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Higher Ground Australia



www.highergroundaustralia.com/

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HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – October 2014

WELCOME

Welcome to our October newsletter. Since we have all returned from our respective John Denver Tributes in Boonah, Queensland, Aspen, Colorado, and Pacific Grove, California, there are lots of stories and photos to share.

HGA - Boonah

We had a very successful weekend in Boonah, Queensland. Our 'Christmas for Cowboys' theme was well received and much fun was had by all. Thanks to the new members who came along and joined us this year, especially Jimmy and Gus, who provided their musical talents, Barbara, Jock, and Daphne, who provided us with their friendship, fun and laughter.

Our success does not happen without the assistance from each and every attendee, and I would like to make a special mention and extend our deepest gratitude to Vicki, who single-handedly produced our Christmas Dinner on the Saturday night. Not only did she do all the cooking, but refused payment for the ingredients, opting to donate the amount earmarked for the dinner to our annual donation. Now for the results of the weekend.

QUILT RAFFLE

The raffle of a handmade quilt was won by Sandra Horwell. **The raffle raised \$330.** Traditionally, this money was used to pay for our plaque and trees for our annual treeplanting. However, the cost for the plaque was donated by Maureen, Carmel, and Alistair. John Comber donated three trees. The total \$330 was placed in our donation for Peggy McDonald's Raptor Rehabilitation Centre. Thanks to everyone who bought tickets in the raffle.

PICTURE BOOKS

This year we had two picture books to give away to primary schools and kindergartens. Ironically, both books will be sent to the same school.

Grandma's Feather Bed will be sent to Russell Island State School. It was nominated by Maureen for her granddaughter Aradia.

For Baby (For Bobbie) will be sent to Russell Island State School. It was nominated by Stacey for her daughter Amelia.

Thanks for participating in this annual book giveaway. Literacy in the early years is so very important, and we are lucky that these beautifully illustrated books feature the lyrics of songs that John sang, thus keeping them alive for generations to come.

DONATION 2014:

Our fundraising effort this year will be donated to Peggy McDonald, whose bird rehabilitation centre near Robertson, NSW, is currently going through a number of changes. Peggy's previous two study internships in Abu Dhabi have resulted in a better and more sustainable method for the rehabilitation of mainly raptors, but her work does extend to all injured birds and her process of getting them back into the wild.

We have raised a total of \$2000.00 to donate to Peggy. Since last week we have had another donation come in, which brings our total to an even number. Here is the breakdown of funds;

Donation – Alf	\$500.00
Donation – Narelle	50.00
Donation – Beverley M	45.00
Silent Auction	553.00
Raffle	330.00
Greeting Card Sales	38.00
General Sales	40.85
Kitty (including donation of Dinner	420.00
Brought forward amount	14.10
Donation – Other	9.95
TOTAL	\$2000.00

Peggy also is the 'keeper' of our two trees planted in 2013, when the place allocated to us in Robertson was not suitable, and she offered to allow us to plant the trees at her establishment. John and Max, as she affectionately calls them, are happily thriving in amongst her bushy paradise. When I contacted Peggy about our efforts this year, this was her response:

Dear Higher Grounders,

Oh my goodness gracious me!!!!!!

I have had to look at this several times to make sure I was reading it correctly. I am just so thrilled and excited.

I have a massive number of birds in at the moment and just sat down to go through the last two days of emails and look what I have discovered!

Your generosity, kindness and understanding of what I am trying to achieve is just so appreciated. As I am sure I have said before, just your support would be amazing and an honour, but the financial support on top is incredible.

I was thinking I probably wouldn't get back to Abu Dhabi to continue my studies, but that nearly covers my airfare already!! Can I bear

more hard work and long hours of study – yes!!

Last Sunday I had a visit from Professor Roger Wheater (google him if you like) an incredible man who is the Chair of the Royal Zoological Society and lives in Scotland. A truly amazing and inspiring person. He has just got back home and straight away has emailed to say how thrilled he was to see the facility and what is happening, and offering to help however he can with the secret project!!!!.

This week also the long battle for the secret project will hopefully bear fruit – keep tuned!! Thank you, thank you, thank you all so very much for helping me to carry on with helping the birds and getting as many as possible back out into the freedom they so deserve.

When things get tricky I go and sit near Max and John's spot, and I am absolutely sure that I feel a great presence that inspires and encourages me to carry on, both mentally and physically.

It certainly was my lucky day when I met you all

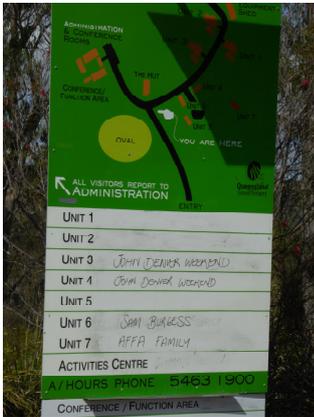
Lots of love and grateful thanks to everyone of you for believing in me

Peggy xo

2014 HGA WEEKEND

FRIDAY:

We arrived in Boonah from all directions – Brisbane, Boonah, Newcastle, Cessnock, Melbourne, Ballarat – all with the same goal – to celebrate the life and music of John Denver.



Friday afternoon and evening was spent catching up with old friends and introducing ourselves to new friends – Jimmy, Gus and Barbara, and Jock and Daphne. Our first meal together of

casseroles provided by the Queenslanders was fun, and loud, as we shouted over the top of each other, each trying to be heard. Dinner complete, and our Annual General Meeting was convened. Once the serious business of the weekend had been attended to, the evening's entertainment started.

Alistair, Colin, and Gus started the proceedings, with Jimmy joining in to play a variety of songs. They played everything, from hits by the Shadows, to Neil Diamond, with plenty of John Denver thrown in for good measure. We finally dragged ourselves at about 2am, promising to do it all again the following night.



(Alistair, Colin, Gus, Jimmy)

Saturday was largely at leisure, and after a hearty breakfast, we made our way down to the local market. There, we spent our money on local produce, and even glimpsed 'Doris' on our travels. We decided to head toward Ipswich for a drive, finding ourselves at one of the many antique markets in this city. Whilst we were on the road, looking around, the others were back at the venue in Boonah, catching up and preparing for the Christmas dinner and silent auction.

All too soon it was dinner time, with the assistance from young Amelia, who did a wonderful job of setting the table and decorating the room in our Christmas theme, a delicious dinner, which was solely prepared by Vicki, was served. Crackers were popped, silly hats and toys were put to use, and jokes shared.



(Carolyn found a moustache in her cracker)

The music started with the singing of Christmas songs and carols, with everyone dressed in their Christmas finery, and cowboy hats. Amelia joined in, singing the theme song from 'Frozen', delighting us all.



(Melanie, Jan, Carolyn, Beverley, Laraine, Jimmy & John)



During the course of the evening, we drew the raffle, and got updates of the progress of the silent auction, and drew out the winning books. The rest of the night was spent singing our favourite songs, the evening finishing at approximately 3am. All too soon, it was time to arise, have breakfast, and make our way to our tree-planting ceremony.



(Back L-R: Stacey, Mike, Maureen, Amelia, Helen, Carolyn, Jimmy, John, Colin, Alistair, Barbara, Gus.
Front L-R: Beverley, Marlene, Melanie, Carmel, Janette, Laraine, Vicki, Rhonda, Sandy)

This is the most solemn and meaningful part of the weekend, and we gathered around the area allocated to us to plant our trees. We have stayed at the Outlook on previous occasions, and our trees and plaques have now been turned into a garden bed for us.



(Jimmy)

We planted the trees – three in all – one for John, one for our wonderful friend, Max, who was John's Australian Tour Manager, and the third tree was planted for our dear departed friends, Steve Weisberg and Harold Simpson. Plaques were laid before the trees for John and Max, whilst we made waterproof tree tags to hang off our tree for Steve and Harold. This place shall affectionately called 'Forest Lawn'. After the tree planting, John read the letters from Aspen and Monterey, whilst I read the letter from us.

Sadly our annual weekend was almost at an end, lunch was eaten, the venue cleaned up, and one by one we left, promising to catch up near Newcastle 'Same Time Next Year'.



THE LETTERS

The Letter from Aspen was written by Rory Young:

*Dear John,
Another year is passing in our beloved Rocky Mountain paradise. I wish you were here to see the golden glory as the aspens settle in for winter. You always loved this place. I remember once when we were talking, and you mentioned that you were moving to California to be closer to Jessie. Startled, I asked why you would leave Aspen. There was an uncomfortable silence, and your face became sad. Then, in a small voice, you mentioned that Aspen wasn't home anymore. Oh, John, if I could take that conversation back, and "undo" the pain that it caused you, I would. But, we can't take back actions or words, just as we can't roll back the clock on sunsets in Monterey. I guess California won out in the long run.
We visited the Maroon Bells, last weekend and I thought of you. The clouds were moving in, and there was indeed a storm across the valley. Shadows played melodies with the sunlight as they danced over the aspens and across the face of North Maroon Peak. I knew that if you were here, you'd just throw your head back, laugh, and be grateful for one more day in Aspen. But of course, I know you're only here in my heart. You've already fulfilled your life's purpose, while those of us left to carry on are still working on ours.
Seventeen years have passed since you graced us with your melodic presence. We lost Dick Kniss awhile back, and this year we lost dear Joe, and Steve. Maybe there is something to the "Great Gig in the Sky".
With each passing friend I find that the pain moves on. However, the loss of the loved one never does. It stays with you, for the rest of your life.*



And, just as you really would have rather lived on the side of a mountain than in a city of concrete and steel, California's cityscape won out to Aspen's mountain vistas. You changed your life because of love for your daughter and that speaks volumes to me. I know we all grow up, but you were our mentor: The one who taught us to follow our hearts... To find our spirits... To run on ridges with wild horses.. To soar on eagle's wings, and to love the land.

So many of us have learned the life song, but... we've lost the singer.

Yet there will always be a country boy in California, and the memories of him in my Colorado heart. You were here to show us the beauty in this world, and all too soon you were gone. And, after all these years, your words still speak to my spirit as clearly as the day they were penned.

So, in closing, I just wanted to say, "Thank you", for being my friend. Thank you, for having faith in me, for giving me a chance when you didn't have to. Your actions as a friend gave a humble truth to your timeless words. So many times, people say the lines of a beautiful song, but you were one who actually lived them. As I say goodbye in this letter, I wanted you to know that I still think of you in moments when I'm happy and I'm smiling. Your songs comfort me on cold and cloudy days when I'm crying. And, still, I really do love to see the world go around, and the sun go down.

And around and around. Rory

The letter from Monterey was written by Anne and Jim Curry:

Greetings to all John Denver Friends that have gathered together in Monterey, CA; Aspen, CO and in Australia to honor a man who has meant so much to us all. Old friends and new have come together to form a family - to continue John's legacy of meaningful music, his efforts to bring awareness of environmental concerns and his encouragement for us to help each other as human beings, and live together on this Earth in Peace.

To the many around the world who are with us in spirit - friends who have passed away, or those unable to travel at this time. We thank you all for your well-wishes, your thoughts and prayers as we travel to enjoy each other's support and friendship on this weekend that we celebrate the life of John Denver. We feel your spirit here with us, and the memory of your love deep in our heart. It's been very exciting to plan the activities here in Pacific

Grove and the Monterey Bay area this year. The Foundation for the Performing Arts in Pacific Grove and the Chamber of Commerce have joined with us in helping plan some of the events. We are thankful to all the local businesses, who have sponsored events that give us the opportunity to meet together as a group and enjoy this beautiful place and feel the inspiration of John's life here. Our beach cleanup is now joined in support and participation with the Surfrider foundation, and we are delighted they could be with us on this day where we all can make a difference. With heartfelt appreciation for those who have kept this weekend in Pacific Grove going for the past 17 years, and open arms to those joining us for the first time - and for our friends in Aspen, Australia and around the world: we salute all who share this weekend in the memory of John Denver and in the celebration of his contribution to our life, that we may carry that on to a new and better world.

*Peace,
Jim and Anne Curry*

The letter from Australia was written by me!

*Riding on the tapestry of all there is to see
So many ways and oh so many things
Rejoicing in the differences, there's no one
just like me*

*Yet as different as we are we're still the same
We extend our heartfelt greetings from
Boonah, Australia to our friends across the
world. We really feel connected to each and
every one of you at this time of the year as we
pursue our various activities to honour the life
of John Denver and to celebrate the music that
has drawn so many of us from all corners of
the world together at this time of the year.*

*Some of us have been fortunate enough to
visit Aspen during the John Denver tribute
week from time to time, so we do feel as if we
are joined spiritually despite our great
physical distance.*

*We are grateful that John wrote and sang so
many songs during his lifetime; songs that
touch on so many different subjects, and
songs that touch so many lives. One only
needs to look around to see how many
different people from so many different
backgrounds and places are drawn together
all because of one man and his music. Music
is truly a universal language.*

*We recently had the pleasure of attending
'Take Me Home', the Music and Life of John
Denver, which toured throughout Australia
and New Zealand. Bevan Gardiner, the young
New Zealand singer, is able to portray the very
essence of the songs he sang with a talent
that is so rare. Bevan is also well-known to*



many of you as he has performed in Aspen on a couple of occasions.

This year we mourn the passing of two icons of the 'John Denver World', two people who have contributed much to the music and to the commemoration week in Aspen.

Losing Steve Weisberg this year was a shock to us all. His valiant fight against cancer may have come to an end in May, but Steve's positive attitude during his illness has been an inspiration. We did not know Steve personally for a very long time, but some of us did have the opportunity to 'hang out' with him in 2012 in Aspen, providing us with wonderful memories of a fun bloke who also wrote one of our very favourite Christmas songs.

We honour Harold Simpson, who is responsible for the letter exchange between Aspen and Australia from 2001. This exchange of messages quickly became a tradition, and we were delighted when it was extended to those who were organising events in Pacific Grove.

Although the letters had not been exchanged between 2008 and 2012, the tradition was reinstated last year thanks to the generosity of Willie Hoevers, who provided the air-time in Aspen during his radio show, thus giving us the forum for sharing our messages to each other. We are delighted to once again have the opportunity to connect with our friends in Aspen and in Pacific Grove, but at the same time, reaching people from across the world. At this year's gathering in Boonah, we will be planting three memorial trees. The first tree is for John, to celebrate the man who has given us so much pleasure through his music. The second tree is for our friend, and John Denver's Australian tour manager, Max Moore. The third tree will be planted in memory of Steve, Harold, and all of our friends who have passed away.

Friends, God bless you all. You are in our thoughts as we reflect upon the seventeen years since John passed away, but at the same time celebrate his life and the music that draws us together each October.

ASPEN/MONTEREY CELEBRATIONS

There are many wonderful stories from Aspen and Monterey, many of which can be read on Facebook, and far too many to include in this newsletter. However, it seems that the Inaugural John Denver Festival, organised by Willie Hoevers was an outstanding success. Apart from some of the better-known tribute acts, many solo artists were given the opportunity to perform. This concert was enjoyed by many people and it was a wonderful concept. Hopefully this can be repeated in years to come.

FAR OUT! PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN DENVER AT THE WHEELER

Andrew Travers-Aspen Times October 10, 2014

In the years following John Denver's death in a plane crash in 1997, at age 54, his former bandmates and writing partners gathered in Aspen for a weekend of concerts on the anniversary of the accident. The informal get-together quickly grew into a global event, bringing fans and musicians to Aspen for a days-long celebration of his life and work, with a concert at the Wheeler Opera House featuring Denver's former bandmates as its annual centerpiece. Last year, due to construction at the Wheeler, the tribute concert by Denver's old band was taken off the bill and Chris Collins filled it with a fundraiser show at the Theatre Aspen tent.

Collins, a Texas singer-songwriter with floppy hair and brown glasses that accentuate his resemblance to Denver, is a popular interpreter of the Aspen icon's work and has been a prominent part of the John Denver celebration for years. This weekend, Collins and his band, Boulder Canyon, bring the keynote tribute back to the Wheeler.

The smaller show by Collins and Boulder Canyon last year in the Theatre Aspen tent raised money for four new inscribed stones in the John Denver Sanctuary. With the Wheeler scheduled to undergo another renovation next fall, Saturday's show is likely the last big John Denver tribute in the concert hall until 2016.

"The people that come up here from all around basically come because of the body of his work, which was more than the hits you heard on the radio. It was about nature, the human condition, humanity itself, longing — those things are timeless. ... His music basically talks about stewardship of the earth and stewardship of each other." Chris Collins, Singer-songwriter

The weekend typically draws an international crowd of John Denver devotees, coming from Europe, Asia, Australia and from around the U.S. Collins credits the event's drawing power to the message in Denver's music. Here in Colorado, we may think of Denver as our immortal poet laureate and our longtime neighbor, celebrating Aspen and its mountains in song. For those making the pilgrimage to Aspen, the connection is perhaps deeper.

"The people that come up here from all around basically come because of the body of his work, which was more than the hits you heard on the radio," Collins said. "It was about nature, the human condition, humanity itself, longing — those things are timeless. ... His music basically talks about stewardship of the earth and stewardship of each other."

Correspondingly, Collins' shows tend to include deep cuts outside of the Denver standards,



though, of course, he always includes the hits, too.

"You can't do a John Denver tribute show without playing 'Rocky Mountain High' and 'Annie's Song,' but we'll throw some oddball stuff in there, too," Collins said. "We'll keep it interesting."

He counts early Denver folk songs like "Poems, Prayers and Promises," "Boy from the Country," and "My Sweet Lady" as his favorites to perform. Many of the current fans making the pilgrimage to Aspen, he noted, came around on Denver when they heard songs in his catalog beyond hits like "Rocky Mountain High" and "Thank God I'm a Country Boy."

"I think that the reason they come up is that John's music resonates with them, not only on a musical level but on a message level," Collins said. "Back in the '70s, John's music was considered very saccharine, very sweet — it was kind of hip not to like him."

Aspen's most recognizable pop culture icon, Denver charted a seemingly endless stream of hits from the early 1970s to the late 1980s. His No. 1 Billboard songs from 1974 to 1976 alone included "Sunshine On My Shoulders," "Annie's Song," "Back Home Again," "Sweet Surrender," "Thank God I'm A Country Boy," "Calypso," "Fly Away," "Looking For Space" and "Like A Sad Song."

Denver's music also is set for a major reconsideration this fall. He'll get the deluxe box set treatment next month with the 90-song, four-CD "All My Memories: The John Denver Collection." Spanning the mid-1960s to Denver's death, the collection includes standards like "Leaving On A Jet Plane," "Take Me Home, Country Roads" and "Rocky Mountain High" along with live recordings, early folk tunes and six previously unreleased tracks. Collaborations with the Mitchell Trio, Olivia Newton-John, Sylvie Vartan, Placido Domingo, Emmylou Harris, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and, of course, the Muppets also are included.

The new release offers a chance for the full breadth of Denver's output, and the less well-known material that Collins cherishes, to reach music fans.

"He's a genius," Colorado Music Hall of Fame director G. Brown writes in the box set's liner notes. "He'll defeat all the cynicism in the world because he's so real. You don't have to think too much about him — just lie back and let his sunshine wash all over you. And you know you'll feel real."

Collins' band is made up of musicians who met at previous John Denver Celebration weekends in Aspen. Boulder Canyon is a six-man backing band including talents like guitarist Paul Swanton, who compiled the 200-song John Denver songbook for guitarists.

Saturday's show also will include a guest spot

from Mack Bailey, the Aspen-based musician who performed with Denver on his last tour.

Despite his resemblance, Collins notes his band performs a tribute and an interpretation of John Denver's songs. It's not in impersonation act.

"I don't sing exactly like John, or try to, but there is a similar timbre in my voice that I think people accept John's music through me — I'm a surrogate," Collins explained. "If I quote John, I say 'John used to say ...' while an impersonator would go out and say, 'Hi everybody, I'm John Denver!' At the tribute shows, we try to be respectful and not use his phrases, like 'Far out.'" This year's John Denver events also include smaller concerts at the Limelight Hotel and Aspen Community Church on Friday from the Aspen Meadow Band, John Denver Project Band, Billy Jacobs, Mark Cormican and Starwood. Saturday, before the main event with Collins and Boulder Canyon at the Wheeler, Chris Bannister and Ron Matthews perform Denver's music at the Aspen Community Church and Mountain Chalet. The musical events wrap up Sunday with a luncheon concert at the Pine Creek Cookhouse, a campfire at the Marron Bells and a Mack Bailey solo concert at the Aspen Chapel.

Denver's photography also is the subject of a show at Anderson Ranch (see the Oct. 9 edition of the Aspen Times Weekly for more on that).

The community that gathers every October in Aspen to celebrate Denver is brought together by his music, yes, but also by the idealistic spirit that Denver embodied. That helps make the annual festivities here more than just another cover band gig, Collins said.

"If people who come here to celebrate John Denver are starry-eyed or dreamy, then I'm glad to be counted among the dreamers," Collins said, "because it's a good message."

<http://www.aspentimes.com/entertainment/13323129-113/denver-john-collins-aspen>

JOHN DENVER RECEIVES STAR ON HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME

October 24, 2014 | 10:00AM PT

Malina Saval Associate Editor,
Features@MalinaSaval

[John Denver](#) was 27 years old the summer he moved to Aspen, Colo., a place with which the then-emerging singer-songwriter — born Henry John Deutschendorf, the son of a U.S. Air Force officer — would one day become synonymous. "The Rockies always resonated, and he always wanted to live here," says G. Brown, director of the Colorado Music Hall of Fame (Denver was its first inductee in 2011), who interviewed Denver multiple times during his tenure as a popular music journalist for the Denver Post. "When he got to the mountains he was happy — that's all there is to it. That summer he camped a lot, and he got back to the things he loved most, the beauty of the land and the quiet of the wilderness,



and how precious it was to him. The meteor shower that August was the best meteor shower that John, an amateur astronomer, had ever seen.”

It was this experience of “coming home” that formed the basis of “Rocky Mountain High,” Denver’s lyrical paean to the state, to its “silver clouds” and “the forest and the streams,” and the song that, per Brown, initiated him into the public consciousness when it landed at No. 9 on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 chart in 1973.

On Oct. 24, 17 years after his life was cut tragically short in a private plane crash over Monterey Bay, Calif., Denver will receive his posthumous star on the Hollywood [Walk of Fame](#), and “Rocky Mountain High,” a campfire standard latent with themes of serenity and peace and the great outdoors (and adopted by Colorado in 2007 as one of its two state songs) will no doubt be on the minds of those celebrating his musical legacy. “He was a troubadour,” says Brown of Denver, whose albums have since sold over 33 million copies. “He was a one of a kind talent. Never sang out of tune. He was a fantastic vocalist. When you listen to a record like ‘Sunshine on My Shoulder’ — the string arrangement, his vocal performance. He was just a phenomenal performer. It’s undeniable.”

Record companies were not quick to sign Denver whose acoustic style was fomented in the folk tradition of the mid-1960s when he came up through the Mitchell Trio, a group produced by the legendary Milt Okun, founder of Cherry Lane Music Publishing Co.

“Folk was over,” recalls Okun. “That was the feeling everyone had. So no one wanted to sign a folk singer, no matter how good. And John was turned down by every company I went to.”

But Harry Jenkins at RCA saw potential in Denver, and signed him to a four-album deal. (“That was unheard of in those days,” Okun says.) The arrangement ultimately proved fortuitous for Denver, since the first three albums made little noise, with adequate sales at best. RCA also initiated the partnership between Denver and manager Jerry Weintraub.

“It had ‘Take Me Home, Country Roads,’ ” says Okun of “Poems, Prayers and Promises,” the auspicious fourth album that finally broke through and signaled the arrival of Denver on the pop music radar. “The song that really got to me was ‘Rhymes and Reasons.’ The lyric, of ‘the children and the flowers are my sisters and my brothers, their laughter and their loveliness would clear a cloudy day...’ just this young kid coming up with these poetic, powerful lines.”

Conversely, there was a circle of critics who famously dismissed Denver as “the Mickey Mouse of Pop” and “the Ronald Reagan of Rock,” but what bothered Denver most were not the

naysayers themselves, but the way in which their insults affected his faithful fans.

“That’s aimed at diminishing not only me, but all the folks whose lives have been touched by my music,” Denver told Brown during their final interview. “I still meet people who use my songs in their weddings, who have played them while they are going through labor.”

“He could take the haters,” says Brown, “but he didn’t like that his fans were being diminished, and I always thought that was pretty cool.”

But Denver’s reach went far beyond that of a folk singer with granny glasses and shaggy blond hair. His finger firmly pressed on the hot button of social activism, Denver was a high-profile champion of the environment. Among his many philanthropic pursuits, he spearheaded an opposition movement to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and established the Windstar Foundation, a nonprofit education and demonstration center that studies alternative solutions to food production and energy. Denver’s sunny charisma and passion for the land inspired countless people to move to Colorado and he campaigned heavily to protect its rugged, natural landscape.

“We were the flyover at that point,” says Brown of Colorado’s reputation in the pre-John Denver days. “The Broncos hadn’t yet put us on the map. There was Coors Beer, but that was pretty much it in Colorado. Then John came along and people began to discover the joys of the outdoors and nature. I’ve spoken to people from everywhere who became aware of Colorado through John’s music. ‘I’m from New Zealand,’ they’ll say. I’ll say, ‘Oh, I’m from Colorado.’ And they’ll go, ‘Oh, John Denver!’”

But no matter the heights to which Denver’s popularity soared — he guest-hosted “The Tonight Show” on several occasions and hosted the Grammy Awards five times, not to mention his myriad appearances on “The Muppet Show” — he always remained a “country boy” at heart: humble, loyal and filled with gratitude.

“He was just a nice, gentle person,” says Jay Cooper, Denver’s attorney during the last few years of his life. “He wasn’t the type to force his personality on people. He was very easy, relaxed and always seemed to be enjoying himself and the people around him. He didn’t carry himself off as a star. You never felt like you needed to bow down or cater to him. He was creative and unique unto himself. He wasn’t a follower, nor was he one who jumped on the popular bandwagon of the day. He was a regular person.”

<http://variety.com/2014/music/spotlight/john-denver-receives-star-on-hollywood-walk-of-fame-1201335804/>

JOHN DENVER STAR UNVEILED ON HOLLYWOOD’S WALK OF FAME



John Denver: Recipient of the 2,531st Star in the along the Walk of Fame
The Hollywood Star is unveiled on Hollywood Boulevard posthumously for musician John Denver, who was represented by two of his three children Zak Deutschendorf (2nd R) and Jesse Belle Denver (3rd R) at the ceremony in Hollywood, Calif., on Oct. 24, 2014. The first musician inducted into the Colorado Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, John Denver hit it big in the 70s with his combination country-pop-folk music which included hits like "Take Me Home, Country Roads" and "Rocky Mountain High," the latter of which was honored in 2007 as Colorado's second official song by lawmakers. A portrait of Denver was placed in the state capitol in October 2008 after the posthumous honor. Denver, who was born John Deutschendorf and changed in name to help his musical career, was named as Colorado's poet laureate in 1977. He died in a plane crash Oct. 12, 1997, in California and a memorial service for him was held at Aurora's Faith Presbyterian Church. Denver's ashes were scattered in the Rocky Mountains. (credit: FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP/Getty Images)



APPLICANTS FOR OLD POWER HOUSE INCLUDE JOHN DENVER MUSEUM AND HOSTEL

BY [MARCI KRIVONEN](#)

Friday was the deadline for businesses and non-profits to submit an application to operate in Aspen's Old Power House. The building along the

Roaring Fork River used to house the Aspen Art Museum.

Fifteen proposals were submitted to the City of Aspen ranging from a John Denver Museum and Cultural Center to a hostel. Other applications include a brewery, a homeless shelter and a science center.

The building is attractive because of its location and its price. The art museum paid one dollar a year to rent the space. It's up to council to decide whether that amount will apply to a new tenant. Barry Crook is Assistant City Manager.

"There is an anticipation that the City will put money into upgrading and preparing the building, and maybe subsidizing the rent. That's not a given, but most people think they won't be paying market rates," he says.

Now the applications will be reviewed by a 7-member panel made up of City staff and private citizens. They'll make a recommendation on which applications should move forward. City Council will make the final decision, which could come by next spring.

JOHN DENVER TRIBUTE CONCERT, AUCTION TO BENEFIT YOUTH EDUCATION

11:02 p.m. CDT September 29, 2014

SWEET, SWEET LIFE: THE PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS OF JOHN DENVER - OPENING OCTOBER 24TH 2014

On October 24, 2014, Substrate Gallery in Los Angeles debuts "Sweet, Sweet Life: The Photographic Works of John Denver", an exhibition of photographs taken by the late singer-songwriter. The gallery will hold an opening reception on October 24, 2014, from 12pm to 10pm and the exhibition will run through November 23rd, 2014.

Photos are for sale. Please click the link to see the available photos and to order.

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

JIM CURRY CONCERTS:

Dear Musical Friends:

We have a some fantastic concerts coming up, featuring special guest artist, John Sommers! Do you remember listening to the radio in the summer of 1975 when John Denver sang, "Thank God I'm a Country Boy"? At the very end of the song, after the last fiddle break, John Denver shouted, "That's John Sommers, and he wrote that song!!" Thank God I'm a Country Boy became a #1 hit song for 22 weeks, and was recorded on the popular live album that went several times platinum (An Evening With John Denver). It was also recorded on another album, Back Home Again, but fans preferred the live version so that is what the radio played. For 22 weeks, the #1 chart-topping hit featured John Denver hollering out John Sommers name!

A songwriter couldn't ask for better recognition than that, but John Sommers takes it all in humble stride and says with a grin, "That song has been



very good to me." Since then, Thank God I'm a Country Boy has been recorded by many artists, in many different languages around the world. Thank God I'm a Country Boy has also been the traditional "7th inning stretch" song of the Baltimore Orioles since 1975 - and any attempt to introduce a new song has been met with strong resistance from the fans.

This weekend, John Sommers joins Jim Curry and the band to pay tribute to the music of John Denver, and the show will include John Sommers performing his own hit song, "Thank God I'm a Country Boy". Don't miss this unique opportunity to see the talented John Sommers - and make sure you tell your friends. Better yet, bring your friends and family along with you and enjoy the fun and inspiration of John Denver music together.

Also...Two Very Important Fundraising Concerts
It is so very important for the younger generations to be exposed to the music of John Denver! We jump at any chance we have to perform John Denver music in school educational programs, and in the month of November we have 2 shows lined up for students. During the day, we will perform for school students - and in the evening we will have a regular ticketed concert to support the school's music programs.

First, Jim Curry, John Sommers and the band will make a rare appearance in Wyoming on Monday, November 3. The good folks in Casper Wyoming have made arrangements for us to do 2 educational performances for the school, then a ticketed night concert for the public. Please support this concert by purchasing tickets and attending the evening show. If you can't attend, you can purchase tickets and donate them back to the program.... an investment in our youth, and support for good music everywhere!

[Click for more information - Casper, Wyoming - November 3](#)

Next, Jim Curry, John Sommers and the band will travel south to Colorado to the Manitou Springs Elementary School to perform in their 2014 Global Opus program on Wednesday, November 5. This will also be supported by a ticketed evening concert for the public in which part of the proceeds will be donated to the school music program. This concert will also include student guest performances.

The poster for this event is below:

[Click here for ticket information - Manitou Springs, CO - Wednesday, November 5](#)

And What's Next? Two Symphony Shows!!
After the school fundraisers, Jim, John and the band will get on an airplane for 2 symphony shows with the Charlotte Symphony in North Carolina, Friday, Nov 7 and Saturday Nov 8th. Symphony shows are always so amazing because you hear the powerful sound of an entire symphony added to the already powerful words

and music of John Denver. We are so excited because this is the first time John Sommers has joined us for a symphony show and we know he will have as much fun as we have performing with an orchestra. Here's the information:

[Click for info: Charlotte Symphony - Friday, November 7](#)

[Click for info: Charlotte Symphony - Saturday, November 8](#)

JOHN DENVER PROJECT BAND

There has been much written about the Italian group – The John Denver Project Band and their concerts in Aspen in 2014. All I can say about them is – Come back next year so I can attend your concerts!



NEW CONCERTS – RENEE ARMAND

I received an email from Renee Armand recently, and she says;

Hello Everyone,

I've decided – for the first time since my work with John – to do a show dedicated to him. I have finally found a singer worth working with, Paul Aleman.

Steve Weisberg loved Paul, his voice and his heart and musicianship, and was putting together performances with him, but left us before that was possible.

We are beginning here in Nashville in October (for those of you unable to make the concerts anywhere else) and then in Puerto Vallarta the first week of December.

Thank you and blessings all round. Renee Armand.

I have followed up with her the dates for her concerts in Puerto Vallarta in Mexico during the first week of December, and the dates/venue are as follows:

**Venue: Red Room (Act II Entertainment)
355 Basilio Badillo,**



Emiliano Zapata

Puerta Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico

Dates: 2 December 2014 7:30 pm

3 December 2014 7:30 pm

5 December 2014 7:30 pm

8 December 2014 7:30 pm

9 December 2014 7:30 pm

11 December 2014 7:30 pm

12 December 2014 7:30 pm

15 December 2014 7:30 pm

For more details and for tickets, please click on this link:

<http://vallartatickets.com/events/event/rocky-mountain-high/>

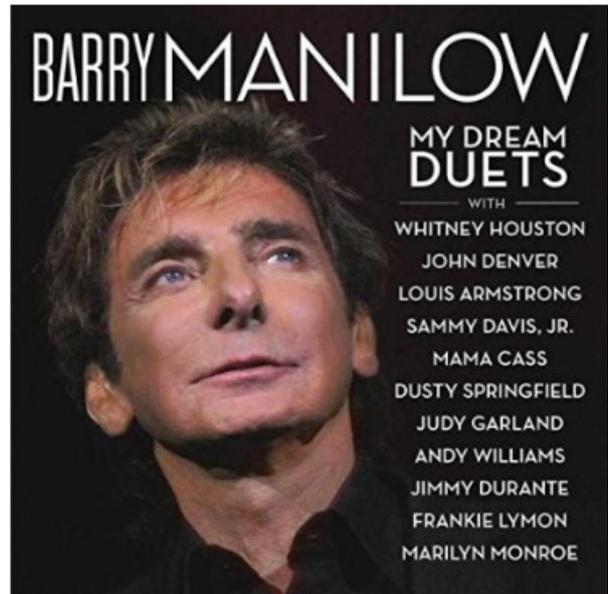
or

<http://vallartatickets.interticket.com/info.php?event=244>

We all wish Renee and Paul the best of luck with this new concert. Hopefully I have reached someone out there who will be in Puerta Vallarta at that time. Unfortunatley, we arrive in Puerta Vallarta exactly one month later.



NEW ALBUM FROM BARRY MANILOW
Barry Manilow's Dream Duets is due to be released on October 27.



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.



Starwood in Aspen

*It's a long way from LA to Denver
It's a long time to hang in the sky
It's a long way home to Starwood in Aspen
A sweet Rocky Mountain paradise
Oh, my sweet Rocky Mountain paradise*

*Springtime is rollin' 'round slowly
Grey skies are bringin' me down
I can't remember when I've ever been so lonely
I forgot what it's like to be home
Can't remember what it's like to be home*

*But I think on my lady's sweet memories
I think on my children's sweet smiles
I think on my home in Starwood in Aspen
All my friends and the snow covered hills
Oh, my friends are the snow covered hills*

*And I tell you I'm happy to be here
To share and consider this time
For I see here the shadows of changes
And a feeling of new friends to find
And I see here some new friends to find*

*But it's a long way from this place to Denver
It's a long time to hang in the sky
It's a long way home to Starwood in Aspen
A sweet Rocky Mountain paradise
Oh, my sweet Rocky Mountain paradise*

