

A World of Accordions Museum

August, 2007

Newsletter for Members

Editor, Helmi Strahl Harrington, Ph.D.

My Note to Members

August 13-18, the *American Accordionists' Association* together with *Accordionists and Teachers Guild* hosted the *Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes* in Alexandria, VA. The CIA's *Coupe Mondiale* is considered by many the world's most significant competition. Twenty-six years have passed since this event was held in the USA. Faithe Deffner (Coordinator), Joan Cochran Sommer (ATG President) and Linda Soley Reed (AAA President) were presented with AWAM awards recognizing their extraordinary efforts in support of this event.

After the Saturday banquet, the CIA named me "Honored Friend of the Accordion," one of the highest international awards. In the 60-year history of the CIA its list of honorees includes fewer than 100 scholars, educators, performing artists, and spokespersons worldwide whose accomplishments are deemed significant contributions, and who are considered of outstanding influence in supporting and promoting the accordion. The award was actually conferred in 2006 (in Finland), but presentation was postponed until the 2007 meeting in Alexandria. It's just a piece of paper, but it means a lot!



A featured event at the convention was my presentation of "**A World of Accordions Travelling Museum,**" in which 30+ instruments were explained in terms of chronological, aesthetic, and cultural developments. Each was sounded in a performance/demonstration workshop at which attendees overflowed the room, sat on the floor and stood crowded around the room. Many people returned during the next days to discuss, question, and learn more. A slide-show of 645 instruments of the Museum alternated with a 45-min. movie showing my performances on 19 different types of accordions during all exhibition hours. Some friends of long-standing (like Mort and Cressida Herold) drove many hours with primary goal being this workshop/exhibit.



Josephine Rush came to Alexandria from Easton, PA, with her companion Diane and a wonderful donation of accordions, misc. supplies, reeds, tuning table, and two boxes of 50 marvelous accordion figurines (virtually all were new to us!). The items are from the accordion studio she and her husband Worman Rush operated. Several accordions and all the figurines were immediately added to the Museum, and the remaining items will be gratefully used in the next long-term ARTS curriculum I plan to offer in 2009. You may also recall that Jo contributed an article about her friendship with Charles Magnante to my book. We sincerely **Thank You, Jo.**



L-R: Charlie, Krystal, (back of circular table) Hanni, Audrey, Diane, Jo, Helmi

Please notice-- Charles Magnante: America's Great Accordionist has just gone into its Fourth Edition!

Audrey Meitzner, valued friend and Museum volunteer, accompanied me on the trip. My children Hanni and Charlie, together with Krystal Wolfe, drove from Texas to be present at the award. Please view the many pictures and reports at www.cia.org/coupemondiale.

On our return trip, we stopped in Bethlehem, PA, to visit with Gisella Jaynes, a long-time student and friend of my mother. Gisella is now on a walker and cannot play her accordions and guitars anymore, so she generously decided to donate them to us. We gratefully **Thank You**, Gisella.

Just after we got back, Charlie and Krystal arrived for a visit. The few days passed too quickly, but it sure was good to enjoy their company again.

I'm going to become a Grandmother! My daughter Hanni flew to Superior with her significant-other Vincent for a get-acquainted weekend prior to the birth of their baby girl already named Cheryl Renee. I'm about as excited as can be—for Hanni and for myself.

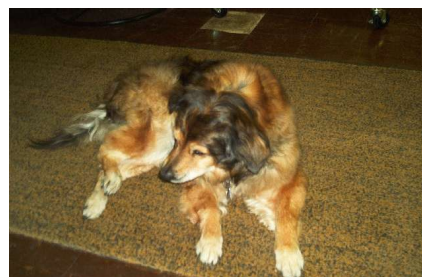
On recommendation from Faithe Deffner, **Steve Mobia**, independent film producer working on a documentary about accordions and accordion personalities, came from Los Angeles, CA, to interview me and learn about HARTS. We wish him much success in this long-term project.



Henry Doktorski appeared in concert at HARTS on September 16. While the audience numbered just under 50 people, they came from amazingly distant areas--Los Angeles (CA), Indianapolis (IN), New Jersey, Austin (TX), Washburn, Boulder Junction, Wausau, and Solon Springs (WI), Two Harbors and Minneapolis (MN), as well as local residents of Superior and Duluth. Henry came from Pennsylvania. I was sorry to learn that Mary Kay, his wife and my former student, was unable to attend due to ill health. The concert was preceded by a workshop and followed by a lesson for special-student Joan Moyer (IN). Audrey served supper for 15 people afterwards!



We had to say good-bye to Onyx and Lady, my dogs that accompanied me for so many years. Everyone loved them while realizing that their time was coming to an end. Onyx had a progressive neuro-muscular paralysis, and Lady suffered from severe arthritis and after-effects of strokes. I made the difficult decision to euthanize after much heart-searching when Onyx began dragging her hind-quarters and Lady cried upon trying to lay down or arise. I had been carrying them up and down stairs for a year already. It was time for a humane, peaceful end, and I hope eventually to find them in a heaven for all spirits.



For years we've been asked for recordings of my playing. Well, Andrew Meitzner (Wausau, WI) video taped me with Museum instruments in July. I learned how to segment, add transitions, signage, and burn the completed film in DVD format just ahead of taking the first 20 to the *Coupe Mondiale*. We'll have the next batch burned professionally and for sale in the Gift Shop. Be sure to consider *A Profusion of Sound* as a special gift to yourself or someone you love. After all, Christmas gifting is just around the corner!

We wish Emil Meitzner a rapid and complete recovery from surgeries to open or bypass clogged arteries. Our steadfast friend, volunteer, donor is precious to all who admire his impact on HARTS and especially AWAM. Between surgeries, Emil devised and built two accordion section-holders for use during repair procedures. I first saw such a device at Karpek's, Audrey got a picture at Peter Schultz's, and now we have a great design that we can use, reproduce and sell. **Thank You**, Emil.

Upcoming Concert

"Chance" featuring Cheryl Leah and Ed Willet in Concert. November 4, 2:00PM. Helmi will participate in this performance.



Harrington Arts Center Publications

Charles Magnante: America's Great Accordionist, Fourth Edition. CD of 21 Magnante performances included. \$45.00.

Helmi's Handouts (2004). ca. 150 p. with indexed divisions. \$25.00.

Selected Favorites for Free-Bass Accordion: Quint- Converter Edition (2004). 17 pieces, 33 p. plus Appendices. \$15.00.

Christmas Carol Favorites for Quint Converter (2004). 19 pieces, 33 p. \$15.00.

Bohemian Button Diatonic Method. Books One through Five. Supplemental Books One, Two, Three. \$12.00 each.

Chemnitz Concertina Books: Five Easy Pieces. Books One, Two, Three, Four. Five Medium Pieces. Books One, Two. Five Medium-Difficult Pieces. Books One, Two. \$6.95 or \$7.95 each.

Club System (Regular Keyboard) Button Diatonic Method. Book One. Book Two. \$12.00 each

Club System (Expanded Morino Keyboard) Button Diatonic Method. Book One. \$12.00.

Hymns and Sacred Music. (for Piano- or Chromatic Accordions). \$9.95

Olde Tyme Favorites of the Midwest. Sixteen pieces for accordion. \$15.00

The Texas Book (for Piano- or Chromatic Accordions). Coming soon.

Accordion-Family Instruments: An Introduction. Part One. Coming Soon

A Profusion of Sound: 19 AWAM Instruments on DVD, with explanatory booklet. \$20.00

Watch our website www.accordionworld.org for new features.