

The Folk Club

Volume 12 Issue 11

of Reston-Herndon

November, 1998

November 10 Showcase - Dan Grove



Greetings, all. I've been a Folk Club member for over six years, and I've been writing these showcase performer profiles for the last three years. Most of you know me by now, so I'll skip the biographical stuff, and use this space to update an article I wrote a few years ago on practice habits. For my showcase, I'll be joined on one song by Deirdre Murphy. We hope to see you there!

The Secret to Good Chops

No, not pork or lamb.... We're talking playing ability, on whatever instrument you choose. The secret to good chops is simply adopting good practice habits, which are surprisingly easy – just do the **right thing**, at the **right speed**, at the **right time**.

The Right Thing: this means you shouldn't waste your time on something that's a dead end. Your own taste and current playing ability determine the direction to go in, and where you start from, but frequently a teacher, instructional book/tape/video, or jamming partner can show you the things to work on that will give you the best foundation for continued success. This is beyond the scope of this article, so you're pretty much on your own here...

The Right Speed: this is one of the most important things to learn about playing an instrument. The right speed is *slow*, never speeding up to the point where you lose form. It doesn't matter what the instrument is, or what level of ability you've attained. Let's use guitar as an example, since it's what so many of us play. If you're just beginning, learning how finger C, F, and G chords, for example, take your time and make sure that every string rings freely, unmuffled. As you practice changing from one chord to another, there is a speed you can go at that keeps perfect form (all the strings ringing), and there is a speed that's too fast, where things get sloppy. *Stay slow, and over time the speed will develop naturally.* You advanced players, working on complex fingerpicking patterns, solo runs, or tonal effects, for example, are in the same boat. If you go too fast, or allow sloppiness even at the slow speed, you'll develop bad habits that are very hard to break. *An extremely useful device to have is a metronome, which will keep you steady at slow speeds and let you speed up gradually.* Patience is rewarded, and haste will haunt you!

The Right Time: this is the good news. Most of us can't find enough time to practice, but it doesn't really take that much. The secret is that several short practice sessions a day are better than one long one. Twenty minutes in the morning and twenty minutes at night are better than forty all at once. Recent research shows that learning fine motor skills, like learning from a textbook, involves transferring the learned material from short-term to long-term memory, which takes several hours. Two transfers per day beat one, and fit our schedule better, too! A solid hour or two every now and then going over things you've already mastered is essential to retain them, but when you're learning something new at slow speeds, the law of diminishing returns applies.

The **right thing**, at the **right speed**, at the **right time** will take your chops where you want to go. Good luck!

T.M. Hanna House Fire

A fire severely damaged the home of Folk Club board member, newsletter editor, and raconteur extraordinaire T.M. Hanna on the night of October 31. He and his family got out safely, and are temporarily staying in a hotel. He wants to let everyone know that his phone and email won't be working for a while, but that he'll be online again as soon as possible.

Calendar submissions and announcements for this newsletter edition were unfortunately lost in the fire. New submissions can be sent to the stunt editor (see the back page for info).

Being catty -

ANNE HILLS

7:30 PM November 17, 1998

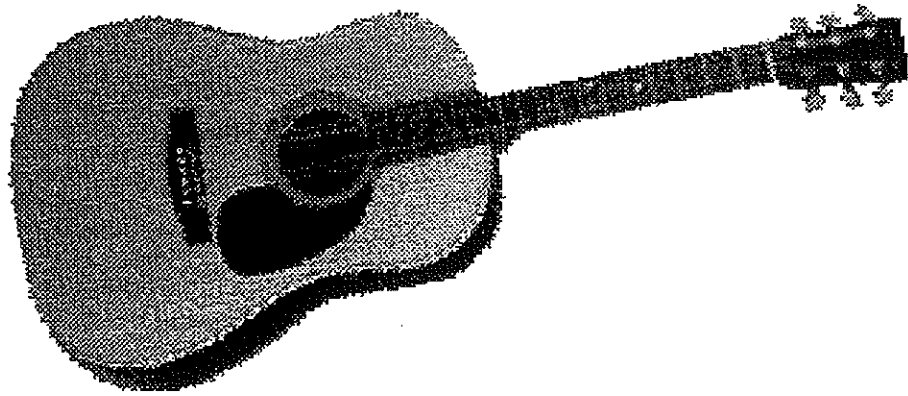
Tickets \$10 (\$9 members)



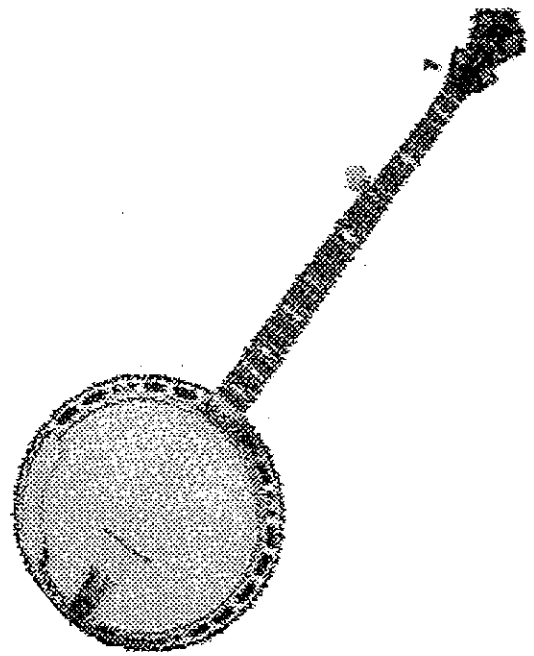
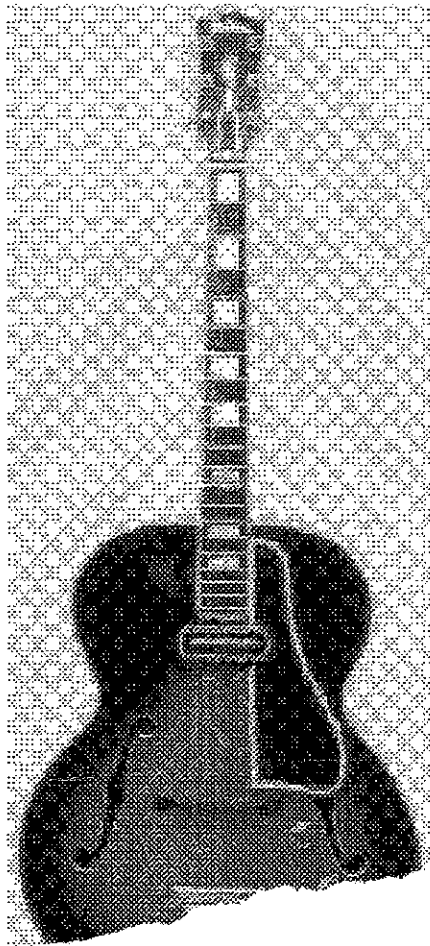
Reviewers and critics have been showering praise on **Anne Hills** since her recording debut in 1981. "Powerful," "crystalline," "gorgeous," "luminous," "soulful," and "irresistible" are just a few of the laudets used to describe her singing and performances. The Sacramento Bee said that "Anne is blessed with one of the finest voices in contemporary music." she has had a long-term association with **Tom Paxton**, with whom she formed the trio Best of Friends (with Bob Gibson), and Anne provided backup vocals for a half-dozen Paxton recordings over the years. In 1984, Hills recorded her critically acclaimed debut solo album, *Don't Explain*, and over the years developed a solid reputation with folk

audiences and theatergoers for her performances, which are both stunning in their sensitivity and inclusive in their warmth.

Anne has been a favorite guest on the **Midnight Special** and **Studs Terkel** shows on WFMT-FM, and has appeared on nationally broadcast shows such as **Mountain Stage** and **Music Americana**. Anne's 1988 recording *Woman of a Strong Heart* earned her "Best Contemporary Folk" nomination from the Philadelphia Music Foundation. Since then Anne has recorded *Voices*, with Priscilla Herdman and Cindy Mangsen; *Never Grow Old*, a choice traditional selection; and her latest, *Angle of the Light*. Whether performing at **Carnegie Hall** with such folk luminaries as the Kingston Trio and Mary Travers, or leading the finale at the **Winnipeg Folk Festival**, Anne's singing demands attention. Join us for a heartfelt, uncompromising, warm, and personal performance.



Instrument Gallery



Kathy Abbott 8522 Cottage
Left - 2 blocks Det...
Folk Club Format

72:28

Folk Club Guest Artists,

Showcases, and Special Events

prices are for nonmembers/members - it pays to join!
all times are 7:30 PM

573 3260
h.

On most nights, the Folk Club is an open mike format with a sign-up board. Each performer gets 12 minutes (or 3 songs, whichever comes first). A \$1 donation is requested.

Nov. 10	Dan Grove Showcase	n/a
Nov. 17	Anne Hills	\$10/9
Dec. 8	December Showcase	n/a

Showcase Performances

On the second Tuesday of each month, we feature a Folk Club member in a two set (25-minute) "Showcase" performance. To be in a showcase all you have to do is:

- be a Folk Club member (who hasn't done a showcase in 6 months)
- fill out a lottery slip any time in the month before the drawing
- win the drawing (held on the night of the previous month's showcase); and

Stay tuned for '99 events!

703-799-9110
7199-110
7199-960
799-111

Newsletter Submissions

Club members' performances will be listed in the club calendar, and members' music-related notices (instruction, equipment for sale, etc.) will be listed free of charge.

Articles, reviews, artwork, and other items related to music are welcome, although publication can't be guaranteed.

The editor, T.M. Hanna, is temporarily offline. You can contact the stunt editor, Dan Grove, at (703) 742-7993 or <dangrove@erols.com> with submissions or for more information.

The Folk Club

Tuesday nights, 7:30 PM
at The Tortilla Factory
648 Elden St., Herndon, VA
(703) 471-1156

President: Larry Mediate
Treasurer: Richard Flinchbaugh

Board of Directors:
Ray & Ellen Kaminsky, Lynn Jordan,
Bill Davis, Jim Rosenkrans, T.M. Hanna,
Sue Beffel, Dan Grove, Dave Hurd

Publicity & Information:
Lynn Jordan (703) 437-7766

Bookings:
Ray Kaminsky (703) 689-0444

MEMBERSHIP - ADDRESS CHANGES - RENEWAL

Check your mail label - your membership expiration date (in Year-Month-Day format, YYYYMMDD) is there. To renew, or to join for the first time, please send your check for \$12, payable to The Folk Club, to membership chair Dave Hurd at the return address below.

He's the one to send any address changes to as well.

The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon

c/o Dave Hurd
1405 Cottage Street SW
Vienna, VA 22180



What do TM + family need most urgently?

He was operated Sunday, but last night seemed OK. Said things were getting taken care of.

Leon just did a song with 2 notes in the melody, repeated ad nauseum