

## Next SVSA meeting

The next meeting of the SVSA will be held

**Wed., Apr. 28**

at Third Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke, VA. Doors will open at 7 p.m.; meeting begins promptly at 7:30 and will last until the last song critique is finished, or 10:30 p.m., whichever comes first. Members may submit one song for critique (on cassette or CD) and should provide at least 12 copies of the lyrics. Critiques are limited to members only but non-members and guests are encouraged to sit in on the discussions and exercises.

## Feature Article: *The Creative Life*

by *Britt Mistele*

The creative life: what is it? How do we find it? Live it? As it turns out, all of us live a creative life every day. It is how we put together what we will eat for breakfast. It's how we choose the clothes we will wear for the day. Admittedly, some people are more creative than others, but we all create how we interact with the world around us.

How does all this relate to the songwriting process, you ask? Well, those of us in the SVSA have a drive, a need, to express ourselves through the craft of song writing. The things which make a great song are all around us. Ideas, opportunity – it's all out there for the taking if we will only look.

Have you ever really considered what a magical thing it is to write a song? Think about it. One day you put pen or pencil to paper, and the next thing you know, you have created something out of nothing! Until you let your creative power out, that song didn't exist. What a marvelous thing! You have created something that has the chance to live on, long after we are gone. That truly is magical.

I think all of us, as songwriters, aspire to write songs that move us, that reach deep into our souls. Songs that we hope will reach others as well. There is that inner need to share our thoughts and feelings with the greater community at large. To relate tales and stories we want to tell. It is that creative spark that lives in all of us, striving to break out, to be heard.

So how do we welcome this creative gift? As songwriters, we need

*We can draw inspiration from a multitude of sources: the news, things we read, a solitary gnarled tree in an open field, the beauty of the Shenandoah Valley. It is there, waiting to be taken and embraced.*

NOTES FROM  
THE STUDIO  
CHAPTER 2

*By Mike Pearrell*

I've been back in the studio twice since the last newsletter for about two hours each time. It's still just been me and the guitar. And Harold telling me to "try that one more time."

We have basic rhythm guitar tracks completed for all but two songs. That's a big start but still a long way to go.

Part of getting a project like this done is getting the players together. We've had a few scheduling conflicts come up but next week we get working with some bass and drums.

Last Tuesday was tough. I was working on "October Sky," which might be my best song. I've gotten used to performing that song in a loping nostalgic way when I'm on stage alone. Steady timing has never been one of that song's attributes.

But I want a bass bottom to it so I worked on charting the song in a form that was consistent. Then I had to play to that chart. It was difficult for me to play to that form with a click track in my head.

I keep running into my limitations, but I keep stretching them too.

to be as open and free as possible, to make it easy for this creativity to bubble to the top, to form ideas that will lead to new ways to express our inner Muse. The Muse lives in all of us and wishes to be courted. We must reach out to her, seek her inspiration, and accept all she gives us, as a reflection of our inner selves. I admit that this not an easy proposition. The requirements of everyday life weigh us down, and divert our creative energies in all directions. We must accept this as our operating environment and embrace it for what it is. If we truly apply ourselves, we can find the time each day to ponder, reflect, write and refine our ideas into the basis for a song. We can draw inspiration from a multitude of sources: the news, things we read, a solitary gnarled tree in an open field, the beauty of the Shenandoah Valley. It is there, waiting to be taken and embraced.

So be ready! The process is a joyous thing, and very satisfying. It is a rewarding process which allows the expression and renewing of our inner self. So create, bring a new song into this world, and we will all be the better for it. ●

***A cause worthy of our support***

SVSA member Aspen Black works with several children in a group called the Sontag Music Club. Three of the children in this group have a father who is gravely ill with cancer and has no medical insurance. The children have written a contemporary Christian song called "I Believe" and are selling CDs of the song to raise money for their family. Anyone interested in buying one of the CDs to help support this family can get in touch with Aspen at buksbari@swva.net or leave a message for Aspen at Sontag Elementary School (540-483-5667) or at home (540-483-8513), or you can mail \$4.00 along with your name and address to Aspen Black, 707 Marcus Rd., Rocky Mount, VA 24151.

*(And see page 5 for details about a fundraiser for the Lewises.)*

## Monthly meeting report

March's SVSA meeting was a lively affair with 12 members and two guests attending, including new member Sonny Campbell (welcome, Sonny!) and returning members Marian McConnell and Dale Hamilton (welcome back Marian and Dale!) We met at Third Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke, Virginia, on Wednesday, March 24. Over the course of the three-hour meeting, we critiqued six strong original songs. Discussions during the critiques ranged far afield and called for further exploration of several topics at future meetings.

Personally, every time I get to thinking that I pretty much know all about songwriting, something will come up at an SVSA meeting that will make me realize that there's always something new to learn. A particularly satisfying group feeling arises at the meetings when a member makes a suggestion or offers an opinion that clearly and obviously strengthens and/or straightens out a crimp in a section of an otherwise workable song. Those "ah-ha!" moments are among the many things that make the meetings continue to be worthwhile for old and new members alike.

- David Simpkins

## Items of note

### SVSA-er on the small screen

SVSA member Xanna Via reports that she recently appeared on the program "Our Blue Ridge" on Roanoke's NBC affiliate, WSLS-10. Xanna performed selections from her CD, "Winter's Rage," on the show on April 16.

### State of the local music biz

A discussion of the local (Roanoke, Virginia) music scene was broadcast on 101.5 FM The Music Place's "Roanoke Valley Conversations" with host Bruce Bryan with guests Tad Dickens ("Cut N Scratch" music reporter of the Roanoke Times) and Bruce Houghton (Skyline Productions booking agent). Both guests had a lot of optimistic and positive things to say. The discussion offers a number of facts and tidbits to any interested local performer or performing songwriter. Dickens posted the audio to his "Cut N Scratch" blog at <http://tinyurl.com/y9j7vjh>.

### Earth Day 2010

Bill Modica does a great job organizing the music element of the annual Roanoke Valley Earth Day Celebration, held Saturday, April 17, in the Grandin Court area. This year, all three performing acts had ties to the SVSA. First up was BeBop Hoedown, new member Sonny Campbell's band. Then, current SVSA members David Simpkins, Kathy Acosta, and Britt Mistele performed. Closing out the bill was Steve Langston and Lawanda Jenkins. Steve is a former SVSA vice president. Thanks to Bill for setting up and managing such a well-run event (a little less wind next time, please, Bill!) and to the Earth Day organizers for making this a paying gig!

## *Message From The President*

Well, spring has sprung and that's good news for everybody. Now we can get outside and get all those things done we longed to do during the winter months when the weather was prohibitive.

I'm probably not supposed to say this, but it might be a good time to take a break from your songwriting regimen. Not a permanent break, mind you; just a little breather in order to enjoy the warm air, the bright sun, and all of nature's blooming wonders. You can push songwriting to the back of your mind a bit and still find artistic inspiration in all the natural wonders you behold. Store it up and let it flow into your songs at a later date. In fact, save it for a rainy day! (There's a song in there somewhere ...)

And you can take advantage of the spring weather to get out and support the various SVSA performing songwriters who are dialing up their special brands of magic throughout southwest Virginia and beyond. One glance at the SVSA Performing Members' Gigs list will show you that many of our members are making themselves and their music available on a regular basis. Show your support and take in a fellow member's performance as often as you can. They'll appreciate it and you'll get the satisfaction of knowing that you're helping to promote local original songwriting. It's something we need a lot more of!

Speaking of local original songwriting, keep in mind that the SVSA will be holding its very own Songwriters Night on June 11 at Third Street Coffeehouse in Roanoke, Virginia. Preference will be given to those SVSA performers who were not a part of the Kirk Avenue shows earlier this year. A call for participation will be made in May.

Lastly, and, as always, I encourage you to attend the monthly SVSA meetings and to keep up with our various activities via this newsletter – and on-line. It's your newsletter and your web site – and your contributions are always welcome. In fact, your input is vital. If something of a musical nature that may be of interest to SVSA-ers comes up, please let all of us in on it. Let us know what's going on in your musical world!

— David Simpkins

*Kathy Acosta  
Marc Baskind  
Aspen Black  
Sonny Campbell  
Danny Cockram  
Tim Davis  
Frank Dieter  
Mike DeGiorgi  
Charlie Divers  
Paddy Dougherty  
Mike Franke  
Pat Haley  
George Harris  
Dale Hamilton  
Josh Jones  
Mark Laperle  
Leigh Littleton  
Barbara Martin  
Robert Matter  
Marian McConnell  
Britt Mistele  
Mickey Nelson  
Dianna Parks  
Mike Pearrell  
Neal Phillips  
Phillip Raintree  
Larry Sakayama  
Chris Sargent  
Connie Sellers  
Kathy Shaver  
David Simpkins  
Sharayah Spears  
Eddie Sutphin  
Greg Trafidlo  
Xanna Via  
Randy Walker  
Jill Wickham  
Eddie Williams*

## ***Fundraiser for Lewis family May 2***

The Sontag Folk Fest will be held Sunday, May 2 at Franklin County Parks and Recreation off Rt. 619 in Sontag, Virginia.

The event is a benefit for the Owen Lewis family (see page 2). Come out and support this worthy cause while enjoying a lineup of songwriters including SVSA members Randy Walker, Mark LaPerle, and Aspen Black, as well as Dave Campbell, Lonnie Quinn, and a great group of kids - the Sontag Music Club and SMC-Christian.

Food and games are free; a \$5.00 donation is requested at the gate.

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## ***Local songwriters tribute May 14***

SVSA member Randy Walker will present a Local Songwriters Tribute on May 14 at Third Street Coffeehouse.

All the songs on the setlist are written or co-written by local songwriters, including many SVSA members. "These are some of my favorite songs by local writers and I just had the idea of doing them all as one show," Randy says.

Randy will be accompanied on some of the songs by his singing partner Terry Dollar.

Songs on the list include "Time Is A Mountain" by Greg Trafidlo, "Trail Dancing" by Frank Dieter, "Tightrope" by David Simpkins, "Man of 1000 Faces" by Phil Waynick, "Down By The River" by Robert Craig, "White Dove" by Sharon Feury, "Like The Moon" by Marian McConnell, "Mercy Bridge" by Steve Langston and Walker, "How Many Times" by Bill Payne, "Granny Ford" by Monty Cox and Walker, "If I Can Ease Your Mind" by Ed St. Clair and Danny Altice, "Love Came By Sundown" Casey Hash and Walker, "Love As Long As It Takes" by Mike Pearrell, and "Amy's Windowbox" by Ed Lyons and Walker.

## ***SVSA Classifieds***

SVSA Music News free classifieds may be submitted by paid members only. All classifieds must be music-related.

### **FOR SALE**

1932 Gibson L50 acoustic archtop guitar with bridge pickup installed. In great condition with a gorgeous sound. Perfect for anyone who plays old blues, jazz or old time music. **Barbara Martin**, 540-886-2966, barbara@barbaramartinmusic.com.

### **DEMO RECORDING AND PRODUCTION**

The Shop in Fincastle, Virginia. Clean, high-quality multitrack recording and mixdown with an all-digital recording system. I can make MP3s and CDs from the mix. I'm a capable sessions player and can add guitars, keyboards, bass and percussion, as well as arranging and sweetening. \$25/hour for SVSA members. Contact **Josh Jones**, thejonesgroup@rbnet.com, (540) 473-3598 for more information.

## SVSA Performing Members' Gigs

### SVSA Songwriters

**FRIDAY, JUNE 11**

SVSA Songwriters Night, Third Street Coffeehouse, 7-10 p.m. (No Open Mic for this show.) Free admission. Third Street and Mountain Ave., Roanoke, Virginia.

### Greg Trafidlo

**MAY 6**

Bluebird Cafe, Nashville, Tennessee. In the Round with other winners of the USA Songwriting Competition.

### Frank Dieter

**MAY 18**

The Acoustic Lounge Songwriter Showcase. One of four featured performers. 8 p.m., Studio Roanoke, 30 Campbell Avenue, SW, Roanoke, Virginia. For more information: info@studioroanoke.org.

**MAY 29**

Hickory Hills Vineyard & Winery – 7 p.m. With Mike DeGiorgi and Larry Sakayama. Hickory Hill Vineyards & Winery, Moneta, VA 24121. For more information, see [www.hickoryhillvineyards.com](http://www.hickoryhillvineyards.com).

### David Simpkins

**FRIDAY, JUNE 11**

SVSA Songwriters Night (with other SVSA songwriters), Third Street Coffeehouse, Roanoke Virginia

**FRIDAY, JUNE 18**

Third Street Coffeehouse, Roanoke Virginia, with the KGB

**SAT., JUNE 19**

Farmers Market, Radford Virginia

**SAT., JULY 17**

Farmers Market, Radford Virginia

**SAT., AUGUST 21**

Farmers Market, Radford Virginia

**SAT., SEPTEMBER 25**

Farmers Market, Radford Virginia

**SAT., OCTOBER 16**

Farmers Market, Radford Virginia

### Aspen Black

**MAY 2**

Sontag Folk Fest

**JUNE 5**

Sontag Coffeehouse

### Mark Laperle

**SAT., APRIL 24**

7-10 p.m., El Torito Mexican Grill, Moneta, Virginia

### Randy Walker

**FRIDAY, MAY 14**

Third Street Coffeehouse, Roanoke, Virginia.

### Xanna Via

**FRIDAY, JULY 2**

Third Street Coffeehouse, Roanoke, Virginia

#### Upcoming at Third Street Coffeehouse

**April 23:**

Steve and Lawanda

**April 30:** Sherwood (Robyn and Marian)

**May 7:** Mark Laperle

**May 14:**

Randy Walker - Local Songwriters' Tribute

**May 21:** Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge

**May 28:**

Chuck Schaeffer

**June 11:** SVSA Songwriters Night

**June 18:**

David Simpkins and the KGB

## SVSA Performing Members' Gigs

### Barbara Martin

#### FRIDAY, MAY 7

6:30–8:30 p.m., with Mac Walter, Stone Soup Books and Café, 908 West Main Street, Waynesboro VA 22980 540-943-0084 info@stonesoupbooks.net. Reservations highly recommended. www.stonesoupbooks.net Donation requested.

#### SATURDAY, MAY 8

7:30 p.m., Barbara Martin & MacWalter, with 3 other acts: Joe Pettus, Naughty Dynamic and The Design, The Program, Brown Velvet Productions Presents: A Kiss of Jazz and Blues, Court Square Theater, 61 Graham Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia. www.courtsquaretheater.com. \$15.

#### SATURDAY, MAY 15

9-11 a.m., Staunton Farmer's Market, Johnson & Central, Staunton, VA www.safarmersmarket.com

#### SATURDAY, MAY 15

5-7 p.m., Barbara Martin & Mac Walter, The Palladium at McLean 1450 Emerson Avenue, McLean, VA 22101 703.288.9505 www.thepalladiumatmclean.com. Free outdoor concert.

#### SATURDAY, MAY 29

1-1:30, Barbara solo, Acoustic Stage, Hometown Holidays Festival, Rockville Town Center, Rockville, MD www.rockvillemd.gov/events/hth. Free.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 30

1-1:50 p.m., Barbara solo with special guests, Art in the Park, Bandstand at Gypsy Hill Park, Churchville Thornrose Aves., Staunton, VA 24401. Free.

### Marc Baskind

#### EVERY TUESDAY

With the Blu Spruce Band. J&J Social Hall, Burnt Chimney, Virginia, 7-10:30 p.m. \$5 admission at the door includes dinner.

#### SAT. MAY 1

Lincoln Theatre, Marion Virginia, with The Collegians, 7 p.m.

#### FRI. MAY 14:

Annie Moore's Irish Pub, Roanoke. With Caravan (jazz/rock/blues), 8 p.m.

#### FRIDAY, JUNE 4

Covered Bridge Festival, Elizabethton, Tennessee, With The Collegians, 7 p.m.

#### SAT. JUNE 5

"Clinch River Days," St. Paul, Virginia. With The Collegians, 7 p.m.

#### TUESDAY, JUNE 22

Roanoke Public Library, Jefferson Street. "Jazz On The Patio" with the Marc Baskind Trio, 6:00-7:45 p.m.

#### FRI. JUNE 25

Annie Moore's Irish Pub, Roanoke. With Caravan (jazz/rock/blues), 8 p.m.

#### SAT. AUG. 7

Pipestem State Park, West Virginia, with The Collegians, 7 p.m.

#### FRI. AUG. 13

"Lemonade Days," Bluefield, West Virginia. With The Collegians, 7 p.m.

#### SAT. AUG. 14

Tazewell County Fair w/ The Collegians, 8 p.m., Tazewell, Virginia

# SVSA Members' Recordings



kaleidoscope

## Barbara Martin

**KALEIDOSCOPE** — Barbara's jazziest CD. All original songs, with co-writes with Joel Evans, Mac Walter, and Greg Trafidlo.

**TOUCH THE SKY** — Swinging jazz and acoustic blues. With Mac Walter.

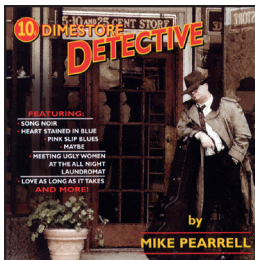
**A DIFFERENT VIEW** — Classic blues of the 1920s, early jazz and "slice-of-life" songs.



winter's rage

## Xanna Via

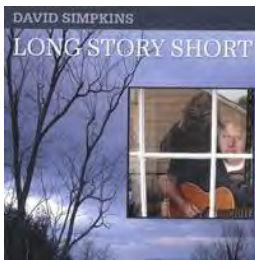
**WINTER'S RAGE** — A dedication to the veterans of World Wars I and II in a classically oriented setting. Features instrumental tributes to the battles of Stalingrad and Belleau Wood. Hear samples at [cdbaby.com/cd/xanna](http://cdbaby.com/cd/xanna).



dimstore detective

## Mike Pearrell

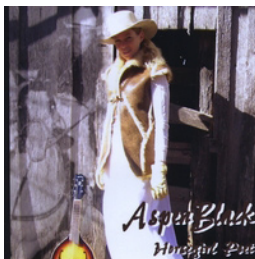
**DIMSTORE DETECTIVE** — Features 14 original compositions. Produced by Greg Trafidlo; with several guest SVSA musicians.



long story short

## David Simpkins

**LONG STORY SHORT** — Offers 12 original Americana tunes blending rock, folk, blues, and country. "Long Story Short" has won critical praise.

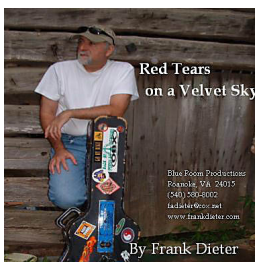


horsegirl poet

## Aspen Black

**HORSEGIRL POET** — Songs and poems about horses, cowboys, and rural life.

**A HUNDRED YEARS TOO LATE** — All original music for horse lovers and those who yearn to preserve the spirit and lands of the last American frontier.



red tears on a velvet sky

## Frank Dieter

**RED TEARS ON A VELVET SKY** — A new collection of home studio demos. All songs except one are new.

**ROUGH CUTS FROM THE BLUE ROOM** — Demos from the blues, jazz, folk, adult contemporary, New Age, and instrumental genres.

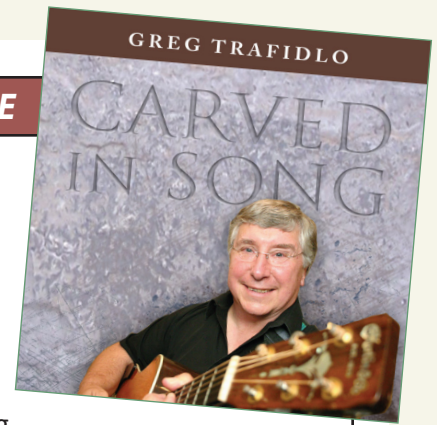
## NEW RELEASE

## Greg Trafidlo "Carved in Song"

"I'm really excited about this new release," says Greg.

"Most of the songs were co-written with some of my favorite songwriters. It also features a host of talented musicians and vocalists (you may be one of them!). Some of the songs are already getting airplay - "(Life is Like a) Grocery Coupon" has been played numerous times across the country."

"Carved in Song" is now available directly from Greg for \$10 (plus \$2 shipping) or at the Fret Mill in Roanoke. You can listen to audio clips and see the lyrics at [gregtrafidlo.com](http://gregtrafidlo.com). You can also purchase the CD (or MP3 downloads) from CDBaby.com.



## Greg Trafidlo

**FOLK SINGULAR** — Reflects the diversity of Greg's songwriting and production skills. With several SVSA members.

**CO-WRITERS IN DISGUISE** — Contemporary folk/country with an emphasis on well-crafted lyrics and humor. With several SVSA members.

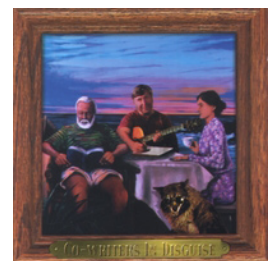
**OLD DOG - NEW TRACKS** — Songs that range from silly to sublime, drawing you in with warmth, wit, and humor.

## Trifolkal

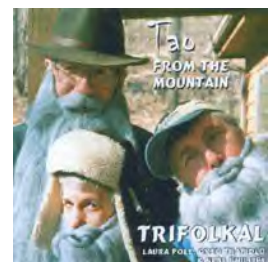
**TAO FROM THE MOUNTAIN** — Tight harmonies, warmth, and witty songwriting from Laura Pole, Neal Phillips, and Greg Trafidlo.



folksingular



co-writers in disguise



tao from the mountain

### **About Classifieds:**

SVSA Music News free classifieds may be submitted by paid members only. All classifieds must be music-related.

Members, e-mail your classifieds to Kathy Acosta by the second Tuesday of the month or mail them to Kathy Acosta, 125 Polk St., Radford VA 24141 by the second Tuesday of the month.

### **About articles and other written contributions:**

SVSA members write feature articles for the SVSA Music News throughout the year. Members can submit other articles and features at any time. Non-members may also submit articles and other written contributions but their inclusion will be subject to time and space constraints. All articles may be edited for space considerations and will be edited, as time allows, for spelling and grammar. Remember -- it'll have YOUR name on it, so do it up right before you submit it for publication. E-mail submissions by the second Tuesday of the month to [svsa@davidsimpkins.com](mailto:svsa@davidsimpkins.com) or mail to Kathy Acosta, 125 Polk St., Radford, VA 24141.

### **About Announcements:**

SVSA members may list music-related announcements in the SVSA Music News. E-mail them to [svsa@davidsimpkins.com](mailto:svsa@davidsimpkins.com) by the second Tuesday of the month or mail them to Kathy Acosta, 125 Polk St., Radford, VA 24141 by the second Tuesday of the month. Announcements from members will be e-mailed to members as soon as they are received and, if still timely, published in an upcoming issue of the SVSA Music News. Announcements from non-members will be held for publication in an upcoming issue of the SVSA Music News.

### **About Members' Gig Listings:**

SVSA members may submit their upcoming performance schedules for publication in the SVSA Music News. The submissions will be printed as submitted; the more information you provide, the more likely the response. Please follow this format:

Date of Gig  
Member's Name  
Name of Venue, Time  
Additional Information

E-mail gig listings by the second Tuesday of the month to [svsa@davidsimpkins.com](mailto:svsa@davidsimpkins.com), or mail to Kathy Acosta, 125 Polk St., Radford, VA 24141.

### **SVSA DISCLAIMER**

*The ideas and opinions contained in this newsletter are intended to be helpful to songwriters. The companies and organizations mentioned are believed to be legitimate; however, SVSA does not endorse any products or services and offers no guaranteed success based on the content. We are always looking for articles about SVSA members and articles of interest to the songwriting community. Send articles and information to the Editor, Kathy Acosta, at 125 Polk St., Radford, VA 24141, or [svsa@davidsimpkins.com](mailto:svsa@davidsimpkins.com). SVSA is a non-profit organization.*

### **SVSA Board Members:**

David Simpkins – President  
Britt Mistele - Vice President  
Charlie Divers – Secretary  
Greg Trafidlo – Treasurer  
Kathy Acosta - Newsletter Editor



**SVSA**  
**P.O. Box 698**  
**Salem, VA 24153**



www.svsasongs.com

P.O. Box 698  
Salem, Virginia 24153

## SVSA 2010 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed for 2010 dues. (Annual dues are \$20.00.) Dues date begins on the first of January. Please enclose check or money order. Do not send cash through the mail.

What would you like to see your Association do in the coming year? (Please feel free to make suggestions; e.g., workshops, field trips, changes in the newsletter, contests, "writer's nights," etc.)

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Give SVSA some information about you related to your songwriting (e.g., have some songs published; want to collaborate; need someone to do demos; have songs recorded; play an instrument; etc.).

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We wish to add you the Member Links section of the SVSA website ([www.svsasongs.com](http://www.svsasongs.com)). Please send a very brief biography and a photo of yourself [subject to good taste] for inclusion on the website. You can e-mail your bio and a JPEG file of the photo to Kathy Acosta, [kacosta@vt.edu](mailto:kacosta@vt.edu).

***Your support of SVSA is greatly appreciated.***