

Cuz's Corner

By Dennis Frost

Welcome to the summer solstice edition of Cuz's Corner. The music recently has been every bit as hot as the weather and this appears to be the case right through the sweltering months ahead. Highpoints last month were fantastic shows by **Uncle Earl**, Carrie Rodriguez, and my old pals, **The Waybacks** with **The Carolina Chocolate Drops**. I was fortunate enough to have interviewed the "**G'Earls**" and Carrie and it continually amazes me just how much talent, creativity, and class there is in roots music these days.

This seems to be a rather busy early summer for music not only in the Charlotte area, but in the surrounding areas and, as usual, I'd like to throw a few of these out for your consideration. On July 5th I am looking forward to yet another McGlohon Theatre co-bill featuring the early bluegrass stylings of **Chatham County Line** with the more progressive sounds of the **Greencards**. This will no doubt be much like the **Waybacks/Chocolate Drops** show where, in the span of three hours or so, you can hear where roots music came from, where it is now, and where it's headed. Another show of note coming up on the 29th of July in this ethereal venue will be an appearance by **Hot Tuna**. This band began eons ago as, most of you know, an outlet for Jack Casady and Jorma Kaukonen's love of the blues (**Jefferson Airplane**). **Hot Tuna** sets were played either preceding **Airplane** gigs or later the same evenings in local clubs. Although **Jefferson Airplane** has come and gone, **Hot Tuna** is still going strong after all these years. If you are a fan of fingerstyle blues guitar in the

tradition of the Reverend Gary Davis, this show just might be for you. Jorma Kaukonen is about my favorite on the planet (More information on both of these shows can be found at www.maxxmusic.com.) A quick note: even though I tend to preview coming shows by national acts, please never forget that there are local and regional performers playing in clubs near you just about every night of the week. Many of these musicians are on equal footing with national acts. I would encourage you to check out club websites or newspaper entertainment sections and go out and hear what the Queen City has to offer musically – you'll be glad you did!

A favorite festival of mine is coming up July 26th-29th in beautiful Floyd, Virginia. This year's Floydfest (www.floydfest.com) has one of its strongest roots-based lineups that I can recall and this eco-friendly event takes place on the top of a mountain with western Virginia as its backdrop. This year's stellar lineup includes **Fu-follet**, **The Red Stick Ramblers**, **The Infamous Stringdusters**, **The Waybacks**, **Blue Highway**, **The Carolina Chocolate Drops**, **The Duhks**, **The Hackensaw Boys**, **Sam Bush**, **Railroad Earth**, and **Donna the Buffalo**. If world music is your passion, you can always find an exquisite lineup of performers and dancers from around the world at every Floydfest!

The 2007 Americana Music Association awards nominations are in and can be found at www.americanamusic.org. One note in passing is that **Uncle Earl**, whom many of us enjoyed so much a couple of weeks ago, received a nomination for emerging artist of the year and all I have to say is, "Go

'G'Earls; you have my vote!" Congratulations to local favorites **The Avett Brothers** for their three nominations. It's great that local music is now getting a national audience! It is my intention to write a piece on the AMA and its award show in the September edition of Cuz's Corner, so stay tuned.

Although not overwhelmed with new releases last month, there were several stellar CDs that I feel are worth a mention. Native American activist Marty Stuart's new release, **Compadres** (www.martystuart.net), is a compilation of duet recordings that range from the 15-year-old Stuart playing with Lester Flatt in the Ryman to a bluegrass version of **The Who's I Can See for Miles** with **Old Crow Medicine Show**. Being that Marty was for a while a mainstream country music star complete with his own TV show (**The Marty Party**), one loses track of how eclectic and true to the music he has actually been. This is a wonderful recording with enough diversity to keep me listening for hours. The duets on this CD include the likes of Merle Haggard, Johnny Cash, Loretta Lynn, Earl Scruggs, **The Staple Singers**, B.B. King, Del McCoury, and many more. Speaking of **The Staple Singers**, be sure to also check out Marty's **Soul's Chapel** gospel recording with his **Fabulous Superlatives**. Not only are the songs done in the tradition of this groundbreaking group, but Marty is actually playing Pops Staples' guitar which was given to him by the family a couple of years ago. You might also want to check out the new one from Mavis Staples, called **We'll Never Turn Back** (www.mavisstaples.com). This recording produced by Ry Cooder revisits the protest songs of the civil rights movement, paying homage to the relationship the Staples family had with the Reverend Martin Luther King.

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Also satisfying is the new disc from **David Holt and the Lightning Bolts** with a title that says it all – **Old Time Music with a New-Time Jolt** (www.davidholt.com). The rearrangements on this CD of familiar old-time and country blues standards are crisp and enjoyable and are given a delightful vocal touch by Asheville's Laura Boosinger. Finally, my CD pick of the month and one that will have to be surgically removed from my vehicle's player, is **The Subdudes'** new one, called **Street Symphony** (www.thesubdudes.com). This group was formed twenty years ago in New Orleans and has put together a literal gumbo of sounds with some of the richest vocal harmonies you will ever hear. It's all here in terms of influences: bayou sounds, jazzy grooves, a folky consciousness, and a bit of R&B thrown in for good measure – all executed the way only a veteran band can. This is the good stuff! That's all for July and we'll see you next month. Be sure to get out and support live music at a venue near you.

All the best,
Cuz

To share your thoughts about your favorite music with Cuz (especially old-time), contact him either at dcmfrost@mindspring.com or 704-532-8846.

Welcome, New Member!

We extend a warm welcome to our newest member, **Don Clapp**.

All members should deduct the entire amount of their membership as a donation. CFS is a 501(c)(3) organization and, according to the IRS, newsletters are not considered to be premiums.

Authors Wanted For New Book Celebrating Carolinas Music

What do bluesman Bob Margolin, rocker Steve Stoeckel, and boogie-woogie piano man Rev. Billy C. Wirtz all have in common? Yes, they are some of the best music makers in the Carolinas – but they are some of the best music **writers**, too.

Their writings are going to be part of a new book that will celebrate Carolina music. **And writers from North Carolina and South Carolina are invited to submit their work for inclusion as well.**

“Novello Festival Press is producing a book that will honor the wonderful legacy of music in our region. We want to represent the diversity of music from folk to rock, gospel to soul, old-time to contemporary,” said Amy Rogers, Novello Festival Press publisher. “We are looking for essays about the people, places, and musical traditions of the Carolinas, from the Appalachians to the Piedmont and the coast. And we are proud to announce that accomplished writer Ann Wicker will edit the book.” The book is scheduled for publication in April 2008.

Guidelines for Submissions:

1. Writers must be 18 years or older.
2. Submission must be non-fiction about a person, place, musical genre, or event that relates to music in the Carolinas.
3. You may send no more than two submissions, no more than 1000 words each.
4. Submissions from previously unpublished writers are welcome.
5. Send a cover sheet with name, address, email address, phone number, and one paragraph about yourself.

6. No materials will be returned. **Do not send original letters, photos, or other materials.**

7. Writers must grant permission for Novello Festival Press to edit their pieces and to print their names and hometowns.

8. There is no fee to enter; each accepted contributor will receive \$25 and a copy of the finished book.

9. **Submissions must be post-marked to August 1, 2007.** Send to Novello Festival Press, 310 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202 or by email to NovelloPress@aol.com.

Novello Festival Press is the award-winning publishing project of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Its books are available in Charlotte area bookstores and library branches. Proceeds from book sales benefit the library. For more information, call 704-432-0153 or visit www.novellopress.org.

Old Time Fiddle & Guitar Workshops

Celestial Mountain Music will host a fiddle workshop by champion fiddler Betty Vornbrock and a workshop by Billy Cornette on backing up the fiddler on rhythm guitar on Saturday, July 14. Betty will emphasize bow control, rhythms, accents and phrasing. Both workshops will take place 10 AM-4 PM (with a lunch break) at the home of Lo and Mary Gordon, 8450 Greenville Highway, Brevard, North Carolina. Tuition for each workshop is \$65. Camping space available. To register, contact Mary Gordon at 828-884-3575 or celes-tial@citcom.net.