

# Mad Folk News

## June at Kiki's House of Righteous Music!

First up this month is bluesman Ray Bonneville on June tenth. Bonneville may have been born in Canada and lived there most of childhood, but his music is rooted in the southern Delta blues of artists like Muddy Waters. Much is made of the fact that he didn't release his first record until he was in mid-forties, but it seems pretty obvious to me that he needed to live all these stories before he could write them. And he has to have a lot of them; his is among the most interesting bios I've seen. To wit: He only spoke French when his family moved to the United States when he was twelve. He was expelled from school and ended up in Vietnam for a year. He was a bush pilot in Quebec, where he also gave flying lessons. He drove cab in Boston, teaching himself harmonica between fares. He's lived in Canada, France, Boston, Seattle, Colorado, Maine, Alaska, and New Orleans. It's the last that's probably had the biggest effect on his music. His most recent release *Easy Gone* is as much about the Big Easy as it is a state of mind.

Bonneville first played at the house on an unseasonably cold November day in 2014. The temperature hovered in the single digits, but it didn't take him long to warm up. Perhaps the most effective one man band I've seen, he used his acoustic guitar, harmonica and plywood stomping board to great effect. The small crowd was a mix of enthusiastic fans and folks seeing him for the first time. By the end we were all believers. As the show came to

a close he asked if he could come back again sometime... when it was warmer. I think I can safely say it will be.


My guiding principle in booking bands is quite simple; I seldom book bands I haven't seen. I can't expect folks to come see a band that I can't vouch for, but occasionally I'll take a chance. When I do it's usually on the recommendation of someone I trust. In the case of Vandaveer, who will be playing at the House of Righteous Music on June 21, it was Undertow. I've worked with them many, many times in the past, and no one is better at organizing entire tours of living room shows for their clients while making it exceptionally easy for those who host. Though before agreeing, I listened to Vandaveer's new release *The Wild Mercury* several times over. It's a gorgeous indie folk-pop record, featuring smart songwriting and the infectious duo vocals of Mark Charles Heidinger and Rose Guerin. It's easy to imagine these songs played in living rooms across the country. Like other Undertow shows, tickets can be purchased through them at <http://undertowtickets.com/collections/vandaveer/products/madison-wi-june-21>

When I announced that frequent visitor Robbie Fulks would be returning to the house on June 25 with yet another stellar line-up of musicians the 9 pm show filled up quickly. The response was enthusiastic enough to justify a second show at 6 pm the same day. This time through he'll have fiddler Aaron Till, upright

bassist Missy Raines and the spectacular mandolinist Don Stiernberg. You can read my review of his new record *Upland Stories* in this issue. Spoiler alert- it's really good. I don't know another performer with a wider of range of musical knowledge and abilities. It makes every show a uniquely entertaining experience.

For more information or to RSVP for a show e-mail me at [righteous-musicmgmt@gmail.com](mailto:righteous-musicmgmt@gmail.com). Hope to see you in the basement.

### Mad Folk Concert Tickets

When you see this symbol –  – you'll know that you're reading about a Mad Folk sponsored event. Advance tickets for Mad Folk shows are available online at [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org) and at these outlets:

- Orange Tree Imports, 1721 Monroe Street
- Spruce Tree Music, 851 East Johnson

Purchase tickets ONLINE for Mad Folk concerts via Brown Paper Tickets (with \$1.62 service charge):

<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/producer/10879>

You can also purchase advance tickets by mail. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope with your check payable to Mad Folk, PO Box 665, Madison, WI 53701. If all else fails, call 608-846-9214 for information.

# Summer Sing-alongs begin June 17 At Blue Mounds State Park

The first of three monthly Summer Sing-alongs at Blue Mounds State Park will be held at 8 pm, Friday June 17. Madison's own Mac Robertson on banjo and guitar will lead the all-ages singing. Copies of Rise Up Singing and Rise Again songbooks will be available, with lyrics of hundreds of songs old and new. You are invited to bring instruments, at least your voices, to join folkies and campers in singing the sun down on one of the longest days of the year, from one of the highest points in southern Wisconsin.

Weather and preparations for the Horribly Hilly Hundred bike race permitting, the Sing-along will be held at the main shelter at the top of the hill, or, alternatively, at the indoor Friends Shelter. Park staff at the gate can direct you to the correct location. You must have a park sticker (daily or annual) to enter, but participation in the Sing-along is

free, thanks to the Madison Folk Music Society and the Friends of Blue Mounds State Park.

From Madison, take Highway 18-151 past Mount Horeb to County Highway F in Blue Mounds, then follow the brown state park signs. Come early, and picnic at one of the many tables available at the park. Mac Robertson, in leading the singing, has a uncanny ability to engage his audience, and a vast repertoire of songs to chose from silly to serious, folk to popular, camp to sea shanties he learned as a musician on the Clearwater. Song requests from young and old are welcomed and honored.

The July Sing-along will be held on the fourth Friday, July 22, to accommodate Mac's summer schedule, and the August Sing-along will be on the third Friday, August 19, all beginning at 8 p.m. Join us in song in a magical location.

## The WaterFront Festival's Cottonwood Folk Stage

The Marquette Neighborhood tried a folk stage at The Waterfront Festival two years ago and it was an immediate success. We named it The Cottonwood Stage last year and added a Sunday lineup (June 11 and 12) for your pleasure this summer. Bobby Batyko is booking this folk stage and he has assembled a formidable performer list and he came in right on budget. We'll add some food and drink and more chairs for this stage to make The Cottonwood Stage a happening scene. The biggest change is that three of our main stage performers, April Verch, Jon Dee Graham and Shannon McNally, will do double duty as they come to us unplugged at the acoustic stage 50 yards to the east of the main Marquette Waterfront Festival stage.

We are excited to have Shannon, April and Jon Dee doing second acoustic sets on the intimate Cottonwood Stage but there is some

great talent to be found in the local ranks.

On Saturday we'll present Lil Rev who is a Milwaukee based, songwriter / instrumentalist / storyteller / historian / educator and interpreter of American roots music and culture. His fascination with all things ukulele and harmonica keep him busy teaching and performing all across North America. Lil Rev will be leading a ukelele jam right away on Saturday before his own set. David Landau will ensue with a set for kids then Lo Marie and Waterfront favorite Cris Plata will follow before headliners McNally and Verch take the stage.

On Sunday Slipjig will get the music rolling they play fiery dance tunes, sweet airs & historic ballads from the Celtic nations, specializing in tasteful instrumentation & rich harmonies. They will get things going on Sunday by leading an Irish Jam or session so bring your instru-

### The 27th Marquette

#### Waterfront Festival Main Stage

Saturday, June 11th:

Noon-- East High School Black Music Ensemble

1:30 pm-- The Caravan Gypsy Swing Ensemble

3:00 pm-- The April Verch Band (Ottawa Valley, Ontario)

4:45pm ---- Boogat ( Quebec)

6:30pm -- BéLO (Haiti)

Sunday, June 12th :

11:30 am -- The Fat Babies (Chicago)

1:00 pm -- Evan Murdock and the Imperfect Strangers

2:30 pm -- Shannon McNally Memphis Band (Mississippi / Memphis)

4:15 pm -- Jon Dee Graham & The Fighting Cocks (Austin, TX)

6:00 pm -- JC Brooks & The Uptown Sound ( Chicago)

### The Cottonwood Stage

#### (East of the Main Stage)

Saturday, June 11th

11:30 -12:15-- Ukulele Jam with Lil Rev

12:30 - 1:15-- Lo Marie

1:30 - 2:15 -- Lil Rev (multi instrument set)

2:45 - 3:30 -- Cris Plata

4:00 - 5:00 -- Shannon McNally (Mississippi)

5:30 - 6:30 -- April Verch -- ( Ottawa Valley, Ontario)

Sunday, June 12th

Noon--1:15 -- Slip Jig Irish Session & set

1:30 - 2:00 -- Dave Landau kids show

2:30 - 3:20 -- Jon Dee Graham (Austin, TX)

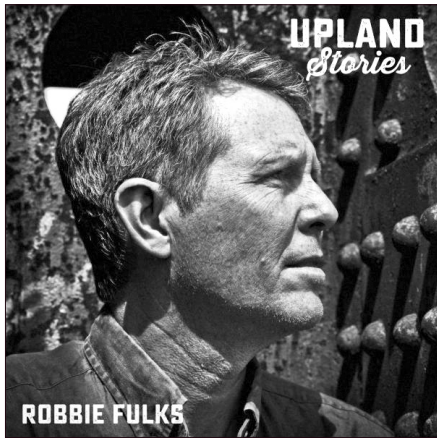
4:00 - 5:00 -- Anna Vogelzang

5:30 - 6:40 -- Mal O Dua

ments. Slipjig's set will follow the jam. Austin's Jon Dee Graham will follow with a set of his original tunes that will certainly be poignant and amusing. Madison favorites Ana Vogelzang and quirky Mal-O- Dua will follow. All this and great food and drink and a loaded main stage schedule to boot.

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

It's often hard to reconcile the whirlwind of hilarity and joking musicality of a live Robbie Fulks show with his recorded material, which often tends toward the dark side with murder ballads, tales of adultery and the like. His new Bloodshot release, *Upland Stories*, comes in what feels like quick succession with this year's *Jura* (his collaboration with the mini-Mekons) and his 2013 release, *Gone Away Backward*. When I say *Stories* isn't quite as good as the latter, it's not a comment on the quality of this record; it's a statement on the quality of all his records. In the case of Robbie Fulks, his releases are on a relative scale of excellent. Helping him out on this effort are returning players and frequent collaborators multi-instrumentalist Robbie Gjersoe and violinist Jenny Scheinman, as well as fiddler Shad Cobb, pedal steel player Fats Kaplin, organist Wayne Kaplin, bassist Todd Phillips and drummer Alex Hall, who appear when needed.

The three songs recorded as duos with Fulks make the best use of Gjersoe and Scheinman. "Sarah Jane" is a sweet, sad ballad to a lost love and the pain of enduring heartache. "Oh my Sarah Jane, long years since I met you, oh sweet Sarah Jane, how many till I can forget you?" he wonders in the chorus while Gjersoe's baritone guitar urges on Fulks' acoustic. Gjersoe is perhaps at

his best on the resonator guitar, and it's never prettier than on the dark "Needed," as the narrator reluctantly tells his grown son the cautionary tale of a long-ago terminated pregnancy. The confession comes in the powerful blink-and-you-miss-it line, "She longed to keep it, I said no, I had my future to think of, and in her darkest hour she learned what young men won't do for love." It's worth listening to carefully for both the moral of the story and the gentle way he gets there. Fulks switches to the banjo for the anti-anthem "America's a Hard Religion" while Scheinman's violin is the choir he's preaching to. It's an intense two and a half minutes.

The record is at its most lighthearted on "Aunt Peg's New Old Man." The family comes to meet their aunt's second husband, who certainly had his qualities, "His back was strong, his hands were rough, but he rocked her old age sure enough." You can hear Fulks smiling as he sings "She liked his fiddle and, no doubt, liked his help on the rural route, and the rest, eh, I don't want to think about." I really, really hope he had an Aunt Peg and that this is a true story. The equally high-spirited "Katy Kay" deserves to be a new bluegrass classic. Gjersoe mans the resonator again, while Shad Cobb plays an incendiary fiddle and sings on this tale of true (?) love. "Hey now Katy Kay, heaven never made one cuter, if I didn't love my Katy Kay I'd probably have to shoot her." Again, it takes a careful listen to realize he'd married for money, but Katy is the one he really loves. "The man who is a Mormon his values are askew, he's got more women than he can count, all I need is two."

The record ends, appropriately enough, with "Fare Thee Well, Carolina Gals." The same trio tells the tale of youthful indiscretions and honest confessions. The list of clever turns of phrase, oh-so-subtle rhymes and flat-out brilliant lines are multitude, and too many to list here. You should probably hear it for yourself.

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](mailto:madfolk@charter.net). Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org).

[www.facebook.com/pages/Madison-Folk-Music-Society/34497984835](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Madison-Folk-Music-Society/34497984835)

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## Whistle Musings

John Morgan, one of my favorite Madison writers, regularly sends me his wonderful poetry and prose in the US Mail. His most recent story (**In The Hospital**, ©2016 John Morgan) had an ending that involved his whistling while waiting for the bus. The person waiting beside him thanked him as she got on the bus, and added, "Whistling's a lost art these days."

Needless to say there is a whole lot more to John's ending, and to his whole story, than that. But I couldn't stop thinking about whistling. The woman was right; you don't hear much whistling in these days of earbuds and cell phones. But whistling has played and still plays a large part in my life. And appropriate to this column, there couldn't possibly be a more folk-musicy behavior than whistling.

When I was a kid my teeth were crooked. I had an overbite, and my lower rack was aligned like a windblown fence. It wasn't a traffic-stopping mess, but it was noticeable enough that the other kids would tease me about it sometimes. The only things more mortifying than crooked teeth were the braces that I got to straighten them. These came along with zits and glasses and other puberty delights around 1960, when I was in seventh and eighth grade.

There was one peculiar benefit that came with my particular pre-braces configuration, namely, the ability to whistle through my bottom teeth. I could pout, you might say, sticking my lower lip out a little which would expose my bottom teeth, place my top lip upon the tops of my bottom teeth, and blow. The whistle would be created by the air swooshing through the unusual spaces between my crooked bottom teeth (and here I'm not talking about that whispery tongue-whistle most people can do with their mouth loosely open). Because of my teeth, I never was able to whistle through my puckered lips

like most people do. But when my braces were taken off in a couple years, the situation was reversed: I could no longer whistle through my teeth, but could now tweet away through the lips like a regular guy.

I had a friend who used whistling as part of a disguise. This was back in the mid 50s, when I was in third or fourth grade. My friend liked to think of himself as a junior detective, and when going undercover, he would borrow his father's raincoat and fedora, pull the hat down low, and walk around the neighborhood whistling. He called himself "The Whistler." All this was no doubt inspired by a TV show (based on a radio show and subsequent movies made in the 1940s) which came out in 1954 called **The Whistler**. I never saw it but I have to believe my friend did.

My second whistling memory from those elementary school days involves a contest I've mentioned before in this column. All the kids had to decorate their bikes and pedal to the high school football field. We dismounted, and at the given signal (a whistle?), had to run to the opposite end of the field, where we were given eight saltines. We had to choke those down, then the first kid who could whistle got the prize. (A whistle?)

But my third memory from those days was of the beautifully melodic, loud, and chirping whistle of an old man named Mr. Gill, who would often be walking home from work in the opposite direction when I would be walking home from my junior detective friend's house. It was such a lovely whistle, and in my memory it echoes across and down the tree lined streets of my boyhood home. Beautiful, though I imagine it went through old Mrs. Gill's head like a nail.

So what's the deal with whistling? Listening through the whistled theme songs of **Lassie** and the **Andy Griffith Show**, and through the whistles of Otis Reading's **Dock of the Bay** and the Lovin' Spoonful's **Daydream**, the Harlem Globetrotters **Sweet Georgia Brown**, and the songs ABOUT whistling -- **Give A Little Whistle** from **Pinocchio**, **Whistle a Happy Tune** from **The King And I**, **Whistle While You Work**

from **Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs** -- it reaffirms that traditionally there is not only an upbeat mood associated with the art, but a more specific don't-sweat-the-small-stuff, carefree, and jaunty feeling.

But if you whistle, you probably do it at different times for subtly different reasons. Here are a few of mine:

One, in keeping with the above point, I whistle gayly when I'm alone, taking out the trash or changing the furnace filter. I think I whistle at these uninteresting times because creating melody is an interesting pursuit, and I whistle instead of hum because you can whistle blowing out or sucking in, so it's nonstop. I also think it subconsciously adds a comforting layer of order over the jumbled environment we trudge through.

Two, sometimes I whistle when shopping, so quietly that no one can hear me, but people can see that I'm whistling. I think I do this because I'm an old fart and don't want people to think I'm befuddled. If you're whistling, I don't think people perceive you as befuddled. But the joke's on them, because, of course, I am.

Three, when I'm walking through the woods and it's hunting season, I whistle loudly. I do a Mr. Gill. It's my audible Blaze Orange. Whistling travels further than singing, and I whistle not random tweets, but a melody. This may be the best way to let hunters in the area know you are a human and not Bambi. Gosh, maybe this is why and how music developed in the first place.

And four, I whistle studiously as a music composition tool, and even once in a while publicly as a musical instrument. My music partner and I have a dog song with an entire whistled bridge. Audiences have been known to whistle along, which is convenient because I often break into a smile during this part of the song, and that, ironically, prevents one from whistling.

No doubt there are other times when I am moved to whistle, but I have learned my lesson. I always take care not to eat eight saltines beforehand.

# The Mad Folk Refrigerator Cover

June 2015

## Venues

### FOLKLORE VILLAGE ...passing it on

#### Folklore Village

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

- Tue, June 7th -- Open Mic @7pm
- Sat June 11th -- Healthy Hoe-down Dance w/ Hook's Cheese, caller Tim Jenkins and Kettle Creek String Band @6:30pm



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

#### Cafe Carpe

All shows at 8:30pm unless indicated otherwise

- Fri, June 3, Corey Mathew Hart / J. Hardin - \$10
- Sat, June 4, Vicky Emerson / Sarah Morris - \$10
- Fri, June 10, Craig Cardiff - \$10
- Sat, June 11, Whiskey Belles - \$10
- Fri, June 17, Piper Road
- Wed, June 22, Briar Pickers - @7:30pm - \$10
- Thu, June 23, The \*Hitunauts / aka Occasional Quartet - @8pm-\$30
- Fri, June 24, The \*Hitunauts / aka Occasional Quartet - \$30
- Sat, June 25, The \*Hitunauts / aka Occasional Quartet - \$30
- Thu, June 30, Jon Svetkey & Heather Quay / Jay Bullock - @8pm



Wil-Mar Center  
953 Jenifer St.  
wildhoginthewoods.org  
608-233-5687

#### Wild Hog in the Woods

All events listed start at 8am and go All Day

- June 21 - Make Music Madison 2016
- Aug 5 - Sugar Maple Traditional Music Festival
- Aug 20 - Gandy Dancer Festival

## Gigs

- Sat, June 18 - @7pm Rattletrap Community Barn Dance  
Deerfield Rod & Gun Club, 4372 Rod & Gun Rd. Deerfield, WI - \$5 or \$25 family.  
for more info, contact 608-764-5267 or firstwingfamilytheatre@gmail.com

#### Dave & Anne Host Folk

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

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

- June 24th @ 7:30 pm (doors at 7) The Moon Gypsies - \$20 / \$17 under 18
- July 22nd @ 7:30 pm (doors at 7) Garnet Rogers - \$18 / \$15 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

- June 10th @ 9 pm (doors at 8) Ray Bonneville -- \$15
- June 21st @ 8 pm (doors at 7) Vandaveer -- \$20
- June 25th @ 9 pm (doors at 8) Robbie Fulks -- \$15

#### The Home of Mike & Carol

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

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

- June 18th @ 8 pm (doors at 7:30) Matt Debnarsky -- \$15

#### Middleton Fairyland

All 4 shows are invitation only and there are two ways to score an invite and get address:

- email middletonhouseconcerts@yahoo.com

- send a "friend" request to Facebook member "Middleton Fairyland".

The house concerts events are listed on the associated Middleton House Concerts page with artist descriptions.

All 4 concerts are "potluck at 6:00pm, music 7:30ish to 10pm, bring a lawn chair. If it rains call ahead." and we give details to friends on the Facebook page. Suggested donation \$15-20, less for children.

Sat June 4 - Ellis Paul

Sat July 30 - Robby Hecht

Sat Aug 27 - Peter Mulvey

Fri Sept 9 - Count This Penny

- Sat, June 11 - @7pm KG & The Ranger  
The Coffee House, 492 N. Pine, Burlington, WI <http://www.burlingtoncoffeehouse.com>

- Thu June 30 - @7pm Common Chord (Michael Bryant and Tracy Jane Comer and friends)  
The Brink Lounge 701 E Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703 - 608-770-2640  
<http://www.thebrinklounge.com> - FREE

- UW Continuing Studies Summer Folk Music Classes  
June 2-30 - \$100 for the five week session  
Full information available at <http://continuingstudies.wisc.edu/music>  
Questions? Contact Jessica Courtier, [jessica.courtier@wisc.edu](mailto:jessica.courtier@wisc.edu), 608-890-3626.

## 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](mailto: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](http://www.prairiebayoucajun.com) with suggestions.

Call Karen at 608-238-6039 for more info. [www.prairiebayoucajun.com](http://www.prairiebayoucajun.com)

## On the Air



[wpr.org](http://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](http://www.wpr.org/simplyfolk).



[wort-fm.org](http://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](http://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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Visit [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org) and click on "Join MFMS"

## Way #2 – unplugged

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### Madison Folk Music Society

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Choose membership category: \_\_\_\_\_

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Regular \$12 \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Friend \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

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Life \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship fund donation (optional) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

GOING GREEN - Send my newsletters electronically by email

Send your check, payable to MFMS to: Mad Folk c/o

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