

The Folk Club of Reston & Herndon

Preserving the traditions of Folk Music, Folk Lore, and Gentle Folk Ways
FolkClubOfRestonHerndon.org



Volume 42, Issue 8

THEME NIGHT: Tues. Aug. 18!

August 2026

The Folk Club Showcase August 11th

Bob Melissinos With Shenandoah Run

By Ben Hamblin

In the early '60s Bob Melissinos was a folk musician in Greenwich Village and shared stages with the likes of Cass Elliot (The Mamas and the Papas), The Highwaymen, and Robert Guillaume. As a member of The Coachmen and other groups, he performed at The Bitter End and other clubs, the 1964 World's Fair, and numerous colleges and universities. Eventually life intervened (he married, raised a family, and probably worked his tail off), and music took a back seat, even though he always loved it.

Then about 2011 Bob had a hankering to get back into making music, and inspired by The New Christy Minstrels and their song "Today" (his favorite folk song), he cast about for singers and players who could do the song justice, as well as other favorite folk songs. That is how Shenandoah Run was born, and it evolved into a group whose aim is to bring back folk and Americana music and keep it vital and fresh.

That has been the key to the success of the band through the years. We pay tribute to both folk and Americana music featuring soaring harmonies and top-notch musicianship designed to entice listeners to sing along with the band. Sharing the feeling of the music with everyone has been the goal and is our primary focus.

We perform at a wide variety of locations in the DC area and beyond. Many of these places have featured Shenandoah Run multiple times, and we often play to large audiences. For outdoor spaces we have brought in some of the largest audiences the venues have experienced.

The current musicians, including five Folk Club members*, will be squeezing onto the stage for our fourth showcase: Jim Johnson* (vocals, mandolin, guitar), Leslie Smile Hoyle (vocals, violin), newest member Richard Thornburgh* (bass), Ron Goad* (percussion), founder and manager Bob Melissinos* himself (vocals, guitar), Ben Hamblin* (vocals, lead guitar), original member Joe Dickey (banjo), and Jill Nelson (vocals, octave guitar, percussion). Unfortunately, Renee Moyer (vocals, percussion) will miss this show.

For information about the band, full bios of the band members, CD purchases, and bookings, visit their website at www.shenandoahrun.com.

Come prepared to sing along!



(That's Bob in the center!)

John Prine taught us about the speed of the sound of loneliness.

We could float up the lazy river.

BUT

we're looking for rockin' down the highway, greased lightning, Mach 2 kind of

S P E E D > > > >

That will be the focus of

Theme Night, August 18th

Lean into the catalog, and surprise us with what you find about fast, fast, fast.

Limits will go unforced; tickets will not be issued!

Save The Date . . .

. . . for the September 15th concert appearance of the Australian folk duo

Great Aunt

selected as an alternate Showcase Artists at this year's Northeast Regional Folk

Alliance (NERFA) conference

and winners of the 2024 Folk Alliance Australia Duo of the Year

Look ahead to November 17th's concert with yet another NERFA-recognized singer-songwriter ***Mean Mary***.

Every Tuesday Night is **open mic night** at the Folk Club. Even on Showcase and concert evenings, open mic slots exist.

Zoom Open Mics: Every other Monday night at 7:30 pm

Al Hobson hosts virtual Folk Club open mics on Zoom.

August dates will be the 3rd, the 17th, and the 31st.

If you'd like to share some songs -- or just watch and listen --

send an email to Al Hobson at alhobson@verizon.net

by Sunday evening. Let him know if you plan to listen in or perform;
he'll send you the Zoom link.

Perhaps on an occasional basis, perhaps on a monthly basis, we want to share tips from fellow members about preparing to perform. In July Dan Grove shared ideas for efficient practicing, and this month we turn to issues of getting up in front of an audience.

SAGE ADVICE

from Rick Landers

Stepping on stage to perform as a vocalist as well as an instrumentalist can be a frightening experience. All eyes are on you, and you're inclined to guard your ego in an attempt to keep it intact, wanting, hoping, yearning to be appreciated. There is no single strategy to remain calm or to overcome what is defined as "stage fright". Even the legendary singer-songwriter Jimmy Webb found singing his own remarkable songs in front of others "debilitating".

Prolific folk musician John McCutcheon advised singer-songwriters at a workshop I attended that a performer should sing a new song 10,000 times before it sinks in enough to feel comfortable in the song's "skin". I figured he used that high figure to establish a stretch of a goal for musicians. So, repeat your originals and cover songs to embed them into your mind as well as in your muscle memory instrument playing skills. Repetitively pair your vocals and instrumentation when you practice, so your songs are smooth, the phrasing feels natural to your audiences, and you don't suffer too much from natural jitters that will, over time, allow you to perform each song nearly intuitively and, yes, more calmly. Both you and your audiences will then have a wonderful time together.

The old Scout motto, "Be Prepared" is a fundamental rule that applies. And this also includes prepping the eventual song presentations: introducing your songs with appealing banter that doesn't become boorish; singing your song with few or no notable mistakes; keeping the tempo steady; introducing your bandmates; and thanking your host and audiences for appreciating your work.

Know that you will make mistakes on stage. Lighten up and smile or laugh about it and keep moving smartly to the song's end. I keep in mind a video I saw of John Lennon in front of a large audience where he stopped at the intro section of a Beatles' hit tune, demurely smiled, and into a hot mic told Paul McCartney, and of course the audience, "I forgot the words." Then he relaunched into the song.

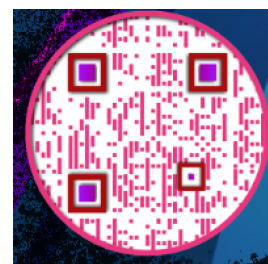
So, be prepared and practice, practice, practice. As they say, "That's how you get to Carnegie Hall".

Rick is the founder, the principal songwriter, and the front man of Heartland, an ensemble that includes Folk Club members Jim Nagle, John Werntz, and Ron Goad. For the last 22 years Rick has published Guitar International magazine.

The Vienna Theatre Company will be presenting a musical next spring that calls for some interesting instrumentation. The name of the musical can't be shared at this time for licensing reasons. However, a lot of the instrumentation is pretty squarely in the capabilities of members of the Folk Club, such as the bodhran, accordion, interesting percussion instruments, various whistles, and a fiddle. For more information, please contact Folk Club members Jon and Jessie Roberts at jonrob0322@gmail.com or jessrob0322@gmail.com.



Join Folk Club member Bill Steskal and friends, Circle of Toads, on August 15 at 7:30. The show will be at Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church, 9350 Main Street in Manassas. Use this QR code for tix.



New members Jessica and Will Melis want us to know about their house concert series in Ashburn, Virginia. Watch for Rupert Wates September 26. <https://shoelessounds.org>

Sarah McQuaid at the Artsbarn September 12 at 7 p.m. <https://artsbarnmusic.org>



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

President: Al Hobson **Treasurer:** Jen Katt
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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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Hickory Grove (Bev & Jack Osburn): www.hickoryg.com
Pete Hill: www.petethefolksinger.com
Jim Johnson: www.jimjohnsonmusic.com
George Katsos: <https://georgekatsos.com/about>
Jennifer Cooke Katt: 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
The Two Peas (Ann Granger and Larry Rice) www.thetwopeasmusic.com

Other DMV music venues/presentors :

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