

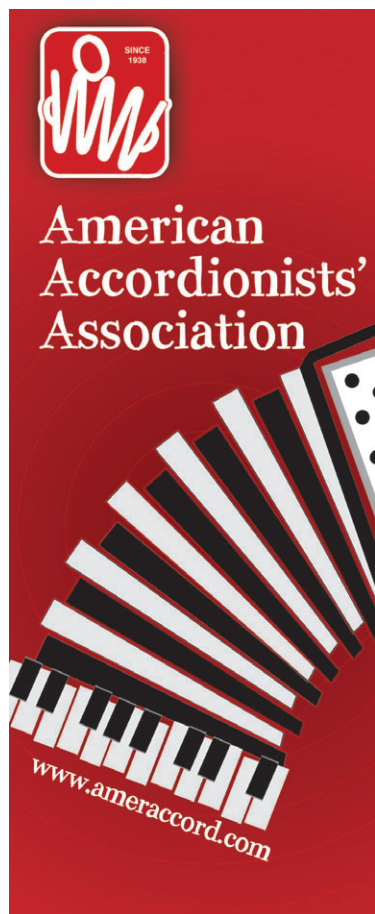


AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION

# Newsletter

A bi-monthly publication of the American Accordionists' Association

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2014



## From the Editor

Welcome to the November/December 2014 edition of the AAA Newsletter. As the busy holiday season approaches and the year draws to a close, we hope that you are all planning on enjoying some music to celebrate the season, either as an artist or a listener.

Once again my sincere thanks to AAA President, Linda Reed, Board of Directors member, Rita Davidson and all those who have been able to contribute news items for helping make this Newsletter possible.

Items for the January Newsletter can be sent to me at [goaccordion@yahoo.com](mailto:goaccordion@yahoo.com) or to the AAA e-mail address, at: [ameraccord1938@gmail.com](mailto:ameraccord1938@gmail.com). Please include 'AAA Newsletter' in the subject box, so that we don't miss any items that come in. Text should be sent within the e-mail or as a Word attachment. Pictures should be sent as a high quality .jpg file, and the larger the file size the better. We can always reduce/crop the picture if necessary. However we are unable to increase the quality from smaller pictures. The deadline for the January Newsletter will be December 15, 2014.

My best wishes to you all for a very happy and safe holiday season, and I look forward to hearing from you with your news for the upcoming January 2015 edition soon!

Sincerely, Kevin

Kevin Friedrich – AAA Newsletter Editor



## 67th Coupe Mondiale in Salzburg, Austria

The 67th Coupe Mondiale of the Fédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA - IMC, an official NGO partner of UNESCO) was held in Salzburg, Austria hosted by the long-time CIA member, the Austrian Accordion Association (Harmonikaverband Österreichs - HVÖ).

Attracting participation from more than 30 countries around the world, the festival was the largest ever held, even requiring some categories to be held over two days. The event featured competitions, concerts, a reception such as at the Mirabelle Palace, and the General Assembly meetings of Delegates.

During the General Assembly meeting, a minute of silence was held honoring long term members and delegates of the CIA including Faithé Deffner (USA) and Lech Puchnowski (Poland) who had both recently passed away.

Young American accordionist Nathan Chapetan representing the USA-AAA, presented an outstanding program in a strongly contested category, the Junior International Competition for Virtuoso Entertainment Music. He performed two rounds of competition to a panel of nine adjudicators including:

### Round I

V. Zubitsky - *Omaggio ad Astor Piazzolla*  
T. Gerov - *Midnight Fantasy*



### Round II

J. Pezzolo - *The Flying Butterfly*  
A. Piazzolla - *Adios Nonino*  
T. Gerov - *Roller Coaster*

Our sincerest congratulations to Nathan on his excellent performance, representing not only the USA with pride, but also serving as a wonderful ambassador for young accordionists from around the world. We hope that this will be the beginning of a long and illustrious career both in music and with the accordion, and that he is able to continue his competition work on an international level. You can visit [www.coupemondiale.org](http://www.coupemondiale.org) and follow the links to the video library, then select Nathan's category *Junior Intl. Comp. for Virtuoso Entertainment Music* to listen to archived videos of his performances.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

AAA Festival 2015

July 8-12, 2015

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites

325 First Street

Alexandria, VA

Faithé Deffner Accordion Competition

\$25,000 in Cash Awards

Donated anonymously in Faithé's memory by an AAA member.

October 3-4, 2015

Carmen Carrozza Scholarship

Competition

and

Memorial Concert

Double Tree Hotel

Tarrytown, NY

Details to be announced.

**Coupe Mondiale in Salzburg, cont'd. from page 1**

Nathan's teacher, Mary Tokarski, incoming AAA President, represented the AAA as their International Delegate, as well as served as a member of the International Jury panel in several categories of competition.

Mary, along with fellow AAA Board Members, Joan Grauman and CIA Ambassador, Kevin Friedrich, performed in the World Accordion Orchestra. Both Mary and Kevin have performed as key players in this group since its inception in 2007 at the AAA-ATG sponsored Coupe Mondiale held in Alexandria (Washington DC), VA. Additionally fellow north Americans Liz Finch (CA), Mark Nejako (MD), Michelle Boddicker-Scheffler (OR) and Beverly Fess (Canada) performed in the orchestra. ■



The CIA held their general elections during their General Assembly meetings, with the new Executive and Music Committee officers for 2014-2017 being elected as follows:

**CIA Executive Committee:**

Raymond Bodell (United Kingdom) - President, Li Cong (China) - Vice President, Herbert Scheibenreif (Austria) - Vice President, Viatcheslav Semionov (Russia) - Vice President, Kimmo Mattila (Finland) - General Secretary/Treasurer, Harley Jones (New Zealand) Public Relations Manager, Mirco Patarini (Italy) - Chairperson of the Music Committee. Executive Appointment: Kevin Friedrich (USA), Ambassador, Newly Elected: Joan C. Sommers (USA), CIA Honorary Member.

**CIA Music Committee:**

Mirco Patarini (Chairperson), Alexander Selivanov (Vice Chairperson), Members: Mijlan Bjeletic (Serbia), Andreas Nebl (Germany), Jorgen Sundeqvist (Sweden), Kasys Stonkus (Lithuania), Grayson Masefield (New Zealand).

Joan Cochran Sommers, celebrating almost 60 years of supporting the CIA as a competitor, teacher, organizer, delegate, International jury member, Executive Officer and more recently director of the World Accordion Orchestra, was awarded CIA Honorary Membership upon her retirement as an Executive Officer. This is only the fifth time in the organization's almost 80 year history that this title has been awarded. Joan joins fellow CIA honorary members from Switzerland - the late Andre Martignoni, United Kingdom - the late James J. Black, Austria - Professor Walter Maurer and the late Maddalena Belfiore from the AAA.

The event concluded with a magnificent prize giving concert featuring performances by the winner of each category of competition, including a special category offered in 2014 celebrating the music of the Salzburg hometown composer, Mozart. The concert finale was the performance by World Accordion Orchestra VIII. The 145 piece orchestra and supporting choir performed three works as follows under the direction of Joan Cochran Sommers and two guest conductors.

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**Results of the 67th Coupe Mondiale**

**67th Coupe Mondiale**

- 1st. Vitaly KONDRATENKO - Russia
- 2nd. Laimonas SALIJUS - Lithuania
- 3rd. Qi MA - China

**Masters Coupe Mondiale**

- 1st. Wenyi WU - China
- 2nd. Aleksandar KNEZEVIC - Serbia
- 3rd. Basil BENDAS - Ukraine

**Junior Coupe Mondiale**

- 1st. Aleksandr KOMELKOV - Russia
- 2nd. Milos MLADENOVIC - Serbia
- 3rd. Rodion SHIROKOV - Russia

**Intl. Comp. for Virtuoso Entertainment Music**

- 1st. Sergei LOBKOV - Russia
- 2nd. João GUERREIRO - Portugal
- 3rd. Mahatma COSTA - Brazil

**Junior Intl. Comp. for Virtuoso Entertainment Music**

- 1st. Jean Baptiste BAUDIN - France
- 2nd. Nikolay OVCHINNIKOV - Russia
- 3rd. Andrea DI GIACOMO - Italy

**Int'l. Competition for Ensemble Music**

- 1st. Siberian Bayan Duet - Russia  
Andrei BITIUTSKIKH (Accordion)  
Aleksandr SIROTKIN (Accordion)
- 2nd. Duo Jedynecki-Mikolajczyk - Poland  
Iwo JEDYNECKI (Accordion)  
Karolina MIKOŁAJCZYK (Violin)
- 3rd. Fantazy - Russia  
Pavel MIKHALEV (Accordion)  
Antonina ZHEBROVSKAIA (Domra)

**Int'l. Competition for Digital Accordion**

- 1st. Matthias MATZKE - Germany
- 2nd. Dorin GRAMA - Moldova
- 3rd. Alexander BODELL - United Kingdom

**2014 Mozart Category (2014)**

- 1st. DUO KAROLINA - Poland  
Karolina Mikołajczyk (violin)  
Iwo Jedynecki (accordion)
- 2nd. Mladen VUKMIR - Serbia
- 3rd. Violin and Accordion Duo - Lithuania  
Laimonas Salijus (accordion)  
Milda Kazakeviciute (Violin)





## Coupe Mondiale in Salzburg, cont'd from page 2

- *The Sound of Music* by Richard Rodgers, arr. by Werner Weibert, Conducted by Jacob Noordzij
- *A Tribute to Bernstein* by Leonard Bernstein, arr. by Werner Weibert, Conducted by Werner Weibert
- *Let There Be Peace on Earth* by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson, arr. by Joan C. Sommers, Conducted by Joan C. Sommers with Choir prepared and directed by Sylvia Zobek and Helmut Zeilner

The Coupe Mondiale website [www.coupemondiale.org](http://www.coupemondiale.org) contains many pictures from the event in daily reports, as well as video library archive of all the contestants and concerts, a valuable resource as well as fitting souvenir of this outstanding event held in the Salzburg Congress Center.

The next CIA activity will take place in France, when the CIA begins their year long celebration of their 80th anniversary. The Winter Congress will be held from March 6-8, 2015 in Paris, the city where the organization was founded, followed by the 68th Coupe Mondiale in Turku, Finland from October 6-11, 2015. ■



## Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini in Concert

Accordionist and AAA Second Vice President Mario Tacca and vocalist Mary Mancini recently presented a concert "Allegria, An International Journey," in Valhalla, NY with guests Rinaldo Toglia (tenor), Mike Caruso (guitar), Dave Winograd (bass) and Larry Balestra (drums). (see photo at right)

The program included: *Jolly Caballero* (P. Frosini), *Granada* (A. Lara), *Divertimento* (A. Astier), *Quando, Quando, Man Without Love* (Panzeri), *Tu Ca Nun Chiagne* (L. Bovio, C. de Curtis), *La Donna e Mobile* (G. Verdi), *Ciribiribin* (Pestalozza), *Serena* (San Remo Festival), *Over the Rainbow* (The Wizard of Oz - H. Arlen), *Musetta's Waltz* (La Boheme - G. Puccini), *Getting to Know You* (The King and I - Rodgers & Hammerstein), *The Prayer* (C. B. Sayer), *West Side Story* (L. Bernstein), *Godfather Medley* (N. Rota), *William Tell Overture* (G. Rossini), *Till* (C. Danvers, C. Sigman), *Delilah* (L. Reed), *Mi Mancherai* (L. E. Bacalo), *Buongiorno A Te* (arr. M. Tacca), *O Sole Mio* (E. DiCapua), *Phantom Medley* (A. L. Weber), *Nessun Dorma* (Turandot - G. Puccini).

International vocal artist Mary Mancini and award-winning accordionist Mario Tacca were married in 1975 and have been making beautiful music together ever since. This husband/wife duo is unique partly because they appear to be such different kinds of artists. Under the surface, though, you will discover that their skills complement each other wonderfully well.



Left to right Larry Balestra, Dave Winograd, Mike Caruso, Mario, Mary and Rinaldo Toglia

Mary is known and acclaimed for her vocal versatility and her command of many different styles of music. Her ability to sing in eight languages enhances her command of a large repertoire ranging from pops to opera.

Mario dazzles audiences with a technique that has won him awards such as the World Cup of Italy, the Grand Prix of Paris, and the American Accordionists' Association's International Competition held at Carnegie Hall. *The New York Times* writes that Mario makes the accordion "sound like a gift from heaven."

Mario & Mary maintain a busy concert schedule which keeps them travelling on the road, overseas, and on cruise ships.

In addition to their Allegria concert, they also performed at the Bean Runner Cafe in Peekskill, NY with Mike Caruso (guitar) and Ricci Saracino (drums) with a surprise guest appearance by their friend Ray Blue (Sax) who was in the audience and joined them for a couple of pieces. The various combination of accordion, vocals and ensemble performed a diverse array of pieces including Broadway favorites, popular, classical and novelty selections.

Their next concert will be their annual Christmas Concert with the Victor Lioni String Quartet, Randy Smith (percussion) and David Winograd (bass). The concert will take place on Sunday, December 7, 2014 at 3:00 PM at the Church of the Assumption,



Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini with Ricci Saracino, drums and Mike Caruso, guitar, at the Bean Runner Cafe in Peekskill, NY



**Tacca & Mancini – December Concerts, cont'd. from p. 3**

Msgr. Ansbro Way, Peekskill, NY. The program will include popular Christmas music as well as music of Bach, Handel, Mozart and Vivaldi. For more information, please call the Assumption Rectory at 914-737-2071.

You can also hear Mario and Mary at their other holiday concerts in December:



- Friday December 12, 2014 – 7:30 PM Christmas Concert at St. Michael the Archangel Church, Glens Falls, NY 518-792-5859.
- Sunday December 14, 2014 – 1:00 PM Christmas Show at the Magnanini Winery, Wallkill, NY (phone: 845-895-2767, reservations are a must).
- Saturday December 20, 2014, at the Holiday Extravaganza Show, Century Village, Deerfield Beach, FL. For info contact: NYK Productions at 954-457-9100.

For general information, please contact: GIOIA Productions at 914-737-8872. ■

**Slavic Soul Party!**

Slavic Soul Party! played their version of the "Far East Suite" by Duke Ellington & Billy Strayhorn on Thursday and Friday, November 20 & 21, 2014, in New York City. This has only happened twice before in NYC. There were four shows, at 8 PM and 10 PM on both November 20 and 21, in the backroom of Barbès. Sold out both nights!

Slavic Soul Party! is an American Balkan brass/jazz band. Based in Brooklyn, New York, their style of brass band music includes gypsy music, klezmer, funk, and New Orleans jazz influences. In 2013 the Slavic Soul Party! celebrated their 10th anniversary of performing a weekly Tuesday night gig at the Park Slope bar, Barbès.

Slavic Soul Party! re-imagines Duke Ellington's iconic "Far East Suite" as an Eastern European brass band discovering an exotic American sound, reversing the "exotic tinge" and revelling in this subtle, funky, and brilliant music. Ellington's suite was inspired by an extensive State Department tour which was cut short – they didn't make it to the "Far East" – and serves as a perfect foil for SSP!'s blend of Eastern European, Romani, and American sounds. This was a rare performance of SSP!'s entire Ellington program, and the sets were recorded for a live album.

SSP! includes Ben Holmes and John Carlson (trumpet), Oscar Noriega (sax/clarinet), Jacob Garchik and Brian Drye (trombone), Ron Caswell (tuba), Peter Stan (accordion) and Matt Moran (bubanj/snare/darabouka)

Press Comments:

- "Slavic Soul Party! offers a gut punch to preconceptions about traditional music, world music, pop music, dance music, but I'll tell you, this is one gut punch you'll enjoy." (*NPR's All Things Considered*)
- "Of all the NYC dance bands that draw on Eastern European music, Slavic Soul Party! is the coolest." (*TimeOut NY*)
- "A great time." (*NY Times*)

For further information: [info@slavicsoulparty.com](mailto:info@slavicsoulparty.com) ■

**Save the dates...**  
**July 8-12, 2015**

**AAA Festival**  
**Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites**  
**Alexandria, VA**





## Paul Creston "Songs" CD Showcases His Seldom Heard Vocal Works

Accordionist Joan Cochran Sommers recently took part in a recording project to showcase some seldom heard works of the late Paul Creston (1906-1985). The recording project also involved Rebecca Sherburn (soprano), Patricia Higdon (piano), Karen Kushner (piano) and the UMKC Conservatory Chamber Orchestra conducted by Robert Olson. The CD *Paul Creston Songs* is available at amazon.com and other online resources.

Paul Creston was one of America's most important and influential composers of the mid-20th century. He earned ample attention for his orchestral compositions, but his songs many of which are unpublished, remain little known. This new recording, *Songs*, offers a wide introduction to Creston's vocal music, bringing to light pieces for solo voice that have languished in obscurity.

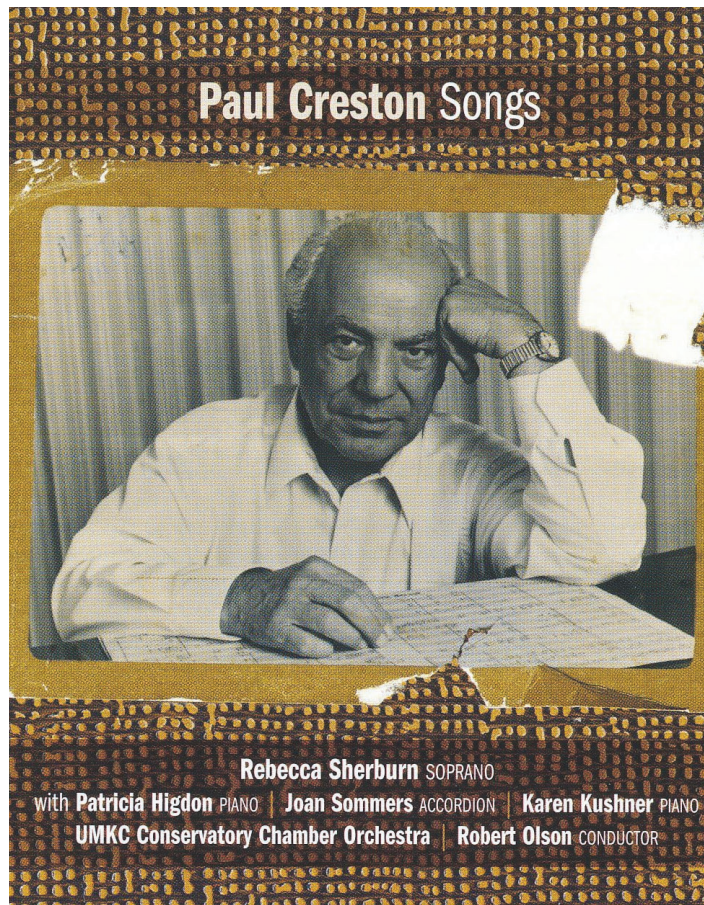
Soprano Rebecca Sherburn is an active chamber musician, having been featured by the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group and the New York New Music Group. Her scholarly work has been published by the NATS Journal of Singing and the ACDA Choral Journal. A graduate of the University of Southern California, Ms. Sherburn is on the faculty at Chapman University. Prior to this appointment, she was at the University of Missouri Kansas City where she received an excellence in teaching award.

Tracks for the CD include:

1. Three Songs, Op. 46
2. Nocturne, Op. 83
3. La Lettre, Op. 59
4. Song of Joys, Op. 63
5. Cantilena from Sadhana, Op. 11
6. Bird of the Wilderness, Op. 2
7. Thanatopses - Four Songs to Death, Op. 7
8. Ave Maria, Op. 52
9. Psalm 23, Op. 37
10. The Lamb to the Lambs, Op. 47
11. Dance Variations for Voice & Orchestra, Op. 30
12. French Canadian Folk Songs (with Joan Cochran Sommers)
13. Lullaby
14. It's So Fantastic
15. My Love For You



Elsie Bennett and Paul Creston



Thanks to the efforts of Monica Slomski (pictured right), a UMKC Graduate and U.S. Champion accordionist who did her Doctoral dissertation on Paul Creston, the extensive Paul Creston Collection was donated to the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) by Louise Creston, Paul's wife, in 1987. (You can hear Monica's "live" performance of the *Creston Fantasy* on the upcoming CD of commissioned works by the AAA. The performance was recorded at the University of Bridgeport (CT) during their Composer's Festival that honored Paul Creston. Mr. Creston was in attendance.)



The strength of the collection lies in the over 300 manuscript scores. The collection contains 102 of Creston's 121 works with opus numbers, and many of his works without opus numbers, including radio, film and television scores and also contains 154 published scores, some of which are permanently out of print.

Another strength of the collection is the professional correspondence. In handling correspondence, Creston always typed a letter, copied it, signed it, mailed the signed copy to the recipient, and kept the original unsigned letter for his records. Thus the correspondence contains all of the letters, telegrams, and postcards sent to and from Creston.

Paul Creston was born Giuseppe Guttovveggi on October 10, 1906, in New York City to Italian immigrant parents, Gaspare Guttovveggi and Carmela Collura. At age 8, he began taking piano lessons and teaching himself how to play his brother's violin. Creston also pursued an interest in literature, writing his first poem at age 12, and starting a novel a year later. Because of poor family finances, Creston's formal education ended after two and one-half

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## Paul Creston "Songs," cont'd. from page 5

years of high school. During high school, he was nicknamed "Cress" after a character he portrayed in a play. Later in life, he lengthened this name to Creston, chose Paul for a first name, and legally changed his name to Paul Creston in 1944. Creston worked at various businesses, banks, and insurance companies to pay for organ and piano lessons, while studying English, foreign languages, mysticism, music composition, and orchestration on his own.

Although Creston had been composing as a diversion or passtime since age 8, his development as composer increased during the 1920s until 1932, when he finally decided to choose composition as his career. Creston learned how to improvise by working as a theater organist from 1926-1929, and eventually became the organist at St. Malachy's Church in New York City from 1934 to 1967. In July of 1927, Creston married a dancer, Louise Gotto, (1903-1989), who influenced Creston in his ideas on rhythm and dance. His first premiere was in 1933 with the incidental music to a play Iron Flowers. The Crestons' first child, Paul Julian, survived only six weeks and was buried on the Crestons' tenth wedding anniversary, July 1, 1937. But on Thanksgiving Day, 1938, the Crestons were blessed with a healthy boy, Joel Anthony, and four years later, they had their third child, Timothy.

The success of Creston's early compositions created many new opportunities for him. From 1944 to 1950, Creston conducted a quartet on the radio program, The Hour of Faith, which aired each Sunday morning. Creston also worked as a composition instructor at over fourteen colleges and universities between the years of 1940 and 1962. In 1960, Creston received a U.S. State Department grant as an American specialist, which enabled him to lecture about American music for over a month in Turkey and Israel. He served as Professor of Composition and Orchestration at New York College of Music between 1963 and 1967, and in 1968, he became artist-in-residence at Central Washington State College in Ellensburg, Washington. During this time, he appeared as guest conductor and lecturer at many colleges and universities across the country. In 1975, he retired from Central Washington State College and moved to Rancho Bernardo, California, which lies on the outskirts of San Diego.

Creston wrote 121 compositions with opus numbers including piano pieces, songs, chamber music for various instruments, choral works, symphonic band works, and over 35 orchestral works including six symphonies. He is especially recognized for his contributions to the literature of neglected instruments, such as the marimba, trombone, harp, accordion, and saxophone. His works have been widely performed by major orchestras and performing artists. In an orchestral survey prepared by Robert Sabin in the late 1950s, Creston and Aaron Copland shared first place in regard to the number of orchestra compositions and their performances by major American symphony orchestras.

Thanks to the efforts of the late Elsie Bennett, Paul Creston was commissioned by the American Accordionists' Association to compose several pieces including:

- Concerto for Accordion and Orchestra
- Embryo Suite
- Fantasy for Accordion and Orchestra
- Prelude and Dance

Among Creston's awards and honors are two Guggenheim Fellowships (1938, 1939), a New York Music Critics' Circle Award (1943), a Citation of Merit from the National Association for American Composers and Conductors (1941), the Music Award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1943), and the Citation of Honor from the National Catholic Music Educators Association (1956).

Paul Creston was diagnosed with cancer in 1984, and passed away on August 24, 1985. ■

## Carrefour Mondial de l'Accordeon

ENCORE! The international accordion festival, Carrefour Mondial de l'Accordeon recently took place in Montmagny, Quebec, Canada. For Anita and Bob Siarkowski of Plantsville, Connecticut, it was an encore, being the husband and wife accordion duo's 6th year representing the USA at this annual event. The Quebecois really appreciate accordion music, with so many claiming that the couple's coordinated, accordion themed attire was unprecedented. Also representing the United States in the 2014 festival was Mary Tokarski of Northford, Connecticut, a classical accordionist who had previously performed at this venue with her sister, Julie and brother, Walter as part of "The 'K' Trio". Mary is a U.S. accordion champion, performs internationally, is Co-President of the Connecticut Accordion Association, and has been elected President of the American Accordionists' Association.

This 26th annual event attracted 35,000 people - including 80 musicians from Canada, the United States, France, Italy, Russia, Algeria, Bulgaria, Spain, Belgium, Ireland, Brazil, Argentina,



Anita and Bob Siarkowski

Dominican Republic, and Serbia. Featured highlights of the festival included exhibits, conferences, workshops, concerts, dances, the accordion museum, strolling accordionists in 10 area restaurants (including Anita and Bob Siarkowski), and after-hours jam sessions. While in the very French province of Quebec, Anita's French heritage and high school French helped her to serve as interpreter in restaurants, etc.. Laissez les bon temps rouler! Let the good times roll!

Bob and Anita met through the accordion, entertained as an accordion duo at their wedding in 1962 and at their 50th anniversary celebration in 2012. Proprietor of Bob's Music Center in Plantsville, Connecticut, Bob gives private lessons on accordion, piano, organ, electronic keyboard, and guitar. Anita, a Registered Nurse Case Manager and Independent Consultant, provides theme related entertainment in varied venues as an accordion soloist or with Bob as an accordion duo.

For more information regarding the Montmagny festival please visit: [www.accordeon.montmagny.com](http://www.accordeon.montmagny.com) ■



Mary Tokarski pictured with Madame Christiane Bouille, President of the Carrefour Mondial de l'Accordeon

**AAA Festival • July 8-12, 2015**  
**Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites**  
**625 First Street • Alexandria, VA 22314**  
**In Alexandria's Historic District**  
**\$119 Single or Double - Includes Parking**  
**Faith Deffner Accordion Competition**  
**Over \$25,000 in Cash Awards**  
**For details, contact:**  
**ameraccord1938@gmail.com**

## Dr. William Schimmel Presents Multiple World Premieres

Dr. William Schimmel was the guest artist on the New Music Series at the Shea Center of William Paterson University of New Jersey on November 10, 2014.

Dr. Schimmel performed a concert in collaboration with the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble with Peter Jarvis as Director.

The program included four world premieres:

**-The Paha Sapa Give-Back** (1993) by Jerome Kitzke (for Percussion Quartet, Piano and Vocals).

**-Concerto for Accordion and Mallets** (2014) by William Schimmel (World Premiere) 1. Burlesque, 2. And the Day Passed – And the Twilight Came – John Whittier, 3. Call/Response: A Closer Walk (for New Jersey Percussion Ensemble) performed by John Ferrari, Peter Jarvis, Payton MacDonald, Gary Van Dyke and William Schimmel).

**-Traffic Signals** (2014) by Gene Pritsker (World Premiere) (for Accordion and Vibraphone, William Schimmel & Peter Jarvis).

**-New York Classical** (2014) by William Schimmel (World Premiere) (for Accordion and Vibraphone) 1. Allegro Moderato, 2. Slow, 3. Allegro performed by William Schimmel and Peter Jarvis)

**-Controlled Improvisation Number 3** (2014) by Peter Jarvis (World Premiere) (for Accordion and Drumset) performed by William Schimmel and Peter Jarvis

**-Accordio-Mass** in 3 movs. (2013) by William Schimmel (for Mixed Ensemble) performed by John Ferrari, Peter Jarvis, John Link, Gene Pritsker, Travis Salim and William Schimmel

William Schimmel, AAA's Artist-in-Residence, is a virtuoso accordionist, author, philosopher and composer. He is one of the principal architects in the tango revival in America, the resurgence of the accordion and the philosophy of Musical Reality (composition with pre-existing music). He received his diploma from the Neupauer Conservatory of Music and his BM, MS and DMA degrees from the Julliard School. He has taught at the Julliard School, Brooklyn College CUNY, Upsala College, New School University, Neupauer Conservatory (Dean) and has lectured on accordion related subjects at Princeton, Columbia, Brandeis, University of Missouri, Duke University, Manhattan School of Music, the Graduate Center CUNY, Santa Clara University, The Janacek Conservatory in Ostrava, Czech Republic and at Microsoft.

He has performed with numerous major symphony orchestras throughout the United States including a longstanding relationship with the Minnesota Orchestra, as well as virtually every chamber music group in New York including Ensemble Sospeso and the Odeon Jazz Ensemble. Pop star colleagues range from Sting to Tom Waits, who has made the legendary statement: Bill Schimmel doesn't play the accordion, he is the accordion. For further information on upcoming performances, please contact: [billschimmel@billschimmel.com](mailto:billschimmel@billschimmel.com). ■



Dr. William Schimmel

## Just Being "Frank"

The American Accordionists' Association celebrated Valtaro, the regional music of northern Italy, on September 28, 2014 at Riccardo's By The Bridge in Astoria, Queens, New York. This year's honoree was accordionist Frank Toscano - a major contributor to this unique style of music. In attendance at the gala event was Anita Siarkowski of CAA (CT Accordion Association) and AAA, who composed and presented the following tribute in Frank's honor.... **JUST BEING "FRANK."**

At age 8, Frank Toscano began taking accordion lessons from Emilio Chiesa, originally from Borgo Taro, Italy, where Valtaro, the regional folk music, originated. Emilio was the most influential person in Frank's entire musical career, having taught him so much, including the entire Valtaro repertoire, by the time the young Toscano was 12 years old.

During that time, Emilio was performing at Webster Hall in New York City with another remarkable accordionist, Gelso Pellegrini. Frank's parents, Fiorenzo and Ida Toscano, happened to be attending an affair there. So Emilio suggested that Frank, his student of 4 years, bring his instrument along to accompany his teacher on a few songs. So, Fiorenzo packed up Frank's squeeze box, and off they went. Twelve year old, terrified Toscano plunked out "Allegro Waltz" and "Parisienne Polka" with his teacher. This was the start of Frank's lifelong musical career.

Frank continued studying with Emilio, who suggested that the 16 year old Toscano perform in New York City at the Val-Taro - a dance hall featuring folk music of the Val di Taro region of northern Italy. The establishment was owned and operated by accordionists Peter Delgrosso - a.k.a. Filomena, and John Brugnoli - a.k.a. Scudlin - the founder of the Valtaro Musette Orchestra. They managed the place and entertained there as an accordion duo.

When Peter got sick, John needed another accordionist to accompany him. That's when Frank first met Gelso Pellegrini, who was also performing at Val-Taro. Although 10 years Frank's senior, Gelso and Frank bonded, becoming lifelong friends.

Gelso wanted Sundays off, so he invited Frank to audition, and ultimately fill in for him at Val-Taro. So, Frank's father brought 16 year old Frank and his accordion to perform for Gelso. Scared to death, Frank auditioned, but was pleasantly surprised by Gelso's response... "Wow! What technique! You're great!" So impressed with Frank's performance, Gelso hired him on the spot to play at Val-Taro on Sundays!

A month later, Gelso left Val-Taro to perform at "In Boboli", his teacher, Aldo Bruschi's night club. Frank was given the opportunity to replace Gelso at Val-Taro. Being only 16, Frank was a bit reluctant, wondering if he was good enough. However, Frank bit the bullet and took the job at Val-Taro on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Frank considered himself very privileged, being among the ranks of the many notable accordionists who had previously performed at this very prestigious venue during its existence from 1936 to 1961.

Little did young Frank know what he was in for working with John Brugnoli. John didn't talk on the bandstand. Between songs, he would just sit there and smoke. So Frank never knew what John was going to play next. Aware of this, Gelso had advised Frank... "Just follow John. You'll be fine." Somehow, Frank and the drummer, Tony Marco, managed to endure, given their common concern....."Help me make it through the night!"

Frank, though very young, was not that innocent. The legal drinking age in New York was 18. Frank was working at a bar at 16. He





## OneBeat, One Accordionist

In October, a groundbreaking music diplomacy project called 'OneBeat' brought 25 musicians from 17 countries around the world to the United States for a month of collaboration. It began with a two-week residency at the Montalvo Arts Center in the San Francisco Bay Area followed by a two-week tour to Los Angeles, Arizona and New Mexico. In each of these locations OneBeat musicians spent several days giving performances, leading youth workshops and facilitating public music-making events. OneBeat is an initiative of the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, produced by Bang on a Can's Found Sound Nation.

The only accordionist selected to take part in the project was Alexander Shirunov from Russia. Alexander has performed on several occasions in the USA, including as guest artist for the ATG and also as presenter at the popular NAMM show in Los Angeles.

After his father presented him with a tiny accordion at the age of 4, he fell in love with it. He immediately began rigorous classical training on the instrument, eventually graduating from the St. Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory in 2007. Alexander, an adept improviser and avid collaborator, also plays the piano, violin, and saxophone, and also considers singing an important facet of his musical life. He released his first album, *Absolute*, in 2006 to much acclaim and followed up a few years later with his second album, *Solo For Two*, recorded as a duet with acclaimed Russian accordionist Nadia Guseva. A prize-winner of more than 15 international competitions, he has toured around the world performing concerts and leading workshops, both as a solo artist and as a collaborator.

At this annual event, musicians gather for one month each fall to collaboratively write, produce, and perform original music, and develop strategies for arts-based social engagement. OneBeat begins with an opening residency, when Fellows collaborate to create original material, record new musical ideas, and incubate their projects. OneBeat fellows then go on tour, performing for a wide array of American audiences, collaborating with local musicians, and leading workshops with youth. In a closing residency, each OneBeat musician sets out their plans for the future, developing projects in their home countries linked to a mutually-reinforcing network of music-driven social enterprises.



Alexander Shirunov

OneBeat is a musical journey like no other. It is a chance for adventurous musicians from an incredible diversity of traditions to seek common ground, create new musical combinations, push the boundaries of music technology, and find ways to involve all members of society in the process of musical creativity. OneBeat endeavors to be the nexus of a new way of thinking about how music can help us collectively build healthy communities, prosperous societies, and a more peaceful world.

After the residency, OneBeat went on the road for a two-week tour from October 19 to November 1, 2014, presenting performances, youth workshops, and public music-making events in Los Angeles, Arizona, and New Mexico. In Los Angeles, OneBeat fellows focused on how music enlivens and defines three geographically close but culturally distinct neighborhoods: Little Tokyo, the burgeoning downtown Arts District, and the traditionally Mexican neighborhood of Boyle Heights. The crew then traveled to Arcosanti, an experimental town in northern Arizona, and finally to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where they designed a unique multimedia performance at the newly renovated Albuquerque Rail Yards. The program ended with a closing residency at Ghost Ranch in northern New Mexico, where Fellows had the chance to reflect on their experience and plan projects in their home countries linked to the growing OneBeat alumni network.

*continued on page 9*

## Just Being "Frank," cont'd. from page 7

was breaking the law! And the owners knew it! So, whenever the police came by to check things out at Val-Taro, they would hide Frank in the cellar with the booze, food, and supplies. Frank stayed out of sight until the coast was clear and the cops left the building! (They could've closed down the place!)

This went on for two years, as Frank entertained at Val-Taro from age 16 to 18, until one Friday night....Frank showed up for work to find no one around. Val-Taro had not only closed, but the place was under demolition! Who knew? Not Frank! Val-Taro had been sold, but no one bothered to tell the young 'cordine player! That was the end of Val-Taro. Being "the last of the Mohicans," Frank's feathers might've been ruffled for a while, but he soon got on the warpath and drummed up business. Being perfectly "Frank," his musical career continued successfully, the best yet to come.

At 18, Frank started teaching accordion, going house to house. By 23, he was performing in the Playboy Club in Manhattan - (in the "Play Room," no less!) 6 nights a week. This went on for 2 months when, still 23, the young entrepreneur opened the Frank Toscano Music School in his home town of Astoria, Queens, New York, which he built up to over 100 accordion students.

That was then. This is now.... 50 years have gone by since. Frank is "golden!" Toscano and his studio are still going strong. He must be

doing something right....Just being "Frank," I guess! Over the years, Frank produced outstanding students, including Manny Corallo and Fred Sinn - who both won the virtuoso soloist competitions in Long Island, New York.

Memories.... Frank's SUV was stolen during a club date in the Bronx. He reported it to the police, who found it in Harlem! The police escorted Frank there with pulled guns! Some nights he performed during a full moon, bringing out all the crazies! Those were the days!

Renowned accordionist, Angelo DiPippo, who calls Toscano "Tuscan," first heard Frank play at Magnanini Winery. This inspired the formation of the Amazing Accordion Kings. Angelo, Frank Toscano, and Manny Corallo, Frank's accordion student. According to Angelo..."Frank is a great guy, very laid back, a wonderful accordion player, great jazz person, exceptionally good person, very unassuming, wrapped up in his music, and never toots his own horn."

Aside from recording with Angelo DiPippo on "Country Polkas", and on Mario Tacca's "Nostalgia", Frank has two CDs with the Amazing Accordion Kings - "Accordion To Frank" plus "Amazing Accordion Kings" Volumes 1 and 2. In appreciation for all Frank has done for the accordion world....Congratulations! Keep on squeezin', *Just being "Frank!"* by Anita Siarkowski ■



## OneBeat, One Accordionist, cont'd. from p. 8

As their mission, One Beat has three approaches. "We encourage OneBeat Fellows to work together, across borders of musical traditions and backgrounds, in three complementary approaches that we call Analog, Digital, and Social. Analog refers to creating music the 'old fashioned' way, getting together to explore new music with instruments and voices. In the Digital approach, OneBeat fellows make use of the latest digital technology, and work with music and video software programs. Using the Social approach, OneBeat fellows develop music-driven social enterprises, ranging from youth hip-hop education centers to music therapy practices to socially-engaged record labels."

The OneBeat Philosophy: OneBeat is designed with the belief that the creation of high-quality original music is an ideal vehicle for crossing cultural and political divides. This creative process exemplifies how people from drastically divergent musical backgrounds, with diverse training, conceptions of music, and aesthetics, can negotiate differences and find an interplay of cultures that maintains the integrity of each tradition. At OneBeat we encourage musicians to listen deeply to each others' musical voices, and to create work that values the complexity and idiosyncrasies of each tradition, creating risky, wholly unique musical works. This type of egalitarian, cross-cultural interaction continues in our discussions of social issues, as we find ways to use music to catalyze positive change in our communities and internationally.



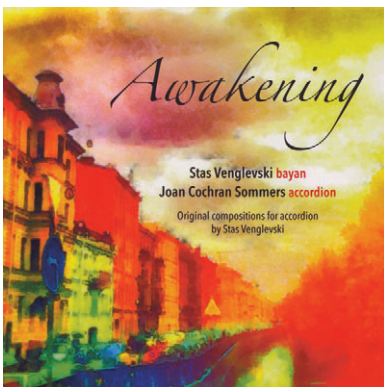
*The OneBeat Philosophy: OneBeat is designed with the belief that the creation of high-quality original music is an ideal vehicle for crossing cultural and political divides.*



To see more about the fascinating OneBeat project, see an extensive series of pictures from the tour and some sound samples (2012 and 2013 are loaded, with 2014 coming soon), please visit <http://1beat.org>.

## New CD By Stas Venglevski and Joan C. Sommers

*Awakening* is a new CD by Stas Venglevski and Joan Cochran Sommers highlighting Stas' new compositions for accordion duo and accordion ensemble. Composing has always been of interest to Stas who finds it challenging and an adventure. "Every piece I write leads me to the next quest of an unfinished story. The album is melodic as melody is the root of the story. From an early age, I was influenced by the beautiful Russian folk songs and the stirring Soviet songs for the masses with their rich melodies," writes Stas.



In addition to Joan C. Sommers, John Simkus (bass accordion) John Babbitt (bass) and Michael Lorenz (drums) performed on a few of the pieces.

Stas has released numerous CDs over the years, and this is the second recording made in duo with Joan C. Sommers. The tracks on the new CD include: 1. *Languid Night of Desire*, 2. *Awakening*, 3. *Prelude and Fugue in B Minor*, 4. *Invention in a Minor*, 5. *Invention in D Major*, 6. *Triplicity Trio*, 7. *Anticipation*, 8. *Lenny*, *The Cordeen Man*, 9. *Memoirs*, 10. *Cocktail Party*, 11. *Butterfly Swing* and 12. "Hey" Polka.

For more information, please visit [www.stasv.com](http://www.stasv.com)

## Little Accordion - Big Story

Alex Rosner, a concentration camp survivor whose boyhood horrors were depicted in the movie "Schindler's List," recalled Oskar Schindler and other memories from the Holocaust when he recently spoke at the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center in Glen Cove, Long Island, NY.

Rosner has donated to the HMTCC the accordion he once played for Auschwitz guards. The instrument is featured in the new exhibit, "Objects of Witness: Testimony from Holocaust Artifacts," on display through April 30, 2015.

Dozens of items that were part of daily life in Europe before, during and after the Holocaust – a child's leather shoe, the accordion, a light bulb, a beer stein – form the remarkable exhibit on display at the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center in Glen Cove, offering a glimpse into a lost world made all the more poignant for its combination of ordinariness and horror.

Titled "Objects of Witness: Testimony from Holocaust Artifacts," this collection presents a nuanced view of a civilization as it collapsed into genocide and destruction. The items, donated to the center by Holocaust survivors, WWII veterans and their families over





### Little Accordion - Big Story, cont'd. from page 9

the past decade, encapsulate life as it was lived under the growing Nazi shadow.

The child's shoe, for example, was found by an Auschwitz survivor near the site of a gas chamber in Auschwitz-Birkenau; the name of the child who wore it is unknown. The beer stein, of a kind commonly found in German taverns, is decorated not with the usual quaint Black Forest imagery but rather with vicious anti-Semitic caricatures. The light bulb, which features intricate carvings of a menorah and Star of David, is all that remains from the synagogue of Drama, Greece. The accordion was the instrument played by young Alex Rosner, whose fortunate ability to entertain the concentration camp guards caused them to spare his life. The moving story of the boy and his eventual escape are recounted in the popular movie, "Schindler's List."



Alex Rosner pictured above with Oskar Schindler

"For the first time, we are opening our collections of artifacts from the years preceding the Holocaust, as well as during and immediately after," said Beth Lilach, senior director of education and community affairs at the center, and the exhibit's chief curator. "The very ordinariness of the items offers an important perspective. When you look at the beer stein, for example, you see the warning: 'Jews, Get out of Germany!' This was part of the way everyday people were desensitized and came to accept the slandering of their neighbors."

Hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 12 noon – 4 p.m.. The exhibit is free; requested donations are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and seniors. The Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center is located at 100 Crescent Beach Road in Glen Cove, NY. For more information, call 516.571.8040 or visit [Holocaust-Nassau.org](http://Holocaust-Nassau.org). ■

### FR-8X V-Accordion Announces Version 2

Sean Montgomery, Roland Europe V-Accordion Product Manager recently announce that "Roland is pleased to announce a significant 'Version 2' system update for their flagship FR-8x V-Accordion.



This free, user-installable upgrade adds many new improvements and enhancements designed to make the FR-8x even more versatile in any musical situation. Based on user feedback, the new features include new drum and orchestral parameters, improved control of audio files, more Looper functionality, and new Orchestral Chord "voicing" capabilities.



Uwe Steger officially launched the Version 2.0 update in a dedicated workshop on Saturday November 1, 2014, as part of the 67th Coupe Mondiale in Salzburg, Austria. This workshop is available to view online at the Coupe Mondiale website.

Since the revolutionary V-Accordion launched in 2004, Roland has introduced many digital accordions culminating with the current FR-8x launched in 2013. Roland has recently announced a manufacturing agreement with FATAR Srl that will ensure that production of the V-Accordion range remains in Italy.

A dedicated team of Roland staff based at FATAR, together with FATAR's world-renowned craftsmanship and quality standards, will ensure that Roland remains dedicated to the ongoing development of these specialized Digital instruments.

Roland Corporation is a leading manufacturer and distributor of electronic musical instruments, including keyboards and synthesizers, guitar products, electronic percussion, digital recording equipment, amplifiers, audio processors, and multimedia products. With more than 40 years of musical instrument development, Roland sets the standard in music technology for the world to follow.

For more information about the Roland upgrade, please visit: [www.coupemondiale.org/2014/VDigital.htm](http://www.coupemondiale.org/2014/VDigital.htm) ■

### Accordion Day in Westmont, NJ

The Acme Accordion School hosted Accordion Day on November 9, 2014. November is National Accordion Month.

The annual event began with the traditional Accordion Day photo featuring all players. Guests included Suzy Andrew who performed literature from the standard accordion repertoire, including the famous "Rhapsody in Blue." Dr. Lou Persic performed popular standards and organizer and AAA Board of Directors member, Joanna Darrow performed music of Massenet, Frescobaldi and Rameau. The Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra featured Annette Marinelli in one of the earliest accordion concertos written by Pietro Deiro, Sr. Other guests included Lenny Feldmann, who performed

on the Roland digital accordion and Rik Kaplan of Washington DC who added to the musical mix performing Cajun music.

Founded in 1948, the Acme Accordion School is home to the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra, accordion school, and Musik Garten, a music and art program, where children from birth to 6 years old can come to develop their sense of rhythm, coordination and social skills.

For more information on this or upcoming activities, please contact: Joanna Darrow - 856-854-6628 or e-mail: [acmeaccordion-schoolmusikgarten@verizon.net](mailto:acmeaccordion-schoolmusikgarten@verizon.net) ■





### Of Ink and Pen and Accordion – The LIAA in Poem

At a recent Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) meeting, not only were the creative spirits of the guest artists in motion, but also one of the audience members as well, with the experience being captured on paper in more ways than one!

#### OF INK AND PEN AND ACCORDION

[To Art From The Heart From Art]

I watch the artist sitting there, by my table, upon his chair.  
Does he chance a glance at me? Would he bother? Does he care?  
No. For it's his sketchpad that draws his stare,  
as he ponders what to draw, and where.

The dining room is crowded, and the air is full of noise.  
An accordion club is preparing to be sharing their collective joys.  
It's clear to me they share with glee this strange instrument they seize.  
A fine lady, and all those fellows have to deal with so many buttons, bellows, and all these shiny keys.

On this magical melodious night, the artist drinks it all in;  
what a marvellous sight.  
For he longs to capture the essence of the evening in the starkness of black and white.  
Now he surveys the room, and the light is just right how he twists and he turns but try as he might,  
His perspective is off 'cause the angle's not right and he can't move to improve upon his line of sight.

And now he seems stable so I stop at his table to offer a brief hello,  
For I'm wondering, and curious why his pen's been so furious, and just what his sketchpad will show.  
He seems kind and doesn't mind sharing his efforts with me. As I took a look down,  
What I saw did astound for upon his sketch pad I did see.

All the accordionists that were up on the stage, were staring at me right up from his page.  
I complimented him on what he had done and after that we had a nice chat, a new friendship had begun.  
And so it just goes to show, you never know.  
Just what may rhyme when you take the time to stop for a brief hello.

Arthur Steven Foster - 10/2/14



Sketch by Mr. Rolando Nesi of Northport, NY



# Oktoberfest 2014

Several Accordion Clubs celebrated the traditional Oktoberfest with concerts, presentations and performances. WMAS and CT Accordion Association both put on spectacular programs.

## Washington Metropolitan Accordion Society News

*By Joan Grauman*

WMAS features an annual Oktoberfest and this year's was spectacular. A record crowd showed up, requiring us to scramble for more tables and chairs, and the room was festive with lederhosen, dirndls, feathered hats, dancing, dance group performances and great music. Delighting everyone were our two young and very talented accordionists, Cody McSherry and Michael Leggett. In full Bavarian attire, they entertained solo and as a duo with their beautiful Austrian diatonic button accordions, "Steirische Harmonikas." Both Cody and Michael, as well as Michael's father, Mike, are seasoned "Schuhplatters." The three took partners and danced the beautiful Haushammer Plattler for the very appreciative audience.

Our 12th annual WMAS Holiday Concert will be held on Sunday, December 14 at 2:30 pm at the Sleepy Hollow United Methodist Church in Falls Church, Virginia. Please join us for this popular and festive event in the beautifully decorated social hall. You will be welcomed by the joyous sounds of a 26-piece accordion orchestra, small groups, soloists and sing-alongs, followed by delicious refreshments prepared by our members.

For more information, please visit our website: [www.washingtonaccordions.org](http://www.washingtonaccordions.org) or contact Joan Grauman at [joangrauman@verizon.net](mailto:joangrauman@verizon.net) ■

## CAA – Connecticut Accordion Association

*By Marilyn O'Neil*

Although many of our regular meeting-goers were either vacationing or off to Coupe Mondiale, the meeting was well attended and the audience got some unexpected surprises.

We started out with a moving presentation by Paul Ramunni, who played an accordion given to him by the family of an accordionist named Barbara O'Connell who played USO shows with the instrument. He had a pictorial album of pictures of her, along with articles about her show, which typically ended with a rendition of "God Bless America." He gave a moving tribute by picking up Barbara's instrument and playing the piece for the audience! Paul's a very skilled presenter, as his genuine nature, not to mention his command of the information, shines through. A fantastic, poignant presentation all around.



Paul Ramunni

Ed Hendela, pictured below, played a variety of Scandinavian music, and it was beautiful. Ed is very talented, as we all well know. I wondered if I'd be able to relate to the music, but it was so beautiful that I was captivated, as was the audience. His performance was followed by several members doing lively polkas and more typical Oktoberfest fare. The Siarkowskis played, as did Steve Balog, and they had a great response from the audience. ■



Ed Hendela



Cody McSherry and Michael Leggett playing their diatonic Steirische Harmonikas