

The Cotton Patch Rag!



Official Newsletter of the Houston
Folklore and Music Society

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March 9, 2025 6:00 pm

**5308 Buffalo Speedway
Houston, TX 77005**

RYAN BITER

Ryan Biter is the aimless, eccentric, tactless kid you went to school with growing up that you always kind of wondered what happened to after high school. With equal measures of irreverence, sharp insight, and vulnerability, Biter invites audiences to be open to our profound humanness. Weird, wonderful, and flawed.

The grit, soul, and raw emotion of his voice has drawn comparisons to Amos Lee and Chris Stapleton. His songs have the ear worm hooks and eveman sensibility of Ed Sheeran, 2000s Country music, and Paul Simon. His expansive finger style guitar work is reminiscent of Michael Hedges, Tommy Emmanuel, and John Butler. Think of him like a guitar slinging Mr. Rogers for messed up adults.



Opening Act—Grifters and Shills

They call it High Lonesome Harmonies with a Rock n Roll Soul. They've been described as an amped up Johnny Cash & June Carter, and they've been compared to Gillian Welch and David Rawlings, by way of Houston.

Rebecca & John are **Grifters & Shills**, showcasing the classic sounds of East Texas piney-woods harmony singers meeting the intensity of straight up rock n roll. Their musical styles were a fiery collision, bearing forth a sound that was at once novel and instantly familiar--high lonesome harmonies with a rock and roll soul. Fresh off their double-vinyl release of their album FIREBALL, they are on the road in 2025 bringing their sound to audiences near and far.



SECOND SUNDAY CONCERT IS PRESENTED BY THE HOUSTON FOLKLORE AND MUSIC SOCIETY, A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF SINGER-SONGWRITERS WORKING IN THE FOLK MUSIC TRADITIONS. TICKETS ARE \$20 PER PERSON - SOLD AT THE DOOR (EXCEPT FOR OPEN MIC EVENTS). CHILDREN UNDER 12 ARE FREE (MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT). STUDENTS GET IN FREE WITH STUDENT ID! CONCERTS ARE HELD AT [ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN](#). VISIT OUR WEBSITE, WWW.HOUSTONFOLKMUSIC.ORG OR CONTACT JIM GILL AT JIM@SAHOUSTON.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION.

COMING EVENTS

HFMS Song Circle

Tuesday, Mar. 4, 2025
(First Tuesday) 7:00 PM

Midtown Bar & Grill

Upstairs



Monthly Pickin' Party

March 16, 2025
(3rd Sunday every month!)
March Artist: Townes Van Zandt

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!

SECOND SUNDAY CONCERTS

April 2025

[Dana Cooper](#)

[Ed Amash](#) opens

May 2025

[Daniel Neihoff](#)

[Audrey Bryant](#) opens

September 2025

[Jack Motley](#) and [Butch Morgan](#) song swap

October 2025

[Sara Beth Go](#) and [Nathan K](#) song swap

Cowboy Coffee Pots and Cowboy Soirees

by Andy Longo



Yes, these two things came about in the latter part of the 19th century. Two brothers, Frederick and William Niedringhaus came to America in the 1850's. They started a tinware business which they developed into the National Enameling and Stamping Company. Having thus made a fortune with this enterprise, they invested in the 1880's a large cattle ranch in northeastern Mon-

tana, the N Bar N Ranch. The ranch prospered during the period of the "beef bonanza".

Charles M. Russell, artist, sculptor, and sometimes ranch hand, came to the ranch to work and paint. While there, he painted "The Mad Cow".

The brothers treated their ranch hands well. They hosted evening parties, from time to time, featuring food, drink, and dance music. Young ladies from the surrounding area were sure to attend. There is one tune played at these gatherings that has been documented. It



was written for the occasion, and is called the N-Bar-N Waltz. An article about the ranch includes a copy of the sheet music. I found no recording out on the web, so, I had one made. My music teacher, Barbara Riley, a most talented violinist played the violin, and I modestly provided a guitar accompaniment. Here's the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngOUNbR1NKs>

A Blessing and a Curse

by Paul Cooper

My friend Gene had perfect pitch, which is referred to as "Absolute Pitch" in the scientific literature. It is the ability to identify the musical pitch of a sound without a reference tone. It is estimated that about one person in 10,000 among the general population have this ability. Surveys have suggested, however, that about 4% of music students have absolute pitch.

I met Gene at a bluegrass jam at an old dance hall in southern New Jersey (see Song of the Month). Gene played bluegrass music on banjo, bass, guitar, fiddle, and mandolin – all well enough to perform on stage. But his favorite was the bluegrass banjo. We sat up late many nights playing in his kitchen, and I learned much of what I know about performing bluegrass music from him.

Gene's absolute pitch was both a blessing and a curse. He could sing both melody and harmony with great accuracy. And he could tell instantly if a string was out of tune. But his gift also was a source of frustration and confusion with external stimuli. The refrigerator in Gene's kitchen hummed between G and G#. A lot of bluegrass tunes are played in G, so to Gene's ear there was a dissonance between the refrigerator and our instruments whenever we played anything in G. I could hear the hum, but I was not really aware of the pitch, so it bothered me very little. But it drove Gene crazy. We would start out the evening in standard tuning, but he would soon have to start cranking his banjo up until it was in tune with the refrigerator. And of course, I would have to stop and retune my guitar to be in tune with him.

There are times when we might wish to have "gifts" that others possess, but we may not always be aware of the baggage that comes along with the gift. I would love to have been as versatile and accomplished a player as my friend Gene, but I am not sure I would have enjoyed having to be so acutely aware of the pitch of every sound that came to me in the outside world. So, I offer this tale as both an amusing one and a cautionary one: It's always a good idea to be careful what you wish for.

March Featured Song

by Paul Cooper

Ninety Years Without Slumbering

This song was written in 1875 by Henry Clay Work, who also wrote "Marching Through Georgia". When I first heard it growing up, I thought of it as a children's song, but it is widely known in many circles. It is popular with British brass bands, and was a staple of the common repertoire when I regularly attended bluegrass jams in South Jersey in the 1990s. You can hear a nice version of it by Doc Watson here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8fktZM42Fs> or on the HFMS Audio Archive page at <https://www.houstonfolkmusic.org/AudioArchives>. Doc does it in the key of D, so you can play right along.

GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK

D A D G
My grandfather's clock was too tall for the shelf
D A D
So it stood ninety years on the floor
D A D G
It was taller by half than the old man himself
D A D
But it weighed not a pennyweight more
D D7 G D
It was bought on the morn of the day that he was born
D A7 D
It was always his treasure and pride
D A D G
But it stopped, short, never to go again
D A D
When the old man died

CHORUS

D
Ninety years without slumbering
Tic toc tic toc
His life's seconds numbering
Tic toc tic toc
D A D G
It stopped, short, never to go again
D A D
When the old man died

In watching its pendulum swing to and fro
Many hours he had spent when a boy
And through childhood and manhood, the
clock seemed to know
And to share both his grief and his joy

For it struck 24 when he entered at the door
With a blooming and beautiful bride,
But it stopped, short, never to go again
When the old man died



CHORUS

My grandfather said that of those he could hire
Not a servant so faithful he'd found,
For it kept perfect time and it had one desire
At the close of each day to be wound

At it kept to its place, not a frown upon its face
At its hands never hung by its side
But it stopped, short, never to go again
When the old man died

CHORUS

It rang an alarm in the still of the night,
An alarm that for years had been dumb
And we knew that his spirit was pluming for
flight
That his hour of departure had come

Still the clock kept the time
With a soft and muffled chime
As we silently stood by his side
But it stopped, short, never to go again
When the old man died

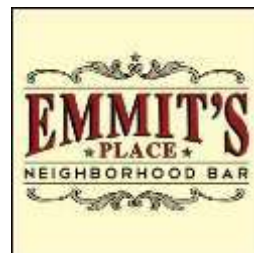
LOCAL FOLKIN'!

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

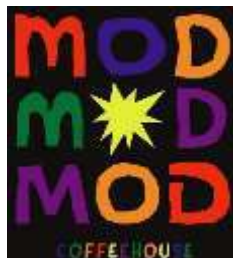
- 🔗 Search by genre or your favorite band
- 🔗 Create your own schedule/calendar
- 🔗 Get email updates



LIVE MUSIC VENUES



JOHNSON STUDIO



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

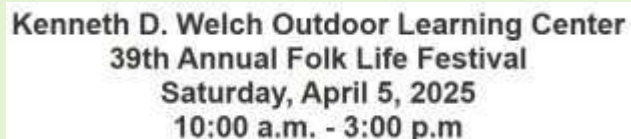


Select Saturdays & Sundays
Check for times!

FOR THE KIDS!



LOCAL EVENTS



Saturday, March 1, 2025

April 26-27, 2025

Annual Czech Spring Festival
April 5, 2025



April 12-13, 2025



March 27-29, 2025

NRG Park

April 4-6, 2025

UPCOMING TEXAS EVENTS



Feb. 28—Mar. 2, 2025



Weekends March 1—April 20, 2025



Mar. 22-23, 2025



April 25-27, 2025



Chappel Hill Bluebonnet Festival

April 12-13, 2025



Date: Apr 26 - Apr 27, 2025

Location(s): 120 Point Theatre Road Ingram, TX 78025 - 830-367-5121

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



Lake Havasu BlueGrass Festival
Feb 28 – Mar 2, 2025



Canberra, Australia
April 17-21, 2025



Day of Morris Dancing
Stockport, UK
April 26, 2025



Melbourne, Australia
March 14-16, 2025

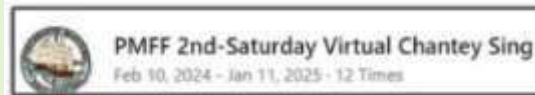
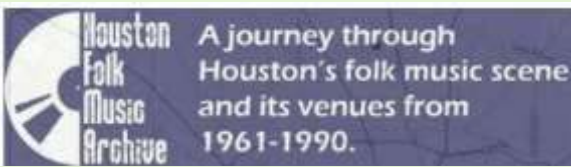
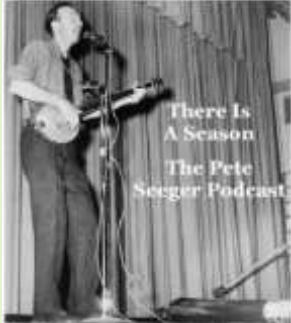


April 25—27, 2025



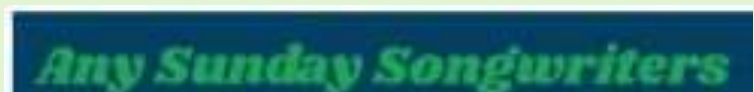
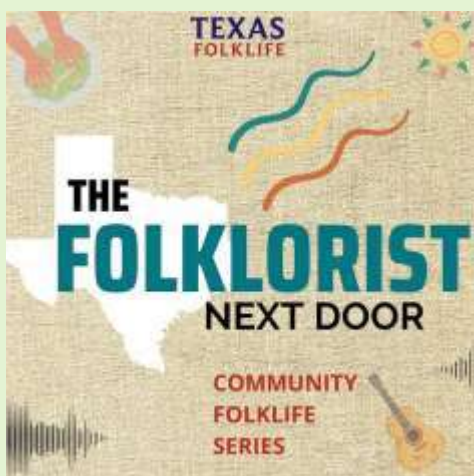
JUST FOLKIN' AROUND

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*



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

Started in June 1951, Houston Folklore and Music Society (HFMS) is a non-profit, 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 100% of concert proceeds have gone to 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 Sunday 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 (one email address) individual membership, and \$35 (two email addresses) joint membership.**

Join us online at [Online Memberships](#). Or if your preference is snail mail, 📧 this form can be printed and mailed with a check payable to Houston Folklore and Music Society, P O Box 16013, Sugar Land, TX 77496.

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!

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