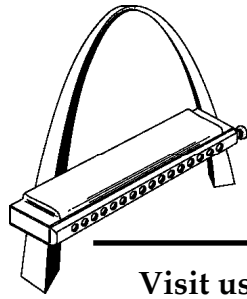


January—February 2005



The GHC REEDER

Visit us on the Internet at www.gatewayharmonicaclub.org

NEWS & VIEWS *by Mary Ann Love*

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Health Report:

Tony Wilbraham is recovering from back surgery. See his note elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our sympathy is offered to Frank and Bill Davis on the loss of their brother, Carl Sawyer, from Little Rock, Arkansas on November 7, 2004.

We also extend our sympathy to Norma Uhl on the loss of her dear husband, Joe. Joe was a longtime GHC member and dear friend. We will sorely miss him.

Welcome Visitor

Doreen Scurlock paid the club a visit on November 9 and played "Beautiful Ohio" accompanied by Bob Provart. We are always glad to see Doreen. She is ever cheerful and a delightful presence. Doreen keeps active in her hometown Buckeye Club and is also a member of the GHC.

Left Over Turkey

At open mic on the After-Thanksgiving practice session, Sidney Wolff apologized for missing the previous week, but had prepared "*Turkey In The Straw*". After his usual greetings and oratory, Sid played that tune (quite well and was accompanied 'on the wing' by Joe Fey on chord). Sid went on to remind us all that we have so much to be thankful for and to play other appropriate Thanksgiving tunes: *Over the River and Through the Woods, We Gather Together, Bless This House, Thanks for the Memories, Thank Heavens for Little Girls (!)* Sid always adds his own unique style and humor and we are very appreciative of this club founding father, past officer (multi times), and continued faithful member.

Christmas Get-Together

Another great party sponsored by our Ladies Auxiliary following the December Business Meeting on December 7. Thanks, ladies. Games, prizes and special holiday treats were enjoyed by all who attended.

Dues are Due January 1 for 2005

Just like tax time - it rolls around every year. But not nearly as painful. We get a lot for the money. Newsletters printed and mailed, sheet music arrangements, a bright and cozy meeting room, and the honor to belong to the greatest harmonica club in St. Louis! Not to mention the friendly folks we meet and the opportunity to advance ourselves on the harmonica. Please send or bring your dues in as soon as possible - we are working to update our membership roster.

2004 Year-End Charity Contributions

Gateway Harmonica Club is proud to present to each of the following St. Louis organizations a check in the amount of \$400:

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

Thanks to all participating members who made these donations possible from performances, the sales of tapes and harmonica necklaces, and various other fund raising events. We also wish to acknowledge the efforts and support of the spouses. Thanks to all! You are why the club is successful!

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: BuddyHarmonica@aol.com

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Webster Groves, MO 63119
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All other correspondence should be directed to:

Mary Ann Love
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1162 Villa Flora Dr.
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(636)-379-7707
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Information about the club's activities is also available on the World Wide Web at:

www.gatewayharmonicaclub.org



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

January		February	
Frank Muriel	1/3	Pauline Weindell	2/7
Teresa Steiven	1/4	Amanda Warren	2/8
Alfred Perry	1/5	Tim Holland	2/19
Cleta Hessel	1/5	Ernie Roberts	2/21
Ed Heining	1/8	Von Rhey Ford	2/24
Art Vaeth	1/12	Sidney Wolff	2/26
Chuck Turner	1/12	Sandy Bonfiglio	2/27
John Bottchen	1/15		
Tom Komadina	1/24		
Johanna Sutterfield	1/28		

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

TV APPEARANCE

GHC has again been invited to appear on the Channel 24 Telethon broadcast on Sunday, January 9. Our performance is scheduled to begin at 2:15 PM but as we have learned before, broadcasts of this type don't always go as scheduled. Those wishing to play should arrive at the New Life Evangelistic Center at about 1:45 PM. The Center is located at 1411 Locust Street. Ample street parking is usually available on Sundays.

Mic setup will be coordinated with the KNLC-TV technicians. Henry Gerfen will work out the details.

GREETINGS FROM GREG HOMMERT

Merry Christmas everyone! A sincerest happy holidays from your favorite poster child, and I can't wait to see you all again soon!

Also, some friends and I have acquired a jazz gig (8-10 pm) at the Creve Coeur Borders on Friday, January 28th. Again, we will be playing mostly jazz at first, with a few of our own originals thrown into the mix, I will be playing predominantly harmonica, and also a little bit of guitar, and maybe even recorder. I thought that you all might be interested in that information, and if you have any questions, email me at Mythacles@msn.com or just ask me again once club starts back up.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Greg

THE BIRTH OF A NOTION *(by Jerry Bonfiglio)*

As most of you know, my wife, Sandy, is the Activities Director at Meridian Village, a senior retirement community in Edwardsville. She has this way of getting senior citizens to participate in activities that they really don't want to participate in. Myself included.

One day in the true spirit of SPAH (Society for the Preservation and Advancement of the Harmonica), she suggested I start a class to teach some of the seniors to play the harmonica. I, of course, laughed and said "You get them together and I'll give it a try," knowing of course I would never have to give it another thought.

About a week and a half later she announced that she had about 12 people expecting to learn to play the harmonica waiting for me on Thursday. "What about harmonicas?" I whimpered. "I had someone go buy enough for the group." Very resourceful lady.

I solicited some help from Tony Wilbraham, who was very helpful for several weeks. In fact, there is still one lady who wants to know if Mr. Wilbraham will be coming. I try to explain that he is a very busy man and cannot be there, but for some reason she has suddenly lost all interest in the harmonica. My thanks to Tony for helping me get this off the ground and for naming the group "The Meridian Village Harmonica Ensemble."

We met on the first Thursday and our beginners began with the simple task of learning to play a single note. This for some of my students, none younger than 75, became a major project. Some, of course, accomplished it, but others had reasons for not being able to do so... "My tongue gets tangled up in the harmonica"... "My false teeth seem to chatter"... "I just don't have enough air"... "My hearing aid seems to whistle when I hit a certain note"... "Is there something wrong with this harmonica?"... After several weeks the group began to get smaller. I apologized to each of the withdrawals as they quit and explained that I was just not a very good teacher.

Our "ensemble" has shrunk to 6 - all very hardworking harmonica players. There is Bob, at 89, and I know he would probably rather be playing golf so we schedule our rehearsals around his golf games.

Eloise, at 88, is a very tall, slender, elegant lady who played harmonica in grade school and probably showed the other kids how. She keeps track of what we are trying to learn to play and also what we had better forget.

Aggie, at 87, just a slip of a girl, joined our group late. She has just recently moved into Meridian and for her introduction to the group, Sandy had scheduled a gig at a nursing home that has no budget for entertainment. Aggie joined us for that gig and with no rehearsal played admirably. When I asked her about playing with no rehearsal, she said "You just played all the songs I happen to know." A great addition to our group.

Claude, at 82, is a very talented guitar player in addition to his harmonica skills. He plays by ear and sings mostly country. When we play a gig Claude usually gets to play and sing one of his songs and is a big hit. Wally calls him the "hill billy." We are very lucky to have Claude as one of our group (regardless of what Wally says!)

Noreen, at 79, is a very busy lady who also takes care of one of the other residents and doesn't have a lot of time for our rehearsals, but when it's time to play a gig she is there, ready to play. I watch her go over the songs in some out of the way place just before we are ready to play and she always comes through.

Wally, at 78, is the "baby" of the group and probably the most outgoing, and I say that as a warning to the ladies. A former Chief in the Navy, he is still a swabby at heart. Bought his first harmonica while overseas and recently had Hohner try to repair it. They told him they would give him a good deal on a new one. He is the newest member of GHC and enjoying every second of it. Some of you may have already met him.

I think that our group is really having fun playing the harmonica and in their own way keeping up the tradition of harmonica playing. I try to talk about the chromatic harmonica and every now and then take out a piece of written music, but suddenly the subject turns to things other than harmonica music. They love playing their diatonics and playing by ear. I helped get them this far - who am I to spoil their fun...

Editors Note: I had the privilege and pleasure of attending the Meridian Village holiday gig on December 11 and Jerry's "Meridian Village Harmonica Ensemble" took the stage and treated us to When The Saints Go Marching In. After a couple false starts their version was quite impressive! Not a bad note in the bunch. And what a great looking and exuberant group! Good job, Jerry! That's what it's all about - having fun and sharing the pleasure!

A TRIBUTE TO A DEAR FRIEND

Joe Uhl, longtime member of the Gateway Harmonica Club and a friend of many in the harmonica community, passed away on December 26 after an extended illness.

Joe joined the club not long after its founding. He began attending while we were still meeting in St. Louis County Library facilities. He had begun playing the harmonica many years earlier and, together with his old friend and harmonica pal Ed Weber, became an active member. For many years he also attended SPAH and Buckeye conventions.

Joe worked hard at improving his playing skills. He learned to read music and eventually became a member of the harmony section of our club's ensemble. He also served as our music librarian for a number of years. He was a regular at our gigs, sometimes taking a solo on one of his favorite songs, "Alley Cat," to which he always added a playful "meow" at the end.

Joe was born in Germany on December 25, 1923. One of his favorite anecdotes was to explain that in addition to being born on Christmas day and having a name that sounds like "Yule", his parents' names were Mary and Joseph. His family moved to the United States when he was very young. He served in the U.S. Navy in World War



II. Most of his working life was spent in the printing trade, and he was called on a number of times to handle special printing jobs for the club.

The Gateway Harmonica Club extends its deep sympathy to Joe's dear wife, Norma, and her family.

GET THE REEDER VIA THE GHC WEBSITE

Effective with this issue, The REEDER is now available on GHC's website. Concurrent with publication of the printed version of the newsletter, we will send an email message to each member whose email address we have on file, providing a link that can be used to download the issue onto his or her own home computer. From there, you can view the REEDER on your monitor and/or print it on your printer.

If you decide to get your bimonthly copies of the newsletter by this method and discontinue receiving printed copies, please notify Joe Fey by email at joefey@earthlink.net. We will then adjust our newsletter mailing list. This will save printing and mailing costs.

WE GET LETTERS . . .

11/10/04

Folks of the GHC:

Thank you so much for the Get Well Card - it was much appreciated.

After emergency surgery on Friday 29 Oct. (I was whisked by ambulance from Edwardsville to St. Luke's Hospital on October 28 - past a morgue-like Busch Stadium because the Red Sox had finished the job the day before) my back is doing great - and thankfully I'm pain-free. But I have to be careful how I negotiate stairs since my left leg has been weakened by the back problem. I descend stairs backwards - and go up stairs one-at-a-time - but I'll conquer that.

I am scheduled to see the neurosurgeon 8 Dec - and by that time I need to be able to walk a mile. If he wants me to provide proof - I figure that that will be about 50 times around his office!

Have been keeping in touch with Jerry - who tells me he is on the mend - and one day we will return.

Thanks and Cheers.

Tony Wilbraham

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

GIGS AND OTHER EVENTS

- 1/2/2005 (Sun) 7:00 PM — Bethesda Orchards: 21 North Old Orchard Ave--Webster Groves, MO 63119 (From I -270 going South--Get off on I -44 and go East about 1-1/2 miles. Get off at Big Bend Ave. Go to the light and turn right on Big Bend. You will stay on Big Bend for about three miles. After you pass Webster University, you will pass about two stop lights. At the second stop light (I believe) you will see N. Old Orchard Ave. Turn left and follow the signs.
- 1/9/2005 (Sun) 2:15 PM — KNLC-TV Channel 24 Telethon: New Life Evangelical Center- 1411 Locust Street, St. Louis, MO 63103
- 1/21/2005 (Fri) 2:00 PM — Parc Provence: 605 Couer De Ville Dr.-- Creve Couer, MO 63146 (between Ladue Rd. and Olive St. Rd. on the West outer road of I -270
- 1/23/2005 (Sun) 2:30 PM — Garden Villas South: 13457 Tesson Ferry (Hwy 21)--on Highway I -270 going South, get off to your right onto Tesson Ferry. Go right. At top of incline at stop sign go right (East) to the address.
- 2/14/2005 (Mon) 12:45 PM — Living Information for Today--LI FT : Home Town Buffet, 12228 ST. Charles Rock Rd. (Go East from I -270 to 12228 St Charles Rock Rd.. It is located next to Kohl's Department store, in the Plaza De Paul) Due to small space, limited to 8 players.
- 2/22/2005 (Tue) 10:15 AM — Salvation Army Golden Agers: 3601 Weber Rd., St. Louis, MO 63125 (a white building on the corner of Carondelet and Weber Rds.)
- 3/4/2005 (Fri) 7:00 PM — Aim Community Band Concert rehearsal:
- 3/6/2005 (Sun) 3:00 PM — AIM Community Band Concert: Kirkwood High School Auditorium, 801 West Essex Avenue, Kirkwood, MO 63122 (West on Essex from Lindbergh/Kirkwood Road past Geyer Road)
- 3/17/2005 (Thu) 6:30 PM — Hazelwood Baptist Church 50+ Club: 6161 Howdershell Rd., Hazelwood, MO 63042 (traveling North on I -270, exit at McDonnell Blvd; turn left on McDonnell, which turns into Howdershell Rd.)
- 3/24/2005 (Thu) 12:45 PM — Living Information for Today--LI FT : Salad Bowl--3949 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63074
- 3/31/2005 (Thu) 2:00 PM — St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley: Student Center Multipurpose Room, 3400 Pershall Rd., Florissant, MO 63135
- 4/1/2005 (Fri) 7:00 PM — Pres Club: 1st Presbyterian Church, 100 East Adams Ave, Kirkwood, MO 63122 (on the corner of Adams Ave. and Kirkwood Rd.)
- 4/16/2005 (Sat) 8:30 PM — Tentative gig??:
- 4/26/2005 (Tue) 12:30 PM — New Beginnings: Viking Conference Center, Lindbergh Blvd and Watson Rd. (Hwy 366) If you are traveling South on I -270, exit on I -44 East, then exit on Watson going East. Go to door 5 to unload our equipment.
- 5/11/2005 (Wed) 1:30 PM — Weber Road Branch, St. Louis County Library: 4444 Weber Rd., Affton MO. 63123 (From I -270, go East on Gravois Rd. for about 3 miles; turn right on Weber Rd.)
- 5/15/2005 (Sun) 2:30 PM — Garden Villas South: 13457 Tesson Ferry (Hwy 21)--on Highway I -270 going South, get off to your right onto Tesson Ferry. Go right. At top of incline at stop sign go right (East) to the address.
- 6/5/2005 (Sun) 2:00 PM — Delmar Gardens North: 4401 Parker Rd.--Florissant, MO 63033 (This is a nursing home just behind the Garden Villas North at 4504 Parker Rd. --From I -270 go north on West Florissant Rd.--Turn left on New Halls Ferry Rd.--Turn right on Parker Rd.)
- 6/9/2005 (Thu) South County Shrine Club: Genesis: 2651 Telegraph Rd. St. Louis , MO 63125--South on I 270 (it may be East at this point) get off at Telegraph Rd.; go left toward Jefferson Memorial Cemetery until you reach 2651, on your left.
- 8/11/2005 (Thu) 2:30 PM — Garden Villas South: 13457 Tesson Ferry (Hwy 21)--on Highway I -270 going South, get off to your right onto Tesson Ferry. Go right. At top of incline at stop sign go right (East) to the address.
- 10/27/2005 (Thu) 7:30 PM — St. Bernadette 50+ Club : 68 Sherman Rd., St. Louis, MO 63125 (Take I -270 South--Get off at Telegraph Rd. -- Go left toward the City--Turn right on Sherman Rd--Go about 2 miles to 68 Sherman Rd. and the Church)
- 11/13/2005 (Sun) 2:30 PM — Garden Villas South: 13457 Tesson Ferry (Hwy 21)--on Highway I -270 going South, get off to your right onto Tesson Ferry. Go right. At top of incline at stop sign go right (East) to the address.
- 12/9/2005 (Fri) 6:00 PM — St. Albans Senior Golf: St. Albans Country Club--Go west on Manchester Rd. pass Clarkson Rd and pass Highway 109. Continue until you reach Highway T. At that point turn right and go about 2 miles. You will see the Club.

A POEM FOR THE SEASON

Chris Pondo usually composes a poem to include with her Christmas cards each year and wants to share the following with GHC members:

CHRISTMAS 12/25/04

By Chris Pondo

*Too many decorations!
Where should I put them all?
Some on the table, some on the wall.*

*Crocheted snow couple,
Ornaments with pearls and beads.
The Christmas tree has lots of needs.*

*Why keep this one?
Its cracked and dull
But in my memory - its still swell.*

*Years old tinsel,
Faded dolls, toys and glass,
The dented reindeer made of brass.*

*I love them all!
And dust them with care
I put them out for friends to share.*

*The floors are clean,
I vacuumed and scrubbed,
Washed windows, polished and rubbed.*

*There's my favorite angel
Lots of Santas, dolls and flowers.
Preparing everything took countless hours.*

*Although I am so very tired
What makes Christmas grand?
Making music with Gateway Harmonica Band!*

Happy New Year!!!



THE GHC REEDER
14650 Baraton Drive
Florissant, MO 63034