

Mad Folk News

Michael Johnson Takes the Stage in Madison

♪ Fans of legendary singer-songwriters like James Taylor, Gordon Lightfoot, and John Denver will be delighted to discover—or perhaps become reacquainted—with songwriter and balladeer Michael Johnson. If you do not immediately recall his name, you will recall his voice from some of his Billboard Top 40 hits, including “Bluer Than Blue,” “This Night Won’t Last Forever” and “Almost Like Being in Love.” Michael is also a classically trained, masterful guitarist who is equally at home singing pop, country, or classics from the American songbook.

Born in Colorado and raised near Denver, Michael began playing guitar at age 13. He went to Colorado State College to study music but left after winning an international talent contest in 1964 that landed him a deal with Epic Records. He then moved to Barcelona

to attend the Liceu Conservatory and study with the classical guitar great Graciano Tarragó. Not long after returning to the U.S., Michael joined Randy Sparks in a group called The New Society, touring East Asia.

In 1968, Michael started touring with the Chad Mitchell Trio and began co-writing with John Denver, forming the trio Denver, Boise & Johnson. In the late 1960s he spent some time as an actor, working in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. In the 1970s, Michael returned to the music scene in a big way. He released some of his biggest songs on the Billboard charts and enjoyed equal success in Nashville, recording #1 country songs with singers like Juice Newton and Sylvia. He continued to write and perform throughout the 1980s and ’90s. His songs have been recorded by such artists as Alison Krauss, Suzy Bogguss, Chet Atkins, and The Persuasions.

Always most at home on stage with just an acoustic guitar, Michael continued to tour solo and played about half his shows in Minnesota, where he lived from 1969 to 1985. At a more recent show in Minneapolis, he met up with singer-songwriter John Gorka. Michael talked about wanting to return to his acoustic roots, and John connected him with his manager and his St. Paul-based label Red House Records.

Red House president Eric Peltoniemi, who was very familiar with Michael’s work, was delighted to meet Michael and hear his new material. “I was just stunned at how great his new songs were,” he says. “It thrilled me to hear a true artist still at the top of his game.” Michael signed with Red House and recorded his new songs at Minneapolis’

Wild Sound Recording Studio.

Michael said, “It just seemed that all roads were leading me back to Minnesota—signing with Red House, working on the new album and most especially, reconnecting with my daughter who lives here.” Michael adds, “And I’m just an old hippy, and I need to be up where my people are.”

Michael released his latest album, *Moonlit Déjà Vu*, in October 2012. His once-long-lost daughter Truly Carmichael, a classically trained vocalist, joined him in recording a poignant duet titled “One Mile Apart.”

Michael has toured around the world and shared the stage with a diverse range of entertainers, including Judy Collins, Bill Monroe, Vince Gill, Cheryl Wheeler, Prudence Johnson, John Gorka, George Carlin, Trisha Yearwood, Andy Kaufman, and Jennifer Warnes. He has performed with classical symphonies, and toured with Clint Black, Wynonna Judd, and Alison Krauss and the Union Station. He has even appeared on nationally syndicated television shows, including *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno, *Austin City Limits*, and *Entertainment Tonight*.

But Michael says he is a soloist at heart. He loves the intimacy and spontaneity of a live acoustic show. About his shows, Michael says, “I like to talk to people and I love to make them laugh. And, of course, I have to move them with the music. That’s the whole thing. Without that, there is no reason to be on stage.”

You can find more information about Michael Johnson on his website at www.mjblue.com.



MICHAEL JOHNSON, photograph by Larry Marcus

David Francey Concert Tuesday April 19



The music from the skating rink
Drifts across the town
The stars of heaven high above
Forever looking down
I stand here looking upward,
And I'm listening to the sound
Of the village in the lonely heart of
winter

So writes and sings Canada's David Francey, one of the most delightful songwriters on the folk music scene today. This is the first verse of the title song from his 2003 CD, *Skating Rink*, which won the 2003 Penguin Eggs Magazine's Album of the Year prize, then went on to win a 2004 Juno Award, which is Canada's foremost music award, presented annually by the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. This was Francey's third album, his second album (*Far End of Summer*) having already won a Juno Award and Penguin Eggs Magazine Album of the Year prize. He has now taken home a total of three Juno awards, a prestigious SOCAN Folk Music Award as well as taking home the Grand Prize in both the International Acoustic Music Award and in the Folk category for the John Lennon Songwriting Award.

The lights above the skating rink
Illuminate the scene
And on the snow the shadows show
Footsteps where we've been
And Danny's breath hangs motionless
Hovers like a dream
Above his head, in the lonely heart of
winter

All these awards and accolades -- and there are countless more -- are totally deserved, honoring the gentle artistry and genius of this man's performance and writing. The three-

verse *Skating Rink* song quoted here is a good example of the brilliant simplicity of David Francey's lyrics, and his melodies match perfectly the mood of this spare and beautiful imagery. In the liner notes, David says of the song, in part, "I live in a small village in Quebec across the street from the skating rink... From my house I can hear the thin music from the loudspeakers, the sound of hockey being played, the cut of steel on ice, the thud and boom of the puck on the boards..."

The sky above the skating rink
The blackened weight of space
Falls endless on the frozen world
Upon the saving grace
Of the lights around the skating rink
Laughing in the face
Of the darkness at the lonely heart of
winter

The astonishing visual quality of these lyrics is common to David's songs. It isn't surprising to learn that he is a gifted visual artist, with his beautifully moody paintings offered for sale on his website. His songs and his paintings are grounded in everyday experience, be it positive or negative. In his music, Francey's use of the specific details of everyday life pull the listener into the very center of the familiar but somehow ghostlike picture, as in his haunting "*Cheap Motel*" song:

It's concrete wall and concrete walks
Concrete halls and concrete blocks
In the cheap motel

The girl at the desk, she's learning guitar
Watching the faces, counting the cars
In the cheap motel...
...The Ice machine, she's broken down
And we're stuck out here on the edge
of town
In the cheap motel...

David Francey was born in Scotland in 1954, moving with his family to Canada at age 12. He spent decades of his life as a carpenter and didn't record a song until he was in his mid forties. Many of his songs portray aspects of the working-class life or of the general Canadian experience, though he also has written songs like "*Fourth of July*," a political song about the post-9/11 USA, and "*Wishing Well*" about the execution of Timothy McVeigh. No matter what the subject, David's songs are simple but interesting, both melodically and lyrically, and are captivating because of their specificity. It isn't surprising to learn, therefore, that among his musical heroes are Joni Mitchell, the Beatles, and John Prine, all masters at writing melodically and lyrically interesting songs.

Onstage, Francey is a treasure, with a calm, humble, but worldly wise demeanor. His singing and playing are as refreshingly spare as his writing. David's stories could have provided him with a fine stage career on their own. A night with Francey's music is a good reminder that we are all in this together, right down to the ice rink nights and broken ice machines.

There will be an opening set by Joe Crookston.

Details:

Apr. 19 (Tue), 2016, 7:00 pm (Doors at 6:30 pm).
The Brink Lounge, 701 E. Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53701, phone 608-661-8599

Please bring a non-perishable item for our local food pantry
Tickets \$16 in advance
\$18 day of show

Available at Orange Tree Imports, 1721 Monroe Street, Madison, or Spruce Tree Music, 851 East Johnson, Madison, or ONLINE at Brown Paper Tickets: <http://davidfrancey2016.bpt.me/>

If you are on Facebook, please consider (if you have not already) "friending" or is it "liking" this page. Then when you are on this page you can invite others to "like" this page.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Madison-Folk-Music-Society/34497984835>



Review by Kiki Schueler

I had picked up a copy of the Best of 2015 at B Side Records on State Street and was surprised to see a Mary Lou Lord record on owner Steve Manley's list. Even though I was a big fan in the late 90s and early 2000s, I can be forgiven for not keeping up on Lord's musical career because it had ceased to exist. Prior to the new Backstreet Angels, her most recent release was 2004's Baby Blue. Shortly after that record she announced she suffered from spasmodic dysphonia, a vocal cord disorder. And although a decade has passed between releases, Angels fits seamlessly into her catalog, which suggests either her music is timeless or it's stuck in the past. Her sweet voice sounds just as youthful as it did then, despite the fact that she turned fifty last year. Other things remain the same, like her penchant for cover songs, and the contribution of the Bevis Frond's Nick Saloman. Of the record's sixteen tracks, only three were written by Lord, two by Saloman, the pair cowrote one, and the rest are covers.

Her choice of covers lends some credence to the idea that she's still living somewhere in the past. Record opener "Metal Firecracker" hails from Lucinda Williams' classic 1998 record Car Wheels on a Gravel Road. Lord doesn't reinvent the song, but her smooth, lighthearted vocal is an

intriguing counterpoint to Williams' anguished one. Her interpretation of Beat Happening's "Cry for a Shadow," from 1991's Dreamy, is a welcome one, turning their pointedly lo-fi, willfully primitive song into a sweet ballad, beautifully filled out with just acoustic guitars and voice. A pair of tunes from the Seattle-based Green Pajamas fall on the same narrow time line—"She's Still Bewitching Me" circa 1999 (which Lord also recorded for Live City Sounds in 2000) and the haunting "She Turns Me On" from 2006. From the same era comes "By the Time My Head Gets to Phoenix" by the shamefully underappreciated Peter Bruntnell. It's hard to go wrong with his clever tale told from the point of view of Ted Williams' cryogenically frozen head. Last piece of evidence, Paul Westerberg's "It's a Wonderful Lie" (1999, again). Absolutely none of the songs sound dated, and every version on this record is worthy. But it feels like she decided to pick up where she left off, the last ten years be damned.

It would be easy to close the case now, but that would mean ignoring the pair of songs from twentysomething Matt Minigell. The first, "Pipe Dreaming," a smart tune about knowing when to leave town, is as perfectly suited to Lord's voice as any of the tracks here. Minigell frequently plays with Lord's daughter Annabelle Lord-Patey, and she takes over lead vocals on his hopeful tune "I Feel Better." Only the hesitation of youth distinguishes her voice from her mother's backing vocals. It's a gorgeous duet. And then there are the new tracks from Lord and Saloman. Lord's "Let's Jet" is the can't-sit-still rocker of the bunch, while "The

Run that I'm On" is a gauzy confection of lap steel and loops, a song that sounds familiar and brand new in turn. Saloman's "You Can Count on Me" has a similar effect—lyrics like "I never turned my back on you; I kept the secrets that you asked me to. No I'm no catch, but you can count on me" ring with honesty.

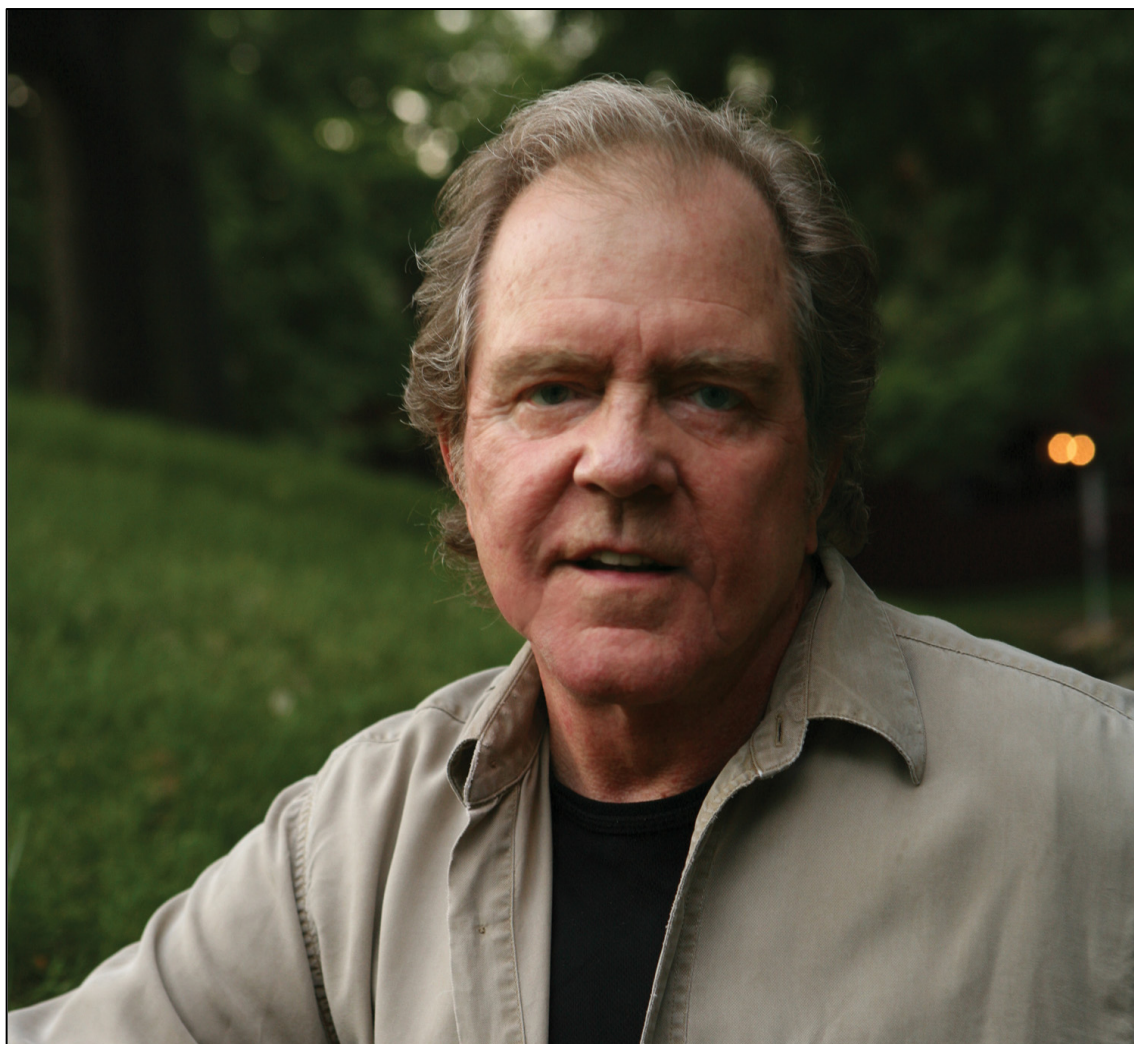
So, you ask, which is it, timeless or time capsule? I've decided it doesn't matter. It's a great record with great songs. Welcome back, Mary Lou.

Mad Folk News is published monthly by the Madison Folk Music Society, a non-profit, volunteer-led society dedicated to fostering folk music in the Madison area. Contact us at madfolk@charter.net. Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at www.madfolk.org. www.facebook.com/pages/Madison-Folk-Music-Society/34497984835

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“a dazzling guitarist and wonderfully expressive singer” – *Billboard*



**Madison Folk Music
Society PRESENTS**

Michael Johnson

Saturday, March 26, 2016

7:00 pm

THE BRINK LOUNGE, 701 E. Washington, Suite 105

Tickets \$15 advance, \$18 day of show

Available at: www.madfolk.org,

Spruce Tree Music, Orange Tree Imports



Non-perishable donations of food will be collected for local food banks.



Jump Rope Rap

Way back in the early 60s, I got hooked on a children's rhyme book my sister Mary owned. Among other goodies, it contained a collection of rhymes that kids recite as they jump rope. I remembered the name of the book to be "Rhymbles" and Googled for it, to no avail. Recently Mary mentioned the book in an email, but spelled it "Rimbles." I had been spelling it wrong! That's why I couldn't find it. I see it now available here and there as a used book: Rimbles, by Patricia Evans.

So I found the book, but I also was motivated to look around the web for other examples of jump-rope rhymes, and they are everywhere, by the hundreds. In schoolyards and sidewalks I'm sure there are thousands, and new ones born by the bazillions every summer.

Some are old, with versions going back to at least the 1700s, like *Peas Porridge Hot*, that most everyone has probably heard:

*Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold
Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old
Some like it hot, some like it cold,
Some like it in the pot, nine days old*

Then there are newer ones, some developed by kids having fun interpreting grownup situations:

*Had a little sportscar 248
Took it round the corner
And slammed it on the brakes
Bumped into a lady, bumped into a man
Bumped into a policeman, man oh man
Policeman caught me
Put me in jail
All I had was ginger ale*

These new kid creations are often downright surreal:

*Three, six, nine, the goose drank wine,
The monkey chewed tobacco
On the Street car line
The lion choked, the monkey croaked,
And they all went to heaven
In a little row boat*

...or sound (to me) like Beatles' songs:

*Charlie Chaplin went to France,
To teach the ladies the hula dance.
First on the heels,
Then on the toes,
Around and around and around you go.
Salute to the Captain,
Bow to the Queen,
Touch the bottom of the submarine.*

...and, more sweetly:

*Down by the riverside green grass grows
Where someone walks, some tiptoe.
She sings oh, she sings so sweet,
She calls to someone across the street
Tea cakes pancakes everything you see
Meet me at the park at half past three.*

Some are pure whimsy:

*I know something but I won't tell
Three little monkeys in a peanut shell
One can read and one can dance
One has a hole in the seat of his pants*

Some are established enough to have their own Wikipedia entry, like *Miss Lucy Had a Baby*:

*Miss Lucy had a baby
She called him Tiny Tim
She put him in the bathtub
To see if he could swim
He drank up all the water
He ate up all the soap
He tried to eat the bathtub
But it wouldn't go down his throat
Miss Lucy called the doctor
Miss Lucy called the nurse
Miss Lucy called the lady
With the alligator purse
In came the doctor
In came the nurse
In came the lady
With the alligator purse
'Mumps' said the doctor
'Measles' said the nurse
'Nothing' said the lady
With the alligator purse*

Some are mysterious:

*I like coffee, I like tea
I like sitting on Bobby's knee
Salute to the king
And bow to the queen
And turn your back
On the gypsy queen*

Many of them hint at sexuality:

*Ink, ink, a bottle of ink,
The cork fell off and you stink.
Not because you're dirty
Not because you're clean,
Just because you kiss the girls
Behind the magazine*

...and in a more romantic mood:

*The wind the wind the wind blows high
It blows Mary through the sky
She is fair and she is pretty
She is the girl from the tin can city
She can play the piano, 1 2 3
Mary, Mary, who is she?
Johnny, Johnny says he loves her.
Off they go with a kiss, kiss, kiss.
He took her to the courtyard,
Asked her, Will you marry me?
Yes no maybe so, yes no maybe so.*

This one explains you can't buy love:

*Johnny gave me apples,
Johnny gave me pears.
Johnny gave me fifty cents
To kiss him on the stairs.
I gave him back his apples,
I gave him back his pears.
I gave him back his fifty cents
And kicked him down the stairs.*

This one adds the always popular themes of sickness and death:

*Last night, night before, my boyfriend
Took me to the candy store
He bought me ice cream
He bought me cake
He brought me home with a belly ache
Mamma, mamma, I feel sick
Call the doctor quick, quick quick
Doctor, Doctor will I die?
Close your eyes and count to 5*

And some, though surprisingly few, are about childhood itself:

*First grade babies
Second grade tots
Third grade angels
Fourth grade snots
Fifth grade peaches
Sixth grade plums
Seventh grade ladies
Eighth grade bums!*

To me, these are great examples of how writing in rhyme can be silly fun, and speaking as a writer, that is easy to forget. I should write myself a note. On the way to heaven in a little row boat.

The Mad Folk Refrigerator Cover

March 2015

Mad Folk Events



Michael Johnson

Saturday March 26th
The Brink Lounge 701 E. Washington Ave. Ste 105
608-661-8599

David Francey

Tuesday April 19th
The Brink Lounge 701 E. Washington Ave. Ste 105
608-661-8599

Venues

FOLKLORE VILLAGE

Folklore Village

3210 Cty Hwy BB
Dodgeville, WI
folklorevillage.org
608-924-4000

- Tue, Mar 1 -- Open Mic @7pm
- Sat, Mar 5 -- Healthy Hoe-Down Dance w/ Ducks in a Row Farm, caller Steve Pike & A Rare Privilege @6:30pm
- Mar 18-20th -- Spring Swedish Music & Dance w/ Karin Hansen & Ellge Jakobsson and Christer & Kristina Samuelsson



18 S. Water St.
Ft. Atkinson, WI
cafecarpe.com
920-563-9391

Cafe Carpe

All shows at 8:30pm unless indicated otherwise

- Sat, Mar 5, Bill Camplin Band - \$10
- Thu, Mar 10, New Pioneers - @7pm - \$10
- Thu, Mar 17, Round Robin Song Circle w/ Tricia Alexander - @7pm - \$5
- Fri, Mar 18, Jill & The Jax / Three Thin Dimes - \$7
- Sat, Mar 19, The Briar Pickers - \$12
- Fri, Mar 25, Ernie Hendrickson - \$8
- Sat, Mar 26, Lonesome Bill Camplin - \$8

Mother Fool's
Coffeehouse
1101 Williamson St.
motherfools.com
608-259-1030

Mother Fool's

- Sat, Mar 19, A Kin - 8pm - \$6

Irish Cultural & Heritage Center
2133 W Wisconsin Ave
Milwaukee, WI -- ichc.net
414-345-8800

All Shows are \$10 Advance and day of show w/ Student ID

- Fri, Mar 18 - We Banjo 3 - 7:30pm -- \$25 adv/\$28d.o.s.
- Sat, April 2 - Old Blind Dogs - 7:30pm -- \$21 adv/\$25d.o.s.
- Wed, April 20 - David Francey - 7:30pm -- \$18

Stoughton Opera House
381 E. Main Street
Stoughton, WI
stoughtonoperahouse.com
608-877-4400

- Fri, March 4, Beau Soleil avec Michael Doucet - 7:30pm - \$30
- Sat, March 19, Count This Penny - 7:30pm - \$20

Gigs

Dave & Anne Host Folk

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, contact Dave & Anne at annedave@chorus.net

- April 3rd @ 7 pm (doors at 6:30) Ellis Paul - \$20 / \$17 under 18
- May 20th @ 7:30 pm (doors at 7) Harpeth Rising - \$20 / \$17 under 18

Kiki's Righteous House of Music

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, contact Kiki at righteousmusicmgmt@gmail.com

- March 12th @ 9 pm (doors at 8) Dressy Bessy / German Art Students -- \$10
- March 31st @ 8 pm (doors at 7) Chris Mills & the Distant Stars / Gerald Dowd -- \$10

The Home of Mike & Carol

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, contact Mike at maddog-210@charter.net

- April 7th @ 7:30 pm (doors at 7) Charlie King w/ Martha Leader
- April 27th @ 7:30 pm (doors at 7) Katie McNally w/ Neal Perlman & Madison's Schauncey Ali

- Common Chord (Michael Bryan, Tracy Jane Comer, and Friends - Friday, March 11th -- 701 E Washington, Madison -- 8pm -- \$5 donation

- Loreto Ridge Concerts - March 31 at 7 pm (doors 6:30 pm) - Old Blind Dogs - Invitation and advance RSVP required. For full details or to request an invitation use the "Contact Us" page at www.McCluskeyBros.com

Misc

Old Time Jam

Monthly - 3rd Sunday of every month, 4 to 6pm

EVP West 3809 Mineral Point Road

Coodinator: Al Wilson

cell: 608-572-0634

adwilson@pediatrics.wisc.edu

Madison Ukulele Club-- Singalongs 1st and 3rd Weds 7:00-9:00pm
- call for location- 246-8205 (Andrew)

Cajun jams are on hold until a new location is found. Email www.prairiebayoucajun.com with suggestions.

Call Karen at 608-238-6039 for more info. www.prairiebayoucajun.com

On the Air



wpr.org

Simply Folk on Wisconsin Public Radio w/ Stephanie Elkins, Host

Sun 5:00-8:00pm

Concerts recorded in Wisconsin, music and dance of people the world over. For playlists, calendars, station listings, and more, visit www.wpr.org/simplyfolk.



wort-fm.org

WORT 89.9 FM community radio

Sun -- 3:00-5:00pm

• "On the Horizon" w/ Ford Blackwell, Paul Novak, Gloria Hays & Helena White

Weekdays 9:00am-noon

• Mon - Global Revolutions (folk from the world over)

w/ Dan Talmo & Martin Alvarado

• Tue -- One Fine Morning w/ P.C. Allen

• Wed -- Back to the Country (country music on a theme) w/Bill Malone

• Thur -- Diaspora (folk and international) w/Terry O'

• Fri -- Mud Acres (bluegrass and acoustic) w/Chris Powers

Madison Dance

- African/African-American Dance classes with live drumming -- Sun, 7:00-9:00pm -- Metro Dance, 3009 University Ave. -- 255-3677 / 251-4311

- SpiritMoves Ecstatic Dance 2nd and 4th Weds, 7:00-9:00 pm -- The Center for Conscious Living, 849 East Washington Ave. -- \$7 min. donation

- English Country Dance taught -- 1st and 3rd Mon, 7:30-9:30pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 238-9951 or 238-9951

- International Dancing -- Wed and Sun; classes 7:30-8:30pm, request dancing 8:30-11:00pm -- The Crossing, 1127 University Ave. -- 241-3655

- Irish Dancing -- Monthly Ceili and set dance events are posted at celticmadison.org/dance

- Italian Dancing -- Tue, 7:00-9:00pm, no experience or partner necessary -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 838-9403 (Philana)

- Madison Contra Dance Cooperative -- Tue; 7:30 jam band practice, intermediate level dancing 7:45-9:40pm -- \$5 for non-members -- Gates of Heaven, 302 E. Gorham -- 238-3394 (Steve)

- Morris Dancing -- Wed, 7:00pm -- call for location -- 238-9951

- Scottish Country Dancing -- Sun, 7:00pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 233-2956

Is this your last copy of *Mad Folk News*?

There are two ways to renew your **tax-deductible** membership

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Life \$500 _____

Scholarship fund donation (optional) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

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