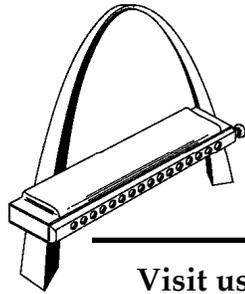


January—February 2004



# The GHC REEDER

Visit us on the Internet at [www.gatewayharmonicclub.org](http://www.gatewayharmonicclub.org)

## NEWS & VIEWS *by Mary Ann Love*

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Health Report — Bob and Leta Provart have both been in surgery for facial skin cancer. Jackie Pratte has been taking therapy following bone replacement in her broken arm. Henry Gerfen has been feeling under the weather. Peg Davis has been continuing chemo treatments. Lillian Krueger is still recovering from surgery. Please keep them all in your thoughts and prayers.

2003 Charitable Contributions — Gateway Harmonica Club is proud to present to each of the following charitable organizations a check for \$500 each:

- Salvation Army
- Shriners Hospital for Children
- Cardinal Glennon Hospital
- Post-Dispatch 100 Neediest Cases
- Rock Hill Baptist Church

Election of Officers — Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the club. Incumbents Charlie Pratte, President; Ron Beer, Vice-President; Mary Ann Love, Secretary, retained their respective positions, and Buddy Hirsch was elected Treasurer. Jim Melchers had reached term limits as Treasurer, and we want to acknowledge the outstanding dedication and time he devoted to the club during the past four years.

At this time the GHC officers would like to extend sincere appreciation and thanks to all members who made these donations possible by their interest in club matters and participation in scheduled events.

Dues Are Due — GHC membership dues for 2004 are payable January 1 and become delinquent February 1. Please see the membership/renewal application form on page 7.

SPAH 2004 membership dues are also payable January 1. Applications are

available at each GHC meeting.

Harmonica Man — Pat Stewart, who has visited GHC a couple of times, was recently the subject of a Post-Dispatch article about his work with children. Pat had asked us for assistance and there has been some discussion at recent meetings about how we could help. However, we have been unable to contact Pat. If anyone hears from him, please put him in touch with Jim Melchers.

Mike's on the Web — Club member Mike LaRue now has a website up and running. It's a directory of St. Louis business and community info. Check it out at

[www.archcityconnect.com](http://www.archcityconnect.com)

Visitors to this site can find (among other things) a listing for our club (including a photo), how to contact GHC and a link to our website.

Nice going, Mike!

Harmonica Classes — At long last, we have received the rest of a shipment of Huang Cadet Soloist diatonics so that we can proceed with the next round of beginner instruction. We have had a backlog of requests from students but were unable to proceed because the harmonicas were on back order. We're now set to go with ten students, but because of the holidays and Joe Fey's travel schedule, we have had to delay the startup until late January. The three sessions will be on January 27, February 3 and February 10 from 6:00 to 6:45 PM. Thanks to Louise Cook for contacting the students with schedule information.

Movie Review: — About 35 members and guests were on hand Tuesday, December 9, to see the collector's edition videos of

*(Continued on p. 2)*

THE GHC REEDER is a bimonthly publication of the Gateway Harmonica Club, Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and advancement of the harmonica. The club meets weekly on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM at the Rock Hill Baptist Church, 9125 Manchester, Brentwood, MO.

Inquiries about membership should be directed to:

Buddy Hirsch, Treasurer  
47 Orchard Lane  
Kirkwood, MO 63122  
(314) 821-8651  
e-mail: ?????

For information about club activities and performances, contact:

Charles Pratte, President  
1547 Azalea Dr.  
Webster Groves, MO 63119  
(314) 961-7764  
email: CAPJR68@aol.com

All other correspondence should be directed to:

Mary Ann Love  
Recording & Corresponding Secretary  
1162 Villa Flora Dr.  
O'Fallon, MO 63366-4443  
(636)-379-7707  
e-mail: malove@mindspring.com

Information about the club's activities is also available on the World Wide Web at:

[www.gatewayharmonicaclub.org](http://www.gatewayharmonicaclub.org)



Birthday greetings are extended to the following members of the GHC family who are celebrating birthdays in January and February:

<i>January</i>		<i>February</i>	
Muriel, Frank	1/3	Weindell, Pauline	2/7
Stieven, Teresa	1/3	Warren, Amanda	2/8
Perry, Alfred	1/5	Holland, Tim	2/19
Hessel, Clea	1/5	Roberts, Ernie	2/21
Heininger, Ed	1/8	Ford, Von Rhey	2/24
Vaeth, Art	1/12	Wolff, Sidney	2/26
Turner, Chuck	1/12	Bonfiglio, Sandy	2/27
Bottchen, John	1/15		
Sutterfield, Johanna	1/28		

If we have missed a member's or spouse's birthday, please let us know so we can correct our records. Thanks.

## NEWS & VIEWS *(from p. 1)*

some of the Harmonica Rascals and Harmonicats. Thanks go to Richard Krueger for sharing these videos and to Jim Melchers for providing the projection equipment. Besides being wowed by their talent, they interjected a lot of humor and fun. That's entertainment!

GHC Email Address Book — As personal computers find their way into more and more GHC members' homes, we continue to widen our circle of communication by email. One recent addition to our address book is the email address of Bill and Rosemary Nessler. You can now reach them at:

[ranlwn@msn.com](mailto:ranlwn@msn.com).

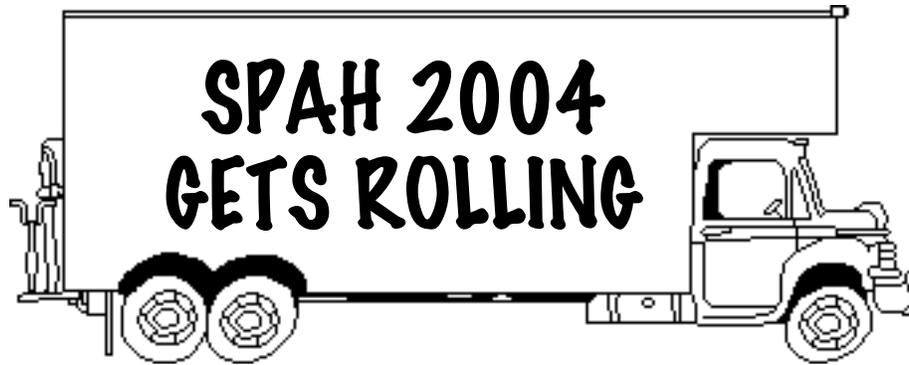
If you have email and have not previously been receiving messages from the club, please give your email address to Joe Fey.

## MORE ON OUR ROLLING ADVERTISEMENT

Guy Vaccaro has been having fun with the Gateway Harmonica Club magnetic signs on his truck complete with musical notes. He reports: "It's been fun especially whenever people pull up alongside at stop lights and smilingly toot their horns with thumbs up! On one occasion two women stopped and the passenger lowered her window yelling for me to lower my window so they could hear what I was playing on my harmonica. It was a real blast! They pulled off laughing and clapping!"

At other times I try to park my truck where there's heavy foot traffic and place business cards, that my daughter, Pamela, made for me on the outside door panels where they can be readily seen. Some have been taken."

Guy took the initiative to have these signs made and applied himself. Guy often transports the sound equipment to gigs. The club says, "Thanks, Guy, so happy you are enjoying your slice of life with the harmonica!" That's what it's all about!



Members of the SPAH leadership team were in St. Louis on November 20 and 21 to check out further details of the 2004 convention site and to meet with GHC members about the host club's responsibilities. The SPAH team included Doug Tate, Paul Davies, Roger Bale, Gene Hansen, Jack Ely and Rudy Michelin.

About twenty-five GHC members and spouses were on hand for the Friday night meeting at the Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet. Doug Tate gave an overview of the volunteer effort needed and all of the SPAH team members answered questions and offered suggestions.

Here is the list of folks who have volunteered so far for various assistance at the convention. Additional volunteers are needed and welcome, and you may volunteer for more than one position. Contact Frank Davis or Joe Fey to help in any of the areas listed below. You will meet a lot of enthusiastic harmonica players and have fun at the same time. SPAH is coming up fast (August) and we are sprinting into action as hosts.

- BANQUET: Frank Davis, Joe Fey, Bob Pangilinan, Guy Vaccaro
- DAILY TICKET SALES: Betty Ford, Ria Meagher
- EMCEES' ASSISTANTS FOR EVENING SHOWS: (volunteers are needed to help Paul Davies and Buzz Krantz make sure performers are ready to go on as scheduled)
- HOTEL LIAISON: Frank Davis, Joe Fey
- KIDS SESSIONS: (Volunteers will be needed to help Buddy Wakefield keep children in order during his teaching sessions)
- OPEN MIC: (Volunteers needed to help Marvin Monroe, Roger Monroe, and Herb Eck make sure open mic performers are ready to go on as scheduled)
- PHOTOGRAPHY: Mike LaRue, Ernie Roberts
- PUBLICITY: Joe Fey, Mike LaRue, Jim Melchers
- REGISTRATION/INFORMATION DESKS: SPAH personnel in charge of registration will be Roger and Nancy Bale, Rudy and Doris Michelin. GHC volunteers are Ron Beer, Judy Beer, Mary Ann Love, Bill Nesslein, Rosemary Nesslein, Charlie Pratte, Sid Wolff
- RESTAURANTS: Frank Davis, Guy Vaccaro, Sid Wolff
- SEMINARS: Ron Beer, Bill Dulin, Audria Gebhardt, Buddy Hirsch, Bill Nesslein
- SENIORS AFTERNOON: Frank Davis
- SOUND: Frank Davis, Henry Gerfen
- SPAH STORE: SPAH Treasurer Gene Hansen will be in charge. GHC volunteers are Judy Beer, Bill Dulin, Sue Fey, Ria Meagher, Charley Pratte, Ernie Roberts,
- SPOUSE ACTIVITIES: Peg Davis, Sue Fey, Jessie Hirsch, Mary Ann Love, Theresa Stieven
- TRANSPORTATION: (Volunteers may be needed to assist VIPs with transportation to and from the airport)
- USHERS: Judy Beer, Ron Beer, Louise Cook, Bill Davis, Betty Ford, Ernst Hackmann, Buddy Hirsch, Ria Meagher, Bob Pangilinan, Joe Uhl, Guy Vaccaro
- WEBSITE: Mike LaRue, Jim Melchers, Ernie Roberts

*Editors Note: In the absence of a Biography from a GHC member this issue, we are going to feature an artist who was outstandingly impressive at the last St. Louis SPAH convention.*

## ROBERT BONFIGLIO

As a truly unique artist gifted with extraordinary lyrical expression, harmonica virtuoso Robert Bonfiglio (pronounced "Bone-feel-yo") has taken an instrument known to all and elevated it to new heights. Bonfiglio's singular ability to perform as a classical virtuoso with symphonies, breathe life into pop music and play the blues, have earned him extraordinarily high critical praise. The Boston Globe raved about Bonfiglio calling him "A master of the harmonica (whose playing is something you have to hear to believe - you wouldn't have thought it possible)," while the Newark Star-Ledger noted, "Bonfiglio is a stunning musician by any measure" and the Los Angeles Times simply described him as "The Paganini of the harmonica."

Bonfiglio has received extensive recognition in many of the best-known concert halls in the United States and

*(Continued on p. 5)*

## PLAYING A HARMONICA CONCERTO WITH AN ORCHESTRA

by Robert Bonfiglio

(Reprinted with permission from *Harmonica World* Oct/Nov 2003)

So I have just played my Orchestre de la Suisse Romande debut - one of the top orchestras in the world - and you might wonder what preparation has went into this performance.

The amount of preparation is mind boggling when you step back and look at it. Five years of harmonica technique and articulation with Changer Huang, 12 years of coaching on the major works for harmonica and orchestra with Andrew Lolya, the Principal Flute of the New York City Ballet, and a BS from Mannes College of Music and a Masters from Manhattan School of Music in Composition, with studies with Aaron Copland and now one is ready to walk out on stage with a major symphony orchestra . . . NOT QUITE!

The object of gaining technique is so that you don't have to think about technique when you go to perform a concerto; you can just play emotions out of the harmonica. To be a soloist you must be able to play your instrument technically, but that is not enough; you must be able to do it in front of 3,000 people; but that is not enough, you must have charisma and take command of the stage; but that is not enough, you must be able to meet and greet the supporters after the concert; but that is not enough, you must also translate on television and give good interview.

Classical playing is dangerous because everyone in the orchestra knows if you can play or not - classical music has a "pocket" in the same sense that blues has a "pocket" and the phrasing and the control and the tone all must be in the "classical pocket" or the players in the orchestra and the conductor will know immediately.

Classical playing is also about taste - taste of tonal colors, taste of vibrato, taste of phrasing and taste of repertoire and stage presence. This taste does not come out of a vacuum; it comes from years of study of classical music and being coached by other great classical musicians. Score reading, analysis, history, and so much more go into how to play a Harmonica Concerto and which one to play. Classical playing is not about playing *The Flight of the Bumble Bee* 100 mph while standing on your head.

The same rules that apply for Toots to play cool jazz, apply for classical players to play music acceptable to the orchestras and audiences.

The reason I play the *Villa-Lobos Harmonica Concerto* so often is that Villa-Lobos is the most well known major composer to write a harmonica concerto and also because I recorded it on RCA with Gerard Schwarz and the New York Chamber Symphony so the music directors of orchestras hear this performance and then engage me.



Classical playing is also about tone. It's about power! You must be able to play with a 60 piece orchestra without amplification and sound loud and have a full tone. Of the 300 performances of the Villa-Lobos Harmonica Concerto I have done since recording it, about 65 have been totally acoustic. The acoustic sound is the classical sound and any enhancement must be subtle in order to be in the classical groove. I use a wireless Sennheiser MKE2 lapel mic which moves with me as I move on stage.

I play a CBH 2016 because it's the only harmonica that responds to power; other chromatic harmonicas sound like toys to me. I use the fact that I played blues first to add to this, because blues harp is about power, too. My job is to pick up where Adler, Reilly, Sebastian, and Huang left off and go from there. I absolutely love playing the harmonica and I love performing with orchestras.

Now after three great concerts and great reviews with the Minnesota Orchestra they have offered to do the world premier of the new Harmonica Concerto by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom in 2006!

## FROM THE DESK OF EL PRESIDENTE:

The year 2003 was both a good year and one filled with health problems for Club members and some family members. I will not dwell on the health problems other than to say "We are in the hands of God and we are on the mend."

I overheard Joe Fey say that we will have performed 41 gigs during the year. That is outstanding, when you consider that we limit our outside playing to four per month, one per week and we do not take any new bookings after December 19th. I've turned down several late December bookings.

After all of our expenses were paid, we gave away \$2500 to five charitable organizations. So far bookings for 2004 are sparse with only one gig booked for January and none for February. Fortunately, we have a healthy reserve.

Once again, we will be challenged this coming year, with the responsibility of hosting SPAH (Society for the Preservation and Advancement of the Harmonica) convention during August at the West Port Plaza. Under the leadership of Joe Fey and Frank Davis, we have made a very good beginning. Many of our members have accepted assignments for the SPAH Convention.

Thank you for helping make 2003 such a Club success. I hope that the Club will be even more successful during 2004.

I wish our members and their families all the best for the Holidays and the year 2004.

*Charlie Pratte*

### ROBERT BONFIGLIO *(from p. 4)*

beyond. He has appeared on several occasions at both Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl and Lincoln Center. He has also appeared with singer Anne Murray at Symphony Hall, where they performed with the Boston Pops, conducted by John Williams in a show that was nationally televised on PBS's "Evening At Pops." In addition, Bonfiglio has been the featured soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Madrid RTVe Symphony, the Minnesota Symphony, l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the New York Pops, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Seville Symphony, the Luxembourg Philharmonic as well as the orchestras of Indianapolis, San Antonio, Denver, Milwaukee, Puerto Rico, Charlotte, Oregon and Florida, and many others.

In September 1996, Bonfiglio gave a special performance at the Grand Canyon for President Clinton, Robert Redford, members of the Cabinet, and others involved in preserving the wilderness in a ceremony to dedicate the Canyon Lands of Utah.

In addition to orchestral concerts, "Robert Bonfiglio & Bach Porch," a new acoustic ensemble which blends together classical, pop, folk and blues forms has appeared throughout the U.S. beginning in the 2002/2003 season.

Bonfiglio has also made guest appearances on many

of the top television and radio shows in the U.S. and Canada including "CBS Sunday Morning," "Live with Regis and Kathie Lee," "The Larry King Show," "The Dini Petty Show," "CBS This Morning," "The Tom Snyder Show," "A.M. Canada" and "Music City Tonight" (TNN). He's also been seen throughout the U.S. featured in two PBS specials, "Home For The Holidays" and "An Evening with Robert Bonfiglio."

Bonfiglio's recordings reflect his great range of talent. From the highly praised classical album where he performed the "Villa-Lobos Concerto for Harmonica and Orchestra" with conductor Gerard Schwarz, to his pop recording, "Through The Raindrops," which spent 8 months on the Billboard charts, Bonfiglio established himself as one of those rare artists who can prevail in two distinct worlds of music. Many of his other recordings have also charted including "Romances," which features selections by Debussy, Sondheim, Bach and Gershwin and the Christmas album, "All Is Calm." Of special note is the pop jazz/blues album, "Live At The Grand Canyon," as it was recorded at the Grand Canyon Music Festival which Robert Bonfiglio founded in 1984.

Born in Iowa where he first began as a blues player and trained in the conservatories of New York City, Robert Bonfiglio is a virtuoso without limits.



With the coming of SPAH to St. Louis in August, 2004, some of our new members are asking: WHAT IS SPAH? The following article reprinted from *Harmonica Happenings* (Spring/Summer 2003)

Vaudeville, movies, the profusion of night clubs, as well as playing on the street corner, were some of the activities that helped the harmonica reach new heights in the musical world during the 30's, 40's, and early 50's. Then came a new generation of families with more mobility and more leisure time to take vacations and attend organized entertainment events away from home, which diminished the visibility of the instrument and, for a short period of time, put the harmonica back into its case.

A small group of harmonica enthusiasts in the Detroit, Michigan area felt that the harmonica could be compatible with the changing times. They undertook the task of locating other harmonicists in the area, and the group began to grow. Through their efforts, the first meeting of SPAH as an organization was held in October 1962. A year later, on October 23, 1963, the Society for the Preservation and Advancement of the Harmonica (otherwise known as SPAH) was officially incorporated in the State of Michigan, USA as a nonprofit organization.

SPAH's objective is to preserve and respect the colorful past of the harmonica, while advancing its acceptance as a bonafide musical instrument. Among the membership are individuals and entire families; accomplished musicians as well as beginners; people of all ages. Many members have played or do play the harmonica professionally. Their music styles, ranging through Country, Blues, Popular, and Classical, can be enjoyed via recordings or live performances.

SPAH is governed by a Board of Directors elected biennially by absentee ballot through the mails. SPAH's quarterly publication, *Harmonica Happenings*, contains a wide range of information of interest to all harmonica

players from beginner to professional. SPAH remains in continuous communication by mail, telephone, fax, and E-mail with members around the world, thus enabling us to respond to all inquiries by relying on the expertise of its members and its archives of harmonica information and memorabilia.

SPAH members are encouraged to form harmonica clubs in their own local communities. As part of local clubs and as individuals, SPAH members participate in local activities that include parades, fairs, festivals, and civic performances. Many major harmonica clubs sponsor an annual gathering in their area which draws enthusiasts from far and wide to meet, renew acquaintances and have fun. SPAH sponsors an annual convention which brings harmonicists from throughout the world. For five days amateurs, professionals, beginners, and experts play their harmonicas, attend seminars, share their knowledge, and shop for the latest in harmonicas, accessories, and recordings. The event is highlighted by the Saturday Night Banquet and Show where the best harmonica players in the world perform for the best harmonica audience in the world. Some who have played for us at conventions include Larry Adler, Jerry Adler, Jerry Murad, Charlie Musselwhite, Mildred Mulcay, Alan Pogson, Stan Harper, Charlie Leighton, Don Les, Pete Pedersen, Alan "Blackie" Schackner, Lee Oskar, Peter Madcat Ruth, Sugar Blue, Tommy Morgan, Gary Primich, Mike Stevens, Stagg McMann, Charlie McCoy, Cham-Ber Huang, Robert Bonfiglio, Harry Bee, Larry Logan, Eddy Manson, and Richard Hayman.

The many benefits of SPAH will be available to you as a member. You are welcome to join SPAH regardless of playing ability or style. SPAH also welcomes members who just like to listen to harmonica music. You will be joining people from around the world to preserve and advance the harmonica.

# GHC EVENTS CALENDAR

## WEEKLY EVENTS

Tuesday evening meetings at Rock Hill Baptist Church, 9125 Manchester, St. Louis, MO 63144:

- 6:30 PM - Blues Group, led by Louise Cook — Everyone welcome
- 7:00 PM - First Tuesday of month: Business Meeting — Everyone welcome  
All other Tuesdays: Band Rehearsal — Everyone welcome
- 8:15 PM - Open Mic — Everyone welcome

## OTHER EVENTS

- 1/11/2004 (Sun) 2:00 PM — Delmar Gardens North, 4401 Parker Road, Florissant, MO (about 1/2 mile east of New Halls Ferry)
- 1/21/2004 (Wed) 1:00 PM — Cardinal Ritter Institute Adult Day Care: Holy Infant Apartments, 7663 Watson
- 1/27/2004 (Tue) 6:00 PM — Beginner Part 1 Class: Session 1
- 1/29/2004 (Thu) 2:30 PM — Garden Villas North: 4505 Parker Rd, Florissant, MO 63033
- 2/3/2004 (Tue) 6:00 PM — Beginner Part 1 Class: Session 2
- 2/10/2004 (Tue) 6:00 PM — Beginner Part 1 Class: Session 3
- 3/18/2004 (Thu) 7:30 PM — St. Peter's 50 Plus Club: St. Peter's Church Cafeteria (On the Corner of Clay and Jefferson in Kirkwood, MO. Jefferson is off Kirkwood Rd. Go West one block to Clay)
- 3/23/2004 (Tue) 1:00 PM — Temple Israel Retirees, #1 Rabbi Alvan D. Rubin Dr., St. Louis, MO 63141(Highway 40 to Linbergh Blvd.--North to Ladue Rd--Left or West on Ladue Rd. to the Temple, which is before you reach Spoede Rd.)
- 4/7/2004 (Wed) 1:30 PM — Weber Road Branch St. Louis County Library: 4444 Weber Road, Affton
- 4/15/2004 (Thu) — Buckeye Harmonica Festival: Holiday Inn Worthington (thru Sat 4/17), 175 Hutchinson Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43235
- 5/20/2004 (Thu) 12:15 PM — Greater St. Louis Suburban Educators: Heritage House, 2800 Olive (west of Jefferson)
- 8/8/2004 (Sun) 2:00 PM — Delmar Gardens North, 4401 Parker Road, Florissant, MO (about 1/2 mile east of New Halls Ferry)
- 8/17/2004 (Tue) — SPAH 2004 -- St. Louis, MO: Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet (thru Sat 8/21)

## GATEWAY HARMONICA CLUB 2004 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Please include me on the membership roll of the Gateway Harmonica Club for 2004. My check is enclosed for:

- Regular Membership Renewal (\$10.00)                       New Membership Application (\$15.00)
- Lifetime Membership (\$100.00)                               Associate Membership (Newsletter Only) (\$5.00)
- Honorary Membership (spouse of deceased GHC member) — NO PAYMENT REQUIRED

Name \_\_\_\_\_

If information below has changed since last year of membership, please enter new information

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

(Area Code) Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and membership dues payment to Buddy Hirsch, 47 Orchard Lane, Kirkwood, MO 63122. Make check payable to Gateway Harmonica Club, Inc. • 2004 dues become delinquent February 1, 2004.

## TECH TIPS • TECH TIPS • TECH TIPS

Compiled by Sissi (Anneliese) Jones, Harmonica Tech. For Hohner Inc.

Harmonics Do's

1. Break in a new harmonica gently.
2. Warm up harp to body temperature.
3. Rinse mouth with cool water before playing.
4. After playing wipe outside of harmonica with lint free cloth  
(rubbing alcohol on the cloth will help keep harp shiny).
5. Let harmonica air dry before putting back into case.
6. Clean parts after removing them from harmonica  
(such as slide assembly etc.)  
with soapy water to remove sticky stuff.
7. Tighten screws till just snug, no need to overdo.
8. Use glue sparingly.
9. Practice repairing on an old worn out harp first.
10. Keep harmonica clean, free of dust, lint, and any foreign matter.

Harmonics Don'ts

1. Don't play a brand new harp with excessive force.
2. Don't play a cold harmonica.
3. Don't rinse, soak, or boil a harmonica.
4. Don't leave harp in hot (or freezing) car.
5. Don't oil slide assembly.
6. Don't force slide.
7. Don't expose harmonica to any extreme conditions  
(such as heat, cold, excess moisture, excess breath pressure.)
8. Don't over tighten screws.
9. Don't attempt working on reeds until having had some  
Practice on an old worn out one.
10. Don't eat or drink, especially sugary substances right  
before playing.

