

# S·V·S·A music news

Feature article:

## Home Cookin' – Musically Speaking

By **Marian McConnell**

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**House Concerts** and **Pickin' Parties** are two great ways to serve up music in your home. We've had both at our home in Catawba, so I'd like to share some lessons learned and tips on how to make such events successful.

**House Concerts** are a possibility for musicians who are traveling through the area and looking for a venue that might offer them a place to stay and/or back-to-back gigs. Sometimes when musicians travel from more than a couple of hours away to play at the Third Street Coffeehouse on a Friday night, I'll offer our home as a place to have a Saturday night gig. There is usually a suggested donation of \$5-\$7/person (remember, the musician has to pay for gas/transportation), and they often spend the night. They are encouraged to sell their CD's and autograph them. I make it a Pot Luck and BYOB and start it around 6 or 7 pm so the guests can find their way and appreciate the view of the famous "Murder Hole" cave and Appalachian Trail from our "Miracle Ridge" property.

The turnout has varied, depending upon who the musician is, the weather, and what else is going on in the Valley that evening. We've had from 2 to 40 people turn out. I do try to publicize the House Concert well in advance, but it's unpredictable for attendance. In addition to PR through the Coffeehouse, SVSA, and Roanoke Times events calendar, I invite people via email that I think may be interested.

One fun part of House Concerts is that often the musician is willing to jam after the "formal" part of the concert. Some of our House Concerts in the past have featured Johnsmith, Tinker's Dam, Kieran Halpin, Anthony John Clarke, Brooke Campbell, and Ian Bruce (some of the folks were from Scotland and Ireland!)

It's a wonderful way to get to know the musicians on a personal level. Johnsmith and I hiked up to McAfee's Knob on the Appalachian Trail the afternoon before his concert – we had a blast and he got to get some exercise exploring this beautiful part of Virginia.

The biggest challenge is getting people to venture out to the "wilds" of Catawba. Even though we are only 15 miles from town, some are reluctant to venture over the mountain. I'm hoping perhaps some of you who live closer in might be willing to have House Concerts at your place. (On a side note, I'm booking more and more musicians from out of state who are asking if we can put them up for the night when they play at Third Street. If you are willing to host traveling musicians, please let me know.)

**Pickin' Parties** are informal gatherings of musicians and friends, with no suggested donations required – it's all FREE. We usually have them on Saturday nights, and make them Pot Luck and BYOB as well. We encourage everyone who plays any instrument to come and bring friends. We push back the furniture in the great room and make a giant circle. The easiest way to run this is to go around the circle in order and each person offers a song. Good musicians/performers will balance playing original songs with well known "sing-alongs" and familiar tunes that everyone can join in on.

One of our best parties included George Dummitt and his "How to Be" band members, along with other SVSA folks and friends who played. That night we had guitars, banjos, fiddles, keyboard, bass, drums, accordion, kazoos, tambourine, and who knows what all. It was a musical night to remember.

Hosting music at your home is a great way to help out traveling musicians, play music with others, make new friends, share food and fellowship and fun with your neighbors, and not have to drive home afterwards!

# Upcoming Events for Songwriters

## *Horse & Writer programs offering scholarships*

This summer, for the first time, songwriters will be given the opportunity to attend Skip Ewing's Horse & Writer Invitational program on scholarship. These scholarships are being provided to offset the \$2500 tuition that would otherwise be associated with the Invitational program.

The first week of programs, the Horse & Writer Invitational, is one to which writers apply and are accepted on the merit of their work and are given the opportunity to spend seven days (August 24-30), at a ranch in Dubois, WY, with Skip Ewing and the Horse & Writer 2008 Pro Songwriter Staff — hit writers Deanna Bryant, Clay Mills, and Chris Wallin.

During the Invitational program attendees will be provided singular attention, individual writer and song specific education and mentoring. Other than the application fee(s), if accepted to the program, attendees will only need to pay for travel to and from the

## *Durango Songwriter's Expo to be held May 29-31*

The Durango Songwriter's Expo, one of the nation's premier singer/songwriter events, will for the first time take place in the Southeast in Asheville, N.C., May 29-31 at The Crowne Plaza Resort. The Expo is a combination of workshops, listening sessions, showcases, panels, and open mics, and in each of the last several years new artists have been signed at the event. The Expo is also a highly regarded hit songwriter's retreat with two #1 songs written there by participating songwriters.

With over 40 music industry pros and hit songwriters, all genres of music, and registration limited to 200 attendees, The Expo is described as an unparalleled networking bonanza and very much an intimate and rewarding event. Special guests include Emerson Hart, Mindy Smith, Jill Sobule, and Chuck Cannon. For more information and to download the registration form go to [Durango-Songwriters-Expo.com](http://Durango-Songwriters-Expo.com) or call 970-259-9747.

program. All lodging, food, instruction, horseback riding, and program specific materials for the duration of the program are provided for by the scholarships.

The songs with which the accepted writers apply will be extended consideration for single-song contracts with several major Nashville publishers.

The second program, Horse & Writer Classic, takes place August 31 - Sept. 6. This year's staff, in addition to Skip, includes James Dean Hicks and Tim Johnson.

Skip Ewing's songs have appeared on over 70 million albums. He has been BMI Songwriter of the Year, won Song of the Year, received 12 BMI Million Air awards and written such hits as: "I Believe" and "You Had Me from Hello."

For complete information regarding both the Invitational and Classic Horse & Writer programs, see [www.horseandwriter.com](http://www.horseandwriter.com).

Next Meeting:  
Wednesday,  
April 23  
7:30 p.m.  
Third Street  
Coffeehouse  
Roanoke, Virginia

## CLASSIFIEDS

### GUITAR LESSONS

**Guitar Lessons** - If you can count to 4, you can play guitar! Acoustic or electric; folk, rock or blues. Children welcome. Randy Walker, 588-5826; [rwalker25@cox.net](mailto:rwalker25@cox.net).

### RECORDING & PRODUCTION SERVICES

**Blackwater Recording** – Harold Thompson has recorded Pole, Trafidlo & Phillips; Symphony Creek; Duncan & Danielle; Deb Ferron & Polk Green; Julie Ann Sgroi and others. (540) 721-1413

### FOR SALE

**Blue Ridge acoustic guitar.** Orchestra model with shallow neck. A very nice guitar for someone with smaller hands. Easy to play and also good looking. \$400 or best offer. Contact Barbara Martin at (540) 886-2966, [barbara@barbaramartinmusic.com](mailto:barbara@barbaramartinmusic.com)

**Three hours at Flat Five Recording Studio,** \$100. Contact Barbara Martin at (540) 886-2966, [barbara@barbaramartinmusic.com](mailto:barbara@barbaramartinmusic.com)

*SVSA DISCLAIMER: The ideas and opinions contained in this newsletter are intended to be helpful to songwriters. The SVSA companies and organizations mentioned are believed to be legitimate SVSA music news; 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

**Charlie Divers** - President  
**David Simpkins** - Vice President  
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**Kathy Acosta** - Newsletter Editor

[P.O. Box 698, Salem, VA 24153](mailto:svsa@davidsimpkins.com)

## THIRD STREET COFFEEHOUSE

Third Street Coffeehouse is located in Trinity United Methodist Church at the corner of Third St. & Mountain Ave. in Old Southwest Roanoke. The coffeehouse is open from 7-10 p.m. every Friday night, offering live music and socializing in a smoke-free, alcohol-free environment. Open Mic is 7:00-8:00 pm; sign up at the door. Main act 8:00-10:00 pm. No cover charge; we pass the hat for musicians. Supervised children are welcome. Drinks, snacks and desserts are sold.

For more information about Third Street Coffeehouse, contact **Marian McConnell** at **540-309-4707**.

### UPCOMING AT THIRD STREET COFFEEHOUSE

- Apr 25 Clinton Collins & the Creek Boys
- May 2 Mike Franke
- May 9 David Simpkins
- May 16 Riddle on the Harp
- May 23 Generic Folk
- May 30 Ella's Umbrella
- Jun 6 Cliff Rubin
- Jun 13 Sherwood: Robyn Hood & Maid Marian
- Jun 20 Bob Grubel & Grace Note
- Jun 27 Andrew Kasab
- Jul 4 Just Us
- Jul 11 Donna Pearson & Brad Archer
- Jul 18 Gretel
- Jul 25 Drew Arnn & Billy Via
- Aug 1 David Simpkins
- Aug 8 Bleecker Street
- Aug 15 TBA
- Aug 22 Special Surprise Tribute
- Aug 29 TBA
- Sep 5 TBA
- Sep 12 The Aardvarks
- Sep 19 TBA
- Sep 26 Mary Gordon Hall and Friends
- Oct. 10 SVSA Performing Songwriters In the Round

# SVSA Performing Member Gigs

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**Friday, April 25**

**David Simpkins**

**Coffee Buy the Book, Pulaski, Virginia**

**6:30-9:00 p.m.**

Admission is FREE; donations appreciated  
10 W Main St, downtown Pulaski VA 24301 --  
(540) 980-4424

<http://www.coffeebuythebook.net>

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**Saturday, April 26**

**Barbara Martin**

**House Concert, Ambrosia Farm B&B**

Potluck dinner starts at 6 p.m., concert is at 7 p.m.  
271 Cox Store Rd., Floyd, Virginia. \$10 per  
person. For more information: (540) 745-6363, or  
see [www.ambrosiafarm.net](http://www.ambrosiafarm.net).

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**Friday May 2**

**Marc Baskind with the Blu Spruce Band  
Redwood Ruritan**

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**Saturday, May 3**

**Marc Baskind**

**“Red, White, and Blues” benefit**

Roanoke Civic Center Special Events Building, 7-  
11

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**Friday, May 9**

**David Simpkins**

**Third Street Coffeehouse, 7:30-10:00 p.m.**

Admission is FREE; donations appreciated  
Third St & Mountain Ave, downtown Roanoke  
VA 24015. In the basement of Trinity United  
Methodist Church -- (540) 344-6744 (ext 309)

[Third Street Coffeehouse website](http://www.thirdstreetcoffeehouse.com)

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**Saturday, May 10**

**The Aardvarks**

**(with Randy Walker and Britt Mistele)**

**The Bedford Center for the Arts  
Bedford, Virginia**

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**Saturday, May 10**

**Barbara Martin & Mac Walter**

**The Hamner Theater, Nellysford, Virginia**

**7:30 p.m.**

Cabaret Concert Series. \$15 admission (by  
reservation only) includes food. Doors open at  
6:30 p.m. No reserved seating. For more  
information see [www.thehamnertheater.com](http://www.thehamnertheater.com) or  
call 434/361-1999. 190 Rockfish School Lane,  
Nellysford, VA.

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**Friday, May 16**

**David Simpkins**

**The Coffee Mill, downtown Radford, Virginia**

**7:00-9:30 p.m.**

Admission is FREE; donations welcome  
1144 E Main St, downtown Radford VA 24141 --  
(540) 267-3008

<http://www.coffeemillonline.com>

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**Saturday, May 17**

**David Simpkins**

**Radford Farmers' Market, downtown Radford,  
Virginia**

**10:00 a.m.-noon**

Main St., Downtown Radford, Virginia 24141. For  
more information:

[www.mainstreetradford.org/market.php](http://www.mainstreetradford.org/market.php)

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**Sunday, May 18**

**David Simpkins**

**WUVT-FM 90.7, Blacksburg, VA**

**“Wild Billygoat’s Hoedown” with Americana DJ  
Bill Wright**

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**Friday, May 23**

**David Simpkins**

**Coffee Buy the Book, Pulaski, Virginia**

**6:30-9:00 p.m.**

10 W Main St, downtown Pulaski VA 24301 --  
(540) 980-4424

<http://www.coffeebuythebook.net>

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## Saturday, May 24

**Greg Trafidlo**

**Bass Mountain Boys Bluegrass Festival & Bass Mountain Boys Reunion.**

Bass Mountain Bluegrass Park, Snow Camp, N.C.

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## Thursday, June 5

**Barbara Martin and Mac Walter**

**Free Outdoor Lunch Concert, noon – 1 p.m.**

James Center, 1051 E. Carey St., Richmond, VA.  
(Inside if it rains.)

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## Friday, June 6

**Frank Dieter**

**The Griffin Bookstore and Coffeeshop,  
Fredericksburg, Virginia, 7:30 p.m.**

For more information see

[www.thegriffinbookshopcoffeebar.com](http://www.thegriffinbookshopcoffeebar.com)

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## Friday, June 13

**Barbara Martin**

**Stone Soup Books, Waynesboro, VA  
6:30-9 p.m.**

Outside on the patio with candlelight and a creative dinner menu. 908 W. Main Street, Waynesboro, VA. 540/943-0084.

[www.stonesoupbooks.net](http://www.stonesoupbooks.net)

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## Friday, June 20

**David Simpkins**

**Coffee Buy the Book, Pulaski, Virginia  
6:30-9:00 p.m.**

Admission is FREE; donations appreciated. 10 W Main St, downtown Pulaski VA 24301 -- (540) 980-4424

<http://www.coffeebuythebook.net>

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## Friday, June 20

**Barbara Martin Trio**

**6-7:30 p.m., Summer Arts Festival  
Schultz Dining Hall Lawn, Virginia Tech**

Off the mall entrance to Virginia Tech from Main Street, Blacksburg. In case of inclement weather the concert will be moved to Squires Student Center. [www.sota.vt.edu/saf.php](http://www.sota.vt.edu/saf.php)

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## Friday, June 27

**Barbara Martin**

**“From Ragtime to Rock and Roll” family program – two shows**

10:30 a.m. at Blackstone Library, 414 S. Main St., Blackstone, VA 434-292-3587 and 1:30 p.m. at Crewe Library, 400 Tyler St., Crewe, VA 434-645-8688. Free admission.

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## Saturday, June 28

**David Simpkins**

**Radford Farmers’ Market, Radford, Virginia  
10:00 a.m.-noon**

Main St., Downtown Radford, Virginia 24141. For more information:

[www.mainstreetradford.org/market.php](http://www.mainstreetradford.org/market.php)

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## Saturday, June 28

**The Three Old Guys With Guitars**

**(Frank Dieter, Steve Langston, Britt Mistele)  
Hickory Hill Vineyards**

Near Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia

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## Saturday, July 19

**David Simpkins**

**Radford Farmers’ Market, Radford, Virginia  
10:00 a.m.-noon**

Main St., Downtown Radford, Virginia 24141. For more information:

[www.mainstreetradford.org/market.php](http://www.mainstreetradford.org/market.php)

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## Friday, July 25

**David Simpkins**

**Coffee Buy the Book, Pulaski, Virginia  
6:30-9:00 p.m.**

10 W. Main St, downtown Pulaski VA 24301 -- (540) 980-4424

<http://www.coffeebuythebook.net>

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## Friday, August 1

**David Simpkins with very special guests**

**Third Street Coffeehouse, 7:30-10:00 p.m.**

Third St & Mountain Ave, downtown Roanoke VA 24015. Basement of Trinity United Methodist Church -- (540) 344-6744 (ext 309)

[Third Street Coffeehouse website.](http://www.thirdstreetcoffeehouse.com)

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**Saturday, Aug. 2**

**Marc Baskind with the Collegians**  
**Bluefield, WV Southpoint Park**

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**Wednesday, Aug. 13**

**Marc Baskind with the Collegians**  
**Tazewell, Va. Co. Fair**

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**Saturday, August 16**

**David Simpkins**  
**Radford Farmers' Market, downtown Radford,**  
**Virginia**

**10:00 a.m.-noon**

Admission is FREE; donations appreciated. Main  
St., Downtown Radford, Virginia 24141.

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**Saturday, September 13**

**David Simpkins**  
**Radford Farmers' Market, downtown Radford,**  
**Virginia**

**10:00 a.m.-noon**

Admission is FREE; donations appreciated. Main  
St., Downtown Radford, Virginia 24141.

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**Wednesday, Aug. 20**

**Marc Baskind with the Collegians**  
**So. Charleston, WV**

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**Saturday, Aug. 23**

**Marc Baskind with the Collegians**  
**Pipestem State Park, WV**

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**Saturday, Sept. 13**

**Marc Baskind with the Collegians**  
**Bluefield, Va. Autumn Jamboree**

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**Friday, October 3**

**Marc Baskind with the Collegians**  
**Bluefield, Virginia: Octoberfest**

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**Friday, October 10**

**SVSA performing songwriters "In the Round"**  
**Third Street Coffeehouse, 7:30-10:00 p.m.**

Note: No Open Mic this week.

Admission is FREE; donations appreciated  
Third St & Mountain Ave, downtown Roanoke  
VA 24015. In the basement of Trinity United  
Methodist Church.

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**Saturday, October 18**

**David Simpkins**  
**Radford Farmers' Market, downtown Radford,**  
**Virginia**

**10:00 a.m.-noon**

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**Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 23**  
**Third Street Coffeehouse, 7:30 p.m.**