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<http://hgavic.wix.com/hgavic>

HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – April 2016

Welcome

Welcome to our April newsletter. Today is ANZAC Day, which is the most important day in the Australian and New Zealand calendars, which commemorates all who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations. The date, 25th April honours the members of the of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps who fought at Gallipoli against the Ottoman Empire in World War 1

Since 1995, an Australian Rules football match has been played on ANZAC day between traditional rival teams Collingwood and Essendon at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Today's match has attracted over 90,000 spectators, and American Mason Cox playing his first match with Collingwood has scored the first goal. Go the Pies!!!

Please listen to Willie Hoevers' radio show this Saturday, 30th April because you never know who will be interviewed! There is more information about the show (including the time it is broadcast live) at the end of this newsletter.

<http://www.avradio.org>

HGA John Denver Tribute Weekend

Our tribute weekend will be held on the 14-16th October at CYC The Island in Cowes (Phillip Island). The address is 41-53 Church St Cowes 3922. It is approximately 2 hours drive from Melbourne airport. <http://theisland.cyc.org.au/> Cost is \$87.00 per person for the weekend. We have three sleeping cabins, a kitchen/activities room, BBQ, and they will also provide a fire pit for our 'campfire'.

Food Kitty is \$40.00 per person for all meals. The Victorian people will provide the casseroles for the Friday night's meal.

To secure your place, we will require a \$40 deposit (food kitty). The deposit can be paid directly into my account;

BSB: 733-039

ACC: 542649

Name: Mrs Janette Frawley

Please enter JD + your name in the description so I know who has paid, and follow it up with an email to jefrawley@bigpond.com.

Fundraiser for Peggy McDonald

Our fundraiser this year will benefit Australian Raptor Care and Conservation. Please check the website for information about the work that Peggy McDonald does in this area and how the money we raise goes toward the ongoing work with

raptors in Australia.

<http://www.australianraptorcareandconservation.com/>

On the Road (Raffle – 2016)

Last year, whilst in Aspen, Judy Therrien introduced me to Carl Franzen, and I was fortunate enough to engage in a very animated conversation with him for over an hour on the footpath in front of the Mountain Chalet. This year's raffle quilt is a reflection of that chance afternoon discussion. It is called 'On the Road', which is the name of the song that Carl wrote and that John Denver recorded on the 'Back Home Again' album. It is a reminder of all the wonderful road trips that I have taken in my life, but it especially significant because it was inspired by chatting with one of the most interesting men I have ever met. Here is a sneak peek of a yet-to-be-finished quilt, which will be raffled in October. More details about ticket sales will be available later in the year.



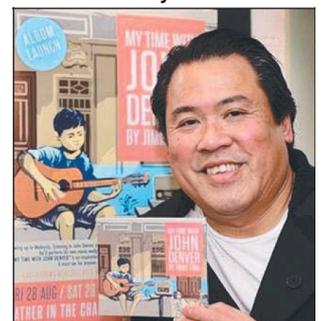
HGA Website

<http://hgavic.wix.com/hgavic>

Our website has been updated recently. I have updated the Aspen in October news for 2016, and will shortly include some links to the Rocky Mountain Foundation for the Performing Arts.

The exciting news is that, in collaboration with Jimmy Fong, we are now able to sell his CDs through the website.

Please check out Jimmy's story and photos, including his personal photos of the



time he met and performed with John Denver in Malaysia in 1994. We have included some sample tracks for you to listen to. CDs are AUD\$25.00 each, including postage and handling. The CDs are also available to US purchasers. For our Canadian, British, and European customers, please email me on hga.vic@gmail.com for details. Transactions are securely handled by PayPal.

Paving Brick from Windstar

Last year, when I collected the paving brick we donated to Windstar, I was also given this one, which I have brought home. I would very much like to find out who donated this paver to Windstar and organise to have it returned to its rightful owner. If you know of someone who did donate a brick to Windstar, please ask them to contact me at hga.vic@gmail.com.

If nobody claims it, we will treat it with respect, placing it with our paver once we decide where it will be permanently placed.



Rocky Mountain Foundation for the Performing Arts

This is a message from Willie Hoevers; Hello Everyone, just a brief update about the Foundation. We are in the middle of planning at last three shows for this year with a possible fourth in the works!

In promoting RMFPA, we have the very first t-shirt available and since I have not announced them yet, I am giving you first chance at purchasing these at a \$25 donation to the Foundation. Please let me know via email if you would like one, I only have 24 available currently with sizes Large and Extra Large. Also, I know that most of you listen to the Music of John Denver show I host every other Saturday, but in case you missed it, you can go to our web page at www.rockymountainfpa.org and at the bottom of the Home page you will find a player where you can scroll to the show to listen to it! I have been posting them there for the last three shows now and I hope you enjoy them! Thank you for your time,

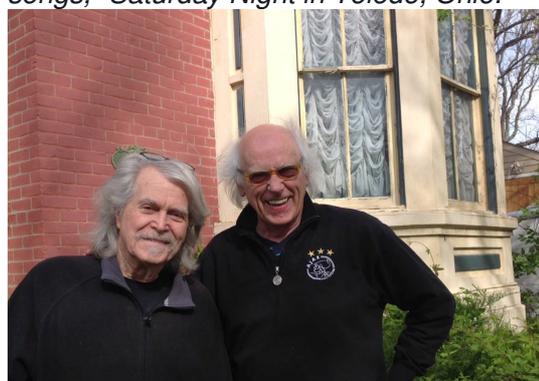


Owen Danoff on 'The Voice'

Owen Danoff is still doing well on 'The Voice'. Keep your fingers crossed for a positive outcome as this season heads into the final few weeks. <http://www.nbc.com/the-voice>

Young John Denver Oral History

Carl updated his Facebook page with an update on his meeting with Randy Sparks; *Another 1000 miles, Denver to Leavenworth to Minneapolis. Yowza! Spent a great 15 hours with Randy Sparks, who started the New Christy Minstrels, opened for Burl Ives, played bongos for Maya Angelou when she was a beat poet, and gave Little Johnny Deuschendorf his stage name. And he wrote one of my favorite songs, "Saturday Night in Toledo, Ohio."*



Keep up the good work, Carl!

<https://www.crowdrise.com/young-john-denver-oral-history1/fundraiser/carlfranken>

If you wish to donate to this crowd fundraiser, please click the link. Carl released this short film in Aspen last year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmVzheMmQCk>

Dennis Curley to Star in 'Country Roads, The Music of John Denver' at Plymouth Playhouse this Winter

THIS SHOW FINISHES ON MAY 1

Plymouth Playhouse celebrates the music of one of America's favorite folk heroes and songwriter in COUNTRY ROADS, THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER starring Dennis Curley. This Plymouth Playhouse debut previews January 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, opening Thursday, January 28 and continuing through May 1, 2016.

Originally produced by Table Salt Productions in 2013, COUNTRY ROADS, THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER is conceived and performed by co-founder Dennis Curley. The show intersperses 18 songs that cover many of Denver's best-known hits and introduces you to many others with personal recollections of growing up with John Denver's music as well as stories from family and friends that touch the heart.

When asked about his personal connection to Denver, Curley commented, "I grew up listening to



John Denver. He was my favorite singer! My mom's family was like the Von Trapp family singers-they all sang, and most of them played guitar. I grew up hearing them sing and harmonize to the music of John Denver, Joan Baez, Judy Collins and Peter, Paul & Mary. I would sneak down the stairs and listen to them sing late into the night-it was one of my favorite childhood memories. The first song I learned to sing and play on piano was "Annie's Song." I never set out to imitate John Denver. His style unconsciously seeped into the way I sing."

Peter Rothstein, Artistic Director, Theater Latte Da, says of Curley, "He mines the warmth, charm and humor in John Denver's iconic songs. His stunning voice will thrill both John Denver fans and make new fans for those unfamiliar with one of America's great musical storytellers."

Backed by a six-piece band that includes well-known local musicians Matt Zimmerman, Tony Wirth, Leo Lenander, David Weeks-Wynne, Kellie Nitz, Amy LeGrand and Dorian Chalmers as back-up vocal, COUNTRY ROADS, THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER takes you on a 90 minute uplifting and touching sing-a-long that includes such favorites as "Calypso," "Back Home Again," "Annie's Song," "Rocky Mountain High," "Sunshine On My Shoulders," "Take Me Home, Country Roads," "Leaving On A Jet Plane" and "Thank God I'm A Country Boy."

Table Salt Productions introduced to audiences Country Roads The Music of John Denver at Bryant Lake Bowl in 2013 and most recently at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres as part of their 2015 Concert Series to sold-out performances.

All performances of COUNTRY ROADS, THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER starring Dennis Curley are at the Plymouth Playhouse, previewing January 21-27, opening January 28 and continuing through May 1, 2016. Performances dates, time and prices: Wednesday 1 pm \$28; Thursday 1 pm \$28; Thursday 7:30 pm \$35; Friday 7:30 pm \$35; Saturday 3:00 pm \$37; Saturday 7:30 pm \$39; and Sunday 2:00 pm \$37. Overnight "Stay & Play " packages are available (includes a room for two at the Ramada Hotel Plymouth, a dinner voucher at the Green Mill Restaurant and two theater tickets to the current show, all under one roof). The Plymouth Playhouse is located at I-494 and Hwy. 55, twenty minutes west from downtown Minneapolis, in suburban Plymouth, Minnesota.

For ticket information, call the Plymouth Playhouse Box Office at 763-553-1600 x 1 or visit plymouthplayhouse.com. For group information call 763-383-1073.

**Address: 2705 Annapolis Lane N
Plymouth, MN 55441**

Phone: (763) 553-1600 ext 1

**Directions: I-494 & Hwy 55, Plymouth, MN
20 minutes west of downtown Minneapolis**

Gustafson "Celebrate Earth Day Every Day"

Aspentimes April 19 2016

Some moments are so simple and beautiful that they grow in our hearts to become the symbol that summarizes an important chapter of life.

For me, the bliss of childhood was summarized the moment I saw my daughter's eyes widen with wonder, watching the dandelion seeds she had just freed as they danced off on the wind. She skipped and whirled around the grassy hillside as they encircled her like little fairies. And I can still hear her joy-filled laughter, the sounds of pure imagination, born from the delight of seeing each little parachute twirl off on the breeze as she frolicked along. Even at the age of 2, my daughter already knew she was a part of the wonders of nature, and she treasured setting it in motion.

At that moment I remember thinking to myself, true, with a little effort one could count the number of seeds a flower contains, but only the future will reveal how many flowers one single seed will produce. I was not wishing for a garden full of dandelions that day, but aspiring to nourish the soils of her childhood in which the seeds of future hope would grow, and to keep that bliss alive; something I still wish for, every day.

To foster a sense of passion and love for our planet is a wish I have for everyone. And for children in particular, who will grow up with ecological literacy if the soil they are raised in is filled with experience, love and good examples. So as spring sprouts forth new life and germinates our souls, this is the perfect time to scatter the seeds of hope and enhance our connections with our environment.

"Celebrate morning... Celebrate living... Celebrate evening... Celebrate Earth Day every day," John Denver once sang. The synergy he felt and radiated while living in this valley expanded beyond his own lifetime, and from his love for this land grew many great things.

And if you haven't experienced it yet for yourself, make a point to visit Aspen TREE (Together Regenerating the Environment through Education), at their Farm Park at Cozy Point Ranch this Earth Day, or any day. Amid the brilliant scenery, be inspired, as John Denver once was, when he pioneered Earth Keepers, now kept alive by the collaborative efforts of Eden Vardy and River Morgan and the rest of the team at Aspen TREE.

Watching my children explore their gardens, tasting the edible landscape within the biodome, connecting with the baby animals, and really experiencing first-hand where our food comes from, I can truly see their environmental knowledge taking root.



Well-known locally for their Farm-to-Table Free Community Meal that takes place before Thanksgiving, and for their resident alpacas Kona and Roy at the Aspen Saturday Market, Aspen TREE also offers so much more.

In 2010 they inherited Earth Keepers, a youth empowerment program based in farmyard experiences and nature connections, which was originally developed by John Denver and Tom Crum as part of the Windstar Foundation. This one-of-a-kind program was set in motion during the 1970s as a way to get kids outside and inspire them to care for their world through hands-on learning in natural sciences, land-based skills, innovation in environmental design and technology, and general Earth stewardship.

In the early years, John Denver's guest teachers included Buckminster Fuller, leaders of Native American tribes, and other renowned environment leaders. Buckminster Fuller designed a biodome that became part of the program headquarters, a modern version of which headquarters Earth Keepers today.

The Farm Park is open daily for public use, and this Sunday, April 24 they invite the community to join them in celebrating Earth Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Come meet and cuddle the new baby animals, enjoy a children's yoga class, create fairy homes and other Earth Day crafts, and most importantly discover this unique and inspirational public space for yourself.

With his chin resting on the ground, I watch my son bring a worm out from the churned soil, and as his eyes grow huge watching it squiggle through his dirt-covered hands, I can feel his excitement. He jumps up barefooted, and runs across the yard, welcoming me to join him in his newly unearthed bliss. I slow down everything to watch these moments and try to live vicariously through my own children's sense of wonder, and I pine for those moments of absolute connection to the Earth that seem to come so naturally during childhood.

And though in adulthood we often need a holiday to remind us to be grateful, I will try my best to take a hint from John Denver, and this year celebrate Earth Day every day.

It's easy to do when watching children, as they are born naturalists. They experience their surroundings in moment-to-moment sensory bursts: tasting, touching and absorbing the world around them. It's up to us to nourish their instincts to love and share. After all, at the season's end, success would be measured best, not by an abundant harvest, but by the seeds sown so far and deep that they will return to multiply year after year.

Let's exchange a piece of my mind for a little peace of mind; after all, if we always agree what

will we talk about? Britta Gustafson appreciates an open mind; share yours and email her at brittag@ymail.com.

<http://www.aspentimes.com/news/snowmass/21651785-113/gustafson-celebrate-earth-day-everyday>

The John Denver Guitar Research Site

The John Denver Guitar Research Site is a really interesting site, which gives a little bit of history about the instruments that John Denver used throughout his recordings, concert tours, and television shows. The content is fascinating and one of the site owners, Jeff Pine, is an accomplished musician himself (now living in California). <http://www.jdgrs.com/index.php>

Remembering John Denver

MUSIC | A tribute album brings new fans and new respect for the late singer-songwriter

By WARREN COLE SMITH

Posted April 25, 2013, 01:19 p.m.

Even if you are not a John Denver fan—and I should admit up front I am—you've probably heard his best-known song, "Take Me Home, Country Roads." It's infiltrated the American psyche as a campfire staple. It made it onto a best-selling Disney video, Campout at Disney World. It's the state song of West Virginia, boisterously sung at all West Virginia Mountaineers home football games. In one particularly strange episode of the TV series *The Office*, Dwight Schrute sings a verse of "Country Roads" in what is supposed to be German. (See the video clip at the end of this article of Denver singing the song on *The Midnight Special* in 1973.)

But Denver's career was much more than this one, albeit iconic, song. As a songwriter, he had his first big hit with "Leaving on a Jet Plane," which Peter, Paul, and Mary took to No. 1 in 1969. Within a few years, Denver was making hits himself. "Country Roads" came out in 1972. But his biggest years were 1974 and 1975, when he had three consecutive Billboard No. 1 albums, and four consecutive No. 1 hit singles, including "Annie's Song," which has undoubtedly been played at a million weddings since.

And Denver wasn't just on the radio. His "Rocky Mountain Christmas" TV special in 1975 attracted 60 million viewers, at the time the biggest audience in ABC-TV's history. His TV special "An Evening with John Denver," which aired earlier in 1975, won an Emmy Award. He was a regular guest host of *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*. He hosted the Grammy Awards five times in the 1970s and '80s, and in 1975 was the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year. In 1977 he starred opposite George Burns in the movie *Oh, God!*



We see you've been enjoying the content on our exclusive member website. Ready to get unlimited access to all of WORLD's member content? Perhaps because of all that fame and middle-America appeal, he was never a darling of music critics. His sound was too gentle and straightforward, especially as his career moved into the 1980s, with its increasingly jaded, ironic, and sexualized MTV generation.

In 1985, when the supergroup USA for Africa recorded "We Are the World" as a fundraiser for famine relief, Denver lobbied unsuccessfully to be a part of the recording. The rebuff, he later said, hurt him deeply and precipitated a downward spiral in his life.

By the late 1980s, a series of extramarital affairs led to his divorce from the woman for whom he had written "Annie's Song," and—he later confessed in an autobiography—he turned to alcohol and drugs. He was arrested for drunk driving at least twice, leading to the temporary suspension of his pilot's license. Flying, which he loved, was his ultimate undoing. He died in the crash of a plane he was piloting in 1997. By then, a second marriage had dissolved, his record label dropped him, and he hadn't had a hit in more than a decade.

But something strange has happened since his death. The man died, but his songs lived on. Denver would have been 70 this year, and to commemorate that milestone, a group of contemporary artists—including Josh Ritter, Dave Matthews, Emmylou Harris, Train, and Old Crow Medicine Show—have released an album of Denver's music, *The Music Is You*.

Like many tribute albums, the performances are a mixed bag. Brandi Carlisle's version of "Country Roads," is uninspired, despite the help of background vocalist Emmylou Harris. Dave Matthews' take on "Take Me to Tomorrow" is just plain weird. But the album has many gems, Mary Chapin Carpenter's "I Guess He'd Rather Be in Colorado" among them. Evan Dando of The Lemonheads does a surprising version of "Looking for Space." Amos Lee's soulful "Some Days Are Diamonds" is perhaps the finest performance on the album. The best cuts honor the songs but don't try to imitate Denver's versions of them, such as Allen Stone's almost wistful take on "Rocky Mountain High."

The album will undoubtedly bring Denver's music back into the spotlight, especially with current fans of the artists who participated. The album debuted at No. 37 on Billboard's album chart and at No. 12 on Billboard's country music chart.

But for many longtime fans the new album is just a validation of their long-standing admiration. Jim Curry has been leading a John Denver tribute band since 2007, and he plays as many as 150 concerts a year, often to audiences numbering in the thousands. When I caught up with him on the

telephone, Curry was on the road in (where else?) Colorado, on the first day of a road trip that will have him doing 42 shows in 52 days. He said he thought Denver's music would survive as part of the American Songbook tradition.

Mark Cormican

For the past 35 years, Mark Cormican has blessed audiences with his singing, song-writing and his genuinely sincere tribute to the late John Denver. Like John Denver, Mark has a way of relating to people with his own original music . . . communicating through song, his love for the people and places he holds most dear. With this winning combination, Mark Cormican weaves together a magical tapestry of music that audiences will remember for years to come. Check out Mark's website for his scheduled performances.

<http://markcormican.com/schedule/>

Chris Bannister

Chris Bannister will be appearing at the Wirral Folk Festival from 2-5 June 2016. Purchase your tickets from www.wegotickets.com or www.ticketswirral.co.uk

(Ralph 'Streets of London' McTell will also be appearing).

Cathy Gianfala Carriere

Saturday 30th April at 1-3pm
Mule's Religious and Office Supply
2627 David Drive Metairie, LA

Michael Cabot

Saturday 30th April at 1pm
Mountain View Park 1768 Sullivan Rel,
Tannersville Pennsylvania 18372
Michael will be performing at the Groundbreaking ceremony of the Pocono Heritage Center.

Marc Roberts

Marc Roberts from Ireland was in Aspen last year. He is currently touring Ireland and the dates of his remaining concerts can be found on his website; <http://www.marcroberts.ie/index1.html>

Jim Curry's Newsletter

Jim Curry's newsletter has been posted (click link below) Jim and Anne put together an excellent newsletter regularly. It also includes a link to Anne's blog, which is always fun to read, plus a full listing of where they are appearing in concert. Great news again – Jim and Anne will be travelling on a couple of Holland America ships during April.

Check out Jim and Anne's website at <http://www.jimcurrymusic.com/> for details of their upcoming concerts.

Rocky Mountain High Concert

John Denver: A Rocky Mountain High Concert with the Colorado Symphony - September 10 at Boettcher Hall in Denver

We're excited to announce John Denver: A Rocky Mountain High Concert with the Colorado



Symphony, featuring audio and video performances by John Denver backed by members of his former band, with the Colorado Symphony. Saturday, September 10 2016 7.30 at Boettcher Concert Hall.

Tickets available through Colorado Symphony Subscription through July 31. Single tickets on sale August 1, 10 am.

Andres Lopera, conductor

Musical legend John Denver is honored in a special concert celebration with your Colorado Symphony this fall. See and hear two-time Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter and Poet Laureate of Colorado John Denver on video performing in a concert spectacular featuring archival video footage of Denver performing classic songs backed by live performances from former members of his band with full symphony orchestra. This concert is an innovative musical treat and unforgettable tribute. Hear John Denver's voice, see vintage John Denver video performances, hear stories of John Denver told by old friends. The Concert will include hit songs spanning his career and honor Denver's memory and music.

American Veterans Radio

American Veterans Radio is honored to feature the wonderful music of John Denver. Please join Willie From Dillon on his regular Music of John Denver radio show. Here is a link to the podcast of the last show.

<http://www.avradio.org/rewind---podcasts.html>

This show airs fortnightly at the following times

4:00 - 6:00pm Eastern time

3:00 - 5:00pm Central time

2:00 - 4:00pm Mountain time

1:00 - 3:00pm Pacific time

12:00 - 2:00pm Alaskan time

6:00 - 8:00pm Chilean time

9:00 - 11:00pm UK time

10:00 - 12:00Mid European time

Next Morning

6:00 - 8:00am Japan/South Korea time

8:00 - 10:00am Australian time

10:00am - 12:00Noon New Zealand time

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoAots7zRWQ>

Aspen in October

Keep checking for the events planned for Aspen in October this year. The events thus far can be found at;

<http://www.johndenvercelebration.com/events>

Some material included in this newsletter has been derived from the public domain, such as the internet and printed media. Articles and reviews are the opinion of the individual writer and as long as the content is of a reasonable nature and it is appropriate, it will be included. Organisations mentioned or featured in this newsletter are included to educate and inform people of their role and purpose. HGA does not profit from including the names of any organisation in this newsletter.

This newsletter is only emailed to those people who have individually contacted HGA and expressed a wish to receive it. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you no longer wish to receive the HGA newsletter.



Sing Australia

*I come to Australia as many people do
To see the old koala, hitch a ride on a kangaroo
To hear somebody call me mate and call somebody blue
To hear the aborigine play a didgeridoo*

*Some of you came as prisoners two centuries ago
Some of you come as kings and queens your blessing to bestow
Some of you stand all swelled with pride, some with shattered wings
But all of us come with open hearts to hear Australia sing*

*In the desert, in the city
In the mountains and in the sea
In the stories and in the people
I can hear Australia sing*

*Waltzing Matilda, the men of Gallipoli
Clancy of the Overflow, Crocodile Dundee
The myth of all creation, the teaching of baiame
The legends of a dream time for all eternity*

*And in this celebration of a brief two hundred years
The cost to build a nation in blood and sweat and tears
And if we stand divided, divided we will fall
But if we stand together we shall conquer all*

*In the desert, in the city
In the mountains and in the sea
In the stories and in the people
I can hear Australia sing*

*Sing Australia, Sing Australia, Sing Australia, Sing Australia
In the sails on Sydney Harbour
I can hear Australia sing*

