

Mad Folk News

WEARY RAMBLERS MAKE THEIR MAD-FOLK DEBUT

Get ready for a night of unforgettable folk music as the newly formed duo, Weary Ramblers, takes the stage at The North Street Cabaret on Friday, April 28 at 7 pm. Featuring Chad Elliott, a Woody Guthrie Song Contest and Kerrville finalist, and Kathryn Fox, a DownBeat award winner and international touring artist, the concert promises to be a showcase of multi-instrumental talent, tight harmonies, and great storytelling.

With over two decades of experience on the road, Chad Elliott brings his unique blend of folk roots and

soulful writing to the stage. The multi-talented artist is sure to captivate audiences with his original sound and compelling performances.

Kathryn Fox, the “fiddler extraordinaire” according to Cityview Magazine, is a multi-award-winning artist who has toured internationally with fiddle troupe Barrage 8, performing in Europe, the U.S., and Canada. Kathryn played on the Grammy-nominated track “All My Tomorrows” with Kate McGarry, making her a sought-after performer on the folk music scene.

Don't miss this opportunity to see

two of the best in the folk music scene come together for an unforgettable night of music. Get your tickets now for Weary Ramblers Featuring Chad Elliott and Kathryn Fox at The North Street Cabaret on Friday, April 28 at 7 pm, doors open at 6:30. Tickets are \$17 in advance and \$20 day of show and link for purchasing tickets is at madfolk.org

JOHN SMITH TO PERFORM AT THE NORTH STREET CABARET ON MARCH 18

Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter John Smith is set to bring his unique blend of folk, Americana, and roots music to The North Street Cabaret on Saturday, March 18 at 7pm. With a career spanning over four decades, Johnsmith has captivated audiences with his heartfelt lyrics, soulful melodies, and timeless songs.

“John immediately connects with audiences,” says Marilyn Rea Beyer, Host of The Midnight Special. “His new collection ‘Backroads’ speaks to where we all are right now and the melodies and messages in the songs will endure and deepen in meaning as time goes on.”

Johnsmith has been a favorite at festivals, clubs, and house concerts across America and abroad. He has

won the Kerrville New Folk award, released nine solo CDs, and has served as a staff songwriter in Nashville. In addition to his music, John is known for his love of life, family, and friends, and for sharing his joy through song and stories. Come out and support live music, and grab a CD at the show, this is a CD that you're going to want to take on your road trips!

Tickets are available on the link at www.madfolk.org

\$17 advance and \$20 day of show

Doors open at 6:30 and Show is at 7:00

The Tip-Top restaurant is across the street and has fantastic food if you're looking for a place to eat ahead of the show.

Also we will be collection non-perishable food items for the local food pantry

Mar. 18 (Sat), 2023

7:00 pm

(Doors at 6:30 pm)

The North Street Cabaret

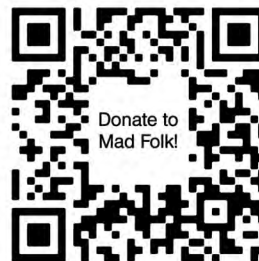
610 North Street

Madison, WI 53703

(608) 422-5646

\$17 in advance

\$20 day of show



String Gathering

By Emily Beebe

Sauk County, Wisconsin squats on the Eastern edge of the Driftless Area on the spot where the relentlessly grinding Laurentide ice sheet reversed course around 11,000 years ago. Back in the day, ice schooners carved out the quartzite outcroppings of Devil's Lake leaving glacial till and moraine in their wake. Towering rock formations overlooked the rolling wild karst to the Southwest glimmering with cold rivers and a secret cache of pristine subterranean water.

Within a few millennia the area became a favorite haunt for a panoply of winged, scaled, and furred species who found attractive ecological niches in which to dwell. A short time later the village of Baraboo sprouted from the warm silty soil and became the prime Winter habitat for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Although the Ringling Bros. have since packed up their caravans, Baraboo still attracts a carnival of musicians every Spring to roost for a weekend in early April like a sandhill crane tent revival on the Wisconsin River. The first (non-Easter) weekend in April heralds the String Gathering: an indoor convention of bluegrass, old-time, and other traditional and acoustic musicians who spend two days immersed in shared music.

The event was started at the Baraboo Clarion Hotel and Convention Center in 2013 by Brian Ray, an accomplished mandolinist and bass player with musical ties to Nashville, California, and Wisconsin. Brian was a founding member of the Briar Pickers (old-time), and This is the Squirrel Hunters (bluegrass), which performed around Southern Wisconsin. Brian knew how to raise the level of all the musicians he played with and was an inspiration for many with his infectious enthusiasm and signature orange mandolins. When he was living in California Brian attended the Great 48, a 2-day hotel jam event in Bakersfield. Bluegrass and old-time musicians would pack the Marriott hotel (and the Amtrak San Joaquins) to share songs, music, and talent. In addition to days of jamming, the event offered stage time for bands that wanted to sign up. After mov-

ing to the Midwest, Brian wanted to create a similar experience for Midwestern musicians.

In the early years, the String Gathering included limited performances by acts such as the High 48s, Art Stevenson & Highwater (bluegrass) and the New Bad Habits (old-time) who played ticketed shows at the Al Ringling Theater in downtown Baraboo. An evening square dance was also held in the hotel banquet hall.

Baraboo, like Bakersfield, turned out to be an ideal setting for the String Gathering to attract musicians from all around Wisconsin as well as Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, and Minnesota. There were so many musicians lining the hallways that the Clarion hotel put up signs that said No Jamming in the Elevators. A hotel guest climbing the stairs might hear Three Forks of Cheat from a calico-tuned fiddle transmogrifying into Big Mon smoking out of mandolin and resonator guitar.

The unpretentious Baraboo Clarion Hotel exuded a warm Central-Wisconsin hospitality. The hotel generously opened 2-room deluxe suites to its musical horde of guests. The Jacuzzis had excellent acoustics and were a good location for the stand-up bass when the room was otherwise crammed with bluegrass pickers. Turns out that they were also big enough for a 4-piece old-time string band, if everyone was on friendly terms and the fiddler was positioned pointy side out.

Stage performances at the annual String Gathering lost attendance after a few years, a clear indication that participants just wanted to play music, not unlike a 6-year-old preferring a bowl of Lucky Charms without the cereal. Plenty of other events held by regional Bluegrass Associations offered a full slate of performance opportunities, band development exercises, and big-name headliners. The String Gathering was different: it did not cater to audiences, but to the communion of musicians deep in their art. If creativity had a smell, it would be warm rosewood, rosin, and hotel carpeting.

Brian retired from organizing the String Gathering in 2016, and the event

took a one-year hiatus. The hole left that first April was deep enough to inspire a collective of old-time and bluegrass musicians to reimagine the event. They held their first event in Portage in 2017. It was a smaller gathering and included mostly old-time music in a convention room with the gravitational draw of Lynn 'Chirps' Smith, an influential Midwestern fiddler who played with the New Bad Habits and the Volo Bogtrotters. The Portage hotel was good, but the space did not support the diversity of smaller bluegrass jams that would carry on late into the night.

The following year the String Gathering moved back to the Baraboo Clarion and added a second weekend in November. There were still no performances or dances, but the styles of music branched out to include Irish, Cajun, Acoustic Swing, and traditional folk singing in addition to the standard Old-Time and Bluegrass. A loyal community of musicians from the region formed around these twice-yearly events, who bonded over hours and hours of shared songs.

After a pandemic-induced hiatus, the String Gathering came roaring back in April 2022, still at the Baraboo Clarion. The November event was retired last year, but the 2023 event is expanded to two full days in the spirit of the Great 48 Bakersfield jam. This year's String Gathering is March 30-April 2 at the Baraboo Clarion Hotel and Convention Center.

For more information about the 2023 String Gathering:

www.stringgathering.com

<https://www.facebook.com/StringGathering>

YouTube videos from the Brian Ray years:

Bluegrass and Old-Time Spring String Gathering: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvXyA7HIL2k>

Spring String Gathering – Bluegrass and Old-Time Fest – Baraboo, WI

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8PIKRm_wY&t=3s

White Mule

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxLaEvnoMwM>



Review by Kiki Schueler

You can't keep a good man down. Or a good woman either, for that matter. From their beginnings in 1977 through McLennan's death by heart attack in 2006, Robert Forster and Grant McLennan were the only constant members of the intermittently active band the Go-Betweens. Arguably the best-known band from Brisbane Australia, they never managed to make it big despite the heaps of praise they received. In the 80's, well known Village Voice critic Robert Christgau called them "the greatest songwriting partnership working." The Candle and the Flame, Forster's fourth solo album since McLennan's passing, and eight overall, may be his most personal. At 65, he looks back with a clarity on a life well lived, and a future worth living for. It's also a family affair, which certainly made recording during Covid easier. His children Louis and Loretta both play guitar on the record, while his wife Karin Bäumlér plays xylophone and violin and sings. Adele Pickvance, a 2000's era Go-Between, plays bass.

The songs were written before Bäumlér was diagnosed with cancer, which adds an eerie prescience to numbers like "She's Fighter." The record's most lyrically stark song, it consists of only two lines. The urgently strummed melody propels the simple message "She a fighter, fighting for good." Hand claps, xylophone, breathy "ah, ah ahs," and unidentified clatters, make it much

more interesting than you would think. "There's a Reason to Live" is another of those prophetic songs. By Forster's reckoning, the reason can be as simple as finding a ticket stub from a concert you've forgotten you went to. The Magnetic Fields may think they defined "The Book of Love," but in "Tender Years" Forster has written the real one. "I see you through the ages, she's a book of a thousand pages, that you can thumb. Images of her are vivid, her beauty has not withered from her entrance in chapter one." It's a powerful reflection on a love for the ages. A real one, not a glossy Hollywood version.

Forster's distinctive voice has an unmistakable solemnity to it, but Bäumlér's backing vocals often lighten the mood. On "Go Free," a song he wrote at the beginning of the pandemic when it seemed we were anything but, her ethereal "la, la, la's" are full of hope. Her voice seconds his claim on the almost too clever "I Don't Do Drugs, I Do Time." No, he doesn't mean jail time. Instead he means the fluidity of memory, moving back and forth through recollections for a different kind of high, "I've been traveling miles from here. I've seen colors and I've known years." The jangly "It's Only Poison" is part self-help, "You won't need a doctor, you won't need a ship. You're far from over and you can heal yourself" and part Alice in Wonderland "It's only poison, meant to drive you mad. It's only poison, and it's all they have." It's a song to get lost in on every listen.

"When I Was a Young Man" takes Sinatra's "It Was A Very Good Year" and unapologetically rewrites it from a songwriter's point of view. "When I was a young man, 21, I wrote songs, I was unsung, unheralded and undone, when I was a young man." It was the year that

changed him, and looking back on it he has no regrets. And thank goodness for that.

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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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>

“Exceptionally written songs, passionate vocals and intelligent lyrics...”
— *Sing Out! magazine*



**Madison Folk Music
Society PRESENTS**

Johnsmith

Saturday, March 18

7:00 pm

THE NORTH STREET CABARET, 610 North St, Madison WI

Tickets \$18 advance, \$20 day of show

Available at: <https://johnsmith-madfolk2023.bpt.me/>

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



With award-winning songwriting and chemistry,
The Weary Ramblers – Chad Elliott and Kathryn Fox – showcase
multi-instrumental performances with tight harmonies and great storytelling.



**Madison Folk Music
Society PRESENTS**

Weary Ramblers

with CHAD ELLIOTT & KATHRYN FOX

Friday, April 28

7:00 pm

THE NORTH STREET CABARET, 610 North St, Madison WI

Tickets \$17 advance, \$20 day of show

Available at: <https://wearyramblers-madfolk2023.bpt.me/>

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



The Mad Folk Refrigerator Cover

March 2023

Mad Folk Events



Johnsmith

Saturday March 18th - \$17 adv / \$20 d.o.s. - @7pm (doors at 6:30)
The North Street Cabaret
610 North Street (608) 422-5646

Weary Ramblers

Friday April 28th - \$17 adv / \$20 d.o.s. - @7pm (doors at 6:30)
The North Street Cabaret
610 North Street (608) 422-5646

• See madfolk.org or our facebook page for latest show postings

 **Don't forget!**
Non-perishable donations of food are collected for local food banks at all Mad Folk shows!

Gigs

Kiki's Righteous House of Music

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

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

- Friday, March 3rd @ 8pm (doors at 7) Lincoln Barr - \$15
- Sunday, March 26th @ 6pm (doors at 5) Will Kimbrough - \$20

Common Chord and Bob's Your Uncle

- Thursday March 30 @ 7pm: Common Chord @ Oakwood Village Auditorium
- Saturday April 22 @ 1pm: Common Chord @ Spring Green General Store, Spring Green
- Saturday April 29 @ 6pm: Bob's Your Uncle @ Cider Farm Tasting Room, Madison
- Friday June 9 @ 6:30pm: Bob's Your Uncle @ Bullquarian Brewhouse, 1128 17th Ave., Monroe
- Saturday July 29 @ 6pm: Common Chord @ Blue Mounds State Park, 4350 Mounds Park Rd., Blue Mounds



Wild Hog in the Woods

- Friday, March 3 at 7:30pm- Dave Schindele and Walter Burt
- Friday, March 10 at 7:30pm- Lynn Patrick Smith
- Friday, March 17 at 7:30pm- Battle of the Irish Bands
- Saturday, March 18 at 2:00pm- Hootenanny
- Friday, March 24 at 7:30pm- Madison Area Ukulele Initiative
- Friday, March 31 at 7:30pm- TBA

Heartwood In Concert

Saturday March 4th, 3pm
Madison Christian Community - Covenant Room
7118 Old Sauk Rd, Madison, WI 53717
Tickets at the door, \$5-20 sliding scale

<https://www.heartwoodtrio.com/listen>

Join Heartwood (Heidi Wilson, Sarina Partridge, Willy Clemetson)

for an intimate, participatory afternoon of music! Heartwood's songs grow out of time spent with generous trees, old stones, and vast waters. With their simple lyrics and rich vocal harmonies, these singers and instrumentalists weave together music that is inspired by, and sung for, the wild surrounding and within us all.

When endless facts detailing the crises of our era can leave us overwhelmed and unmoved, perhaps it is through the ancient art of harmony singing, a language of cellular resonance, that we will find ourselves beautifully beholden to the whole -- and motivated by our undeniable connection to fiercely protect it. Please come listen and sing!

Misc

Old Time Jam

Monthly - 3rd Sunday of every month, 4 to 6pm
EVP West 3809 Mineral Point Road
Coordinator: Al Wilson
cell: 608-572-0634
adwilson@pediatrics.wisc.edu

Madison Area Ukulele Initiative -- Singalongs 3rd Sunday 11am - 1:30pm
- for location visit www.MAUImadison.com

On the Air



wpr.org

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.



wortfm.org

WORT 89.9 FM community radio

- 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 - Green Morning Radio w/ Brian Hirsh
- 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 Plus Community Members Hosted Shows Streaming Live and on your mobile device through tunein radio

Stuart Stotts

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

Venues



Folklore Village

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

- Tue, March 7th - Online Open Mic Night
- Sat, March 11th - Maple Sugaring Basics w/ Bill Robichaud
- March 17th-19th - Spring Norwegian Music & Dance Weekend
- Tue, March 25th - One Day Track & Sign w/ Matt Nelson
- March 31st - April 2nd - Cajun & Creole Music & Dance Weekend



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

Cafe Carpe

All shows at 8:30pm unless indicated otherwise. Please call 920-563-9391 to reserve.

- Fri, March 10th, Bill Miller - \$20 - @8pm
- Sat, March 10th, Cash Box Kings - \$20 - @8pm
- Sat, March 10th, Lonesome Bill Camplin - \$12 - @8pm
- Fri, March 10th, My Politic - \$13
- Sat, March 10th, Tim Grimm - Album Release - \$15
- Fri, March 10th, Ad Hoc Trio - \$10 - @8pm
- Sat, March 10th, Terry White - @8pm

"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

Complete, clip, and mail this form

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

Madison Folk Music Society
P.O. Box 665, Madison, WI 53701
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Renew your membership today at
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Madison Folk Music Society

join renew

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Choose membership category:

Senior / Student \$10 _____

Regular \$12 _____

Family \$15 _____

Friend \$25 _____

Contributing \$50 _____

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

Tracy Comer, P.O. Box 930446 Verona, WI 53593-0446