam Waters has spent the last twenty-odd years crisscrossing the country and honing his unique style on the stages of coffeehouses, clubs, concert halls, and festivals. Music writers across the country and in Europe consistently commend his understated, expressive singing and his simple yet inventive fingerstyle and slide guitar playing.

His literate, tradition-based songwriting mixes seamlessly with his arrangements of rural blues, jug band songs, and American folk music. Waters also spent five years playing National metal-bodied guitars, singing, and stomping on a thrift store hi-hat cymbal with a jug band-influenced trio called The Sugar Kings. The group enjoyed critical raves and performed at several major Midwestern music festivals before disbanding in early 2002. He was also involved in one recording project with The Sugar Kings entitled *Take Your Time, Mr. Brown*, which was released in early 2000 and, like Waters' solo CDs, quickly became a Minnesota Public Radio favorite.

A native of Iowa's only bona fide tourist trap (Spirit Lake and its environs), Waters spent six years in Iowa City, IA, seven on the Mississippi River in Red Wing, MN, and six more in St. Paul before recently settling in Rochester, MN with his wife, Tracy. In addition to being an inveterate music addict, he has studied graphic design and guitar building, **and holds a degree in elementary education.**

Dean Magraw and John Williams

Saturday, December 6th, 8PM

\$5-10 pay what you can; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Celtic folk

Music doesn't exist in a vacuum. It is nothing without someone to listen, experience, dance...Anyone who has witnessed Dean Magraw's music understands this well. The audience becomes a collaborator. We explore, experience, and connect. As Mpls. Based guitarist Steve Tibbets describes Dean Magraw, "it's guitar, but it's so liquid, fluid, lyrical and effortless, that it's like listening to a dancer." Newly released this past summer, his third album entitled, *Heavy Meadow*, a collection of solo compositions, is strongly fluid and perhaps the best summation of Dean's creative processes to date.

John Williams has been hailed by the Irish Times as "a musician of remarkable sophistication even for his day and age, moving easily between opposites - from box to concertina, and from dense filled-in spaces to masterful understatement to seamless duet playing." With five

All-Ireland titles to his credit, John Williams is the first American-born competitor to win first place in the Senior Concertina category. His additional talents on flute, whistles, bodhran, and piano distinguish him as a much sought after multi-instrumentalist in the national session scene. John has appeared on numerous recording and soundtracks, including the PBS special *Out of Ireland*, *The Brothers McMullen*, *Traveller* and *Road to Perdition* with Paul Newman and Tom Hanks.

The long awaited duo album *Raven* a collaboration between John and Dean on Green Linen records is slated for a fall release. It's a traditionally innovative collection of chestnuts and road tested originals which soars from driven dance tune adventures to dark haunted airs. John Williams and Dean Magraw step out on this album as composers, arrangers, and improvisers of their own works as well as interpreters of classic pieces from La Bottine Souriante, Frankie Gavin, early Solas, and the thriller *Road to Perdition*. Anything can happen when the guys get together at Oak Center. Don't miss!

Switchback

Friday, December 12th, 8 PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Celtic/Americana Folk

Energy. Emotion. Excitement. A couple of guys who have played together for over sixteen years, this Chicago based duo has musical roots in celtic, jazz, classical, rock, blues styles. Their relentless unpredictability keeps them from being pigeonholed in any specific genre. Their musical depth is as much a result of what they are as what they are not! Brian FitzGerald picks mandolin like a seamstress might quilt: stitches effortless, skill apparent, and plenty of stories still to sew while the needle is nimble. And if FitzGerald, who hangs his guitars in Lansing, IA, threads the story that is Switchback together, it's his bass-toting partner Marty McCormack of Woodstock, IL that carries the color for the duo. Whether he's bellowing out a Switchback original or a bawdy Irish bar tune, McCormack's bit of brogue, gift of gab, and generally wandering way of being has waxed productive since the duo formed. After all, it takes a couple of dreamy optimists to call a score of clubs their living rooms and the entire Midwest, running like one long train track from Chicago, IL to Oak Center, MN their rambling home. Switchback may show their Celtic souls with the best of 'em, yet they've gone a note further than many of their contemporaries, taking the dirt-driven tenacity of their potato-planting ancestors and gnawing out serious American roots. Indefinable, irreverent, and inescapably American, Switchback songs are known to make even the most sedentary acknowledge their feet. Having something for everyone, it seems, hasn't watered down what's for dinner at a Switchback show. Instead, hitting the heart of what unites us as Midwesterners is a central part of their ever increasing success. Switchback is a high energy band with a huge Midwest following. We welcome them back to break tradition—twice in one year... it couldn't be

helped. We're hooked.

John Gorka

Friday, December 19th, 8PM

\$10

Singer/Songwriter

John Gorka was born in Newark, NJ under Eisenhower skies. He grew up in Colonia, NJ and at age ten got his first guitar as a Christmas present. Before John's fingers were strong enough to press the strings down his older brother claimed the guitar for himself, and carved his name in it. The younger Gorka never recovered from this blow. A few years later he took up the banjo to retaliate. The family was never the same.

In high school Gorka started writing songs and singing with a church folk group. When he moved away from home to go to Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA, he started performing in the school coffeehouse programs and the Razy Dazzy Spasm Band, a non-traditional bluegrass, country, blues and folk band. Fellow Spasm member Doug Anderson took Gorka to a coffeehouse that had just opened on the south side of Bethlehem, PA called Godfrey Daniels. It was there Gorka discovered the kind of performer he wanted to become. He went to shows when he could afford them and regularly performed at the open stage nights. He later hosted the open mikes and volunteered as MC, sound man, usher and counter worker. Now, a Minnesota based Gorka returns to for an evening of song and story. John with his authentic and rich folky baritone voice connects us with his multi-faceted songs full of depth and emotion. His attention to details as a songwriter evoke a time, a person, a place which we resonate with on some long lost or very recent level. Did we mention his zany sense of humor that reaches 'stand-up comedian' stature? Tickets go quickly!

Buffalo Gals

Saturday, December 20th, 8 PM

\$5-10 pay what you are able; kids freewill donation

\$10 at the door

Cowgirl Swing

The ever popular Buffalo Gals are back to put on a winter solstice concert of super swingin' cowgirl stomps and Cajun ditties once again! They swing, they have fiddlin' duos, they yodel, they do the old stuff with pizzazz and style, and they do it with great sophistication and acute charm! The band is Betsy Neil and Mary DuShane dueling it out like the old friends they are on fiddles and harmonies, Maureen Mullen on guitar and

vocals, Kathy Mosher on lead vocals, bells, and tinwhistle, and the gal of gal's, bass player Doug Lohman (a guy!). Always a treat to the ears, join us for an amazingly sweet and fun concert!

CALENDAR IN BRIEF

September

20 Sat. 8:00 PM Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman

*****Women in Folk Series within the Series**

28 Sun. 2:00 PM Stacey Earle and Mark Stuart

*****Women in Folk Series within the Series**

October

11 Sat. 8:00 PM The Mike and Amy Finders Band

17 Fri. 8:00PM Joe Price and Radoslav Lorkovic

19 Sun. 2:00PM Laura MacKenzie and Brian Miller

*****Women in Folk Series within the Series**

19 Sun. 4:30 PM Gary Holthaus Reads from **Farm Issues**

25 Sat. 4:30 PM HALLOWEENO! For kids 2-12

25 Sat. 8:00 PM Todd Menton

26 Sun. 2:00 PM Eliza Gilkyson*****Women in Folk Series within the Series**

November

1 Sat. 4:30 PM Experience of the
Immigrant in the Light of 9/11 and the Ongoing War on
Terrorism—Omar Jamal

1 Sat. 8:00 PM Monroe Crossing

8 Sat. 8:00 PM Lehto and Wright

15 Sat. 8:00 PM Café Accordion
Orchestra

16 Sun. 2:00 PM Maggie and Suzzy Roche

*****Women in Folk Series within the Series**

16 Sun. 4:30 PM The Plight of the Immigrant
Worker Discussion --Teresa Ortiz and Jorge
Flores

22 Sat. 8:00 PM Cam Waters

December

6 Sat. 8:00 PM Dean Magraw and John
Williams

12 Fri. 8:00 PM Switchback

19 Fri. 8:00 PM John Gorka

20 Sat. 8:00 PM The Buffalo Gals

*For further information, please call: The Oak Center
General Store, (507) 753-2080 or email at
folkforum@lakes.com*

www.oakcentergeneralstore.com

