Volume 46 No. 2 February 2020

MadFolk and Wild Hog Present! Robert "One Man" Johnson - February 21st

M It's hard enough to play a guitar, with all those strings and with each of your hands having to do something completely different at the same time, while you are trying to remember chords and runs and tempo and everything else, not to mention singing at the same time. Well Robert "One-Man" Johnson does all these things while also playing the hihat cymbal with one foot and the twelvepedal "foot-piano" with the other, throwing in a harmonica-in-a-rack solo now and then for good measure. But Robert is no "novelty" act. He's a serious student of traditional country and ragtime blues and a wonderful songwriter in various blues stylings.

Robert "One-Man" Johnson was born in Wisconsin Rapids and grew up in Wisconsin, teaching himself guitar beginning at age 12 around 1954. After an initial fascination with popular musicians like Elvis and Chuck Berry, he was introduced to more esoteric country blues artists like Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, Leadbelly, Lightnin' Hopkins, Howlin' Wolf, and other such early masters of acoustic blues.

Johnson graduated from UW Eau Claire in 1967. During his stay there he ran a coffeehouse series which one day featured blues artist Jesse "Lone Cat" Fuller, the incredible "one-man-band" who grew up in Georgia but settled around San Francisco. He was about 70 when Robert Johnson hosted him in Eau Claire. Robert was fascinated by Fuller, famous in blues circles for writing the blues standard "San Fransisco Bay Blues." Fuller played the foot-piano that he called the "Fotdella," influencing Robert to construct one of his own.

Robert ended up living in lowa but traveled the world teaching Language Arts in places like Turkey, China, and Thailand. Throughout this career he also played his music, attracting audiences all over the world who loved the blues. But for one short stint back in the US when Robert gained an MA in linguistics at the U of lowa, Robert and his wife Margery spent 30 years traveling the planet with Robert playing his unique blues all the while.

Here in Madison, Robert "One-Man" Johnson split the bill in the early 80s with Lou and Peter Berryman, and appeared on Mad Toast Live with Mary Gaines and Chris Wagoner in 2013. He appeared five times on A Prairie Home Companion and is a favorite at venues across the US. He has put out fourteen albums of music that he describes as blues and ragtime but with hints of styles from swing to early country. Wonderful to hear on recordings, the visual impact of watching Robert produce all these incredible sounds simultaneously and by himself is unforgettable.

Robert will be playing Friday, February 21st, at the newly remodeled Wil-Mar Center in Madison.

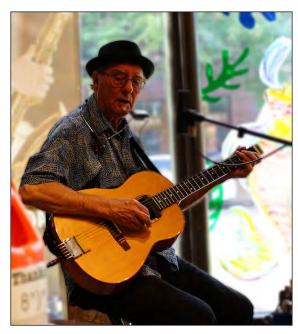
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April 3rd - John Gorka - The Brink
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Robert "One Man" Johnson

Friday, February 21
7:30 pm
Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse, 953 Jenifer St

Tickets \$14 advance, \$16 day of show

Available at: https://xxxxxxxxx.bpt.me

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



My Highway Home

© 2019 Joe Jencks, Turtle Bear Music

Thank You For The Music

As I enter my 22nd year as a full-time touring musician, I am filled with gratitude. It has been an extraordinary experience. And while there have been genuine hardships, I would not trade the path I have chosen for another.

As a child I lay on the floor and listened to 33s, 45s, 78s, cassettes, and any other form of recorded music I could get my hands on. As the youngest of seven children in my family of origin, with a nearly 17-year spread between the siblings – I had a lot of music to choose from. And my parents and grandparents had all collected recordings as well. From 78s of symphonies and big band music to 45s of pop singles, from 33s to bootleg cassette tapes – I devoured it all. From Bartok to Benny Goodman, from Ella Fitzgerald to the Everly Brothers, from Appalachian church hymns to ABBA, from The Beatles to Black Sabbath, from Cole Porter to Cat Stevens, it was all in the mix. But Folk music was a through-line. I can't say for sure why - but I think it was because folk music was music I could make on my own. With a single instrument I could mimic some of what I heard on those magical records.

This of course begs the ques-

tion, what is Folk music?

I don't have a good answer. At age 48, I have been trying for nearly 40 years. But as the fa-mous American Blues and Folk artist Big Bill Broonzy once said, "Folk music? Folk music? I ain't never heard horses sing none of it. It's all Folk music!"

started on Mandolin when I was five. I think my first song was, "You Are My Sunshine." Then my sister took her Mandolin back to college, so I explored the piano and a cool little electric organ my family had. But when I was eight, a family friend gave his classi-cal guitar to me. He was moving to Seattle and did not have room for it in the car. It was the first in-strument I had ever had that was all mine. I was so proud. It was HUGE for my 8-year old hands, but I was determined to learn how to play it. My sisters in particular, and an older brother helped me out with that quite a bit. Then I began to write songs. The songs were simple. They were basic, honest, minimalist expressions of my childhood perspective on the world around me. But I loved my guitar and I was determined to folfow wherever the recordings were leading.

After determining that Ozzy Osbourne did not sound quite right on a classical guitar, I started learning Irish ballads. I tried some of the Classical melodies – but I had a greater love of creating new

songs than learning existing ones. I am so grateful to my siblings and to my parents for their genuine encouragement. I hear so many colleagues tell me stories about how they had to battle their parents in order to get permission to pursue music. How they were discouraged from following their natural curiosity and had to come back to it later in life. But isn't that the joy of music? It's always there

waiting to be discovered!

The way that my sisters and brothers, my parents, and my music teachers invited me to keep exploring was an immense gift. I sang in a boys choir, musical theater, church choir, summer stock theater, Madrigals, Barber Shop groups, Celtic, Gospel, Folk, groups, Celtic, Gospel, Folk, Rock, and Jazz groups, chamber music, and so much more. But I kept coming back to Folk music and songwriting as the most in-tuitive and natural expression of my ideas. Every genre taught me something, and continues to do so. It is more than can be learned in one lifetime. But it is such a gift to have innate curiosity and be met with the encouragement to pursue one's fancy.

I am not blesséd with children of my own. But I have nieces and nephews and young friends that I meet in my travels. And I have encouraged them over the years to follow their passions. For me it was music. For some maybe it's astronomy, medicine, weaving, sheepdog training, law, horticulture, carpentry, mountain climbweaving, ing, natural conservation, social work, education, circus performing, or even parenting (which clearly is a little bit of everything). But whatever the passion, I encourage the young people in my life to go after it in a big way, and I encourage parents to get behind their young people. Eat life with a big spoon! Maybe they don't figure it out. That's what graduate school is for. There's always another chance to chase a living. But there is no replacement for the indefatigable curiosity of youth.

I think that even though my siblings and I grew up with relatively little economic standing – the cultural tapestry that my parents sur-rounded us with was an immense gift. My parents could not afford to travel around the world, so they hosted foreign exchange students. And they brought the world to us. That alone taught me to be aware of other cultures and traditions.

And each student enriched us with food, stories, and music from their home countries. I learned Chess and Backgammon from college students who hailed from Iraq and Iran. I learned simple chants and melodies and stories I later learned were from the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita, from students who hailed from various regions of India. I learned how to make spinach soup from a young Portuguese couple, and tasted my first Teriyaki created by a young Japanese student. We were so rich in experience – I spent very little time worrying about material concerns.

And books! We had books from as far back as the time of the US Civil War. I had encyclopedias from the era of WWI, from the 30s, and from the 1960s. Of course some of it was out of date by the time I was reading it. But most of it was not. We had volumes of literature and philosophy. And great dictionaries! And any time I found a word I did not know, I was in-

vited to look it up.
And camping! That subject will have to be saved for another essay entirely. But suffice it to say - my parents instilled in all of us a sense of deep wonder and appreciation for the natural world. This

too is a gift for a lifetime.

I in no way want to minimize my parent's struggles. They worked hard to support us and to lift us up to the best of their abilities. And they paid a price. But they also gave us the gift of knowledge,

Column continued on next page

Joe Jencks is 20-year veteran of the international Folk scene, an award winning songwriter and vocalist, and a contributing writer to numerous publications. His column My Highway Home is a new addition to the MadFolk newsletter. For more information please visit: www.joejencks.com.

In addition, Joe Jencks hosts a once monthly radio show called My Highway Home on the new Folk Music network Folk Music Notebook. This show features interviews with people Joe meets in his extensive travels along with music by many artists from the big tent that is Folk Music. Tune in on the first Monday of the month at 9:00 ET/ 6:00 PT. And rebroadcast on the following Sundays at 1:00 PM ET / 10:00 AM PT. Several past episodes are archived through Folk Music Notebook including shows about the Kerrville Folk Festival, Old Songs Festival, The Great Labor Arts Exchange, Ireland, and an interview with Sonny Ochs.

Listen in online via: www.folkmusic-

notebook.com

curiosity, learning, and an awareness that the world around us was there to explore. And they also instilled in us the knowledge that we had a responsibility to those with whom we shared the planet. And they encouraged me to follow my dreams.

I do my best to honor them by continuing to follow my dreams, wherever they may lead. And like all paths of inquiry, one needs to be open to the unexpected. Those surprises may change our direction. Good scientists pursue answers to questions, but they also accept the times when the answers differ from the expected results. That is what research and

exploration are about. My most current path of inquiry is with an electric Bouzouki (Yes electric. Pedal board, amp, and all.). Built for me by my buddy Baird Blain. I was inspired to dive in with this instrument as a result of getting reacquainted with the mandolin. I have a 1922 Gibson A-2 Mandolin that I got 2 years ago at a vintage instrument store, in upstate NY. My inner 5 year old was VERY excited to be reunited with an old friend. The electric Bouzouki is a fun merging of existing skills and also pushing new sonic boundaries. We'll see where it leads.

Music has been my primary area of exploration. And there

have been plenty of surprises. But as I continue to make music and share it with others, I realize that one day – the larger pathway of my life may lead me in a different direction. Who knows? But I quote one of my favorite ABBA songs when I say, "Thank you for the music!" It is a gift that will carry me through a lifetime. And maybe, if I am lucky, a few of my songs will carry another curious child into this realm of joyous exploration.

~ Joe Jencks 2-1-20

Charlie King and Prince Myshkins - March 19th

The Charlie King shares an evening with the reunited Prince Myshkins! Wow! This is a monumental and rare happening, and it's occurring right here in Madison. First, a little about Charlie King for those few folks who might not be familiar with him:

"One of the finest singers and songwriters of our time." -- Pete Seeger

Charlie has been a Madison (and World) favorite for decades. He has been in the center of the American folk music and related scenes and has been writing incredibly powerful songs for over 45 years, which have been recorded and sung by the likes of Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert, John McCutcheon, Arlo Guthrie, Peggy Seeger, Chad Mitchell and Judy Small. He has released nineteen recordings, the most recent just last year.

"Now there's a writer! There's a powerful voice!. Somebody I deeply, deeply love love. Charlie has motivated more young singers and songwriters into writing songs about social issues than any person on this planet that I know of. I admire him a great deal." -- U. Utah Phillips

Some of Charlie's well-deserved honors include an "Indie" award for one of the top three folk recordings of 1984; the War Resisters League's 1998 Peacemaker Award given to Charlie and Odetta; the 1999 Sacco-Vanzetti Social Justice Award for which he was nominated by Pete Seeger; the 2009 International Labor Communications Association award for Best Labor History Story. In 2014 the Labor Heritage Foundation presented Charlie the Joe Hill Award, a lifetime achievement honor which recognizes excellence in the field of labor culture. He received the coveted annual Phil Ochs Award in October of

2017, in recognition of his songwriting and performing for social and political justice.

"What this world needs is Charlie King. Luckily, we have him!"

--Tom Paxton

Many times over the past few decades, and from coast to coast, Charlie has shared the bill with the legendary Prince Myshkins, consisting of Rick Burkhardt and Andy Gricevich. Rick, who plays accordion and sings, and Andy, who plays guitar and sings, met in 1995 at the U of Illinois, where they formed a theater company and traveled the country. in '97 they moved to San Diego and, with their brilliant satyrical songwriting, became KPBS San Diego's resident satirists, producing songs heard on NPR's "Morning Edition" and Pacifica Radio's "Democracy Now!" As the Prince Myshkins, the duo has toured the country extensively. Individually, they both are involved in writing and performing experimental theater and experimental poetry. The Prince Myshkins facet of their wildly artistic lives has taken something of a break over recent years, reforming now and then to absolutely rave reviews.

"Dazzlingly fast, complex, socio-political songs with musical changes

that would leave Kurt Weill smiling and shaking his head with jealousy....

The Myshkins leave one's mouth gaping with their rapid-fire hilarity...

they also have penned what I consider to be the greatest anti-war song

in the history of music: 'Ministry of Oil." -- Brad Schreiber, A Critical Moment

As well as being a songwriter, Rick

Burkhardt, who now lives in New York, is an Obie-award-winning playwright, performer, composer whose original chamber music, theater, and text pieces have been performed in over 40 US cities, as well as in Europe, Mexico, Canada, Taiwan, Australia, and New Zealand.

Andy Gricevich lives right here in Madison and has his own business (whatgot-gathered.com) creating wild foraged and fermented sauces. As an acclaimed and published poet, known for working with weird music selections in the background and drawing inspiration from reading subjects such as philosophy and biology, he has founded Madtown Poetry which hosts open mics and public readings throughout the area.

The pairing of the Prince Myshkins with Charlie King is an absolute natural, as they form a mutual admiration society for good reasons. All three of them are exceptional musicians, brilliant wordsmiths, and passionate spokespersons for social justice. Moreover, they all have wicked and wonderful senses of humor which keep their work human and impossibly entertaining. This reunion is a thrilling development for Madison audiences! Don't miss it!

Prince Myshkins and Charlie King Concert

Thursday March 19, 2020 North Street Cabaret https://www.northstreetcabaret.com/ Start time is 7:00 - doors open at 6:30 \$17 in advance and \$20 day of show.

PLEASE BRING A NON-PERISH-ABLE ITEM FOR THE LOCAL FOOD PANTRY "Anyone who aspires to write political satire should hear this brilliant duo." Sing Out! magazine

"[Charlie King is]...one of the finest singers and songwriters of our time." *Pete Seeger*





The Prince Mishkins Charle King

Thursday, March 19
7:00 pm
THE NORTH STREET CABARET, 610 North St

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

Available at: https://xxxxx.bpt.me

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



Spread the Feeling - pernice brothers ashmont records- 2019



Review by Kiki Schueler

It's been nine years since the underrated Goodbye Killer, and fans could be forgiven for thinking there might not be another Pernice Brothers record. Joe Pernice, founder, songwriter, and sole constant member of the band, married and relocated to Canada shortly before that record. While the Pernice Brothers may have been on hiatus, Pernice has not been quiet. He's surprisingly vocal on Twitter, tweeting frequently about music, sports and his ex-pat view of American politics. He's also been busy musically. The Scud Mountain Boys reunited after fifteen years to release Do You Love the Sun in 2014. He joined forces with Norman Blake of Teenage Fanclub to form the New Mendicants, and put out Into the Lime the same year. He also partnered with hip hop producer and multi-instrumentalist Budo for Roger Lion, and released a record under that name in 2015. While all those projects were great, the news that there was a new Pernice Brothers record, and even a short tour, made me extremely happy.

Listening to Spread the Feeling, it feels like they were never gone. And while they don't all play on every song; all the familiar players are here. Drummers Patrick Berkery (The Bigger Lovers) and Ric Menck (Matthew Sweet) split the percussion duties, as they had over many releases and tours. The always-charming Brit James Walbourne has been busy, dividing his time between the Pretenders and his own band the Rails, but stops by to play guitar

on three tracks. Peyton Pinkerton, who played on nearly every PB record back to their 1998 debut Overcome by Happiness, as well as Pernice's solo releases, plays on two. Thom Monihan and Bob Pernice (yes, there really is a brother) also contribute. The new name here is Canadian Liam Jaeger, whom Joe describes as an "engineer/musician extraordinaire." He plays something on nearly every track, as well as manning the mixing board.

Pernice Brothers records have always been characterized by catchy melodies paired with ridiculously smart lyrics, thrown off with easy aplomb by Pernice's hauntingly gorgeous voice. And this record has it in spades, so much so that it feels familiar after only a listen or two. The most immediate is "The Devil and the Jinn." A chorusless, relentless word stream detailing the cruelties of love, "Love is a shoeless charlatan, a silvertongued huckster with a sadist's lipless grin," even while insisting that when it shows up, you'd better let it in. It wasn't until I read the title that I realized he was talking about a mythological spirit, instead of one made from juniper berries. Backing vocals from chanteuse Neko Case only up the ante. "Throw Me to the Lions" is another highlight, its lyrics a perfect descriptor, "Reckless and fast, and the fast never stay. Gone in a flash, then the flash went away." It's an exhilarating ride. The slight "Skinny Jeanne" is strangely intoxicating, despite the initial aversion to the punny title. What could certainly be a tale of an abused altar boy, the troubling "I Came Back" wraps the unappealing subject matter in swirling guitar. The aggressive "Lullaby" is anything but.

From opening track, the vaguely dance-y "Mint Condition," through the angsty closing track "Eric Saw Colors" with its obfuscated lyrics ("The strange came like epidemic without prejudice to scythe the strong or fet-

tered weak resistor."), the whole thing feels ultimately cathartic, as if Pernice needed this record as much as we did. From the sound of it, there's a lot more where this came from, so just maybe we won't have to wait another almost decade for the next Pernice Brothers record.

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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** CD RELEASE CONCERT! **
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7:30 to 10:00 pm



Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse 953 Jenifer Street, Madison, WI 53703 http://www.wildhoginthewoods.org

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February 2020

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

Robert "One Man" Johnson

Friday February 21st - \$14 adv / \$16 d.o.s. -- 7:30pm (doors @7) Wild Hob in the Woods, 953 Jenifer St 08-422-5646

Prince Myshkins and Charlie King

Thursday March 19th - \$17 adv / \$20 d.o.s. -- 7pm (doors @6:30) Wild Hob in the Woods, 953 Jenifer St 08-422-5646



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Kiki's Righteous House of Music

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

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

- Saturday, February 8th @ 8pm (doors at 7) Parker Gispert -- \$15
- Thursday, February 17th @ 8pm (doors at 7) Trapper Schoepp Band -- \$15
- Saturday, January 18th @ 2pm (doors at 1) Jon & Sally's Big Afternoon -- \$15

Tanya Cunningham & Neil Robinson

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- Saturday, February 8th @ 7pm (doors 6:30pm) Claudia Schmidt \$20
- Thursday, March 12th @ 7pm (doors 6:30pm) Garnet Rogers \$22.50

Dave & Anne Host Folk

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, contact Dave & Anne at annedave@chorus.net - 608-256-2958 or 335-7909

- Friday, February 21st @ 7:30 pm (doors at 7) The Birds of Chicago
 - \$25 / \$20 under 18

The Wisconsin Room

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, email:

thewisconsinroom@gmail.com

• Saturday, February 1st @ 8pm (doors at 7) Eric McFadden w/ Kate Vargas - \$25

Common Chord

- Friday, February 7th, @7:30pm Wild Hog in the Woods CD Release Party!
- Saturday, February 15th, @2:30 pm Bos Meadery, Madison
- Friday, February 21st, @6:30 pm Common Ground, Middleton
- Friday, March 13th, @6:30 pm Common Ground, Middleton

Tracy Jane Comer et al.

- Saturday, February 8th, @4pm (solo) The Hop Garden Tap Room / Paoli Terrace & Park, Paoli
- Thursday, February 20th, @7pm Top Shelf Trio The Brink Lounge, Madison
- Saturday, March 7th, @4 pm (solo) The Hop Garden Tap Room / Paoli Terrace & Park, Paoli

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- Thu, Feb 13th, New Pioneers \$10
- Sat, Feb 15th, JP Cormier \$25 • Fri, Feb 21st, Ernie Watts, Corky Siegel & Kaylan Pathak - \$35
- Thu, Feb 27th, Song Circle w/ Tricia Alexander \$5

Wild Hog in the Woods 953 Jenifer St. wildhoginthewoods.org

- Fri, Feb 7th @7:30pm Common Chord CD Release Party
- Fri, Feb 14th @7:30pm Paint the Music Music by Mark Adkins - Art by Sandra Klingbeil
- Fri, Feb 21st @7:30pm MadFolk and Wild Hog Present! Robert "One-Man" Johnson
- Fri, Feb 28th @7:30pm Chris Powers

Sugar Maple Concert Series: The Mark Hembree Band Feb 27th - North Street Cabaret - @8 pm - \$8 adv / \$15 d.o.s. Tickets at www.sugarmaplefest.org

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- Tue -- Another Green World with Katie & Tessa
- 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**



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• Cajun Jam - 4th Sunday of every month 1pm-4pm Ziggy's BBQ Smokehouse & Ice Cream Parlor - 135 S Main St. Oregon -- 608-238-6039

- 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, 3rd (and 5th) Mon 7:30-9:30pm -Wil-Mar Center 953 Jenifer St - 238-9951 or 231-1040
- International Dancing -- Thurs nights @7pm The Crossing, 1127 University Ave. and Sun, 7-9pm at Oakwood Village University Woods, 6205 Mineral Point Rd
- 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 -- 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 Neighborhood House 29 S Mills St. casey.garhart@tds.net or John at 238-3847
- Scottish Country Dancing -- Sun, 7:00pm -- Wil-Mar Center 953 Jenifer St. -- 358-4478
- Israeli Folk Dancing - Tues, 7:00pm -- Email for location Melissa Marver — mdmarver@gmail.com

"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

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

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