

May 2020 Newsletter of The Silicon Valley Accordion Society



The Prez says: "Stay safe and well."

We're Back! Your Board of Directors unanimously agreed that we should keep the Newsletter coming to you as a means of maintaining contact and keeping you advised of current activities. We also agreed that, given the moratorium on meetings, we would hold off on membership dues until June, or we start up having meetings again, or we're \$broke! (And I want to thank those of you who have provided us with additional donations! You desire to remain anonymous, but you know who you are! And so do I and our Treasurer **Rosemary Miceli**!! This will help carry us through the "dry" period!). Our membership coordinator **Pam Kawashima**, will keep us posted as to when we will again be asking for membership renewals.



Rosemary M., watching the Society's finances.



Pam K. who runs the website, schedules performers, and arranges Zoom meetings.

The Board of SVAS had a meeting on May 4th! As with all meetings going on at the moment, this was a Zoom meeting. And a great many thanks to **Pam Kawashima** for setting it up, and getting us all included. It was a lot of fun, and we took several important decisions: (i) As noted above, the annual membership drive would be postponed pending further developments. (ii) The Society would continue to publish the monthly newsletter. But in order to keep costs down, this will be a 4 page version, instead of the usual 8 pages. (iii) We will definitely have another meeting soon using the Zoom format! If you would like to join the next meeting, just let Pam know. You can simply be curious about how the Society actually works, and watch and listen to the proceedings. Or chip in with your ideas and recommendations. We are living through a most unusual event, and anyone's ideas and thoughts can be helpful. And you can leave the meeting at anytime. Nothing to lose!

Our Newsletter Editor, **Scott Williamson**, needs our help. PLEASE assist Scott by sending him any articles that you believe would be of interest to our readership--Biographical sketches, "human-interest" stories, memories, accordion-related items, (tasteful!) jokes!--you get the picture. An example: what instruments do you play beside (or instead of) the accordion--Misha: piano and guitar--Barbara Corsiglia: guitar, recorder, concertina, gut bucket base, and several others!--Ken Caple: Vibraphone--Gloria Tapogna--recorder, sax, organ and now Ukulele. Another: what is your favorite (or only) accordion--and why? So have a go, **PULEEZ!** And thanks to Barbara Corsiglia for kicking off the new tradition, as you can read further on.



Scott W. in a B&W moment searching for interesting accordion articles.



Benjamin F. Born too early to join the Accordion Society—but not his fault!

Benjamin Franklin is reported to have said: "Either write something worth reading--or do something worth writing (about)" ! (Courtesy of the Saturday Evening Post) This is your cue. Remember that anything that interests you will almost certainly interest many in our community.

Bill's letter, continued on page 2

Silicon Valley Accordion Society USUALLY (and it will again!) meets on the first Sunday of each month, at CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos, CA 94024. Doors open at 1:00. \$5 for members, \$10 for non-members, 16 and under free. Annual Memberships: Regular \$35, Gold \$125, Platinum \$200

Bill's letter, continued from page 1.

I am really sorry that we missed the May meeting. I did not get the opportunity to wish all the mothers among our group a very **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!** We hope that yours was as enjoyable as the current "limited contact" situation would allow!

Keeping with the times, the annual Cotati accordion festival has been cancelled, as have all of the other regular accordion festivals that we know about: Leavenworth, Las Vegas International Accordion Convention, even Oktoberfest in Munich.

That's All, Folks! Stay safe and well, and we shall meet again---soon! Bill

THE HUMOR CORNER

1. As seen in your local accordion shop in early March:
2. As told by an occasional traveler. "We've all been inundated by ads and emails from the airlines pointing out that 'We're all in this together.' And I sympathize. But I also remember last summer when I put my 52lb carryall onto the scale. I was on my own then.
3. A young, quite good looking male accordion player was walking slowly down the street with an attractive gal on his arm. What was she called?
A tattoo.
4. Why do accordion players NEVER get involved in games of hide-and-seek? *Nobody ever finds them.*
5. What is the difference between an accordion and a trampoline? *You take your shoes off when you jump on a trampoline.*



Tips for Practicing the Accordion by Joe Dimitrovich

www.capricious-accordion.com

(Ed note: Joe's suggestions were detailed, with explanations at every step. Thank you Joe. We condensed them for the newsletter.)

1. Prepare a Setlist of music for practice sessions. Include some long, some short, some complex and difficult, some less difficult. Include varied genres, rhythms, and styles. The list should contain enough material for a typical practice session without resulting in fatigue.
2. At a particularly difficult piece or section, play it repeatedly until you can play it correctly several times in succession. Next practice session, begin with this piece, favoring the synapses that were formed most recently. Another trick is to start with the problem piece, but play the Setlist in the reverse order.
3. If there are no particular "problem" pieces, consider one of the pieces in the Setlist as the "priority" piece. Make a point of ending the practice session with the priority piece, and similarly beginning the next practice session with it. This way will also help memorization of the priority piece.
4. Overall, try to play the more difficult pieces in the Setlist when you are freshest and most alert. The other, better known and/or more familiar pieces can be played when the first flush of enthusiasm has worn off.
5. Always end on a good note, just as these tips end on a good pun.



Joe, at the last meeting he played for us, at Harry's Hofbrau

Joe.



Vic & Barbara Corsiglia

The Corsiglias——Their Musical Journey, by Barbara Corsiglia

Vic's interest in music began in elementary school when he announced to his Italian parents that he wanted to play the trumpet. He was met with dead silence. After several more requests, he gave up and said that he wished to play the accordion. That

very day he was signed up for accordion lessons with Joe Neronde in Sacramento. He played his Neronde accordion at the California State Fair, a local hospital, and a high school show. But, college, a job, marriage and kids found his accordion stashed in the closet.

During the 1960s, folk music and string instruments were popular. Vic bought a banjo and then later a mandolin and took lessons. In time, he joined a group. The leader of the group heard him mention that he played the accordion. She wanted him to play it in her group. So, out of the closet came the accordion—after 25 years! He opened the case; it smelled horribly. He took the accordion apart; the keys sprang out of the accordion, onto the kitchen table and onto the floor. He cleaned them with WD-40 (not a good idea). Much later he bought a 72 bass and a 120 bass Bugari. He joined Barbara's group and several others.

Barbara never had a desire to play a musical instrument; she thought they were too delicate. Her Italian father wanted her to play the accordion; her grandmother said that she was too skinny to play the accordion; she should play the piano. As long as they disagreed, she didn't have to play either. She just wanted to dance and draw pictures.



The Bees Knees, circa early '80s. That's Barbara in the middle, 5th from either side.

them to go to a local convalescent hospital to entertain. Hence, the Bees Knees group was formed. Vic and others joined with them. Many instruments were added. After more than 40 years, the group is still active (three original players are still participating).

After Vic retired from NASA (aeronautical engineer) and Barbara from teaching, they became much more actively involved in music, joining several groups, attending music camps, jams sessions and playing a variety of music—folk, country, ethnic, dixieland, old standards. It has been one of the most enriching parts of their lives—sharing music and being with wonderful friends! They sometimes practice music together—but, they don't always agree on how a song should be played.



Vic in the Sunnyvale Senior Nutrition Band, one of several groups that Vic plays in.

Fast forward to the 1960s—Barbara listened to her college roommates play guitar and sing; she never thought it would be in her future to do those things—until a friend encouraged her, taught her a few guitar chords, and got her to take group lessons from Ron Green. She, in turn, shared her VAST knowledge of 12 chords and a few strums with several friends and then convinced

Only space for one suggested video this month. It is entitled Oktoberfest Accordion. (Oktoberfest has been cancelled, just in case you were thinking....) And it is in fact a 42 minute ad for a Roland electronic accordion! But the playing is beautiful, and it is a treat to see such great fingerwork up close. Might help technique! Also good background music. <https://youtu.be/h1TnAPNBV7Y>

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE at SVASociety.org and visit us on Facebook
Watch Pam's Videos of SVAS meetings on YouTube at: [accordionpam](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqj8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K)**



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