



Notes from the Soundboard

January 2009

WEBSITE: WWW.SSDSOCIETY.ORG

Issue 285

President's Notes



The new president of Silver Strings is now Larry Roper. He is a kind, gentle, and fair-minded man with a knack for making folks comfortable and seeing the best in people.

We are fortunate to have the opportunity for his leadership in our group.

See page 5 of this Soundboard, to learn more about him.

I hope you all had a very merry Christmas, and I wish you all a healthy, happy New Year. I've certainly enjoyed this past year of playing music and spending time with all of you.

I would like to say "Thank You" to the previous board members (Bob, Linda, Karen, George, and Bonnie) for the truly outstanding job they have done for the past two years. I thank them for their service that went above and beyond the call of duty at times. They have been an inspiration to me and I am very excited to have the opportunity to carry on their work. Well done guys!

I am very excited and optimistic about the coming year. We (board members) have discussed some things we would like to do this year and are in the process of putting together an agenda. Most of all we want to continue to make Silver Strings an enjoyable experience for everyone. We will present our agenda at the first board meeting and discuss some of our ideas.

As most of you know, the performing group has completed a very successful season of holiday playdates. They worked very hard since last September with extra practices in preparation for the December playdates and they represented the club

very well. Good job guys! I'm often asked by people if we have a Christmas CD for sale and they are disappointed when I tell them we don't. Part of the reason is the expense involved in making one. Ken Kaiser recorded the performance at St. Richards Church with his equipment and it sounded pretty good. Ken has agreed to volunteer his time and equipment to record the group again, and Terry Treppa has offered the use of St. Richard's church for recording. I think this is a very good idea, since there would be no cost to the club at this point. If the recordings are of good enough quality, we could have a CD produced for the club to sell. There would be costs incurred there, but the sales of the CDs would eventually offset the costs. The CDs are also a good promotional item. At any rate, we have nothing to lose by at least getting the recording done. The problem is, we need to do it as soon as possible while the tunes are fresh in everyone's minds and Ken is available. Terry has made his church available on Friday January 9th at 7pm for a practice. Ken said that he may be able to do the recording in two, four-hour sessions. Times and dates will be announced. I would like the performing group to do this, but if anyone else would like to participate, and can play the tunes on the holiday playlist well, please contact me at **248-437-5403** or at **larry-janelle@ameritech.net**.

Larry Roper

IT'S JANUARY LET'S CELEBRATE !

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

4...Val Losse

10...Sharon McAuliffe

18...Tom Meggison

23...Terry Avery

26...Kelly Kaiser





MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Jan.1.....	No SSDS meeting
9.....	CD practice @ St. Richard's Church....7: pm (Bring your calendars for planning purposes.)
15.....	First 2009 SSDS meeting.....7: pm
17.....	Playdate.....11:am - 3:pm.
18.....	Playdate.....Noon – 4: pm Erie Ice Daze.....Lake Erie Metropark
29.....	SSDS Variety Night.....7: pm Good Hope Church.....Garden City
Feb.20.....	Playdate.....2:30-3:30 pm American House.....Royal Oak

Music Notes

Hi Everyone!

I am happy to introduce myself as the new Music Coordinator for Silver Strings. Although I'm still learning what all my responsibilities will be, I am excited and honored to be able to serve the group in this position.

As many of you know, I am one of those folks who have a fascination for music theory, and I love many kinds of traditional tunes. While I am music director, I hope to build on the many outstanding accomplishments of the music directors who came before me. Some of my goals include:

* Review the tunes in the song book, and get them into a digital format so each can be in a standard (easy to read) form, with the correct chords. I plan to date each tune, and keep a master list, so that we can all be sure we have the latest version. I plan to actively talk to people to find out if they have any questions, comments or corrections to tunes in our repertoire.

* Continue to have tunes available at each meeting for people who need replacement music. As I get tunes into digital format, I will also be able to email replacement music to people if they wish.

* Perhaps most importantly, I want to get input from as many members as possible as to what THEY would like to see from their music coordinator. I want to do as much as I can to make everyone's musical life as fun as possible. New tune suggestion? Workshop idea? Want more hard songs? Want more easy songs? Would you like to see more mentoring of beginning players? Do you want to see more variety (or less) in how we play a tune? Let's talk!

I am excited to begin my responsibilities as your Music Coordinator, and I look forward to talking to you about YOUR music.

Thanks!! Kelly Kaiser



Co-VP Program Notes

We would like to start off by wishing everyone a **Happy New Year**, and to say **thank you** for entrusting us to follow in Linda Losse's most capable footsteps. Linda did a truly outstanding job these past two years, and has generously provided us with a detailed instruction / "how-to" list that should help us during this time of transition to continue to provide you, the members of Silver Strings, with an enjoyable and musically-fulfilling experience.

We also want to shout out a big THANK YOU to the outgoing board, Bob, Karen, Linda, George, and Bonnie. You all did an amazing job and we are grateful for your dedication, service, and leadership.

January 2009 just happens to have 5 Thursdays and y'all know what that means . . . VARIETY NIGHT!!! Your hosts for the evening will be Bob Niemczewski and David Smith. Pizza, salad, and beverages (coffee, tea, hot chocolate, lemonade, iced H2O) will be provided by the club. Desserts (of all kinds) would be greatly appreciated. Anyone wishing to perform that night should contact Bob or David at the next club meeting (January 15th) or anytime prior to variety night. Let's have a big turnout for variety night, and we encourage anyone who hasn't performed before to consider doing so. After all, Silver Strings is about fun, friendship, and sharing the music.

At our first club meeting in 2009 (on January 15th) we will be asking everyone to provide us with Emergency Contacts/phone numbers that we will keep on file. This information will not be included on the official club roster or on the website. The emergency contact information you provide will help us to help you, our members, in the event of an emergency during club meetings or at playdates, picnics, campouts, or festivals.

Let's all have fun and make some joyful noise!

Carol Ann Mathews & Janelle Pacic

Dear Friends,

Dec. 16, 2008

One month ago, the Silver Strings performed at the Hope Clinic's Ground Breaking Ceremony. Your beautiful music added a very special touch to this important event. We are all very appreciative that you took the time from your busy schedules to entertain all of those gathered. I know everyone who attended the Ground Breaking enjoyed your music. We especially appreciate you braving the cold to perform at the event.

Again, please accept our heartfelt thanks for helping us to celebrate this very significant event in Hope's history.

Best Wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year from all of us at Hope!

Sincerely yours,

Cathy Robinson, Executive Director

I wish all of you a Happy New Year. On behalf of all of all members of SSDS, heartfelt thanks to all of the outgoing board members for the wonderful job they have done leading and running this organization. Karen Turner, VP of Business for the past 2 years, has passed the baton to me for that position along with a lot of helpful information (and a lot of boxes). I would like to thank Karen very much on behalf of all of us for all of her hard and very effective work in arranging, organizing, and managing the playdates during her reign along with all the other contributions she has made to SSDS. Also, thanks to all of you who have participated in these events and provided so many listeners in many different venues with musical entertainment. I will do my best to continue the work that Karen and those who held this position before her have done to help make this a joyful experience for those who perform in these play dates and for those in the audiences.

Our first playdates for the New Year are Erie Ice Daze at Lake Erie Metro Park, in Rockwood, Saturday, January 17, 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM, and on Sunday, January 18, 12:00 noon – 4:00 PM. For these events, the atmosphere is casual and we play background music with a few visitors stopping by to listen now and then. We have enough people signed up to play for Saturday (Jan. 17) but there is still space for additional people to sign up for Sunday (Jan. 18). We also have a playdate at American House in Royal Oak on Friday, Feb. 20, 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM. For additional information on the above playdates refer to the playdate listing elsewhere in this newsletter.

Because our next SSDS meeting is January 15, 2009, only 2 days before Erie Ice Daze begins, if you wish to sign up for the still unfilled Sunday Jan. 18 playdate, I would prefer that you contact me at **248-544-0033** or e-mail: bertstein76@gmail.com, rather than waiting until Jan. 15. For any of our other upcoming playdates in 2009, you can sign up at the regularly scheduled SSDS meetings or by contacting me by email or calling me. Sign up sheets at the SSDS meetings will be on the "PLAYDATE" table which will be located just inside the room entrance on the RIGHT and will be available for sign up anytime during the evening and will be posted there for every meeting.

Please note that signups for playdates will operate on a first come, first serve basis. Some playdates may require a limit on the number of musicians due to limited space.

Lastly, if any of you know of a potential playdate, I would appreciate your contacting me with the venue, the contact person's name and phone number.

Bert Stein



Among our holiday playdates, was our annual concert at the Livonia Public Library. This year, had a surprise twist. When we arrived for set-up, we were greeted by an assortment of cameras and microphones. The Library had arranged for a video by city channel 8 of Livonia, to be shown on the Livonia cable station on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and after.

From Marie Naster: "The people from the cable company did an absolutely marvelous job of presenting our group. The sound is good, the angles that they showed us from were wonderful. All of the instruments and all of the people performing appear at one time or another. They superimposed some images over others, they zoomed in and out. They did fades and close-ups. One lady in the audience seemed close to tears, they showed her, there was a youngster jumping with delight, they showed him. they zoomed in on Greg doing his solo, Kelly doing hers and they showed Sandi doing hers. There were some great pictures of the "ugly stick". They got close-ups of all the instruments, hammers hammering , and hands playing, Barb, Linda's, Greg's, and mine included."

The club was given a complimentary video, which will be shown at the meetings in January & February. If you would like to purchase a copy, you may sign up by the viewing screen. They are \$15 each, and you may order yourself or with a group order through the club. Karen Turner will coordinate this.

The audience at the Livonia Library is always very appreciative, and people are never shy about coming forward to see and play the instruments at the end. It offers a great opportunity to really share the dulcimer with many who have never seen one.



SECRETARY'S NOTES

Silver Strings Dulcimer Society

Transitional Meeting...11-30-08

President Bob Hlavacek called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. He provided both the newly elected and current board members with an updated member roster and a detailed list of items to be discussed during the meeting.

Points of Discussion:

- *The new board will be responsible for setting the year's agenda, & goals.
- *The new board will meet with the Council of Good Hope in January to discuss our contract and meet each other.
- *Bank signatures need to be updated early January. 3 people will do this – Bob, George and Gerry
- *The \$25.00 Corporate fee is due to the State in January
- *We must file the Income Tax (1120) by March 15th. Bob and George will assist Gerry

Other Points of Discussion

- *Bob advised the \$300 bi-annual donation to Good Hope is due.
 - *Donations through the year will be up to the new board.
 - *The keys to the cabinets in the basement were handed over to the new board.
 - *Soundboard articles should be sent to Sandi by the 20th of the month for the next month's newsletter.
 - *All music files will be given to the Kaisers.
 - *The amplifier system is in the cabinets in the basement, and a portable amplifier system was discussed for possible purchase. The new board tabled this decision until a later date.
 - *Bob gave Gerry a copy of Quicken software to install in her computer to keep club records.
 - *Sandi suggested an updated inventory of our possessions be made. 3 EZ ups are stored in Bob's garage.
 - *We discussed how we, as a club, could encourage guests and new members to become more comfortable with us. Because new players have a hard time keeping up, some suggestions were:
 1. We could play a song twice very slow, then speed it up the third and fourth time.
 2. Establish a guideline whereas whoever requests a song may ask to have it played slowly first.
 3. For the first half-hour of jam, only play slower songs.
 4. Set aside a different area of the church for new and less experienced players.
 5. Club members could spend more time talking to guests and new members.
 - *A general suggestion was to have shorter breaks, so the playing time is longer.
 - *Whoever requests a song to be played should start it. Gives people practice in starts.
 - *Copyrights were discussed. We can play any songs but cannot record and sell them without permission.
- Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Beverley J Scott

LEDGER LINES _____ (Treasurer)

Thanks for your vote of confidence! I'm glad to be "on Board". I aim for smooth sailing. Here's to happy hours making music together at jams and playdates. A flourishing till would most certainly add to the pleasure!" Gerry Hermans

SSDS 2009 Erie Ice Daze Playlist

Key	Tune	Played
C	Winter Wonderland	3
G	Westphalia Waltz	3
G	Red Wing	3
D	Chinese Breakdown / Nelly Bly	2/3
D	Peek A-Boo Waltz	3
D	Over the Waterfall	3
D	John Ryan's Polka	5
G	I'll Remember You Love, in Prayers	3
Em	Tamlin	3
G	Jingle Bells (Chorus + 3)	3
G	Columbus Stockade Blues	3
G	Tick Tock Polka	3
D	Sandy River Belle	3
D	Bonaparte Crossing Rhine / Flop Eared Mule	3/3
G	Southwind	3
D	Whiskey B4 Breakfast	3
D	Young Roddy McCorley	5
Am	Katushka	5
C	Five Foot Two	5
Am	Cold Frosty Morn	3
G	Sophrina	3
G	Bellman's Jig	3
Em	Lisdoonvarna / Riding Load of Hay	3/3
G	Let It Snow	3
G	March Of St Timothy	3
D	Viola's Schottische	3
Em	Dancing Bear	3
G	Old Joe Clark	3
D	Hey Polka	5
D	Midnight On The Water	3
G	Jamie Allen	3
D	Rudolph	3
D	Festival Rag	3
D	Mississippi Sawyer	3
C	Tennessee Waltz	3
G	Dusty Bob's Jig	3
G	Down Yonder	3
Em	Missouri	3
D	Frosty The Snowman	3
G	Black Velvet Waltz	3
G	Red Apple Rag	3
G	Maggie	5
G	Silver And Gold Two-Step	3
D	Road To Boston	3
G	January Waltz	3
	Endless Medley	
D/D/D/G	Ragtime Annie-Soldier's Joy-Gold-Slippers	2/2/2/2

GETTING TO KNOW YOU Larry Roper

I was born on April 1st (I know, April fools day) in Mineral Bluff, Georgia. I was the 5th of 5 children at that time. When I was 2, my father moved the family to South Lyon, Michigan, and over the years added 5 more children to the family. We had three boys and seven girls, altogether. (My poor parents!) We often thought the Walton's were patterned after us. My mother passed away at age 55. It was her wish that we always remain close and take care of one another. Two sisters moved out of state for a short period of time but moved back, and today we live within twenty minutes of one another, honoring my mother's wishes. I am blessed to have such a loving family. Many years later, my father remarried and we were again blessed, with three stepbrothers. My stepmother, also from Georgia, was very much like my mother. She took us under her wing, and always treated us as her own. She still lives in the farmhouse we grew up in, and we are very blessed to have her in our lives.

In my younger years I was mostly into rock and roll music, of course. I never really played, but I liked to listen to bands like CCR, The Beatles, Stephenwolff, and others. My younger brother Rick, actually (Rickey Nelson Roper) joined a country music band, and my taste turned toward country music. I did actually play a little, since most of it required only three chords. My father, an avid bluegrass fan, told us one day we would come to our senses and realize that bluegrass was by far the best. He would go to every bluegrass festival around and try to get us to go. One day Rick and I decided to humor him and we attended our first festival. We were amazed with the music and both agreed the old man was right. When people ask me if I remember rock and roll bands from the eighties, truthfully I don't. It was all bluegrass for me.

Besides music in my early years, I enjoyed baseball. As soon as my little hand could hold up a catchers mitt, my older brother Jim used me for target practice. He was six years older than me (he still is) and he threw very hard. It was my job to stop the ball with whatever part of my body got in the way. It didn't take long for me to learn that it was much better for the ball to hit the mitt than an arm or leg or somewhere else that might make you see stars or talk in a higher octave. My brother was a very good pitcher, I would go to his practices, and sometimes they would let me practice with them. These guys were six years older than me, and they seemed like giants. At first they took it easy on me, but as I got better they got tougher, and eventually wouldn't cut me any slack at all. Jim, eventually was not allowed to play any more because he threw the ball so much faster than the other guys. He threw a wild pitch one time and broke a guys arm. He still worked with me and taught me about pitching. When I was old enough to play organized ball, the guys my age seemed small. I played baseball every summer and during my high school years I helped the South Lyon Lions win four championships in a row. In my senior year we were undefeated. I was voted MVP of my team and first team all league pitcher of southeast Michigan by the coaches' association. I credit all of my achievements to Jim. I never thought I would thank him for all of those bruises and bumps and scrapes and sprained fingers, but he's the one who made it all possible for me.

After high school I attended Washtenaw Community College. Unfortunately, there was no funding for sports those years. I did, however, play for a traveling league in Ann Arbor during the summer. We traveled to different states, and it was fun but tiring. I was approached one day by a scout for the Detroit Tigers. I didn't know it but he had been watching me since high school. He gave me his number, and told me to call when I was interested in a try out. Although I never lost my love for the game, I never pursued it as a career.

Which brings me to my present job of 34 years: I work for the Wyman Gordon Company in Brighton, Michigan. We manufacture a super alloy powdered metal for use in aerospace applications, mostly jet engine parts. My duties over the years have been many. I have, at one time or another, worked in every department in our shop. I managed three departments over a fifteen year span. I received management training at Oakland Community College, and at Wyman Gordon training center in Houston Texas. My instructor in Houston was a man named Gib Whitman of Whitman resources. Gib was a good friend of Walter Cronkite, and during the Vietnam war it was his job to brief some five hundred members of the free world press. Needless to say, I was very impressed with him.

I was married for fifteen years, and was blessed with two sons. My oldest son, Jason, is now twenty-six years old and also works for Wyman Gordon. He sometimes does vocal work for The Whitey Morgan Band and plays a mean harmonica. He's not yet into our music, but maybe someday. My youngest son Darren, unfortunately, passed away just prior to his first birthday. Darren was born with a heart defect.

I met a neighbor (Janelle) at a graduation party another neighbor was having. She moved to my side of the street, and eventually into my home. At the time, she was a single parent raising a young daughter and I was in the same boat with my thirteen year old son. We've been together now for eleven years, and we are fortunate that we both share the same passion for the music. You may notice, we are never in a hurry to leave a good jam.

I knew of old time music, and would occasionally find a tape or CD, or I would come across a person playing a dulcimer. It wasn't until I met Sherry Humecky that things really started to happen. Janelle and I became friends with Sherry and Morgan, followed them around to their gigs, and were very inspired by what they were doing. They turned us on to places like Evart, Midland, Hillsdale, and most important of all... they introduced us to Silver Strings. It opened up a whole new world we didn't know existed. You folks pretty much know the rest. We've played more music than we ever thought possible and have made more friends than we ever imagined.

I'd like to thank everyone for trusting in me to lead this wonderful group. I am very excited about the coming year, and always look forward to spending time with all of you. Lets have FUN!!!

Larry Roper



Silver Strings at St. Richard's Catholic Church in Redford... even the bass wore a Santa hat.



Janelle Pacik, Larry Roper, Bob & Sandi Hlavacek and Pennye Schieber, spent Christmas Day with Uncle Carl's Dulcimer Club, playing holiday music for a Jackson Community dinner. Anyone who needed company or a good meal was invited.

Over 50 churches were represented as about 175 volunteers gave their time & resources to cook & serve dinner for about 300 guests in a beautifully decorated hall. What a joyful way to spend Christmas Day !!!



Senior living centers are always fun. Garden City Towers again provided a great audience for our music.

December has been a very busy month, with 12 playdates between December 1st & 18th. The performing group has a lot of fun, often having lunch or dinner together afterward. If you haven't yet joined a playdate, come on out... there's safety in playing with numbers, and the friendships built are priceless.



In Victorian attire, we provided dinner music to guests at the Henry Ford Estate. We were later treated to a private tour of the beautiful mansion. What a grand evening it was !