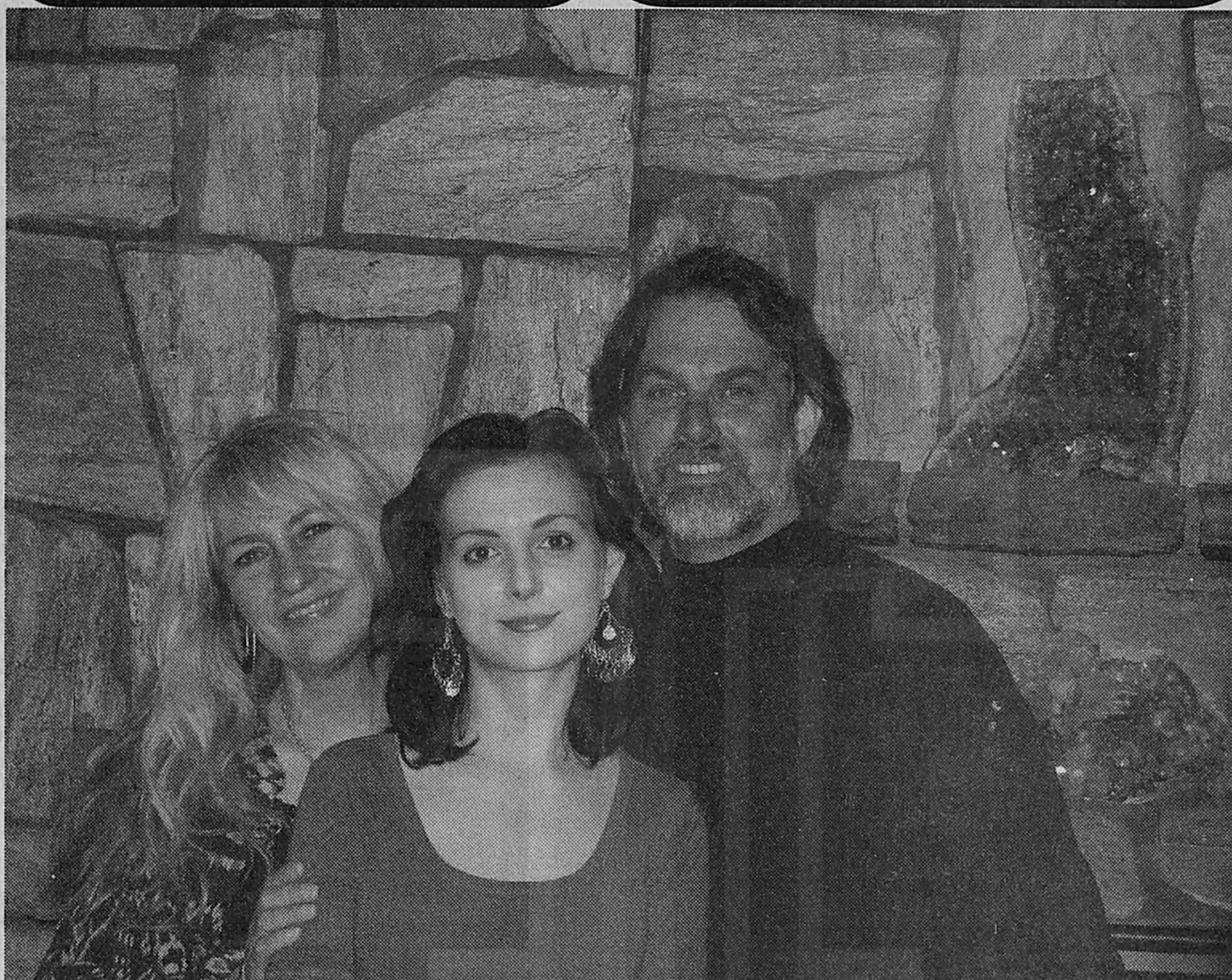


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WHY DID JIM STRINGER DANCE A JIG?

† WUMF: THE LAST RITES

JOHN THE REVEALATOR

FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS #112

ROOTS BIRTHS & DEATHS

REVIEWS * * * * * (or not)

THE CORNELL HURD BAND

THE NORTONS & FRIENDS

ROD PICOTT & AMANDA SHIRES

LUKE POWERS • MISS LANA REBEL

CHARLES THIBODEAUX & THE AUSTIN CAJUN ACES

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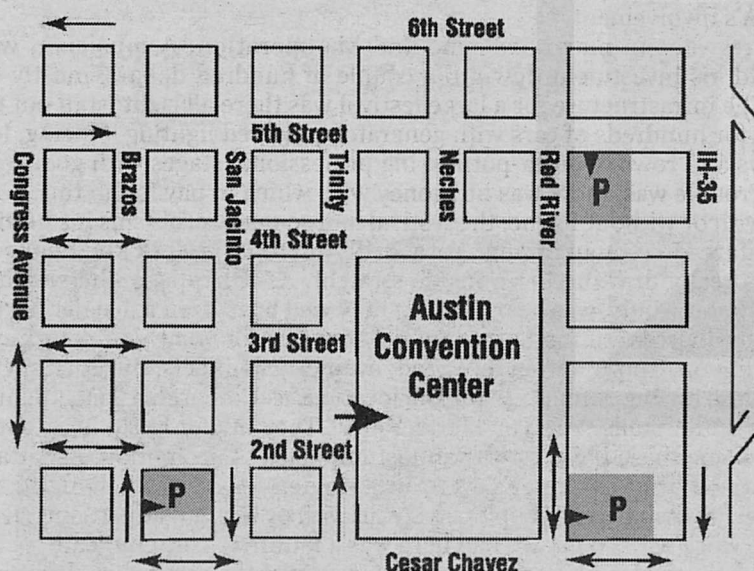
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Sunday 14
 12:30–3 PM ... Austin Lounge Lizards
 3:30–6 PM Toni Price
 8–11 PM Cienfuegos

Monday 15
 12:30–3 PM ... Suzanna Choffel
 8–11 PM W.C. Clark

Tuesday 16
 12:30–3 PM ... Matt The Electrician
 8–11 PM Marcia Ball's Pianorama

Wednesday 17
 12:30–3 PM ... Band of Heathens
 8–11 PM The Gourds

Thursday 18
 12:30–3 PM ... Paula Nelson Band
 8–11 PM Ray Wylie Hubbard

Friday 19
 12:30–3 PM Dan Dyer
 8–11 PM Jimmy LaFave

Saturday 20
 12:30–3 PM Shelley King
 3:30–6 PM Carolyn Wonderland
 8–11 PM Van Wilks

Sunday 21
 12:30–3 PM ... Rick Trevino
 3:30–6 PM Asleep at the Wheel Quartet
 8–11 PM Butch Hancock

Monday 22
 12:30–3 PM The Biscuit Brothers
 3:30–6 PM Sara Hickman
 6:00–6:30 PM ... Mary Hattersley's Blazing Bows
 8–11 PM The Eggmen

Tuesday 23
 12:30–3 PM ... Sarah Elizabeth Campbell
 3:30–6 PM Ponty Bone
 8–11 PM Albert & Gage

Wednesday 24
 12:30–3 PM Slim Richey and Friends
 3:30–6 PM Warren Hood & The Hoodlems
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Live Music & Art Keep Austin Cool

FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS #112

REAL MUSIC PLAYED FOR REAL PEOPLE BY REAL DJs

DURING NOVEMBER 2008

#1 CORNELL HURD BAND

AMERICAN SHADOWS

THE SONGS OF MOON MULLICAN

(Behemoth) *BL/*CP/*DF/*GF/*GS/*HP/*JM/*KF/*KW/
*LB/*MM/*NA/*RT/*ST/*TB/*TG/*TR/*TS

- 2 The Dixons: Still Your Fool (Cow Island)
*BF/*BR/*HA/*JD/*JF/*KD/*LMG/*SH
- 3 Starline Rhythm Boys: Live At Charlie O's World Famous
(Cow Island) *DN/*JP
- 4 Phil Lee: So Long, It's Been Good To Know You (Palookaville)
*3RC/*RE/*RF
- 5 Asylum Street Spankers: What? And Give Up Show Biz?
(Yellow Dog) *DA/*MN
- 6= Kasey Chambers & Shane Nicholson: Rattlin' Bones (Sugar Hill)
*CK/*GM
- Rodney Crowell: Sex And Gasoline (Yep Roc) *CS/*DT
- 7 Lucinda Williams: Little Honey (Lost Highway) *GG/*JS
- 8 Hank Williams III: Damn Right Rebel Proud (Sidewalk/Curb) *PTT
- 9 Rod Picott & Amanda Shires (self) *CF/*RMT
- 10 Old Crow Medicine Show: Tennessee Pusher (Nettwerk) *BP
- 11= The Derailers: Guaranteed To Satisfy (Palo Duro)
- Darrell Scott: Modern Hymns (Appleseed) *RL
- 12= Bobby Flores: Eleven Roses (Yellow Rose) *RW
- Marc Jeffares: Ghost In My Bones (self) *EB/*FS
- Will Quinlan & The Diviners: Navasota (Texsonmusic) *MP/*RG
- 13 VA: The Imus Ranch Record (New West)
- 14= Ryan Adams & The Cardinals: Cardinology (Lost Highway) *SG
- Charlie Pickett And: Bar Band Americanus (Bloodshot)
- 15 Split Lip Rayfield: I'll Be Around (self) *TM
- 16 Amber Digby: Passion, Pride & What Might Have Been
(Heart of Texas) *JT
- 17 Yarn: Empty Pockets (Ardsley) *KB
- 18= Miss Lana Rebel: All I Need (Wantage) *MY
- Todd Snider: Peace Queer (Aimless)
- 19= Kate Campbell: Save The Day (Large River)
- Alejandro Escovedo: Real Animal (Back Porch) *WR
- Charlie Haden: Rambling Boy (Decca) *AA
- Ian Tyson: Yellowhead To Yellowstone & Other Love Stories
(Stony Plain) *AB
- 20= The Breakmen: When You Leave Town (self) *RA
- Chuck Brodsky: Two Sets (Waterbug) *JMB
- Kate Gaffney: The Coachman (Dig Music) *OB
- Jeni & Billy: Jewell Ridge Coal (Jewell Ridge) *RJ
- Patty Loveless: Sleepless Nights (Saguaro Road) *TPR
- The Meat Purveyors: Come And Take It (Gravy Green) *RV
- Miss Leslie: Between The Whiskey And The Wine (Zero Label)
- JD SOUTHER: IF THE WORLD WAS YOU (SLOW CURVE) *BK
- MAVIS STAPLES: LIVE: HOPE AT THE HIDEOUT (ANTI-) *JZ
- BARRY & HOLLY TASHIAN: LONG STORY SHORT (ROCK-A-LOT)
- TEJAS BROTHERS (SMITH ENTERTAINMENT)
- VA: IN THE PINES: TAR HEEL FOLK SONGS & FIDDLE TUNES (OLD HAT) *MJ
- VA: DIRTY LAUNDRY: THE SOUL OF BLACK COUNTRY (TRIKONT [GERMANY]) *KC
- HANK WILLIAMS: THE UNRELEASED RECORDINGS (TIME LIFE) *PP



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WHERE MUSIC STILL MATTERS

*XX = DJ's ALBUM OF THE MONTH

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photo Christina Zambrano

Back in October, I said there were four ways the World United Music Festival could go: succeeds triumphantly, pulls off a smaller version of the grandiose vision, nobody shows up, or it gets cancelled—again.

As it turned out, I called the Roots Music Association Conference part wrong, at least I heard from several people that it was “first class” with “knowledgeable panelists,” “The conference itself was outstanding. The panels were most impressive,” so I will cheerfully give them credit for that. Though when I saw that 50 people attended, it did make me wonder what happened to the 200 free admissions the RMA announced they were able to give away thanks to a sponsor.

However, the festival managed to surpass my expectations by cancelling partway through, the worst of both worlds. While most of the announced acts cancelled themselves or were no shows, the main reason the festival was a travesty of a mockery etc was that there wasn't an audience—reportedly there were 200 paid admissions for an event that was projecting 100,000, something of a shortfall. As one attendee remarked, “There were more porta-potties than people, you could literally write your name on one to claim it for yourself for the day.” Personally, given that Option #1 was inconceivable, I would have preferred Option #2, which would have allowed the whole concept to be retired with some dignity, or, failing that, Option #4 well enough in advance that the artists and vendors wouldn't have spent so much money, none of which they seem likely to recoup.

The Day Job made it pretty much impossible to for me catch any part of the conference or the festival, but that kind of worked out OK. The first I heard about what Michael Corcoran of the *Austin American-Statesman* described as “quite possibly the biggest musical festival disaster of all time where nobody was killed,” was when an Austin DJ called me from the site on Saturday to tell me it was a flop of epic proportions, but he bolted when he heard an unidentified band play Lee Greenwood's *God Bless The USA*, so he missed the official pulling of the plug around 6pm. When I went to the WUMF website on Saturday night, it consisted entirely of “We are sorry for any inconvenience but the Festival has been canceled for the weekend. We look forward to next year's event.” Yeah, right. Interestingly, that last sentence had disappeared by Sunday. I wonder why?

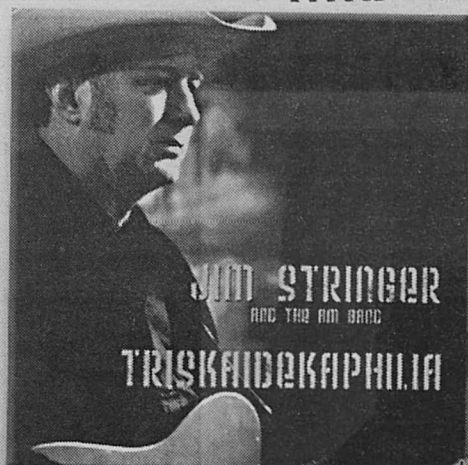
The blame game was going full swing almost immediately, some of the rationales quite obviously pulling no wool over anyone's eyes, but one thing I rather admired about the coverage and comments was the way the RMA managed to distance itself from the festival. In fact, I was rather savagely attacked on one website for linking the two, as if it wasn't the RMA's decision to go into partnership with Jerry Payne and his United States Entertainment Force, obviously with little or no vetting, so he could run the festival while the RMA concentrated on its conference. That Payne turned out to be, at minimum, underexperienced (and you can find him called much worse on many websites) does not in any way, shape or form absolve the RMA of responsibility for the debacle. Au contraire. The plain fact is that the RMA was an essential component of the festival. It recruited all the acts, except maybe the two headliners who were supposed to get paid, none of whom would have signed up if not for the RMA's involvement.

I'm not sure what to make of Payne and his operation. A musician, who deliberately held his investment down to a couple of hundred dollars, mostly for gas, told me, “The infrastructure for a large festival was there all right: staff out the wazoo, parking for hundreds of cars with generator-powered lighting, fencing, lots of vendors, rows and rows of porta-potties, big professional stages with good gear and lighting.” Trouble was, there was no money with which to pay for all this.

However, with or without Payne, the festival had so many problems it's hard to know where to start. How about timing? Texas is iffy anytime, just ask Rod Kennedy, but November's really drawing to an inside straight. As it happens, the weather, while a tad chilly and windy, was bearable, but may well have been a decider for the ambivalent. Then there were the \$35 a day ticket prices for what was not exactly a star-studded lineup. There were a few good, even excellent acts, but Austin City Limits charges less for Big Names. As for the location, as Corcoran asked, “Behind the San Marcos outlet malls? Are you kidding me?” They might, to some extent at least, have overcome these if not for the almost total lack of promotion. As far as I know, there were no print ads and I never saw a single press release, though I, for one, would cheerfully have written up the festival, with or without advertising, if I'd had anything to work with. What we had here was a failure to communicate.

However, for those of us in San Antonio, this was just the other shoe dropping. I've not seen it mentioned elsewhere, but this deal was supposed to go down here last June but—yes—it was cancelled. Last I heard, shoes don't come in threes. **JC**

JIM STRINGER AND THE AM BAND



FAR
June 2008

#1

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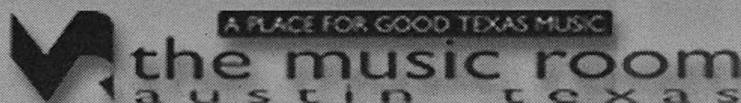
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MISS LANA REBEL • ALL I NEED

(Family Plan ☼☼☼☼)

Reviewing **Juanita Family & Friends** (Family Plan, 2004), I said "Rebel's vocals are smooth and languorous, the minimalist backing warm and gentle and they come together in such a casual, unforced way that you'd never guess her headbanger origins" and "This is one of those albums that starts off sounding pretty good and then just gets more impressive every time you play it." I see no reason to rephrase any of that except to add that this time round she's even more accomplished and convincing as a singer and songwriter. Once the bassplayer and singer in a punk/math-metal trio called The Last Of The Juanitas (and don't ask me, I don't know what the fuck math-metal is either), Rebel's metamorphosis is so complete that you'd never guess she hasn't been writing and singing crying in your beer ballads all her life. I don't know if she's a believer in the pythagorean theory of the transmigration of the soul but her spirit is now definitely incarnated in the body of a country singer. **JC**

ROD PICOTT & AMANDA SHIRES

(self ☼☼☼☼)

Some time ago, I got a so-so CD from a Lubbock group called Thrift Store Cowboys which I almost reviewed if only to bitch about their criminal waste of fiddler/vocalist Amanda Shires, so first off, I want to thank Picott for making her an equal partner. Then I want to thank both of them for an absolutely marvellous acoustic duo album. Apart from credits for mixing and mastering, and to Southwest for 'airplane sound,' this is all Picott and Shires, they cowrote the ten songs, play all the instruments, Shires adding ukulele and thumb piano to her vibrant fiddle playing, and Picott recorded and engineered. The only problem is that their duet singing is so damned gorgeous that I can't settle on a simile. Peaches and cream? Nah, that doesn't work because Picott provides a slightly ragged edge that keeps thing from getting too pretty, and also draws attention to the words of the sensational songs, of which, by a very narrow margin, I make *When You Get Your Story Told* the standout. Another thanks goes to FAR reporter Colin Fielding, host of *Folk & Roots*, 3INR, Melbourne, Australia, who drew my attention to this inspired combination and went to bat for them when I was organizing the last 3CM Presents. **JC**

THE NORTONS AND FRIENDS

HIP REPLACEMENT

(Pipebomb ☼☼☼☼)

As the pun in their album title suggests, The Nortons are knocking on a bit, in fact between them, they have about two centuries worth of experience. Founded in 1996 by Speedy Sparks (bass), John X Reed and Homer Henderson (guitars) with various drummers, Henderson left early on and was replaced by Will Indian, whose fellow Rhythm Rat Rusty Trapps became the blues-rockers' permanent drummer. While, as the three instrumentals, including Horace Silver's *Song For My Father*, demonstrate, they're all terrific players, The Nortons don't exactly have a lead vocalist, which doesn't matter too much when they're ripping up a bar but becomes a factor when making an album. However, their 'friends' sure pick up the slack, Ms Lavelle White singing *Low Down Man*, which she cowrote with Indian, and Slim Harpo's *Shake Your Hips*, Homer Henderson Jimmy Reed's *I'll Change My Style*, Gene Thomas' *Sometimes* (a Doug Sahm standard) and Larry & The Blue Notes' *Night Of The Phantom* (which he also did on Eve & The Exiles' recent **Blow Your Mind**) and Andrew 'Mr Clean' Teckell his own *Tie You Up*, Henry Glover's *Teadrops On Your Letter* and, cowritten with Indian, *Pain Of Love*. Apart from playing together for over ten years, the individual Nortons have worked together in various combinations for decades, indeed right now Indian is the guitarist/leader, Sparks the bassplayer of the James Hand Band, which also enlists Reed for the better paying shows. The point being that they have a shitload of history. 'Austin supergroup' is almost as overworked a cliché as 'Austin tradition,' but The Nortons are something even better, they're an organic entity, a musical affinity group. **JC**

LUKE POWERS • TEXASEE

(Phoebe Claire ☼☼☼☼)

Calling a Nashville band The Four Zoas is pretty ballsy, how do you begin to explain William Blake's unfinished epic poem about the death and judgement of Albion the ancient man to the average Music Row denizen? Still, Brian Ahern was impressed by Powers' songs and hooked the Tennessee State University English Professor up with Austin-based producer Tommy Spurlock. Referencing the studios in which this was recorded, Powers says, "Somewhere between Spicewood, TX and Franklin TN lies the mythical state of Texasee," a metaphor which covers so much territory that he can write about Billy The Kid, a TV cowboy, the murder of a pastor by his wife, Aron Presley musing on his brother's fate, a moonshiners' route down Signal Mountain, Paul McCartney's 'death,' Crazy Horse's vision, Charles Whitman and Nashville's Lower Broadway among the 16 songs. None of them go over four minutes, Powers stating, "I'm tired of all these warbly, navel-gazing 'Americana' songs, I wanted to take a more Sam Peckinpah approach." With help from Spurlock, guitarist Kenny Vaughan and harmony singer Suzi Ragsdale among others, he creates a fascinating musical landscape. and for a perffesser. he sings prettv damn good to boot. **JC**

THE CORNELL HURD BAND

AMERICAN SHADOWS

THE SONGS OF MOON MULLICAN

(Behemoth ☼☼☼☼)

Should you crave a CD of Moon Mullican himself, you're going to have to pay import prices—it's been 22 years since a US label, the revived King subsidiary DeLuxe, put out a Mullican compilation, since then the field has been left to the British (Ace, West Side, Charly, See For Miles) and Germans (Bear Family, of course, and Bronco Buster). This despite the fact that Moon, born Aubrey Mullican in Corrigan, TX, in 1909, should, by rights and simultaneously, be a country, rock & roll, blues, pop, honky tonk and Western Swing legend. Instead, part of the lost generation of 40s and early 50s stars, 'The King of the Hillbilly Piano Players' is a cult figure among a fanatical few—an incredibly detailed page at the Rockabilly Hall Of Fame website will tell you everything you could possibly want to know about him, and so much more—but virtually forgotten in pop culture. Among those who try to keep his memory alive is Cornell Hurd, most all of whose albums have featured at least one Moon Mullican song, and while an entire album of them may not be everyone's idea of the logical next step, Hurd has his own logic. A crucial part of which is to reflect Mullican's multi-faceted talent by bringing in both guest vocalists to supplement Hurd himself and band members T Jarrod Bonta (*Lonesome Hearted Blues*), Randy Glines (*Moon's Rock*) and Howard Kalish (*Heartless Lover*), and guest pianists to spell Bonta. Among the former are Fort Worth bandleader Tommy Alverson (*I'll Sail My Ship Alone*), Bill Kirchen (*Don't Ever Take My Picture Down*), Chris O'Connell and Maryann Price (*Mighty Pretty Waltz* and *Southern Hospitality*) and Justin Trevino (*Jole Blon*), while the other pianists are Floyd Domino, 'Dazzling' Pete Gordon (who also sings *Pipeliners' Blues*) and Debra Hurd. As usual, the 11-piece band plus eight guest musicians, many CHB alumni, is too cumbersome to list in full, but includes the late, much missed Danny Roy Young on rubboard. None of the 30 performers on the album ever saw Mullican, who died in 1967, perform, though Kirchen, with Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen, and Domino and O'Connell, with early Asleep At The Wheel, have been playing his material for many years, in fact, the first song Domino worked up with the Wheel was *Cherokee Boogie*, which he reprises here. Mullican fans might well have a twinge of regret about favorite numbers not included among the 16 tracks, *Good Deal Lucille* would be mine, but, from *Fools Like Me* to a blistering *Seven Nights To Rock*, it's hard to think of any other hands to which one would entrust a Moon Mullican tribute. **JC**

CHARLES THIBODEAUX & THE AUSTIN CAJUN ACES HOMMAGE Á ANDREW CORMIER

(self ☼☼☼☼)

Back in 1991, Texas Folklife Resources staged the first Accordion Kings festival, one of the most remarkable events I've ever attended, of which a highlight was seeing accordion greats Andrew Cormier and the late Joe Bonsall as special guests of Jackie Cailler & The Cajun Cousins. Cormier was already retired, remarking to me that "drinking and fighting every Saturday night gets old after forty years" (his wife going "Uh huh, uh huh"), so I was rather astonished to learn that as recently as last October, he'd driven to Austin from Port Arthur to sit in with Thibodeaux at a Hurricane Ike benefit. Like Cormier, Thibodeaux, born in Beaumont, comes from what overflow Cajuns call Grand Texas (his parents were from Church Point—Iry LeJeune played at their wedding!) and grew up hearing Cormier and other Cajun legends at his cousin's dance hall, the Rodair Club, in Port Acres, TX. After moving to Austin, he founded The Austin Cajun Aces in 2004, a Monday night residency at Evangeline Cafe serving as a home base from which the group fans out all across Texas, playing at Cajun French Music Association events. Backed by LeRoi Brother Steve Doerr acoustic/electric guitars and vocals (*Café Chaud* and Boozoo Chavis' *Dog Hill*) and former Mamou Playboy Peter Schwarz fiddle, bass, T-Fer and vocals (*Diggy Diggy Lo*, Belton Richard's *Je Veux Plus Te Voir* and Adam Hebert's *La Pointe Aux Pins*), with Richard White drums on four tracks and Cajun veteran Dallas Roy guest vocalist on *Kaplan Waltz*, Thibodeaux (accordion, vocals) set out to pay tribute not just to the great but unsung Cormier (try Googling him and see where it gets you) but all the Cajun music pioneers who left Louisiana in the 50s to find better jobs in Texas, with material by Will Balfa (*Les Blues De Cadien*), Octa Clark (*Blacktop Blues*), Aldus Roger (*KLFY Waltz*) and The Mamou Playboys (*Mamou Hot Step*), plus the traditional *Bosco Stomp* and Thibodeaux's own *Two-Step De Andrew Cormier*. With most Cajun and Zydeco groups these days self-releasing their albums with no promotion, Tom Mahnke, host of KOOP's *Fais Do Do*, tells me he has to drive to Louisiana and go backstage at shows if he wants to get hold of new material, but if you live in Austin, you don't have to go any further than Brodie Lane on a Monday night for a fresh hit of first rate steeped in tradition Cajun music. **JC**



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3rd, Cowboy Johnson, 6pm	18th, George Ensle, 7pm
4th, Liz Morphis, 7pm	19th, Freddie Steady 5, 10pm
5th, Larry Lange's Lonely Knights,	20th, Thierry LeCoz & Friends, 3pm
10pm	26th, Two Hoots & A Holler, 10pm
6th, Sunset Valley Boys, 3pm	27th, Tiesco Del Rey, 10pm
10th, Sarah Pierce Band, 7pm	31st, Cleve & Sweet Mary Ol' Farts
11th, Craig Toungeate, 7pm	(early) new Year, 7pm
12th, 3 Balls Of Fire, 10pm	

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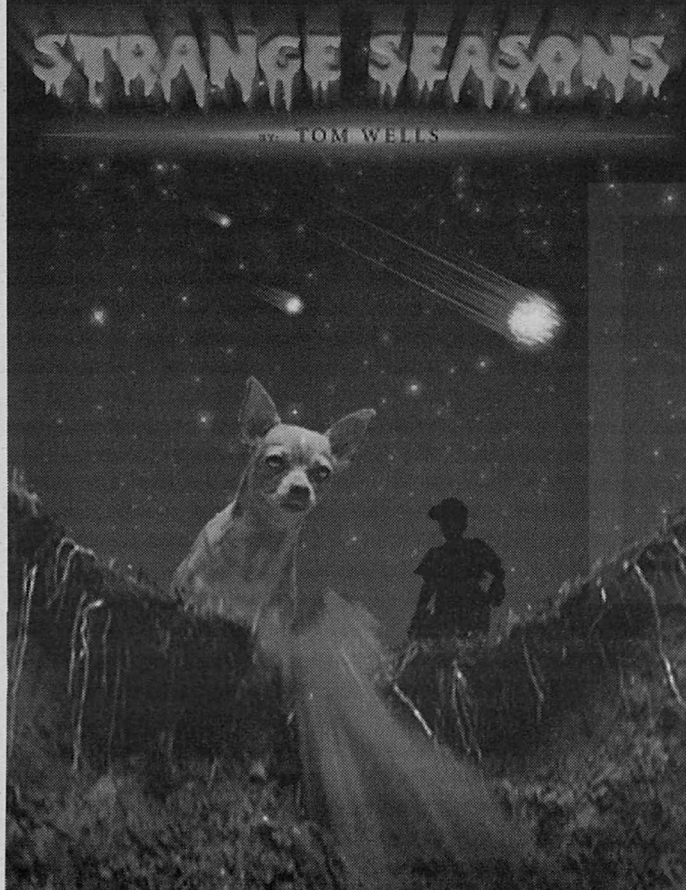
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Strange Seasons: Summer, a novel by Tom Wells, will be available in November. *Strange Seasons* emerges as a nostalgic, perfect book for baby-boomer grandparents to read to their grandchildren.

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An avid reader his entire life, Tom Wells began writing in July of 2001 with his first novel, *Drop-Ins*, the result. Currently, he is working on Book 2 of the young adult series, *Strange Seasons*. In addition to writing, Wells enjoys reading, exercising, listening to great Austin music, and spending time with Lori, the love of his life, and his two dogs, Beams and Murphy.

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Praise for *Drop-Ins*

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CANCELLED!

JIM STRINGER DIDN'T GET TO PLAY AT THE WORLD UNITED MUSIC FESTIVAL SO WHY WAS HE DANCING A JIG?

One of the great things about having a long music career played out on the seamy underside of the business, it's like being a musical colonoscopy probe. I've experienced insanely drunken bar patrons screaming in my ear while I'm singing. I've driven hundreds of miles to play to an imaginary audience—of course for no money. And, I've been part of festivals that failed to draw the crowd they'd expected.

But *never* have I seen a festival fail on the scale pioneered by the World United Music Festival. Forevermore, WUMF will mean to me Wholesale Unparalleled Multiple Fuckups. I mean... *Yikes Almighty!!!*

Now, before I launch into a post-mortem from the performer's standpoint, let me say that I find it a little disingenuous to hear criticism from the likes of the *American-Statesman*, contrasting the failure of the WUMF to the success of the ACL. Particularly without mention of the fact that the *Statesman* is a financial partner in the ACL. The ACL may or may not get free space ads—but they certainly get about three months of free editorial content, including spotlights of every act, regardless of their relative obscurity, detailed diagrams of festival grounds, etc. By contrast, the total exposure given to WUMF by the *Statesman* was *one paragraph* (a small sidebar at that) in the *XLent* magazine the day before the festival was to begin.

And the coverage given by the *Statesman* infinitely surpassed that given by The *Austin Chronicle*. SXSW is partnered with The *Austin Chronicle*—the *Chronicle* didn't even mention the existence of the WUMF. Was this the fault of the publicity company or is this just conflict of interest at work?

That said, John Conquest, long time publisher of *3rd Coast Music* didn't even know of the existence of the festival until rumor reached him just a few weeks ahead of the scheduled date. I'm certain John would at least have given the WUMF a few words—this kind of event it right up his alley. His ad rates are such that even a band can afford a monthly mention. Well, I'm sure that he'll now have *way* more than a few words to share with readers—I can't wait!

The week before this festival, I told the members of my band that if the festival was anything short of a confused, poorly attended disaster, I would be amazed. However, even I didn't fathom the depth of the abyss into which the WUMF fell.

So... just what happened here?

I can only speak from my role as a participant... but as a 50 year veteran inspecting the entrails of the beast, I do have the perspective of experience.

WARNING #1: This event was originally to have been held in San Antonio as Music United '08 Radio Conference & Music Festival, hosted by the Roots Music Association at the Alzafar Shrine Center, and, like the Americana Music Association event in Nashville, coordinated with a conference, panel discussions and the works. Applications for showcases were accepted through SonicBids, I'm sorry to say a warning sign in itself. This event was unceremoniously cancelled just a few weeks prior to the scheduled date. The cancellation was attributed to a 'misunderstanding' about the cost of security. Participants were told that the event was being rescheduled and each of the showcasing acts would be contacted. According to my recollection of the list on the RMA website, around 30 acts were on the schedule: still ambitious, but doable.

WARNING #2: A long time elapsed without hearing from anyone. There was no forthcoming information from RMA, nor was there any rumor of a rescheduled conference.

WARNING #3: Finally, I received an email saying that the event was rescheduled and was being partnered with the 'World United Radio Conference.' Those who had originally been slated to perform were asked to confirm that they would be available for the rescheduled happening. Fine... I did that.

WARNING #4: I didn't hear from anyone until mid-August... for a festival in November, this is insanely late! Most festivals that I play schedule at least six months to a year in advance. Inside this time frame, it's too difficult for *working* bands to find support gigs and route tours. By this point, my band was already booked for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, so my performance options were limited.

WARNING #5: I'd never heard of the people who contacted me after this—they were not Texas residents and I wasn't at all sure who the players were in this new drama.

WARNING #6: Sets length was truncated to 30 minutes, according to the communication, due to "... the amount of artists we have performing." Notice the use of "amount" as opposed to "number" in this explanation, thus equating the

"performers" to a commodity such as beer! In addition, if there *were* a performer that might draw locally, it'd be hardly worth the effort to catch a 30 minute set—not to mention the stiff \$35 day pass.

WARNING #7: There would be over 150 performers on 8 stages! *Yikes...* I don't think I've ever seen a startup festival with more than one main stage and perhaps an acoustic tent! What the....????

WARNING #8: No one locally seems to know anything about this festival.

WARNING #9: There's no actual photo or real description of the festival grounds. As far as I can see on Google Maps, it's a big field undeveloped area behind the outlet mall, later accurately described by one actual musician who *did* play as "...a big, barren, dusty, empty field."

WARNING #10: The scheduled dates are November 14-16... *in Central Texas????* Did no one consult an almanac? I've seen Novembers in this region that rivaled a Southeast Asian *monsoon season* for constancy of rainfall. If not the rain, then cold, even *snow*... November is just volatile weather-wise. Imagine SXSW scheduling *only* outdoor events in March. You can't, can you?

WARNING #11: The music was to be in the above mentioned field... the associated conference to be held at the Embassy Suites, a couple of miles north of the field. Conference event times coincided with performances. My own event was concurrent with the Roots Music Awards ceremony... hey, thanks schedulers.

WARNING #12: The organizers didn't seem to have any understanding of what might draw a crowd in Central Texas—certainly not what they had on the bill! Even the Sunday headliner, Asleep at the Wheel, being a well known but still local act, is good for a packed night at the Spoke, but certainly not a *festival* draw! I don't intend *any* slight of *any* performer who signed on to do this thing—but let's get serious. Have you played in Austin and vicinity? I have to assume they intended to draw from Austin since San Marcos is hardly big enough to supply the expected 100,000 ticket sales.

Do you know what it takes to draw a crowd in an area where, seven nights a week, world famous performers routinely play for the contents of the tip jar? The best way to get a belly laugh from a club owner is to ask, "What's the guarantee?" HA HA HA HA HA HA!!!! Even those who land coveted SXSW showcase spots or ACL appearances learn they *still* have to aggressively promote their gig—there are *no* automatic crowds anywhere at any time. My friend, Mike Jasper, who moved to Austin seeking the 'Live Music Capital Of the World,' says that if he were to move again, it would be to the 'Live *Audience* Capital Of the World.'

WARNING #13: I've played for a festival crowd as large as 26,000 persons... and I've played at festivals where no one showed up at all (Topeka Mid America Fair... performers included my own band and Chuck Mead/Shaw Wilson performing as Dos Cajones. Chuck and Shaw played to me and my band, and conversely, we played to Chuck and Shaw. But... we got paid!!!). I've developed a bit of precognition regarding the viability of events. This event did *not* emit the 26,000 person audience vibe!

So... thirteen being my lucky number, that's enough warning signs. My triskaidekaphilia paid off... my performance was cancelled just as I was leaving home headed for San Marcos. I would never have pulled out of anything I'd previously agreed to do—that's against my personal credo. Instead, I was told that some band that was playing with Augie Meyers could perform only at the time I was slated to play. I tried my best to feign disappointment, but inside I was dancing a jig!

I'm really sorry that this thing didn't work out... the folks behind the Roots Music Association seem to be good people and I think the errors stemmed from zealous idealism, not cynical greed or any other less admirable facet of naiveté. I'd like to see some real independent competitor to SXSW and ACL. It's going to have to start small, though... *real* small, in the wake of this ship wreck.

JC: After Jim sent me this, I got a press release saying that Lorito Management, of New York, has filed criminal charges with the San Marcos police against World United Music Festival promotor Jerry Payne, for theft of services. This was based on the fact that, rather than the cash payment required by contract, Payne gave Phil Lorito a check for \$3000, which then bounced. The irony here is that Lorito's client is Frank Carillo & The Bandereros, the band that moved in on Jim Stringer & The AM Band's slot because that was the only time that worked for Augie Meyers, who played keyboards on their latest album and was making a special guest appearance with them. Guess Jim, who almost forgot to check his phone messages, was the only one the Good Lord took a liking to that day.

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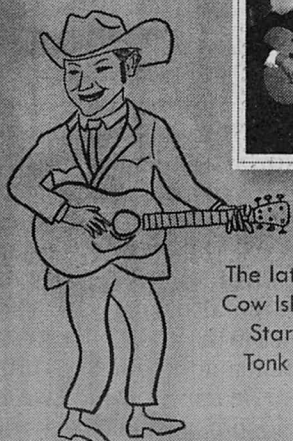
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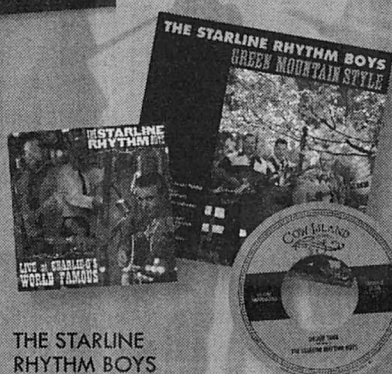
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JOHN THE REVEALATOR

Ancedotal evidence suggests that **Hank Williams** died before midnight on December 31st, 1952, but even if he lasted until the early morning of January 1st, 1953, there couldn't possibly be any concert footage of him from later that year. I must have gone past that **1953** a dozen times without noticing—word blindness is one of the penalties of being your own copy editor. Congratulations to 'Scrupulous in Seguin,' the first of many to call me on this mistake. It should, of course, have been 1952.

- Last month, I said of **Long Black Veil** that "unless I had been in the arms of my best friend's wife" was intended to be a rather bizarre subversive lesbian statement," it doesn't work as a woman's song, and while The Code of the Conquests forbids me to pry into anyone's sexual orientation, I feel fairly confident that Sammi Smith, for instance, did not intend it that way (of course, I could be wrong). However, Axton Kincaid's frontwoman, **Kate Howser**, says "It's funny you mention the lesbian subversive thing about *Long Black Veil*, because that is totally what I mean to be doing! I always joke that it's our subversive lesbian song when I introduce it at shows. In those exact words! Sometimes live I'll change it up to "I had been in the arms of my drummer's wife" just for kicks...."

- Seems **Rachel Harrington**'s financial structure wasn't quite the way I assumed. Most of these deals are set up the primitive capitalist way I described last month, but Harrington tells me only around \$3000 came in from **City Of Refuge** 'patrons,' who each ponied up \$25 in advance for personalized, signed copies, "It wasn't much, but every little bit helps." Unfortunately, she needed the help because on top of a quite reasonable 10K for the album itself, she spent another \$10K for promotion and publicity, which tells me she pissed away a few Gs on indie radio promotion.

- Well, there's a turn up for the books. I have to give the **Americana Music Association** credit, it runs an honest election, and the reason anybody who knows indie radio promoter **Fred Boenig** knows this was an honest election is that, surmounting endless procedural hurdles, he won the At Large seat on the board. Trust me, this was not the result the AMA hierarchy wanted. **Cary Baker**, a NotSXSW player with his annual Guitartown/Conqueroo show at Mother Egan's, lost out and, as I predicted, **Jesse Dayton** was an also ran to fellow non-AMA member **Tift Merritt** for Songwriter rep. One rather odd result was **Tamara Saviano** winning the Publications seat. Saviano is a publicist, and a pretty good one at that, but, unless I'm missing something, her credentials for 'Publications' are two children's books put out by her company. While I haven't seen Scott Crawford's byline since *Harp* folded and just don't get Justin Gage's *Aquarium Junkie* website, both seem rather more qualified.

- Yet another example of Internet misinformation. While writing this month's editorial, before I remembered Uncle Dave Macon (1870), I thought **Eck Robertson** might be the Oldest Inhabitant of my B&D database. Robertson's place in the history of country music is carved in stone because he cut the very first country record, *Sallie Gooden/Arkansas Traveller* (Victor, April, 1923), but look him up and you'll find his date of birth given almost everywhere as 1887. The one exception is The Old-Time Fiddlers' Hall of Fame, which gives it as 1886 and what's more they have art—a photo of Robertson's tombstone, in Fritsch, TX, wherever the hell that is—to prove it. Incidentally, Robertson has 294 'friends' on his MySpace page, which is pretty good going for someone who died in 1975.

- One rather bizarre angle on the **World United Music Festival** came from FARster and "problem magnet" **Nancy Apple**, who was scheduled to perform

(for free) but got subpoenaed to appear in court in Memphis on the Monday after the festival as a character witness. "When I called to tell them I probably needed to cancel, the guy told me I was contractually obligated, he suggested I call the court and tell them that. Bottom line is the DA told me that if I was a no show he could have me tossed in the jailhouse." Tough call.

- One thing that seems to have got lost in the shuffle was the **Roots Music Association Awards**, which didn't show up on the RMA website until a week after the fiasco. I was keeping an eye out for them because **Miss Leslie**, who, rather wisely, was in China (the big one, not China, TX) that weekend, told me she'd been nominated in the True Country category. Turns out she didn't make the cut, the top five nominees were Dwight Yoakham, George Strait, Jason Bolland, Lucky Tubb and Charlie Louvin, and the winner was **Dwight Yoakham**. He must be so proud to win an award from an organization that doesn't even know how to spell his name, wonder what he'll do with the plaque? Other I kid you not nominees were **Jimmy Vaughn** (Blues Artist), **Alvin Young Blood Hart** (Blues Songwriter), **Fred Englesmith** (Roots/Americana Country Songwriter, whatever the hell that's supposed to mean) and **Rosie Ledet & Playboys** (Zydeco Artist). You can't parody this stuff, or **Leslie Satcher**'s nomination for True Country Songwriter (at least they spelled her name right), it parodies itself.

- Among the Wholesale Unparalleled Multiple Fuckups, WUMF promoter **Jerry Payne** emailed all the acts to tell them the festival had been cancelled, but didn't BCC, so everyone got everyone else's email address. This resulted in a fair amount of chatter between the musicians, some of whom had played for an audience consisting entirely of the sound engineer, who doesn't actually count. However, according to the recipient who told me about this, "One musician sent an 'Are we the only band who's pissed about this?' email to everyone, and amazingly to me, got several public replies saying he should be quiet and these things happen and we should all be good little musicians and not complain. I was frankly stunned by this response. Here are people who put their faith and dollars in a phantom non-profit organization who either acted without intelligence or with malice and they don't want to rock the boat? I don't know whether those people, most of whom probably spent far more than we did to be at this fiasco, are genuinely Buddha-like in their forgiveness or what."

- One time, I opined that out of a clutch of Austin women country singers, **Elizabeth McQueen** was likely to be the last woman standing at the microphone, because she was the only one who was neither a wife nor mother. In my observation both these roles are incompatible with a career that involves coming home at three in the morning or being gone for weeks at a time, unless, of course, you're pulling in so much money that your husband can't reasonably make an issue of it and you can afford full-time help, neither of which are really considerations in this context. However, though McQueen is now both married and great with child, Dave Sanger tells me they're out to beat the odds by outfitting a 'Baby Bus' so McQueen can take their offspring on the road with her.

- You may know that the Screen Actors Guild won't allow the use of the same name as anyone on their rolls, living or dead, which means that if we're discussing, say Humphrey Bogart, we have to be talking about the same person. You'd think that, even if it's not a requirement, a sensible musician would modify or even change his or her name if it was the same as, or even resembles, that of somebody really famous, or even just better known. Jimmie Gilmore, for instance, added 'Dale' to avoid being confused with Jimmy Gilmer when they were both

working in West Texas. Trouble is, some musicians are just not bright enough to realize this might be a good idea, and some just don't know too much about music, like Fake **Sam Phillips** (real name Leslie). I've always considered it a knock against T-Bone Burnett that he'd marry someone who openly admits she'd never heard of Real Sam Phillips before she made her first album.

- A recent example of such ignorance comes via **William Michael Smith** of the *Houston Press*, who gallantly reads *Best In Texas* so the rest of us won't have to. Among such risible snippets as "up-and-coming country band Cowboy Mouth," Smith reports a gushing mention of a 'Texas Music' clown from Cleburne. Sorry, guys, there will only ever be one **Sonny Burgess** and guess what, it's not your boy. It's hard to figure which one is the denser, the singer or the *BIT* reporter, guess they deserve each other.

- Not sure why, but I only just got copies of **Jon Dee Graham's Swept Away** CD and DVD which were released back in May. On the offchance you missed the word, the CD is mainly live recordings of songs from all his solo albums, made before the accident, and they snap, crackle and pop with ferocious energy. However, I was a tad disappointed that, among the DVD's interviews, documentarian Mark Finkelpearl didn't get anything out of **Mike Hardwick**, one of the very best but lowest profile musicians in Austin, who is only seen in the DVD as a blurry figure at the back of dimly lit stages, but then that's kind of a metaphor. Hardwick's avoidance of the limelight makes the almost equally self-effacing John Reed look like a publicity hound, but I guess after 25 years, he has a non-image to maintain.

- I know **3CM** readers who would echo Voice of America DJ Katherine Cole's "Some days, I tell people he's my favorite songwriter," though they might skip the "Some days," but **Jon Dee Graham's** 'overview' in *All-Music Guide* still, 20 years after the Trubes broke up, starts, "Best known for his stint as a member of the acclaimed 80s roots-rock band The True Believers," and it hasn't been updated since 1999. Guess they didn't get the memo about the *Austin Chronicle's* prestigious, career-boosting 2006 Musician of the Year award.

- Intended as a one-off, at last October's Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival, **Dave Alvin & The Guilty Women** (Christy McWilson vocals, Cindy Cashdollar dobro, Nina Gerber acoustic lead guitar, Laurie Lewis & Amy Farris fiddles, Sarah Brown bass and Lisa Pankratz drums) are set to tour extensively in 2009. Because it went down so well at the festival? Not quite. Because Alvin's regular venues and places he's never played started offering *double* his usual guarantee if he showed up with The Guilty Woman, and while Alvin was born at night, he wasn't born last night. Pity Porter Wagoner's dead, Alvin could have got some tips on how he dealt with his 80s all-girl touring band, Right Combination.

† DIMAS GARZA

Just two days after recording KUT promos with Larry Lange & The Lonely Knights for an early December 'Legends of Chicano Soul' show, Dimas Garza, whose marvellous tenor made The Royal Jesters one of San Antonio's preeminent doowop groups of the late 50s/early 60s, rivalling Sunny & The Sunliners, was found dead from a heart attack, aged 68. Thanks to a chapter in Ruben Molina's **Chicano Soul** and the efforts of Lange and his group, Garza, who also sang with The Moonlites and The Playboys, was in the midst of a career revival, but if you check such great numbers on YouTube as *You've Succeeded, I Want to Be Loved, Don't Leave Me Baby* and *I Won't Love You*, some just playbacks of old Clown and Cobra 45s, but others recorded in the last two years, you have to wonder why the career of such an amazing singer had to be revived.

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GLYNDA, CHRIS, JAMES, DANNY

Virtually every day, as chronicled by the meticulous Dead Rock Stars Club website, one or more people involved on some level with making music pass on. Most of their names and stories mean little or nothing to those who aren't fans of particular genres or knowledgeable about niches in the business, and even when their names are familiar, as, for instance, Glenn Barber, Don Helms, Jerry Wexler and Charlie Walker, whose deaths 3CM noted during 2008, the news evokes a moment of sadness but, except for those who knew them personally rather than by accomplishment or reputation, not overwhelming grief. However, this year there were four losses I know affected many 3CM readers and subscribers on a personal level, I refer, of course, to Glynda Cox, Chris Gaffney, James Henry and Danny Young. How much their mourners overlap I have no idea, though I'd venture to guess that few Chicago House habitués experienced James Henry's open-handed hospitality and even fewer Henry's regulars experienced Glynda Cox's all-embracing love.

Hardly an earth-shattering revelation, but, for me at least, writing obituaries of people with whom I have no direct relationship, while not what I ever want to do, is relatively easy, but writing tributes to friends is gut-wrenchingly difficult. Because one knew them not just as names in musical history, however revered, but in all their human complexity, the results always seem unsatisfactory and incomplete, even when their families and friends express appreciation.

I know I'll be writing more obituaries in 2009. It will come as no great surprise to all y'all that my read on the history of music is that the Golden Age for just about every form in which I have any interest fell between 1946 and 1962 ("The Last Good Year"), an unfortunate corollary being that many musicians I admire are now in their 70s, 80s, even 90s, if, indeed, they haven't already died in such obscurity that nobody noticed.

Buried in some sub-menu, I'm sure there are formulae that would calculate the average age or median date of birth of the 1154 musicians etc in my Births & Deaths database, but such intricacies are beyond me. I can't even persuade it to tell me who are the oldest, oldest living and youngest people listed, though I'm pretty sure they are, respectively, Uncle Dave Macon, born October 7th, 1870, in Smart Station, TN, Luderin Darbone, born January 14th, 1913, in Evangeline, LA, and, tomorrow's star today, Jenny Wolfe, born September 16th, 1992, in Austin, TX.

I'm also sure there's a much more efficient way of figuring out how many deaths I have entered, but a crude workaround says about 350, which means that, well you can do the still alive math as easy as I can. Trouble is, the database has more off than on ramps. Setting it up, best part of 20 years ago, was a ton of work, not simply collecting information, usually from print sources back then, but reconciling myriad conflicts of days, months, years and places between many different sources. However, once it was up and running, it didn't need much maintenance. Compared to the original intake, new additions have been a mere trickle over the last 20 years, almost certainly outnumbered by the deaths in the same period, and, let's face it, that's not a trend that's going to change any time soon.

My only hope, ghoulish and macabre as it may sound, is that next year I won't have to write any tributes at all, just obituaries.

JC

ARMADILLO CHRISTMAS BAZAAR: A FAMILY AFFAIR

Google 'Austin tradition' and you'll get "about 5,500,000" hits, which kinda tells you it's a somewhat overworked epithet. One could argue about just how long something has to be going to really merit such a designation, but after 32 years, I think the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar comes by it righteously. Offhand, and to be honest I didn't check all five and half million, the only older 'Austin traditions' I spotted were Dirty Martin's Kum-Bak Place (82 years), Eeyore's Birthday (46 years) and The Broken Spoke (44 years). Originally suggested by Lucinda Williams in 1974, as a warm, indoor alternative for the vendors on The Drag, the Bazaar was an instant success, the first expanded by public demand from a planned two days to five. Held at Armadillo World Headquarters from 1976 to 1980, Bruce Willenzik bought the rights after the legendary venue was demolished in 1981, and over the next 25 years, set up his "for-profit, community-based, counterculture business model" in a disused grocery store at Stassney & Manchaca (1981-83), the small ballroom, later the large ballroom at The Austin Opera House/The Terrace (1984-94), Austin Music Hall (1995-2006) and, currently, Austin Convention Center (2007-?).

After all these years, I imagine many people who synch their visits to the Bazaar with the music schedule think of the stage as an integral part of the Bazaar, but in fact it started as an informal bonus in a venue already set up for music. Willenzik recalls, "Back in those days we just did open stage and many different acts and individual musicians just seemed to show up and wait for the act before them to finish. It was unscheduled and totally free form. I remember Marcia Ball playing piano in the background for hours at a time when no one else was on stage. I'd say most of the local acts in Austin just drifted across our stage in the first few years. We started scheduling acts in 1981 when we moved to Cherry Creek."

I started going to the Bazaar in 1988 or 1989, but I have confess that for many years the booths were just a nuisance, nothing more than a labyrinth to negotiate between the music stage and the bar. It wasn't until I was with Debra Lou that I realized that people, you know, like sold stuff at the Bazaar. This revelation has not exactly been a shot in the arm for too many participating artists, in fact, the only ones I can remember ever dropping any money on are Kip Holm—we now have quite a nice collection of Duncan the cat photographs—and Scattered Light, whose jewelry DL adores. Over the years, shopping at Scattered Light and visiting with Russell Smith and Barbara Samuelson came to be an annual ritual.

Then, during NotSXSW 2005, Russell and Barbara showed up at Threadgill's World Headquarters, where I was just about to present, as a favor to Jo Carol Pierce, a 16-year old singer-songwriter called Sahara Smith—Russell's daughter. There may well be many other crossovers between the art on stage and the craft on display, Willenzik tells me that in 1980, Maria Muldaur worked sales in booths and sang, but this is my own living connection between the two aspects as this year, making her Armadillo stage debut (she's long been first assistant salesperson), Sahara will be the first performer on the opening day, while Russell & Barbara will, as usual, be doing business at the Scattered Light booth.

On the music side, I already knew that the Bazaar is very loyal to its veteran performers, rounding up many of the usual suspects year after year, which makes it hard for even the most talented newcomers, like the now 20-year old Sahara, to get their foot in the door. While I've never pried into the dynamics, I figured that opportunities opened up when someone was unavailable for some reason or maybe had priced themselves out of the gig. It probably didn't hurt Sahara's cause any that Willenzik's companion, the lovely Annie Harding, has known her since she was a baby, so she and Bruce were blown away when they happened to be listening to *Prairie Home Companion* and heard Russell's little girl tie for first place in a young talent competition, but then there's a reason she did so well.

What I didn't know, but I guess could have deduced if I'd paid more attention, is that this loyalty also extends to the vendors, who, very unusually, don't have to reapply each year. Again, this makes it hard to gain access in the first place, but, if you do right by the Bazaar, once you're in, they do right by you. In Russell & Barbara's case, they couldn't get a space for several years because Willenzik maintains a balance and there were already enough jewelers, but when a vendor only wanted to run a booth for the first week, Scattered Light was allowed to run out the clock. "We worked all night setting up and all the next day running it, by closing time we were dead on our feet," but next year they were back and have been a fixture ever since. "It literally changed our lives. It meant we could do this full time." Barbara adds. "The difference between the Armadillo and other shows is that Bruce wants *everyone* to do well. He invests himself in every person he invites into this show."

Let's see, Sahara on the 12th, Terri and Eliza on the 13th, Ray Wylie on the 18th, Jimmy on the 19th, Butch on the 21st, Sarah, Ponty and Christine & Chris on the 23rd and, of course, The Dames on Xmas Eve. Well, if we can sell the house, find one in Austin—or maybe Smithville, Russell & Barbara are very persuasive—and move in by December 11th, that might be doable.

JC

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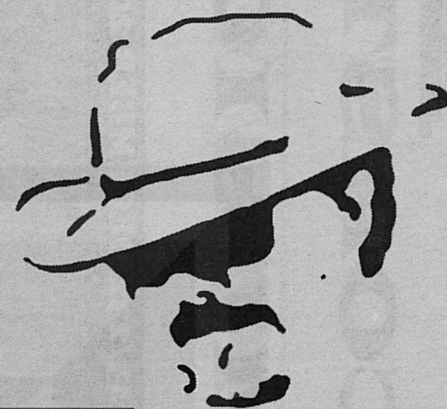
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