

The

Cotton Patch

Rag!



Official Newsletter of the Houston
Folklore and Music Society
Volume 61, Number 1
January 2026



SECOND SATURDAY

AT ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
5308 RUTGERS at Bissonnet
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77005

January 10, 2026

7:00—9:00 PM

Ordinary Elephant with Jay Williams opening



Mesmerizing folk duo Ordinary Elephant has spent the better part of the last decade on a never-ending tour that's earned married couple Crystal and Pete Damore widespread critical acclaim and made fans of luminaries like Tom Paxton and Mary Gauthier. In 2017, the pair took home the International Folk Music Award for Artist of the Year on the strength of their breakout album, *Before I Go*, and two years later, they returned with the similarly lauded *Honest*, which the Associated Press hailed as "one of the best Americana albums of the year."

The band's new stripped-down, self-titled collection is the purest distillation

of their sound yet, showcasing the arresting power of the couple's gorgeous harmonies and intricate fretwork. The songs are timeless, rooted in rich, character-driven storytelling, and the performances are similarly transportive, fueled by delicately intertwined banjo, guitar, and octave mandolin.

<https://www.ordinaryelephant.net/>

Jay Williams

Jay Williams' style is a rich tapestry woven from influences that span folk, jazz, pop, country, and rock. Utilizing a custom built nylon-string guitar, he employs a percussive, finger-picking technique that allows him to traverse a broad spectrum of musical genres. In Jay's compositions, the lyrics reign supreme. His compositions range from foot-tapping, up-tempo tunes brimming with humor to dreamy ballads that whisk you away to distant places. He weaves tales of historical events into his music, bringing the past to life in a way that only he can.

<https://jaymusic.org/>



SECOND SATURDAY CONCERTS

January 10, 2026

**Ordinary Elephant, with Jay Williams
opening**

February 14, 2026

[Houston Balalaika Society Orchestra](#)

Second Saturday Concert is presented by the Houston Folklore and Music Society, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of singer-songwriters working in the folk music traditions. Houston Folklore and Music Society presents folk music concerts from a wide variety of subgenres on the second Saturday of each month (mostly) at The Annex at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. \$20 suggested donation (**cash or check only**) at the door – all proceeds go to support the artists. *Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.* Concerts are held in the Annex at St. Andrew's Presbyterian. Visit our website, www.houstonfolkmusic.org or contact Jim Gill at jim@saHouston.com for more information.



HFMS Song Circle

Tuesday, January 6, 2026

NOTE: NEW LOCATION AND TIME

Hickory Pit BBQ

6601 S. Rice Ave. in Bellaire

6:00—8:00 PM

Monthly Pickin' Party

January 18, 2026

Gary's Place

518 Fair Oaks Dr.

Stafford, TX

2:00 pm snack* and socialize

3:00 pm pick-n-play

***bring anything you like!**

Beyond “Cowboy Guitar Chords”

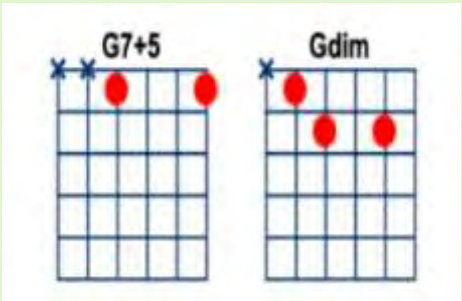
by Andy Longo

When I started out learning to play folk songs, I thought the 1, 4, 5 major and 2, 6 minor chords would serve me well in this endeavor, and generally these “cowboy chords” played in the first position will do well in accompanying a vocal arrangement. However, in many formal arrangements of many songs, i.e., as in a John Denver songbook, one will encounter such things as augmented 5’s or sus 4’s. One trained in piano usually understands many of the variations of such chords, because ... they learned such things in black and white, as it were, on the keyboard. Nevertheless, the naming of chord types has a convention which can be brought to light. For example, a diminished chord lowers the pitch of a note or two. An augmented chord raised the pitch of note within a chord. Some examples of chord types found in folk music expressed as a variant of a C chord:

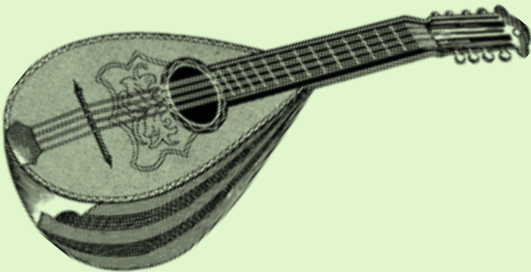
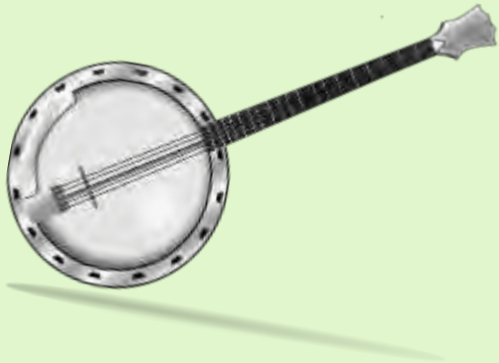
Chord Type	Form	Notes	Name
Major	1-3-5	C-E-G	C
Sus 4	1-4-5	C-F-G	Csus4
Sus 2	1-2-5	C-D-G	Csus2
Major 7	1-3-5-7	C-E-G-B	Cmaj7
Minor	1-b3-5	C-Eb-G	Cm
Dominant 7	1-3-5-b7	C-E-G-Bb	C7
Diminished	1-b3-b5	C-Eb-Gb	Cº
Augmented	1-3-5#	C-E-G#	C+



Now if you look up the chords to a classic cowboy song, “Happy Trails”, you will find within an arrangement in the key of C such chords as G7 augmented 5 and G diminished.



Thus Roy and Dale found these chords useful in harmonizing with their melody. There were more than thirty chord types included in the list I referenced. Many of these are playable by piano players whom, of course, have ten fingers. For guitar, banjo and mandolin players, we have but four fingers generally to execute a chord type. It is not a subject to be overwhelmed by.



He's Been on the Job Too Long

by Paul Cooper

There are many versions of this song by a multitude of artists and folksingers. Some have elaborate spoken introductions, and some play very challenging guitar arrangements. The story is based on an actual incident that took place in the 1890s in St. Louis. The tag at the end of each verse, "been on the job too long", seems to refer to "King Brady" having been sheriff for so long that he came to believe himself invincible, or possibly that he was just burned out. Out of the many recorded versions, I chose one that is fairly straightforward, and easy to hear the chord changes (it's just a two-chord song). You can listen to Seth Reese perform the song here (You can play along with Seth using the chords shown):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZJxRW4YSro&list=RDsZJxRW4YSro&start_radio=1

(on the Irish bouzouki, of all things), or on the HFMS Audio Archive page at

<https://www.houstonfolkmusic.org/AudioArchives>

Duncan and Brady

C

Twinkle, twinkle, little star –

G

Along come Brady in his 'lectric car

G7

Got a mean look right in his eye

C

Gonna shoot somebody just to see him die.

G7

C

Well he's been on the job too long.

Duncan, Duncan was tendin' the bar

In walked Brady with his shiny star

Brady said, "Duncan you are under arrest"

Duncan shot a hole in Brady's breast

Well he's been on the job too long.

Brady, Brady, Brady you know you've done wrong –

Breakin' in here while my game's going on

Bustin down the windows, knockin' at the door

Now you're lying dead on the barroom floor.

Yes, you've been on the job too long.

Old King Brady was a big, fat man

Doctor reached up and took hold of his hand

Felt for the pulse, the doctor he said

"I believe to my soul, King Brady's dead"

Yes, he's been on the job too long

High-tailed carriages a-standin' around

Takin' Brady to the buryin' ground

High-tailed carriages, rubber-tired hack

Took him to the graveyard, he ain't comin' back

Yes, he's been on the job too long.

When the women all heard King Brady was dead

Well they went back home and they dressed in red

Slippin' and a-slidin' and shufflin' down the street

In their big Mother Hubbards and their stocking feet

Well, he's been on the job too long.

Brady, Brady, Brady you know you've done wrong –

Breakin' in here while my game's going on

Bustin down the windows, knockin' at the door

Now you're lying dead on the barroom floor.

Yes, you've been on the job too long.



A Note from the Editor to the Members and Friends of HFMS

You may have noticed that there was no *Cotton Patch Rag* in November and December. My sincere apologies to all. I was hit with a series of unfortunate events, starting with a nasty case of pneumonia. But the health elves appear to have granted me a reprieve, so it looks like I will be around a bit longer.

I hope the New Year brings good music, good food, good company and good health to all. Now get out there and celebrate with live music! In the meantime, I give you chickens wearing sweaters.

Yours,
Luanne



LOCAL EVENTS

**Buffalo Bayou Park
Cistern
Performances: Ring
in the Peace**

Presented By:
[Buffalo Bayou Partnership](#)

Dates:
12/29/2025, 1/6/2026, 1/8/2026, 1/9/2026

Chris Thile

Presented By:
[Performing Arts Houston](#)

Dates:
January 22, 2026

**Modern Folk:
Multicultural Roots**

Presented By:
[The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts](#)

Dates:
January 30, 2026 - January 31, 2026



Warren Haynes

Dates:
February 24, 2026



**17 Farmers Markets to Explore in
Houston**

From fresh produce, eggs, and prepared meals to pet goods and supplies, shop 'til you drop at these bountiful markets



UPCOMING & UPDATED FOLKLORE AND MUSICAL EVENTS AROUND TEXAS AND THE US



January 15-18, 2026
Kicking off CBA's 51st year
Bakersfield, CA

[VIEW THE PHOTOS FROM GREAT 48 2025](#)

Contra Carnivale

Contra Dance Weekend
January 16-18, 2026
San Luis Obispo, California

EVERGLADES ROOTS FESTIVAL 2026

January 9-11, 2026
Ochopee, FL

2026
Portland's
FOLK FESTIVAL
JAN. 30 & 31

VENUE:
CRYSTAL BALLROOM

THE MUSICFEST STEAMBOAT 2026

January 5-10, 2026
Steamboat Springs, CO

WOMAN LED, ALL WELCOME
VIRTUAL DULCIMER FESTIVAL
Dulcitmoon
JANUARY 16 - 18, 2026

53RD ANNUAL
BOSTON
CELTIC
MUSIC
FESTIVAL
2026

January 15-18
ALTAN
OLD BLIND DOGS

[PUBLISHED BY](#) [CLUB](#) [THE](#) [CHORAL SALLARDS](#) [THE](#) [BOSTON](#)

Palestine, Texas



January 3—February 1, 2026

MILE OFEST
KEY WEST
RED BENT AMERICAN
JANUARY 27TH - 31ST 2026

CROSS CANADIAN RAGWEED
STEPHEN WILSON JR. - RANDY ROGERS BAND
SHANE SMITH & THE SAINTS - PAUL CAUTHERN
KAITLIN BUTTS - CASEY DONAHUE - STONEY LARUE
AMERICAN AQUARIUM - CODY CANADA & THE DEPARTED
SILVERADA - THE BAND OF HEATHERS - YAMMER USREY
NASHUA CULPEPPER - MAGGIE ANTOINE - JOSH WEATHERS
JAMES HIGH DRY - JIMMY SWEENEY - MIKE BLANT
THE WILDER REEL - HUGO'S THE AUTOCARD - BRIDYUNG
MIL VASTWEL - TAYLOR HARRINGTON - THEM DORTY ROGERS
UNCLE LUCAS - JAMES LEE WILSON - ALD LEMMONSON
JASON SCOTT & THE HIGH HEAT - THE HANG BROTHERS
PAUL MCCORRALL - COURTNEY PATTON - BEN CHAPMAN
ADAM WOOD - THE DROPTONES - JOHN FULLBRIGHT
JASON LADY - JOHN CHIDLER - BRIAN FERRIS - KELLY STONE
SUZANNE BANTO - JORNNY MULLENAX - MIKE MCCLURE
KOH NAJICH - ELLIS BULLARD - LOW WATIN BRIDGE BAND
RED DIRT RANGERS - TOPO CHILDS CONFRAYS - DJAMUD WALKER
WALK & TWA WILDS - MAX & HEATHER STALLING - KING HARGO
JD GRAHAM - CHOW & CAZZLE - THE SHORN GARS - MAYIS HAPRIC
LANCE BUSH - JULIANA BARNH - HOCKY JAMES - CRATICE YORK
JESSE LYNN MADICA - BLAKE LAMFORD - EMILY HOLLINGSHED

HOME OF ANN ARBOR PRESENTS
48TH ANN ARBOR
FOLK
FEST
2026

Friday Jan. 30
Saturday Jan. 31

48th
Central Florida Highland Games
January 17 & 18 2026

2026 Kerrolle Renaissance Festival
10 Magical Years!
January
17th-18th, 24th-25th, 31st
&
February 1st

ULLRGRASS 2026

January 30-February 1, 2026
Golden, CO

Florida Americana Music Festival

Thurs. Feb. 5, 6pm - Sat. Feb. 8, 5pm 2026 EST

Florida Sand Music Ranch
Beverly Hills, FL

WINTERWONDERGRASS COLORADO 2026

February 27-March 1, 2026
Steamboat Springs, CO

MIDWINTER BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL 2026

February 13-15, 2026
Northglenn, CO

WINTERGRASS FESTIVAL 2026

February 19-22, 2026
Bellevue, WA

UPCOMING & UPDATED FOLKLORE AND MUSICAL EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD



OCEAN SOUNDS FESTIVAL 2026
VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA
JANUARY 10, 2026 / [BUY TICKETS](#)

GIRLS JUST WANNA WEEKEND 2026

January 15-19, 2026
Playa del Carmen, Mexico

Sapporo, Japan
January 1, 2026
SAPPORO SNOW
FESTIVAL
ENJOY
76th

CELTIC CONNECTIONS 2026

January 15-February 1, 2026
Glasgow, Scotland

GLOUCESTER
FOLK TRAIL

Gloucester Folk Trail | 14th - 16th February 2025

Want to do your own search for international music festivals? Try:
<https://musicfestivalwizard.com>

LOCAL FOLKIN'!

Community Folk Music Calendars, Venues and Other Concert Resources
in and around the Houston Metro Area— *Images are Live Links!*

- Search by genre or your favorite band
- Create your own schedule/calendar
- Get email updates



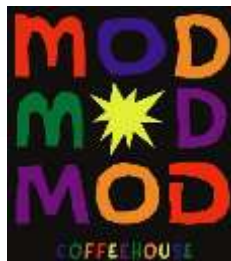
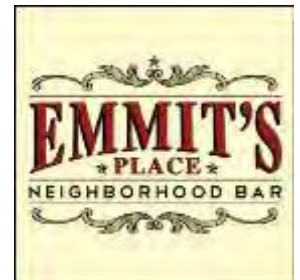
LIVE MUSIC VENUES



Events



Kingwood



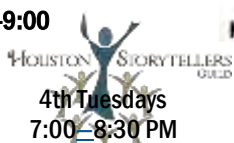
GET YOUR JAM ON!



Luka BBQ Steak House
Tuesdays 7:00–9:00



MONTHLY SUNDAY JAM



4th Tuesdays
7:00–8:30 PM



Wednesdays 12:30 pm
& Monthly Jams



Monthly Saturday Jam

TWINKLE YOUR TOES!



Houston District
Mondays & Tuesdays
[Scottish](#) Country Dance
Register Here!



Mondays & Fridays
Check for locations!



European Dance Guild
2nd & 4th [Thursdays](#), 6–8 pm



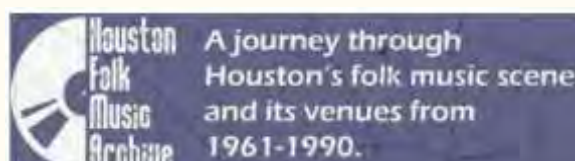
Select
Saturdays & Sundays
Check for times!

FOR THE KIDS!



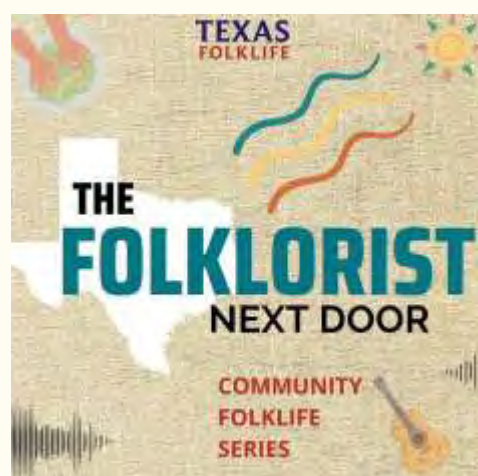
JUST FOLKIN' AROUND

Virtual resources for learnin', partakin', or just listenin'!



THE OULD SOD VIRTUAL TRADITIONAL IRISH SESSION ON ZOOM

Google Map of Old Time Jams, Festivals, Fiddle Contests, Irish Sessions, and Contra Dance Bands in the US and Around the World! *confirm local listings*



Any Sunday Songwriters



**JOIN US, INVITE YOUR FRIENDS
OR BUY THEM A GIFT MEMBERSHIP!**

Started in June 1951, Houston Folklore and Music Society (HFMS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the preservation of folk music (from the German word Volksmusik meaning "people's music"), and promotion of singer-songwriters working in the folk music traditions. In 1980, HFMS started hosting concerts and all concert proceeds have been used to support the artists! We are a 100% volunteer organization presenting: traditional folk, bluegrass, country music, old time, blues, acoustic jazz, other Americana/Roots music, European and Celtic folk, Mexican and South American, and the list goes on... You never know who will turn up at a Second Saturday Concert!

Members receive our monthly digital newsletter, The Cotton Patch Rag (with extensive local resources and worldwide events) and the satisfaction of supporting and promoting live music in the greater Houston area. Dues are \$20 for individual membership (one email address) and \$35 for a joint membership (two email addresses).

If you would like to join online, please go to the Membership page at our website, Houstonfolkmusic.org. Or if your preference is snail mail, this form can be printed and mailed with a check payable to Houston Folklore and Music Society, 5610 Innsbruck St., Bellaire, TX 77401.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

☐ New Membership

☐ Renewal

☐ Re-Joining

Is this a new address? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Today's Date:

NAME(s):

STREET

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE (wk)

E-MAIL (1):

E-MAIL (2):

Enclosed is ☐ \$20 Annual Dues ☐ \$35 Annual Dues

Thank you!

For information contact:

Second Saturday Concerts: Jim Gill jim@sahouston.com or 832-453-4455
Newsletter Editor: Luanne Novak lulutenzo@gmail.com
Membership Management: Karon Mueller karon.mueller@sbcglobal.net
Social media: Jen Grove littlegrover@icloud.com
Website Management: Paul Mueller ptmueller78@gmail.com
Newsletter Contributors: Andy Longo zenflyer@gmail.com and
Paul Cooper pcooperowls0@gmail.com
General Organization Info, Our Prez: Pam Kalinec pamkalinec@sbcglobal.net