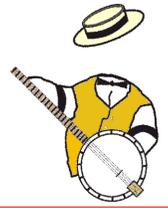




# MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

# EAST BAY BANJO CLUB

## SINCE 1963



WINTER 2006

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 9

### Play-out

### Schedule

#### None Scheduled

Please check our web site as we know more play outs will be scheduled

[www.eastbaybanjo.org](http://www.eastbaybanjo.org)

Click on

#### “Up Coming Events”

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### What’s Strummin’?



As the new President, I would first like to recognize the great accomplishments of my predecessor, Bob Nelson. Last year was simply incredible! Bob’s relentless efforts to raise money and keep us moving forward sets the bar for club leadership very high.

Just before I was elected, Terry Horner approached me with an idea to put on a show at the Dean Leshner Regional Center (DLRC) for the Performing Arts in Walnut Creek.

It seems like a good idea to me because it will give the club a new goal and, if successfully executed, will improve our stage presence and each of our playing skills. It will also give us the opportunity to promote our musical genre. Most of all, it will be fun!

Fortunately for the club, Tim Perry has strong connections at DLRC and was able to get July 1, 2006 as tentative date for a performance. After several meetings with club members and key people at the DLRC we have formed a committee to decide what it will take to make it happen. Although it will not be easy, the committee believes it is possible. We will need to get the commitment of 25 members to participate and to pledge a minimum of \$80 worth of ticket sales. We have set March 14 as the date we must have these members committed in order to commit to July 1 as a “go” for the show.

## Banjo-Rama 2006

This year’s Banjo-Rama featured 22 performers from the EBBC including: **Guy Black, Jack Burrous, Jack Convery, Chuck Cook, Bill Cooper, Lynne Deutscher, Gary and Karen Dietz, Bill Dowling, Don Granberg, Chris and Terry Horner, Garry Kerr, Dina Melamed, Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce, Tim Perry, Ed Rossman, Pat Wheaton, and Marilyn Young.** Our theme was “Rivers”, and included several tunes we rarely play even during our Tuesday sessions let alone on stage in front of a large audience. Our practice paid off. Our strummers were able to play together even when our lead, Bill Cooper, broke a string on stage and was forced to stop playing. The show must go on! Great work gang! Vocals by **Kit, Bill, Kaitlyn,** and **Bud** were the crowd pleasing moments in the show this year.



Garry, Ed, Larry, Jack, and Kit in the front row



Kaitlyn sings “Green River”



Bud sings “Swanee”

# In memory of Shirley Schleif

By Bill Cooper



Some time around 1990, at Banjo-Rama in Sacramento, someone came up to me before our performance and asked me if I was with the group that had that singer, Shy Shirley. Her voice was so memorable that in some people's eyes, we were second banana. Everyone is unique. Shirley stretched the limits of unique. Shirley joined the Banjo Club in approximately 1982. It is my memory that she was encouraged to come by Ophelia Hicks and the whole Hicks clan. She would sit in the back and quietly chord. After about two years, I noticed that she was singing along, and that her voice was actually pretty good. But there was one problem: Shirley was very shy, and was reluctant to sing so that she could be heard. The entire club began to encourage her to sing out, asking her to occasionally take a chorus. After about a year she began to sing with a microphone. Finally, I got her to sing at a gig. Even so, she preferred to remain sitting in the back row. This mystified the audiences, and I can remember the bewilderment on people's faces when they tried to figure out where this big voice came from. It took another year before she would sit in the front, and I never got her to stand up to sing. Once, I pretended to be singing, lip-synching to Shirley, and then stopping in the middle of her song. The surprised look on people's faces as they realized that I wasn't singing was hilarious!

At its peak, Shirley's voice was huge. She could sing any song, and in any key, with warmth, power and style. I think that everyone who heard her and me sing "Some of These Days"

will remember the emotion she could put into it. I arranged "What a Wonderful World" with her voice in mind. Shirley was never prouder than when she sang with our group at the Concord Pavilion. The huge ovation she got misted her eyes. The only time I ever saw Shirley falter was in the weeks after her son's tragic death, which affected her immensely.

No talk of Shirley could leave out the role of Shirley's husband, Al. Al absolutely adored Shirley, and supported her 100%. He came to every Banjo Club practice or play out, sitting in the audience and listening. Al did a lot of heavy lifting, both literally and figuratively, for the club. He always helped carry equipment, and when we had the float, he drove it, helped maintain it, and spent a lot of time lifting the wheel on top of it.

I will miss Shirley. I know that I am not the only club member that will remember her for her style and humor, and especially for that big voice.

## Crab galore at Masonic lodge in Oakland

A large, enthusiastic crowd gobble mounds of crab as they listened to the EBBC perform at the annual crab feed Jan 21. As an added bonus this year, the performers were invited to partake in the feast during the 30 minute intermission. East Bay Club members who participated in this feast and frivolity included; **Guy Black, Rich Boss, Bill Cooper, Betty David, Lynne Deutscher, Don Granberg, Terry Horner, Garry Kerr, Dina Melamed, Bob Nelson, Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce, Pat Wheaton, and Marilyn Young.** We were such a hit, the organizers booked us for next year on the spot.



Large crowd of ravenous crab eaters



Bill Cooper leads with a vocal

## Christmas party in Orinda

The Orinda-Tabor Sister City Foundation sponsored a Christmas party for the Czech-American Society on December 3 at the Orinda Community Center. EBBC strummers had planned to play our standard set of Christmas tunes, but were also requested to play a few polkas as well. Plenty of Czech food, lots of happy music, and yes, even some polka dancing made this play-out fun for all. Banjoists at this gig included; **Bill Cooper** (our fearless leader), **Betty David**, **Lynne Deutscher**, **Karen DeWeese Dietz**, **Ken Fogarty**, **Garry Kerr**, **Kit Nelson**, **Bud Pearce**, **Bob Shaw**, **Diana Starr**, **Jack Starr**, **Pat Wheaton**, and **Marilyn Young**. Helping out on the gutbucket were **Terry Horner** and **Betty Purchase**. **Chuck Cook** kept everyone together accompanying on the tuba (OK, sousaphone). Adding rhythm, **Dina Melamed** played the washboard.



Jack and Garry set to entertain



The whole gang on stage

## Canadian Veterans enjoy EBBC at Christmas party

A group of nine dedicated performers appeared on stage at the annual Christmas party of the Canadian War Veterans in Oakland on Dec 17. The large ballroom dance floor with a stage that was easily six feet above the dance floor seemed a bit of an overkill for both the number of performers and the crowd size. Nonetheless, we had them singing and dancing to a mixture of Christmas and standard traditional jazz tunes. Making his banjo playing debut, **Bob Nelson** took a spot in the second line and promised **Bill Cooper** he would make no attempt to steal the show. Other banjo players included **Rich Boss**, **Betty David**, **Garry Kerr**, **Kit Nelson**, **Bud Pearce**, **Diana Starr**, and **Jack Starr**. **Terry Horner** added variety by playing the gutbucket and washboard.



Bob Nelson debuts on banjo



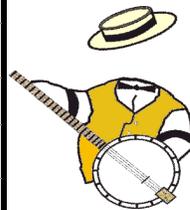
Jack, Garry, Rich, Terry, and Diana on stage

# EBBC Christmas party/General Meeting

Once again, the annual EBBC Christmas party was a huge success. Special thanks to Bob and Kit Nelson for providing the decorations and planning a great event. The Christmas party is also our annual general meeting. The board members elected at this meeting are listed below. Many thanks to **Ed Rossman, Ruth-Anne Bray, and Jack Starr** for all their hard work as Vice President, Secretary, and Booking Agent respectively. The new officers have very large shoes to fill given the successes achieved by the club last year.



EBBC Board Members	
<b>President</b>	<b>Bud Pearce</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Bob Nelson</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Tim Perry</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Pat Wheaton</b>
<b>Music Director</b>	<b>Bill Cooper</b>
<b>Member at Large</b>	<b>Kit Nelson</b>
<b>Booking Agent</b>	<b>Garry Kerr</b>



<b>Assistant Music Directors</b>	<b>Betty David, Ed Rossman, Larry Risner</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor/Publisher</b>	<b>Bud Pearce</b>
<b>Librarian</b>	<b>Bob Nelson</b>