

Bluegrass & More by Red Rocking Chair January 12th

Since May of last year, three friends have come together weekly to play bluegrass and whatever other music appeals to them - not unusual in a region with our musical traditions. What makes this particular weekly session remarkable is that the three friends

are Michael Reno Harrell, Jack Lawrence, and Tom Kuhn - each a master musician in his own right. Playing Tuesday evenings at Charlotte's Comet Grill, they're

known as **Red Rocking Chair**. You'll have a rare opportunity to hear them in a concert setting when they perform for the Charlotte Folk Society at 7:30 PM on Friday, January 12, 2007. Come early to get a good seat in the Bryant Recital Hall in the Sloan-Morgan Building, 1220 Elizabeth Avenue, on the Central CPCC Campus in Charlotte.

Michael Reno Harrell has written and sung his way into the hearts of both native and "new" Southerners with songs such as **Caroline** and **Southern Suggestions** - celebrations of our region's way of life. He was born on the Tennessee side of the Appalachian Mountains. His family migrated there from

western North Carolina the year he was born. He spent his youth traveling back and forth between the two states on winding mountain roads. With mountain roots running many generations deep, it's not hard to see where Mi-



Tom Kuhn, Jack Lawrence & Michael Reno Harrell

chael's love for storytelling arises. His songs have been described as "Appalachian grit and wit" but, as his writing demonstrates, Michael's awareness transcends the bounds of his boyhood home or even the Southern experience. Having toured throughout the British Isles and much of Europe, as well as most of the United States, he writes songs that reflect an insight into the universal human experience. Michael has eight CDs and a DVD to his credit, with his most recent release being *Drive*. Sample his recordings on his website, www.michaelreno.com.

Jack Lawrence grew up in Charlotte. His musical odyssey began
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Rising Appalachia Plays CFS House Concert March 17th

Sisters Leah and Chloe Smith were raised in Georgia by a fiddling mother and a guitar-playing father and were exposed to traditional Appalachian music at an early age. These young women give evidence in their debut, self-titled CD, **Rising Appalachia**, that they well absorbed the ballads and contra dance tunes they were exposed to at home. Influenced as well by music from urban jazz to roots music from around the world, Leah and Chloe have created a style that is truly their own. Add in the unique drumming style and subtle rhythms of Asheville percussionist Forrest Kelly, and their performances take on a driving and hypnotic groove. The musicians of **Rising Appalachia** have traveled throughout this country and beyond, using their rich Appalachian traditions to connect with other cultures.

Please join us on Saturday, March 17, at 7:30 PM when **Rising Appalachia** will perform in a CFS house concert at the home of Salem Macknee and Lee Howard, 14930 Hough Road, in Charlotte. If you know any young folks that you'd like to turn on to traditional music, hearing **Rising Appalachia** would be the perfect way to do so! Admission is \$10 for Folk Society members; \$12 for others. **Reservations are required; space is limited.** Call Salem Macknee at 704-573-0864 to reserve your spot.

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at age ten when his father became sound engineer for the Lake Norman Music Hall. Backstage, Jack had opportunities to meet and learn from some of the top acts in the country, bluegrass, and gospel fields. Performers such as Buck Owens, Don Rich, Bill Monroe, George Shuffler, and Flatt and Scruggs exposed him to a variety of styles emerging in the '50s and '60s. From these early experiences, Jack developed his particular style and talent. Ultimately, his major influences were Doc Watson, Clarence White, and Django Reinhardt. Jack played bluegrass, rock and country music with several bands for more than a decade after high school. Since 1983, his most prominent role has been as picking partner to Doc Watson. The duo has toured the country for more than twenty years, delighting audiences coast to coast. Characterized as a "flatpicking powerhouse," Jack also performs as a solo guitarist/vocalist in both national and international venues. Listen to samples of his CDs on his website, www.jacklawrence.com.

A native of Newton, North Carolina, Tom Kuhn brought his talents to Charlotte in 1986. At the time, he was with the popular western North Carolina variety band **Long Time Gone**, not only holding down the bottom end with his bass guitar, but also pitching in on baritone and lead vocals and playing mandolin when this talented band performed as a bluegrass quartet. Tom made his mark in the Charlotte area on electric bass and background vocals with the pioneering Americana band **Rank Outsiders**, helping to fuel their ten-year run. Currently a force in the **Stragglers'** three-pronged vocal attack, he's also one of Charlotte's most active musicians,

having worked with David Childers, Michael Reno Harrell, Jack Lawrence, and **The Mannish Boys**. He's shared the stage with members of the James Taylor band and stays active in both live and session work. Tom plays in several local bands while keeping a part-time teaching roster and doing various recording sessions on bass, mandolin, and vocals.

Charlotte Folk Society Gathering concerts are free and open to the public. We do accept donations, all of which benefit the musicians. Join us for refreshments following the hour-long concert, then take part in a song circle, or a fast or slow jam session. Questions? Visit www.folksociety.org or call 704-563-7080.

You're Invited: CFS Old Time Acoustic Jam January 14th

The Charlotte Folk Society hosts an open Acoustic Old Time Music Jam at the Charlotte Museum of History at 3500 Shamrock Drive in Charlotte. Generally, the jam takes place on the second Sunday of each month from 2 to 4 PM. Please mark your calendars for the next sessions: **January 14th, February 11th, and March 11th.**

Museum admission is free on Sundays and museum hours are 1-5 PM. The jam is free and open to the public. Contact Ruth Helms, Jam Coordinator, at 704-537-1055 if you're interested in joining the session or have questions. Participation averages fifteen to twenty musicians. Visit www.charlottesmuseum.org for directions and to learn about exhibits and special events taking place at the museum.

"Appalachian Christmas" Concert On January 7th In Wilkesboro

Each year The Kruger Brothers, a traditional American folk/bluegrass trio from Switzerland, perform in "An Appalachian Christmas" concert at the Lutheran Church of the Atonement, 243 Oakwoods Road, in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. This year's free concert will take place on Sunday, January 7th, at 4 PM. All are welcome.

Directions from Charlotte: Take I-77 North to U. S. Highway 421 North. Travel on U. S. 421 North to Wilkesboro. Exit at Brushy Mountain/Oakwoods Road in Wilkesboro. Turn right on Oakwoods Road. The Lutheran Church of the Atonement is approximately 1.5 miles on the right.

For more information, call the church at 336-838-5522, visit www.atonementwilkes.org, or visit www.krugerbrothers.com.

Charlotte Appalachian Dulcimer Club

The Charlotte Appalachian Dulcimer Club meets on the second Friday of each month from 6:30 to 7:30 PM, in Room 103 of the Sloan-Morgan Building, 1220 Elizabeth Avenue, on the Central CPCC Campus in Charlotte. All are welcome. To confirm or for details, call Karen Alexander at 704-391-1354.