

MadFolk News

Live Music – How You Have Been Missed!!

I know we are all looking to see live music again (safely), and we are proceeding in that direction. People are taking music lessons, and I am sure you have seen a few places have been having music, maybe a few outdoor house concerts and they will combine Marquette Waterfront & Orton Park this year. Ekin Neighborhood will have a small neighborhood festival and usually has good music at that. We do lose the LeFete festival this year but hoping to have it return next year..... But what about Willy Street Fair you ask? I was just told it will be two days in September (18th & 19th) and MadFolk will be hosting

a stage both days. So, we will be working hard to fill that stage in the limited time between now and then!

But what about the concert series you ask? We have submitted our first offer for October, so we are venturing slowly out will be starting to book some shows and just hope we don't have a slide back in to last year. Our plans are to reach out to some of the shows we cancelled in 2020 that we had to cancel and reach out to performers and let them know that when they feel comfortable to travel and play that we are ready too.

So, I just wanted to say thank you all for your membership this past year, even though we had no shows, and we hoped you enjoy our guest columnist, and the fact that we pulled Peter out of retirement to do some writing so that we were able to keep the newsletter going. Can't wait to see you all down the music road!

Acoustic Charlies on Tap for Our House Outdoor Concerts

The musical gods have been smiling on the Our House outdoor concerts this summer. Our large audiences have been blessed with lovely weather, superlative music and mosquito-free evenings. We hope to continue the good fortune with The Acoustic Charlies at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, August 14. (The rain date is Sunday, August 15.)

This Madison trio is made up of Chuck Bayuk, Chuck Gates, and Jeff "Chuck" Laramie. The band puts out strong guitar strumming and seamless harmonies, while doing Americana, folk and popular songs from the 1960s, '70s and beyond. If you love The Beatles and the BoDe-

ans, and John Hiatt and John Prine, you will definitely love The Charlies. Their setlist is a step back in time to revisit some of the best American music in the past 50 years.

We've seen The Acoustic Charlies several times, at The Brink, Garver and at Our House. They have a loyal local fan base and always pack the house. So reserve your tickets early. Contact us at annedave@chorus.net for further details. Tickets are \$20 each.

And on Friday, September 10 at 6 p.m., the ever-popular indomitable Claudia Schmidt returns to Our House. She combines a powerful, lovely voice with stellar guitar

playing and her mountain dulcimer to deliver great concerts. Claudia lives out East now, so don't miss this rare Midwestern visit.

And last but not least, we'd like to say thanks again to our recent summer backyard performers—Mark Croft, Jon Vriesacker, Cris and Ann Plata, Willy Porter, and Scott Tyler and Mallory Graham of The Rough and Tumble. They all reminded us why live music is so special and important in these modern times. Keep it up, folks.

- DAVID WALLNER

On the Air



Simply Folk on Wisconsin Public Radio w/ Dan Robinson, 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 89.9 FM community radio visit <https://wortfm.org> for more info!

- Weekdays 9:00am - noon - "On the Horizon" w/ Ford Blackwell, Paul Novak, Gloria Hays & Helena White

- Mon - Global Revolutions (folk from the world over) w/ Dan Talmo & Martin Alvarado

- Tue - Another Green Morning w/ Brian Hirsch

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

- Thur - Hejira (folk and international) w/ Gloria Hays, George Dreckmann, Jeff Spitzer-Resnick & Paul Novak

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



WVMO The Voice of Monona - Promoting the best in Good Music - Roots Music - Americana Music

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Stuart Stotts

Weekly new song Facebook Live event. Song Premiere on Tuesday (SPOT) at 11AM
facebook.com/stuart.stotts



Common Chord

- Thurs, Aug 12, 6:00pm: Common Chord @ Gazebo Musikk, Stoughton
- Mon, Aug 16, 5:00 pm: Common Chord @ Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Madison
- Sat, Aug 21, 12:00 pm: Common Chord @ Grace presents / Grace Episcopal Church, Madison
- Sat, Sept 4, 5:00 pm: Common Chord @ Paoli Mill Park, Paoli
- Mon, Sept 6, 2:10pm: Common Chord @ Beatlefest, Spring Green General Store, Spring Green

Behind Our House

Reserve space required. Contact A&D at annedave@chorus.net with questions.

- Sat, Aug 14th, @6:30pm - The Acoustic Charlies - \$20/person

Farley Center Concert

Contact 608-845-8724 or e-mail at programs@farleycenter.org with questions.

- Sun, Aug 8th, @1pm -Harmonious Wail - \$25/person (Pay at the door)

My Highway Home

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A Song About Love

Pete Seeger's Birthday (May 3rd) came and went this year and I did not honor it in some of the ways I often might. I sometimes give a concert in honor of the man who set me on my path in some very real ways. I sometimes will write about Pete Seeger or make a small contribution to an organization whose mission I support, on his birthday. But this year I was wrapped up in online engagements and eager to be outside when I was not obliged to screen-time. So, I thought I would offer a few reflections now.

I will remember the first time I performed with Pete Seeger until I draw my own last breath, may it be many decades hence.

It was in a concert organized by A.F.M. Local 1000 at the Folk Alliance International conference in Cleveland, OH in February of 2000. I was standing on a stage that was set up inside Cleveland City Hall with Pete Seeger right beside me. We were singing songs to help close the School of The Americas at Ft. Benning in Columbus, GA. In the assembled crew of genuine folkies were John McCutcheon, Pat Humphries, Debra Van Kleef, Tao Rodriguez Seeger, John O'Connor, Charlie King, and many others. Time was moving in slow motion. I had never felt more alive or more in the moment. Nor had I ever felt more like I was exactly where I was supposed to be.

I was trying to contain my wonder at the age of 27, standing next to the musician I most admired in the whole world. I slowly realized as we were singing, that for all he had accomplished Pete was in truth just another human being. Not a god come down from the Olympus of Folk but a guy who just woke up each day, followed his conscience, and gave his best for the people he loved and the ideas he held as truth. A guy who made many mistakes and missteps, but for whom the aggregate total of his choices was

a net positive in the world.

In one fell swoop, I took Pete off of the unrealistic pedestal on which I had placed him in my early childhood, and I began to build a real friendship with a true mentor. In the 15 years I knew Pete personally, he worked to lessen the distance between people. He both professed and lived out the idea that we are all in this together. I needed to have a hero, but Pete showed me that we can get so much more done if we see each other as allies and partners in the greater work to be done.

Earlier in the evening, I sang a few solo songs in the big concert at Cleveland City Hall. During one of my anti-war songs, I sang the phrase "We Cry Out..." and the audience was supposed to reply "No More!" I was surprised that the assembled got it so quickly. And then I looked straight out in the house, and there was Pete, throwing his fist into the air every time the words "No More!" came around. By the second chorus, he was motioning for others to do the same. By the fourth chorus, he had 400 people on their feet. I was at the front of the room, but Pete was in his truest element – rabble rousing, emboldening people to take a stand. I was humbled. My hero was literally "in the house" helping maximize the impact of my song.

What I learned that night more than two decades ago, is a lesson that lingers in my consciousness. And I'm sure I get it wrong someday, even still. But through a dozen or more conversations and shared performances over the years, Pete continued to show me that we are only ever as moral, ethical, or just as our ability to lend our talents and resources for the benefit of others. And in a world that is all about creating differences, Pete built bridges. In the face of competition, he chose cooperation. In the midst of success and abundance, he was generous with his time, atten-

tion, talent, and money.

I'm guessing some of those lessons were hard earned. He wasn't always that Zen-like man I met when I was 27 and he was 80. He earned it through a great deal of trial and error. Pete would sort of prototype ideas, invite people to explore them with him, and then decide if it was viable or not. He was just as happy to give good ideas to others and send them on their way. He did not need to get credit for the fruits of the dialogue. At that point in his life anyway, he seemed much more interested in seeding good ideas and encouraging people to run with them. But he continued to give as well as he was able, to uplift, and to be a cheering squad for anyone whose mission was aligned with his own.

Ever seeking to do a little better, Pete lived a life that was noteworthy in my opinion not because he was famous but because of how he chose to use that fame. From picket lines to the finest theaters, from church basements to his Congressional Testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee, Pete Seeger Column continued on next page

Joe Jencks is 22-year veteran of the international Folk scene, an award winning songwriter and vocalist, and a contributing writer to numerous publications. For more information please visit: www.joejencks.com.

*Joe Jencks also hosts a monthly radio show called **My Highway Home** on the new Folk Music network – **Folk Music Notebook**. MHH features interviews with people Joe meets in his travels and music by many artists from the big tent that is Folk Music. Tune in on the second Sunday of each month at 5:00 PM CT. Rebroadcast at 10:00 PM CT on the same night and again the following Wednesday at 11:00 AM CT. Upcoming interviews include **Carol Maillard of Sweet Honey in The Rock**, **Peggy Seeger**, and more. Several past episodes are archived through **Folk Music Notebook**.*

*Listen in online via:
www.folkmusicnotebook.com*

Column continued from previous page

held on to his ideals. He never gave up on learning new things musically or intellectually, and he had the courage of his convictions.

Another mentor of mine once said to me, "We all make mistakes. It's what we do next that matters." For Pete Seeger - beloved troubadour, rabble-rouser, organizer, and champion of the people - there is no more "next." And I feel that sadness some days. I think that the Covid-19 Pandemic has made me more aware of many losses in my life personally and professionally, even the ones that are not current. I feel the point of intersection between the ancestors and those of us still living. And I feel the awareness that the ancestors, men-

tors, and our beloved departed - past and present - commission us to keep up the good work, to keep making the "good trouble" that the Honorable John Lewis talked about. Some of these folks made it look so easy to do. And maybe it is that simple, even now.

In retrospect, I can say that Pete Seeger was friends with thousands if not tens-of-thousands of people over the course of his remarkable life. So, having been a friend of Pete Seeger's does not necessarily make me unique, but it does make me happy. In a world of artifice and spin, image and cloyingly crafted narrative, it is a joy to have known someone in my life and profession who was so unequivocally "the real deal." And that is worth emulating to the best of our abilities.

ally "the real deal." And that is worth emulating to the best of our abilities.

Pete Seeger sang about the hammer of justice, and the bell of freedom. But he always ended with the song about love. Someone asked him once in my presence, "Pete, how come you don't sing more love songs?" Pete looked at the man in astonishment and said, "They're ALL love songs!" AMEN.

I hope we can all carry that song of love in our hearts and instrument cases, and sing that love into the world in every good way that invites other people to join in. It is not the end of the work, nor the beginning. But the music is a sacred companion on the journey of doing the work of transformation and community building. Music is integral to how we celebrate, grieve, honor, fight, advocate, and find serenity and peace. Music is the thread that can stitch the quilt of community together. In the wake of so much time apart during the pandemic, we need community. We need our music and we need each other.

So, be safe and be smart, but keep on singing. Keep playing. Keep going to concerts as it is viable for you to do so and feel good about it. And keep knowing that as we too wake up each day, follow our conscience, and give the best we have for the people we love and the ideas we hold as truth, we are honoring not just the visible heroes but all of the ancestors. Their hard-won victories and deep dedication brought us into this moment. And now, it is up to us to keep crafting that hammer of justice, that bell of freedom, and that song of love across the generations and distances. From lullabies to laments, love songs to laugh-out-loud songs, activism and art are inseparable. In a culture of mass-produced things, the individual act of singing a song is unto itself just a little bit revolutionary. So... How can we keep from singing?



Photo from Library of Congress. New York World-Telegram & Sun Collection

THE MIDNIGHT BROADCAST - PETER CASE

2021 - BANDALOOP RECORDS



Review by Kiki Schueler

Peter Case began his music career in bands that were an integral part of New Wave as the 70's became the 80's— the Nerves played shows with the Ramones and Devo, and wrote a song later recorded by Blondie, while the Plimsouls memorably appeared in Valley Girl playing their hit "A Million Miles Away." But his solo career since then has hewed closer to his childhood ambition of becoming an "itinerant bluesman." Even though he didn't know what "itinerant" meant then, at least according to the story he tells. His recent release *The Midnight Broadcast* attests he has since learned. The fifteen songs that make up *Broadcast* are a combination of covers and songs in the public domain, along with one original so old it predates his early bands. Interspersed between them are bursts of static, snatches of melodies, manic DJs and come-to-Jesus preachers, his attempt to capture the feeling of a late night cross-country drive. Something he knows a little about, having spent more than four decades crisscrossing the country. I have done a few drives like that myself and never found anything this good.

Yes, it is a concept album, but only loosely. More importantly, it flows. The songs drift into one another like overlapping stations. The DJ interludes voiced by Ross Johnson are something from the old, weird, America. A few of them are even long enough to get a

track listing and songwriting credit for Johnson. These trippy mini-songs are layered with sound collages, actually sound collisions, like a circus and an orchestra thrown into an organ grinder. The drive opens with the lone Case song, "Just Hanging On," which also appeared on his 2007 release *Let Us Now Praise Sleepy John*. Here he forsakes the acoustic guitar of the original and moves to the piano, adding in Bert Deivert on mandolin and Cindy Wasserman on backing vocals makes for a much warmer song. Helpful when musing on the inevitable passage of time. That record's title refers to Sleepy John Estes, one of many blues artists Case can discuss at length. It is easy to hear his influence, Estes' assassination song "President Kennedy" might be mistaken for one of Case's own. Estes' contemporary Mance Lipscomb penned the lighthearted "Charlie James," you can almost hear Case smiling over the bouncy, unadorned, acoustic guitar melody. He furthers your blues education with a lolling version of Memphis Minnie's "Bumble Bee," and a righteously groovy, harmonica fueled cover of St Louis Jimmy Oden's "Going Down Slow."

Of the handful of songs Case plucked from the public domain, "When I Was a Cowboy" is easily the best. Case's psychedelic garage rock stomp outdoes even Leadbelly's manic tongue twister take. The 60's classic organ sound comes from, what else, a 60's classic Vox organ. Surprisingly, two of the most recent compositions are a pair of Dylan tunes. "Early Roman Kings," from 2012's *Tempest*, and as bluesy as Dylan ever gets, snuggles in comfortably with songs a century its senior. Franklin zaps alien buzzes from his Moog, while keeping rhythm with a handful or maracas. Case doesn't take as many liberties with "This Wheels on Fire," written

by Bob Dylan and the Band's Rick Danko, but it doesn't sound much like the original either. Haunted, and quietly jazzy, he lays bare the threat in the lyrics beyond the "please notify my next of kin" of the chorus. Spooky.

While *The Midnight Broadcast* sounds great any time of day, nighttime reveals its true charm. All you need is a car with a CD player and stretch of country road. Or a turntable, a dark room, and a healthy imagination. Trust me; you will like the trip he takes you on.

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.

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Neil Morris.....Newsletter editor

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Meg Skinner..... Scholarships

238-6950 ~ meggskinner@gmail.com

Ron Dennis

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PUBLIC DOMAIN REVIEW REVIEW

In 2020, the great political songwriter Tom Lehrer, age 92, announced he was releasing his music into the Public Domain. The website "**Captured Economy**" explained how this is indeed "sort of" possible.

On Lehrer's website, he says: "All the lyrics on this website, whether published or unpublished, copyrighted or uncopyrighted, may be downloaded and used in any manner whatsoever...In other words, all the lyrics herein should be treated as though they were in the Public Domain."

There are a few more details but basically that's it. Pretty neat, huh? But as explained by the Captured Economy article, it was necessary for Lehrer to use the language "...treated as though they were in the public domain," because actually entering one's work into the Public Domain "...isn't a feature of current U.S. copyright law." In other words, there's no real official way to do this, for various reasons, though pragmatically, Lehrer's statement should do the trick.

This is all especially interesting to my music partner Lou and I because we've discussed doing something like this with our songs eventually. I've always been interested in the murky realm of copyright in general and Public Domain in particular, so I'll be watching to see what develops with Lehrer's work now.

Anyway, as someone interested in all this, it's no surprise that one of my favorite websites, which I talked about a bit in Whither Zither for August of 2017, is called "**Public Domain Review**" [PDR]. Created in 2011, "...The PDR is an online journal and not-for-profit project dedicated to the exploration of curious and compelling works from the history of art, literature, and ideas... In particular, as our name suggests, the focus is on works which have now fallen into the public domain..." This stuff is truly in the Public Domain, thanks to the requisite passage of time.

Reading back over that 2017 WZ, I feel I didn't stress enough just how marvelous this site is so here I'm giving it another plug.

Browsing can be done via four main groups: Images, Books, Film, or Audio (or "all"). These can be filtered by Epoch (Pre-16th Century, 17th, 18, 19, or 20th). They can also be filtered by Theme, too numerous to list here but including such things as Love, Maps, Crime, Design & Typography, Sex, Fashion, and so forth.

In looking for Whither Zither ideas, I performed a search for "Music." The first thing that caught my eye was in the BOOK group: *The Music of the Waters: A Collection of Sea Shanties* (1888) by a woman named Laura Alexandrine Smith, "an exemplary musicologist," who lived in England. "For each song collected there's a musical score, lyrics, alternative versions and translations, as well as the song's history, contextual background, and the activity the song was designed to accompany."

The PDR goes into more detail with this introduction, drawing you into taking a peek inside the pages of the book. The entire book is reproduced in full, and is downloadable (free) as a PDF. I almost wrote this entire WZ on just this book; it is that fascinating, and I'm pretty much a stranger to Sea Shanties.

Browsing in the AUDIO group, I came upon an odd rendition of the song *Barbara Allen* performed by country singer Frank Luther in 1928. Odd to me because it had the lilt and some of the melody of *Big Rock Candy Mountain*.

There is a recording from 1908 of an amazing man named Guido Gialdini whistling composer Luigi Arditi's *The Kiss*. Guido was known for his ability to whistle any tune he heard. As with every item on this website, a picture accompanies the piece, in this case a blurry photo of Gialdini.

There's Ma Rainey singing *Stack O' Lee Blues* in 1926, and a rendition of *Come Take A Trip in my Airship* by Welsh baritone singer J.W.Myers, composed by "Honey Boy" Evans in 1904. In the non-music arena, there is Thomas Edison telling a joke about a liver in 1906, and Ernest Shackleton speaking on his South Polar Expedition in 1910.

The FILM group is astonishingly varied: A 1918 film of *Plastic Reconstruction of the Face*; There's *A Trip to the Moon*, a weird 12 minute 1902 science fiction movie by

George Melies; *Professor Welton's Boxing Cats* from 1894; A filmed interview with Arthur Conan Doyle in 1927, etc., etc.,...

The IMAGES group is even more varied, if that's possible. Illustrations from an 1880s catalog of Japanese fireworks explosions. 200 images of Agostino Ramelli's *Theatre of Machines* -- glorious illustrations of imagined machines -- from 1588. Mattia Giegher's illustrated *Treatise on Napkin Folding* from 1629. Filippo Buonanni's 1722 *Harmonic Cabinet*, beautiful engravings of people playing wild old musical instruments from around the world. A collection of Juneteenth celebration photographs (see insert), with detailed captions, from the early 1900s.

I can't begin to cover the breadth of interests featured in this website, musical and otherwise. And remember: This stuff is ALL IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN. You can re-use any of this in your own projects without violating any copyrights. Most entries are



Juneteenth band, Juneteenth celebrations in Eastwoods Park, Austin, TX, 1900.

enhanced by related essays or at least by detailed descriptions and images of the content. If you ever need encouragement to think outside the box, this collection hauls you off into corners of the world and of the human mind you could never find by yourself. Everything is downloadable and free. And if you find yourself wondering how this quality assortment came to be so incredible, you need look no further than the list of contributors and their qualifications. What a bunch.

No doubt in a hundred years or so, when Tom Lehrer's songs settle officially into the Public Domain, they will find a comfy home here at the **Public Domain Review**.

<https://capturedeconomy.com>
<https://tomlehrersongs.com>
<https://publicdomainreview.org>

WZ for August 2021

"WHEN IS MY RENEWAL DUE?"

(Hint: It is NOT the date on the mailing label!)

The date shown on the mailing label is NOT your membership expiration date! There has been some confusion lately, and we apologize for that. The date is just the date the labels were printed, as new cost-saving postal procedures do not allow us to include expiration dates there anymore. When it is time to renew, we will send you a personal notice by mail or email. At that point you will be able to either mail a check or renew online at www.madfolk.org. If you have questions about your membership in the meantime, send email to info@madfolk.org. Thanks for your membership and support of Mad Folk!

Way #1 – online

Visit www.madfolk.org and click on "Join MFMS"

Way #2 – unplugged

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