

July 2026

Felicia

Along the way, she met a Music Man and knew to Listen to her heart. She would dance, and the earth seemed to understand, sprouting a beautiful seed that stretched towards the heavens and unfurled to reveal a sparkling moonflower. The flower, too, delighted in existing and being a Little Dancer, swayed to the rhythm of life's play. As the lightning bugs rose in the trees, three Fairy God-Mothers appeared in the twinkling sunset and blessed them all with Love and Time and Music, and the strings again began to sing and thump-bump. From delight sprang forth a million things that twirled in the sky as twilight deepened and the stars began to peek. "Here's to us!" they cheered. Many flew off and some landed on the water, concentric ripples by the thousands, bounding along as the strings would sing and thump-bump. "This is the life," she thought. And a sound rose up from the cacophony of everything, ever changing, ever flowing, ever knowing, and she began to sing.

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Felícia

**Want a shot at being Showcased?** To be chosen, you must: 1) be a paid-up Folk Club member who has not performed a showcase in the last 12 months; 2) fill out a lottery slip and place it either in the collection basket or, on the night of the current month's showcase, in the "drawing bucket"; 3) win the drawing; and 4) be prepared to be featured in the next newsletter!

## ***Theme Night Returns Tuesday, the 21<sup>st</sup>***

Think Peter Yarrow. Think of a pet – and, if not a pet, then a playmate. Think of other cuddly animals. Think of a mythical creature – although, perhaps a kindly one. What have we got?

This month's Theme Night theme:

Pets, Critters, and Mythical Beasts.

Novelty songs are certainly ripe with possibilities, but maybe you'll land on a tender remembrance of a pet. Songs about more fearsome critters, however, are fair game. Think beyond Puff. Here there be dragons!! Put on your animal kingdom thinking caps.

(“There were two buffalos, two buffalos, two buffalos on my lawn /  
romping all around and stomping on the ground ‘til all of my grass was gone!” Rolf Harris, 1964)

## ***Get Out There!***

Friday July 10, 7:30 pm  
The Simon & Garfunkel Songbook  
with Tom and Mark Lofgren, Kipyn Martin, Heather Lloyd, Tom Fridrich, and Ronnie Newmyer  
The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Alexandria  
[www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com)

## ***The Folk Club Online:***

Find out more about The Folk Club through  
<https://folkclubofrestonherndon.org> and on  
<https://www.facebook.com/rhfolkclub> .

***Zoom Open Mics:*** Every other Monday night at 7:30 pm  
Al Hobson hosts virtual Folk Club open mics on Zoom.  
July dates will be the 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. If you'd like to watch or share  
some songs, send an email to Al Hobson at [alhobson@verizon.net](mailto:alhobson@verizon.net)  
by Sunday evening. Let him know if you plan to listen in or perform;  
he'll send you the Zoom link.

## **The Secret to Good Chops**

**good advice from Dan Grove**

No, not pork or lamb. . . We're talking playing ability, on whatever instrument you choose. As songwriters, we want to get our music heard, but unless we can afford to hire musicians for gigs, we have to accompany ourselves. Playing an instrument is fun and surprisingly easy if you go about it right. The secret to good chops is simply adopting good practice habits – do the **right thing**, at the **right speed**, at the **right time**.

The **Right Thing** means you shouldn't waste your time on something that is a dead end. 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. Choosing a particular focus is outside the scope of this article, so you're pretty much on your own there.

The **Right Speed** is the most important thing to learn about playing an instrument. The right speed is *slow*, never speeding up to the point that you lose form. It doesn't matter what the instrument is or what level of ability you've attained. Let's use a guitar as an example, since it's what so many of us play. If you're just beginning, when learning how finger C, F, and G chords, for example, take your time and make sure that every string rings freely and unmuffled. As you practice changing from one chord to another, there is a speed that keeps perfect form (all the strings ringing), and there is a speed that's too fast, when 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 truly 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, twenty at lunch, and twenty at night are better than an hour 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 or three transfers per day are better than 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 muscle memory, 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 them to go and will get your songs out into the world in style.

***This space could be yours!***

Headlining at Wolfrap this summer? Trying to sell your late uncle's bagpipes?

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**Meets Tuesday Nights @ 7pm**  
Amphora Diner Deluxe  
1151 Elden Street, Herndon, VA

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#### Folk Club Member Music Websites & Contacts :

**Audrey Adair:** <https://audreyjadair.com>  
**Chris Anderson:** <https://chrisandersonsongs.com>  
**Chasing Magic:** <https://chasingmagic-theband.com>  
**Steven Cutts:** <https://theprimecutts.com>  
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**Ron Goad:** [MisterGoad@aol.com](mailto:MisterGoad@aol.com)  
**Hickory Grove (Bev & Jack Osburn):** [www.hickoryg.com](http://www.hickoryg.com)  
**Pete Hill:** [www.petethefolksinger.com](http://www.petethefolksinger.com)  
**Jim Johnson:** [www.jimjohnsonmusic.com](http://www.jimjohnsonmusic.com)  
**George Katsos:** <https://georgekatsos.com/about>  
**Jennifer Cooke Katt:** [www.jenkattmusic.com](http://www.jenkattmusic.com)  
**Rick Landers & Heartland:** <https://ricklanders.com>  
**Shenandoah Run: (with Folk Club members Bob  
Melissinos, Ben Hamblin, Jim Johnson, & Ron Goad)**  
[www.shenandoahrun.com](http://www.shenandoahrun.com)  
**The Two Peas (Ann Granger and Larry Rice)**  
[www.thetwopeasmusic.com](http://www.thetwopeasmusic.com)

#### Other DMV music venues/presentors :

The Arts Barn: <https://artsbarnmusic.org>  
Focus Music: [www.focusmusic.org](http://www.focusmusic.org)  
Institute of Musical Traditions: [www.imtfolk.org](http://www.imtfolk.org)

**Fall '26 concerts:** *Great Aunt* in September and *Mean Mary* in November.

***Spot an error?*** Incorrect dates? Faulty spellings of names or web addresses? We all make mistakes!  
Please don't hesitate to let us know through the **new newsletter email** [FolkCNews@gmail.com](mailto:FolkCNews@gmail.com)