

# What's Shakin'

March 2011

Newsletter of the Delaware Accordion Club  
[www.DelawareAccordionClub.com](http://www.DelawareAccordionClub.com)

*Meetings held in the banquet room at*

**896 Diner**

**I-95 exit 1b, Route 896 north**

**Newark DE 19713**

**302-733-0442**

Open MIC Sessions 2-5pm

April 17

May 15

June 19 – No meeting – Father's Day

July 17

August 21

September 18

October 17

November 21

December 19

Listen to our sponsor WVUD 91.3 FM

DAC member Brian Lee hosts Scratchy Grooves on Sunday 7 – 8 pm

**98.1 WOGL Breakfast Club with Bill Zimpfer**

approx 7:30am on Thursday morning

**You may think you know music, but do you know your polka?  
Could you figure out what is coming out of Bill Z's accordion?**

Polka Radio - [www.247Polkaheaven.com](http://www.247Polkaheaven.com)

## **December 19, 2010**

Today we celebrated our last meeting in 2010 with a delicious holiday cake. Season's greetings to all of our members and their families.

Joe Bucci opened our meeting and played Silent Night, Pretty Papers, and O Come, All Ye Faithful on his Peppino Z accordion. Phil Bonsiero gave us some Christmas tunes: Angels We Have Heard On High, Joy to the World, Hark the Herald Angels Sing and Jingle Bell Rock.

Joe Oberly's grandsons Jake (on guitar) and Luke (on cymbals) played Under the Milky Way. Talent runs in the family! Tim Conley (Elvis) sang Blue Christmas and Blue Suede Shoes and played guitar. Joe Oberly gave us Up on the Housetop, Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer, Silver Bells, Winter Wonderland and Pigalle. Gary Woodling played I'll Be Home for Christmas, O Holy Night, Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle and a polka medley.

Carole & Len Wolek entertained us in matching Santa hats. They offered: Merry Christmas Polka, Santa Baby, Christmas Island, Mele Kalikimaka, and Frosty the Snowman. Len played a 1928 4-string tenor lute which has projection cones inside.

Lester Rittle and Joe Ragan teamed up for some polkas, including the Tic Toc Polka. They also played the Orphan's Waltz. Susan Shertok and Joe Ragan teamed up for A Marshmallow World, He is Born, We Three Kings, Mary's Little Boy Child and There Was A Little Baby. Susan sang the Chipmunk Song.

Bob Shoemaker played Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas, Million Dollar Baby, Ferryboat Serenade, El Rio Bravo Polka, and Red Rose Cafe. Charlie Mariani led a sing-along with Must Be Santa. Jeff Anderson gave us Old Toy Trains, Santa Bring My Baby Back To Me, Suzy Snowflake, Mister Santa and What Are You Doing New Year's Eve.

Joe Alexander won the 50/50 raffle and Charlie Mariani gave us several mystery prizes. Happy New Year to all and come back in 2011!!

January 2, 2011

### **Accordion Report by Gary Woodling**

**Reprinted with permission from his blog [garywoodling.com](http://garywoodling.com)**

Today I was a guest and a performer at an AccordiCats concert which hosted accordionist, teacher, and all-around virtuoso, Mario Pedone. I began the afternoon playing "dinner music" for the 30 attendees before Mario took the stage. His speed, technique, and accuracy were phenomenal, wowing the audience with his performance of Italian favorites "La Campagnola Bella" and "Carnevale di Venezia," classics such as "Dance of the Comedians" and "Tico Tico" and a medley of songs that began in the Netherlands, went to Venezuela, traveled over to China, then ended his musical journey back in the United States. One highlight was Mario's arrangement and performance of the classic "Unforgettable" made popular by Nat King Cole which included Mario's pre-recorded background accompaniment. I am glad that I had the opportunity to listen to and observe this artist; this was an unforgettable afternoon.

Mario concluded his concert by sharing his perspective on success as an accordionist and the importance of concentrating practice time on technique and chord structures. He shared, "Without understanding technique, you're just playing notes. A quote on his website states, "It is not just an instrument, you have to give your soul, you have to melt with the music. You need to transmit everything you feel to the people that are listening."

January 16, 2011

The monthly meeting of the Delaware Accordion Club met at the 896 Diner, yet where was everyone?? Seems like some football games were more important. The attendance was about 18 people. The players started off with Joe Oberly who had a selection of different tunes starting with Spanish Eyes, When You're Smiling, Danny Boy, and The Anniversary Waltz adding the bellow shake into some polkas. He even did a skit wearing sunglasses showing how a blind Ray Charles could play. He ended with the famous Ave Maria.

Joe Alexander played several selections: Ave Maria, some famous polkas, a military favorite Anchors Away, and some European favorites from Ireland, Italy, and France and finally, Take Me Out to The Ball Game.

We were honored again with the attendance of Howard Scott, better known as Scotty from the Maryland Accordion Club in Catonsville, Maryland. He not only plays accordion but has a One Man Band in which he plays keyboards, sounding like a full orchestra for all occasions. He played on his Pan accordion which weighs 31 pounds. There are only 6 of this model in the country; this brand was the one that Myron Floren played. Among the selections he played were The Supermarket Polka, Venus, Sentimental Journey, and many other great songs. He played well and we hope he returns again.

Our favorite red accordion, the Roland, was played by Bob Shoemaker with many wonderful selections, taking us around the world with Night in Paris, German Polkas, Chicago, and Flick Flack containing 6 pages of music, Joe Oberly helped by changing the pages, and a Pink Panther Melody. It was great to have Bob and Scotty play together. There was a special one called the Trumpet Echo Polka with tuba accent; they also played waltzes, a rumba and some good romantic slow dance tunes. Of course Joe Alexander decided to joined the twosome. Great playing guys, beautifully done. The Maiorano's couldn't resist the open dance floor doing a waltz, rumba and then they were joined by the Mariani's for a slow dance and a swing.

There was no 50/50 drawing this meeting. Better luck next time.

Brian Lee, the university radio announcer for WVUD 91.3 FM, gave us an update on the status of the new higher frequency transformer; the station is waiting on an antenna to carry 75,000 watts. Hopefully this will arrive very soon; it will enable a broader range of area coverage. Brian had to leave early because one of his disc jockeys could not make the night show, so Brian came to the rescue. Brian talked about an up-coming interview with Johnny Mathis, one of his friends.

Written by Thelma Maiorano.

Susan was at her synagogue practicing for a play she wrote.

### **Open Mic - February 20**

Our meeting opened today with an audience of 30 enthusiastic accordion fans. Pat Racioppa led the line-up and played: New York, New York, Al di la, Flight of the Angels, Walk Don't Run, and Ghost Riders in the Sky. Gerald Masucci followed and gave us the Happy Wanderer, La Cumparsita, Italian songs, tangos, and the Tarantella.

Joe Ragan offered Jamaica Farewell, Spanish Eyes, Never on Sunday, and More. Susan Shertok played some duets with Joe: Bing Bang Polka, Sway, Anema e Core (With All My Heart and Soul), Arrivederci Roma, Hey Good Lookin' and Hello Dolly. John Maiorano played The Way We Were, Saber Dance, Dancing in the Dark, Mr. Lucky, and Days of Wine and Roses. Our singers, Charlie and Jeanne Mariani, joined him and offered: Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered, Red Rose Cafe, I Should Care, and When My Old Wedding Ring Was New. Happy 60th anniversary to you! Keep singing and dancing, and you will stay young at heart.

Bob Shoemaker played his Roland and delighted us with After You've Gone, Dream, Night in Paris, Twilight Time, and Peg of My Heart. Gary Woodling joined him for some duets: Sentimental Journey, Up A Lazy River, and Arrivederci Roma. They are our newest dynamic duo!! Henri Mikol played a button Roland accordion and gave us Spanish Eyes and a few French songs. We last saw him perform with the Maryland Accordion Club. Frank Brad returned for a visit; we all wish you a speedy recovery. Carrie Cossaboon won the 50/50 raffle.

### **Report on the Dallas Accordion Convention – March 11-12**

Tony Cristofich and his son Tony had a great time at the NAA in Dallas TX. The event seemed smaller this year, but the quality of the performers was excellent. The Nick Ballarini Invitational Concert was wonderful as well as the concert on Saturday. There were great performances by Patricia Bartell, Bill Cosby, Steve Albini, Tony Lovello, Bruce Gassman, Chris Rybak, and Mario Pedone to name a few.

#### Kudos

To former member Ronnie Rider Jr. who was one of three recipients of the Mayor's Youth Arts Award presented by Dover Mayor Carleton E. Carey Sr. The interview in the article noted that Ronnie traveled to Wilmington for lessons and that he has been playing the accordion for 10 years.

#### Kudos

To Richard DiBlassio on a fine performance at the Downs Cultural Center, Ingleside Retirement Apartments, Wilmington.  
DAC members in attendance included Joe Oberly, John Maiorano, Charlie & Jeanne Mariani, Tony & Lisa Cristofich and Doris Guessford

## Maria LaValle Accordion Bio

I was born in Brooklyn NY to Italian-Spanish parents who fostered a love of music in both me and my brother and sister. For my 8<sup>th</sup> birthday, I was given an accordion. I did not want to play the accordion. I wanted to play the piano. My parents could not afford a piano and the closest instrument to the piano they could think of was the accordion. I reluctantly agreed to take lessons. For the next 7 years I took weekly lessons. Since the accordion, an Invicta, had been purchased from Wurlitzer and was being paid for on a weekly basis, I went to the Wurlitzer Studio in Manhattan for lessons. After the accordion was paid off, I took lessons from various teachers near my home in Brooklyn. I HATED every minute of it!

Finally, after 7 years my mother gave up and for my 15<sup>th</sup> birthday gift, she let me quit! The accordion went into a closet and then into a garage (at my brother's home) in California.

I never gave it a second thought until 1992 (35 years later) when my niece asked me for the whereabouts of the accordion. She had been living in Europe, where the accordion is very popular, and upon her return to the U.S., she wanted to get one and take lessons. Would I be willing to give her my old accordion?

My brother made arrangements to have the accordion shipped back to the east coast. Needless to say it needed a lot of work! Going through the Yellow Pages, I found the "Acme Accordion School" in Westmont NJ, the town next to Collingswood, where I lived at the time. At first, I thought the name of the school was some kind of a joke. ACME? But, I made the call and Mr. Stan Darrow answered. He said he would take a look, and see if it was worth repairing. Even though the repairs cost more than what my parents paid originally, I decided to go ahead with it. When the work was done, Mr. Darrow asked what my plans were. I told him I planned to send it to my niece. He then made this offer – he would give me free lessons for one month and at the end of that time, if I was not interested in taking it up again – no problem. It took one lesson - I couldn't believe how much I remembered! I was HOOKED! I kept the accordion and bought one for my niece.

The following spring, at the AAMS Festival, I won first place in the F. Liszt Category. The year after that, until now, I've played duets – mainly with Ruthann Christopherson. Twenty years and 6 accordions later (I still have my Invicta), and I'm still taking lessons at the Acme Accordion School as often as I can. Since I now live in Delaware and work part-time, I can't make a weekly lesson. For the past 5 years I've concentrated on playing the Chromatic accordion. Also, I'm a member of the Westmont Accordion Band. Looking back, the one BIG regret I have is that I stopped taking lessons all those years ago!

## **Bob Shoemaker Accordion Bio**

I grew up in Allentown PA and studied accordion from age 10 through 15 with Warren Miller, an excellent cocktail pianist and accordionist. I had many competing interests such as baseball, bowling, hunting, fishing, and self taught clarinet and sax. I played in combos in high school and listed the tenor sax as my main instrument with the union but most calls were for a "box" man. I had a Bell double tone chamber with Sano pickup and stereo amp. Filling in with groups of experienced musicians forced me to constantly expand my repertoire and improve chord and bass technique.

After high school, the studio offered me a teaching position which I loved. I had 19 pupils, most from scratch and in 3 years they were on Frosini tunes. "Bubbles" was my favorite. I used the Sedlon system of teaching. While teaching, and gigging, I earned an Associates Degree in Engineering from Penn State which got me to Delaware as a Dupont draftsman.

I was drafted in '63 and served 2 years in Japan in the army. When I came back to Dupont, I drove the 90 miles to Allentown each Friday and gigged through the weekends, sometimes 4 or 5 gigs by Sunday evening. I settled in with 3 older guys from the Big Band era who really pushed my development as a musician. They played a lot of medleys and changed keys often.

I left Dupont in '69 and with my savings and the G.I. bill was able to earn my Engineering Degree from Delaware in 2 years at age 30. I returned to Dupont as an engineer and continued to play in the Lehigh Valley area on weekends until '73 when I stopped completely.

I married Pat in '74. We have 2 great daughters; we even lived in Memphis when Elvis died, and in Holland where our youngest was born. I retired 5 years ago as Vice President and Chief Engineer from BE&K Engineering, now owned by Halliburton.

Joe Alexander and I worked closely together for several years but never knew the other played the accordion. Joe mentioned the Accordion Club to my wife Pat and she said that I played at one time, but neither she nor my daughters had ever heard me play.

When I dug out the old box it needed repair which Ed Tafelski took care of. I had one sheet of music - "A Gay Ranchero" which I worked on until it sounded reasonable and showed up at my first meeting with that, a few standards, and a polka or two.

The club has been a catalyst for my renewed enjoyment of music in retirement.

Thanks to all of you for making the club meetings fun.

**For Sale or Wanted**

**Looking for a particular piece of music or instrument repair?**

**Found an old instrument you want to sell or give away?**

Contact the editor at 302-993-0374 or by mail to 10 Walnut Avenue, Wilmington DE 19805-1144

Acme Accordion School, 322 Haddon Avenue Westmont, NJ 08108 – phone 856-854-6628

Accordion Gallery, Landing NJ, 973-770-6877

Matt Hedson says this is a good place for repairs.

Frank Brad, performer, call 609-408-3906 or 302-529-9333

Joe 215-514-3787, U.S. Sales Representative of accordions made in Castelfidardo, Italy

Brent Hancock, Keyboardist, 302-731-4149 or 302-299-5260

Cintioli's Music Center, 5359 Oxford Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19124

215-533-2050 or 215-533-2053, [www.cintiolimusic.com](http://www.cintiolimusic.com)

Concord Music Company, Inc., 2805 Concord Pike, Wilmington DE 19803, 302-658-6875

The Friends of Newark are now hosting Mocha, Music and More

Currently held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month

If you have original material that you would like to present at an upcoming event,  
please contact Lori Bencoter at 302-834-3385 or email [Bencoter2@aol.com](mailto:Bencoter2@aol.com)

Modern Accordion School II

John Lolli, 226 Cedar Avenue, Richland NJ 08350, 856-691-9273

Pat Racioppa sells straps; he will bring them to our meetings, call 717-939-3096

Howard Scott "Scotty"

<http://web.me.com/Scottymusic>

Accordion lessons in Maryland, 1090 Notley Court, Pasadena MD. 21122-1819, (410) 255-7889

Email [Scottymusic@me.com](mailto:Scottymusic@me.com)

Ed Tafelski from New Castle DE, 302-655-3529, Accordion Repairs, Teacher & Entertainer

Well-Tempered Music, David Cottrell, 293 Lewisville Road, Elkton MD 21921, 410-392-2279

Gary Woodling - accordion blog, [www.garywoodling.com](http://www.garywoodling.com)

It has a forum about accordion repair tools.

At the bottom of the article is a link to purchase a "quick repair kit" to have on-hand  
for those last minute fixes until you can get to a trained professional.

**Show over – Latch the bellows**

**Accordion Events**

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**April 2-3**  
**AAMS Accordion Workshops, Marriott Hotel, Whippany NJ**  
[www.aamsaccordionfestival.com](http://www.aamsaccordionfestival.com)

**May 6**  
**Accordion Day concert in Doylestown PA**  
**look for updates on Gary Woodling's blog**

**May 21 from 2 – 5 pm, Tri-State Accordion Band Clinic**  
**May 21 at 7pm, Accordion Heroes Concert**  
**Free event hosted by the Maryland Accordion Club**  
**Bloomsbury Community Center Auditorium**  
**106 Bloomsbury Avenue, Catonsville MD**  
**For more info, contact Joe Fertitta 410-744-3352**  
**or by email at mdaccordion03@yahoo.com**

**June 19 at 1:30pm**  
**AccordiCats concert – more details TBA**  
**Gallucio's Restaurant, 1709 Lovering Avenue, Wilmington**

**July 15-18, Accordions by the Sea, Victoria BC**

**October 31 – November 3, Las Vegas Accordion Convention**

Editor  
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Carmen Vitanza says, “Hug a musician, they never get to dance.”