

East Bay Banjo Club

Since 1963

July / August 2018

Volume 13, Issue 4

Events Calendar

Saturday, August 18, 2018
Landers Landing Picnic
Members Only – 11 a.m.

Wednesday, August 22, 2018
Reutlinger Community For Living
4000 Camino Tassajara,
Danville – 2 p.m.

Tuesday, September 11, 2018
Round Table Pizza
EBBC Board Meeting
1938 Oak Park Boulevard,
Pleasant Hill – 5:30 p.m.

www.eastbaybanjo.org

To book the East Bay Banjo Club to play at your event, please contact our booking agent, Don Granberg, at grany@astound.net.

President's Message

By Bob Malucelli

We had a good playout at Stoneman Village Senior Residence in Pittsburg on July 3 and the next day we had fun on our float for the Fourth of July Parade in Orinda (we sat on hay bales in the back of a flatbed truck). Both events were well attended and I got a good comment from former music director **Karen Hefter** about the sound system for the Fourth of July Parade. I wasn't able to attend the St. John Vianney Church playout on July 27 but the word is they liked our players and want us back for another banjo performance next year.



We are in the process of starting a new campaign to promote banjo music in our community and hopefully get younger players interested and teach them how to play. Please do what you can to help promote our music and the banjo club anyway we can to the public.

Everyone should join me in giving a big thank-you to **Rich Combs** and **Sheila Welt** for helping to start and promote these programs by working with local schools, education foundations and music stores. Our outreach program is going to try several different directions, and over the next year or so we will see which methods work best to promote our club and attract more young people.

I also want to thank everyone who attends the playouts for your good and enthusiastic participation.

Inside:

July 4th Weekend Playouts – pages 2-3

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On Playing Rhythm Banjo – page 5

EBBC Plays July 3rd At Stoneman Village In Pittsburg

By Don Granberg

Photos By John Greitzer

WOW! Another great playout, this one at Stoneman Village Senior Living in Pittsburg. We all arrived early and got our seating arrangement from **Karen Hefter**, who did a wonderful job as music director for the gig. As usual, **Paul Mack** gave great background and historical information about each song we performed. Our singers -- **Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce, Sheila Welt, Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Chris Lardge, Bob Malucelli** and **Slavka Ruzicka** --did a great job and earned loud applause. Don, on his washboard, thrilled the crowd.

Jan Ruzicka played the guitar intro to the great song "Tancuj" from his home land, Czechoslovakia, and his wife Slavka sang. The audience enjoyed it and clapped along. Other club members at the playout were **Tom Brunetti, Diane Malucelli, Ardie Jarrett, Phil and Linda Myers, John Greitzer** and our great bass player **Guy Black**.

Our audience sang along with us on many of the songs. Karen Hefter was about to end the concert as our hour was up, when a woman in the audience yelled out "play God Bless America." We did so, bringing the joyful afternoon to a stirring end. Thanks to Karen for a great job directing, thanks to Bob Malucelli for being responsible for the sound equipment, and thanks also for the help from other club members in setting things up.



Paul Mack greets the audience, flanked by Bud Pearce and Karen Hefter.



Bud Pearce takes a turn with a vocal.



Kit Nelson sings.....



..... and the club plays on.

Orinda Fourth Of July Parade Features East Bay Banjo Club

Article and Photos by Bud Pearce

It was yet another fantastic experience to perform at the Orinda 4th of July Parade. The weather was great, the crowd was enthusiastic, and the sound system worked better than ever!

We arrived early only to find out, after waiting for some time, that we were in the wrong parking lot. However, we quickly recovered from this setback by decorating the float in record time with everyone pitching in to make it happen. A special thanks to **Paul Mack** for providing us with coffee and doughnuts while we waited for the float. Also, a big shout-out goes to our excellent sound man, **Bob Malucelli**, who, under enormous time pressure, was able to make our sound equipment work flawlessly. As a result, the crowd reacted more enthusiastically to our performance and we were able to stay together! As an added bonus, we were able to project the vocal talents of **Slavka Ruzicka** singing “Tancuj Tancuj Vykrucaj” and “Beer Barrel Polka” in her native Czech costume. These songs paid homage to the *Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation* who sponsored our trip to the Czech Republic in 2005.

Performing on the float this year were **Karen Hefter, Terry Horner, Don Granberg, Paul Mack, Bob and Diane Malucelli, Phil and Linda Myers, Bud Pearce, and Jan and Slavka Ruzicka**. This is usually one of the most fun events of the year, and this year was no exception!



Club members prepare the hay bales.....



...get things just right...



...and hold on as the truck heads to downtown Orinda.

Banjo Entertainment Provided For St. John Vianney Seniors

By Paul Mack

Photos Courtesy Adrian D'Souza

On Friday July 24, 2018 the East Bay Banjo Club performed at St. John Vianney Church in Walnut Creek for their Senior Social Luncheon. We were in the beautiful Monsignor William J. Mullen Commons. The church is named after St. John Vianney (1786-1859) who is the patron saint of parish priests. **Bud Pearce** was the patron saint of this playout as he was the musical director, master of ceremonies and set up the sound system.

We had eighteen musicians and singers: **Kit Nelson, Ardie Jarrett, Paul Mack, Slavka Ruzicka, Jan Ruzicka, Clyde Dedmon, Dina Melamed, Rich Combs, Don Granberg, Bud Pearce, Chris Lardge, Bob Ehrhorn, Red Higgins, Tom Brunetti, Doug Johnson, Larry Risner, Garry Kerr and Terry Horner.**

Just before we started, it was announced that an audience member was celebrating her 90th birthday. We played and sang "Happy Birthday" to honor her. As lunch was being served we began our program with Bob Ehrhorn singing "San Francisco Bay Blues". We also performed two instrumentals: "Missouri Waltz" and "Darkness on the Delta." As we continued playing more and more people were singing along and several were dancing in the aisles. We took a short break while the church announcer told a funny story involving his driving, his wife and a cop who pulled him over. We played a few more songs and Kit Nelson sang "Happy Days Are Here Again" as our closing number. After the show we were graciously offered lunch, which we all enjoyed.



Rich Combs handles the vocal duties for a song at St. John Vianney Church in Walnut Creek.



Bud Pearce (far right) takes a turn at the vocal mic....



.....and a tip o' the caps to thank the appreciative audience as the program wrapped up for the afternoon.

Advice Offered For Playing Rhythm Banjo

By Larry Risner

There is a great difference between playing a guitar, as compared to playing a banjo. A guitar by nature does not deal well with hard playing and therefore it isn't played hard even by beginners. The banjo, on the other hand, is of a drum-style construction and many players, particularly newer players, have a natural tendency to play the banjo too hard because it seems like the thing to do --- especially if one is playing along with other banjo players so they feel a need to be heard.

Unfortunately, playing hard on a banjo takes away from its already limited tonal qualities. The more banjos you add to a group, the louder they are collectively and then it can turn into just a lot of noise. Banjos are by nature loud and it takes a little time to learn how to play it softly. My suggestion for beginners is to learn to play chords holding the pick loosely or use a soft pick. Either of these methods will help result in softer playing. It's much easier to start learning banjo-playing softly and then play harder when needed, than it is to learn playing hard first and then play softly when you need to.

When playing rhythm in a group, be aware of how loud you and the others are playing. If you can't hear the lead melody or the vocalist then the rhythm players are playing too loud. A guide for this is for the rhythm players to play as if a vocalist is singing each and every song. The melody of a tune must always dominate. Rhythm is the support foundation for the melody and should not overpower it.

Here are a few things to remember for rhythm banjo playing:

- Play in support of the group, not for yourself.
- Play every tune as if a vocalist is singing the melody.
- Keep in mind that the banjo is much louder to those in front of you than it is to you.
- If others are playing loud don't play loud also.
- If you can't hear the melody, the rhythm is too loud.

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of instructional articles by long-time EBBC member Larry Risner. The newsletter will run the remaining articles in each of the next several issues.

PBS Provides Early American Banjo History

The PBS American Roots Music web page offers this interesting look at the origins of the banjo in America.

"...as early as 1781 Thomas Jefferson, writing about slaves on his own plantation, said, 'the instrument proper to them is the Banjar, which they brought hither from Africa.' Many of these early banjars were made from gourds and played with a fretless neck. We have no idea how these sounded, but surviving illustrations suggest they used heavy strings and probably had a deep, mellow sound. By 1847 we have eyewitness accounts of the fiddle and banjo being played together in the South - the origin of the modern string band or bluegrass band."

For more, see https://www.pbs.org/americanrootsmusic/pbs_arm_ii_banjo.html

Tech tips

The fourth in a series of tutorials by Larry Risner, for our beginners and less experienced members.

2018 EBBC Playout Participation

Playouts for 2018: nine (through July 31, 2018)

Guy Black	4
Tom Brunetti	8
Rich Combs	6
Betty David	1
Clyde Dedmon	3
Bob Ehrhorn	6
Barbara Findlay	2
Don Granberg	8
John Greitzer	3
Karen Hefter	4
Red Higgins	2
Deb Hodson	2
Terry Horner	4
Garry Kerr	6
Ardie Jarrett	7
Doug Johnson	4
Chris Lardge	5
Annie Lem	2
Paul Mack	9
Bob Malucelli	7
Diane Malucelli	3
Lary McGrew	2
Dina Melamed	3
Linda Myers	3
Phil Myers	3
Kit Nelson	6
Bud Pearce	8
Larry Risner	2
Jan Ruzicka	7
Slavka Ruzicka	8
Sheila Welt	6



Board members and appointed officers for 2018

Board Members

President: Bob Malucelli.....dmalucelli@att.net
Vice President: Paul Mack.....Anthony.Mack55@gmail.com
Secretary: Sheila Weltweltbear@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer: Rich Combs.....combsrichard@sbcglobal.net
Past President: John Greitzerjohngreitzer@outlook.com
Booking Agent: Don Granberg.....grany@astound.net

Non-Board Officers

Assistant Music Director: Jack Convery.....entline@msn.com
Assistant Music Director: Betty David.....(925) 938-0126
Assistant Music Director: Larry Risner.....rhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net
Assistant Music Director and Webmaster: Bud Pearce.....bud.pearce@pearcechriss.com
Digital Librarian: Karen Hefter.....karenhefter@gmail.com
Hard-Copy Librarian: Don Granberg..... grany@astound.net
Hospitality: Sheila Welt.....weltbear@sbcglobal.net
Membership: Chris Lardge.....chrislardge@aol.com
Newsletter Editor/Publisher: John Greitzer johngreitzer@outlook.com
Telephone Tree: Diane Malucelli.....dmalucelli@att.net
Uniforms (Gold Vest & Polos): Ardie Jarrett..... jarjohn@msn.com

About our newsletter

The ***East Bay Banjo Club Newsletter*** is published six times per year, in February, April, June, August, October, and December. The newsletter is available on the EBBC website at www.eastbaybanjo.org (click on "Newsletters"). All articles are written by the editor unless otherwise noted.

Upcoming birthdays



Happy birthday to all!

Ardie Jarrett – September 6
Red Higgins – September 25
Bob Ehrhorn – October 13
Barbara Findlay – October 13
Connor Calimlim – October 14
Fred “Mickey” Finn – October 14
Ken Williamson – October 18
Marco Green – October 25
Bob Nelson – October 27
Karen DeWeese – October 30

EAST BAY BANJO CLUB
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
12 JUNE 2018
ROUND TABLE PIZZA, PLEASANT HILL

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Malucelli at 5:43pm.

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDANCE:

Present - President, Bob Malucelli
Present - Vice President, Paul Mack
Present - Secretary, Sheila Welt
Absent -Treasurer, Rich Combs
None - Music Director, Open
Present - Booking Agent, Don Granberg
Present - Past President John Greitzer

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDANCE:

Absent - Assistant Music Director, Larry Risner
Absent - Assistant Music Director, Bud Pearce
Absent On Leave - Digital Librarian Karen Hefter
Present - Editor, John Greitzer
Present - Equipment Bob Malucelli
Present - Hospitality. Sheila Welt
Absent - Membership, Chris Lardge
Present - Print Librarian, Don Granberg
Present - Telephone Tree Diane Malucelli
Absent - Uniforma, Ardie Jarrett
Absent - Web Master Bud Pearce

VISITORS:

Guy Black

MINUTES: Sheila Welt

The Minutes were adopted as sent.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Rich Combs

The Treasurer's Report was adopted as sent, and filed for audit.

BOOKING AGENT: Don Granberg

Play out - St. Johns V. - 12-1pm
Potential Play Outs – Atria Pittsburg Senior Center (2 Hours)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Editor, John Greitzer - Will do the fliers and post cards for the club.

(Minutes from June 12, 2018 continued)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. No Banjo Practice on July 3, 2018
2. Play Out - Stoneman Village on July 3, 2018 from 2-3pm

NEW BUSINESS:

1. MOTION: Bob Malucelli. Bob moved to donate \$5,000. to the Mt. Diablo Music Foundation. Yes 4, No 1
The Motion Passed.

It will be presented for information to the membership at tonight's meeting.

2. Paul Mack shared the words for the Missouri Waltz. "Old folks Were Singing". He provided a hard copy to the secretary for inclusion with the minutes.

FROM THE FLOOR:

1. Guy Black suggested that we can get 500 business cards printed for about \$10.00 at Vista Print.
The Board of Directors took this under advisement.
2. Guy Black would like to have the songs played the way they were written.
The Board of Directors took this under advisement.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Sheila Welt - will mail the check to the Mt. Diablo Music Federation.
2. John Greitzer - Will do Flier and Post Cards for the club.
3. John Greitzer - will order 500 business cards for the club.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:23pm by Bob Malucelli, President; until the Board of Directors Meeting in July.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Welt

East Bay Banjo Club
P.O. Box 5414
Concord, CA 94524

The East Bay Banjo Club

Meets on Tuesdays from 7 to 9 p.m.

Round Table Pizza

1938 Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill

www.eastbaybanjoclub.org