

On The Road
Hill Country Visitor.com
June 2008
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Enjoying the most well-known hill country event around the world: **The Kerrville Folk Festival**. 18 days of pure joy, creativity, love expressed, new artists, memories, stories and songs. Yep, I love the event, having been to all but one year...the first one. I raised my children on the music and stories of people who are passionate about self-expression. Good lessons in life. The first night finale was **Ray Wylie Hubbard**, a songwriter of great magnitude in the history of Texas music. I was thrilled to find out he loved Flannery O'Conner. He visited my Aledo High School English class over 20 years ago, and he is now the voice of KRVL radio in Kerrville, promoting the distinct sound of "Texas" music. Listen to his song, "The Messenger," if you want to hear great writing.

Peter, Bethany (daughter of Peter Yarrow), and Rufus played Saturday, May 31. An interesting version of PP&M, my favorite group from my college years. Bethany, a gorgeous spirit in life, danced and invoked a spirit of love and change as she performed with the powerful rhythm of drum and cello. Bethany remember camping with my family when she was nine years old, and she remembered noticing my son Anthony! I, too, remember that summer for Peter sang "Puff The Magic Dragon around a campfire with my children in his lap! For a woman of the 60's, this experience was almost beyond belief. I have since come to realize that our thought and intentions at all times shape the world around us.

My interview with **Peter Yarrow** is part of my dissertation for a Ph.D. on the topic," Writers On Writing: An Eclectic Approach to Teaching Composition," completed in 1985. Yes, Peter Yarrow singing "Puff The Magic Dragon," is part of my own life story! **Paul Stookey** also played this evening, and his heart spilled forth in his life commitment to make a difference.

You will see on his website, www.noelpaulstookey.com, that he is an activist....still! Both Peter and Paul are making statements about the culture in all that they do. And they are both filled with love. I saw that, again, in Peter's eyes when he hugged Jessica, last year, at the festival. My 14-year old granddaughter needed that hug...as did I! Peter's famous hugs. And both are committed to a gentle revolution that begins one on one. Go to Paul's website for words and chords to many of his songs.

I didn't miss May 25th when the evening closes with **Tom Russell**, a true global troubadour, and a new discovery of mine, Michael Martin of Los Infidels fame in San Antonio. And **Sara Hickman** (a chapter in my book, a woman with a heart so huge and generous), and **Eliza Gilkyson** (what a writer!) and more! Bob Dylan turned 67 on May 24th so I celebrated that as well at Casbeer's in San Antonio.

What an evening for me, and I had the chance to introduce a new friend from Turkey to this great Americana music venue and event. I don't think he had heard much of Bob Dylan in his years on the planet. Hard to believe for me.

George and Kelly gave us a soulful rendition of "Ramona," "Long Black Coat," and "Time They Are a'Changing." I mention the titles because these are three of my favorites, and I found out later that Kelly plays mostly in her living room, keeping that dramatic voice of hers a secret. WE all encourage her to get out more!

Then another discovery for the evening, Marcos Rubio (if I heard the name right, and I can't seem to find him now!) A nineteen-year-old passionate creative person who brought a group of the horns to join him on keyboard and violin for the most original interpretations of Dylan that I have ever heard. And I kept thinking of Leonard Cohen for some reason. Dylan would love to see this show, given that he reinterprets himself in each concert that I have seen. "It's all over now baby blue" took on new meanings in the sound of horns, violin and keyboard. Marcos (or whoever that young man is), standing and delivering each song, was the embodiment of poetry, music and creativity that I so love.

When I stopped him after the show, out front of Casbeers, I asked about my vision of Leonard. "I have been listening to him for many years," he responded with excitement. Here we stood, 43 years apart, sharing our Leonard stories. Both of us listened to him first in our bedrooms. I was about 19 when I discovered Leonard Cohen while teaching horsebackriding at Camp White Pine in Haliburton, Canada.

The evening at Casbeer's ended at the Infidels took the stage and rocked us out. I had not heard the great guitar of Michael Martin so he became a discovery for me. And Dylan has turned many a concert into a rock show as well. After all, his music does rock out! After the show, as I introduced myself to Michael, telling him I was from Kerrville, he told me that he was playing the next night with Tom Russell! "I'll be there!" I said.

The next night at the folk festival, two men in black, Tom and Michael, took over the stage with stories and songs.....all punctuated by the guitar work of Michael. Michael started the lead into "Gallo del Cielo," I knew we would hear another creative version of this song I love. Joe Ely and Teyve brought the song to a new audience, but hearing the man who created the song, Tom Russell, perform with Michael quickly became one of my favorite musical experiences. Apples and oranges really, with no comparison. Both are wonderful!

I have a copy of Michael's new cd, a dramatic photo is surrounded by stark white edges, with the title, "Fatal Flower Garden," providing the perfect juxtaposition of opposites that I love. And I love that opening dramatic song, "Blood Red Roses." And I found out that the producer also produced Leonard, and three of his band members play on the album. Ah, Carl Jung, "synchronicity."

Band of Heathens closed out Saturday night, after Peter and Paul and Bethany. I gave Jessica Lott, my granddaughter, the camera and left her on the front row! Well, she has talent, and during her first time using my camera, she created interesting artistic shots of the band. They invited her to send the shots for their own website. Plan on that! I had three more friends with me who were experiencing this festival for the first time. We made rounds of the campfires and ended the experience about 5:30 in the morning at Camp Kathleen on the high plain! What fun.

As for the Band of Heathens music, well it rocks with the Americana gutsy blues rhythms that I love. Not only do the men look the part, but the music takes you through the south, over the mountains and into the tough stories. And Ray Wylie is part of that sound, rootsy and rocking. My new favorite band.

Gordy Quist, writer and rocker, once played an open mike in Kerrville, and I had lunch with him the next day, knowing he was going to do more with his music. And he has!

David Amram and his now-classic "jam" returns on Monday, June 2. I once read the last scene from *On The Road* by Jack Kerouac while David played flute behind me. I

wanted to go on the road then, and I still do! **Stephen Bruton** plays on Tuesday, after another Amram moment on June 3, a night not to be missed. Bruton also plays on the Band of Heathens new album. Ah, everything connects.

Dads Who Rock play on Wednesday, June 4, and I loved this show last year. Nathan Hamilton, Beaver Nelson, Matt the Electrician: all these dads have strong voices and are great writers. I'll be out for all those sunset concerts even if I have a long drive home!

Ah, how am I ever going to decide what to teach in the new Texas music class I have at Schreiner University in the fall. We meet on Wednesday at 6, and I know we'll have to make some tough choices.

Kathy Mattea plays Friday June 6, and **Walt Wilkins** closes down that evening. **Randy Rogers** closes down the entire festival on Sunday, June 8. What a great lineup for 2008 Dalis Allen is bringing to this area. She rocks!

And now for another event in September: Mike Blakely's **Fandango**. An aside on **Mike Blakely**: He was a featured performer in the THMF Bard project, and he not only performed at Tivy High School and Starkey Elementary, but he also came to visit my children's literature class at Schreiner. I was reminded that he has 16 novels and 8 cd's and a possible screen play on a book he has co-written with Willie Nelson! That book will be out in time for his September Fandango at Luckenbach, where the headliner is **Guy Clark**. His event, September 12-14, features music as well as an author's day on Sunday. Mike is full of good music and stories! His renaissance talent led him down to the Big Bend country for a round-up and campfire event right after leaving my class. I had a strong urge to jump traces and join him. Glad I got to spend a day in New Art, Texas, on the Llano River with Mike and Abbey, as guests of another Renaissance man, **Bill Worrell**. When Mike sang "Mr Moon ran away with the night train," Bill just had to turn on his recorder and capture the moment. Good for him.

I also have to mention the THMF Living History Event on Friday, September 26. We have talked about a Saturday songwriting showcase, but we'll see how that works out when the replies come in. Check www.texasheritagemusic.org for details. And put those dates on your calendar. More Mariachi music on Friday, a new focus on Texas songwriters, a session with Susie Nelson and children's books, and more! Of course, the tribute to **Jimmie Rodgers** at noon on Friday, featuring his great-grandchildren, Austin and Cody Court. Yes, we still need volunteers, sponsors, and local musicians to participate. Just call us! 830-792-1945. And another welcome to Tim Wilton, returning to help run this office and co-produce this event.

Most recently I had a great time at the **Bandera Saloon** on Sunday night, an evening hosted by Art and Lisa that showcases music to a "listening" audience. Terri Hendrix is featured June 8. Art and Lisa are showcased (quite well) in the June MYTH magazine. Go online or pick your up for this good story, along with great writing by our own Tim Wilton, also an editor for MYTH.

I had a chance to talk about my book on the women at the Bandera Saloon, but more importantly I had a chance to hear great local music. The afternoon started off on the porch with **Trenton Chandler** singing and entertaining. He is also interested in creating a "family" show as a fundraiser for THMF. You go Trenton!

He showcased some friends Sunday, including **Walking John**. Now I heard some wonderful songs from Walking John, including words like "all the colors of her rainbow where bluebirds never go," and "Texas, protected from outside minds." **Lee Winwright**

(hm..did I spell that correctly?) looked the part as he sang one of his songs, “The train that’s coming to take me home.” Yes, I am quite inspired to write a book on the poetry of Texas music. Words matter in this state!

Craig Davies was across the street, holding the lead rope of a huge longhorn, a tourist attraction in the streets of Laredo, on the day of the 40th anniversary of **Arkey Blue’s** downstairs club also on main street. That place was crowded to the max, but I did get a quick hello to this local legend. He looked like he was having fun. At the saloon, Lisa started off the evening, singing like an Emmy Lou songbird. **Kathy Bauer** played and so did her 20-year old daughter later. Kathy can interpret “Help Me Make it Through The Night,” and make me forget the Sammi Smith version I so loved.

The Bandera Music Hall of Fame will honor musicians on Sunday, September 14, when Kronksoky Library celebrated the country’s love affair with music. ut that date on your calendar. I’ll have to drive between Luckenbach and Bandera that day!

Willie’s July 4th picnic, which seems to feature all men on the lineup at this time, is going to be held at the Verizon Ampitheatre in Schertz. I was going to Mexico to study Spanish in July, and I will wait until after this important day! I love all the bands playing, and I am really ready for a dose of **Los Lonely Boys**. Their new album, “Sacred,” not only rocks, but gives me lots of new words for this possible book I’m writing. The visuals are stunning symbols, including the interplay of darkness and light, the orange flames of fire, dark orange background of three men in black. Yeah, all of my favorite stuff!

“Outlaws” includes a track by Willie Nelson, and I personally relate to the words of this song. Yep. Other favorites include “Living My Life,” “I Never Met A Woman,” “One More Day,” “Memories,” “Lonliness,” and “Home.” All titles I love and songs I love. The cd has one indented edge that is filled with Milagros. Miracles abound in Texas music, and this band, often called “Willie’s favorite,” is a story of miracles. One picnic in Ft. Worth then brought out their dad, their inspiration, to do some country music with them. Heartfelt and family.

Joe Nick Patoski’s biography of Willie, AN EPIC LIFE, does indeed many of the details of this life. I started listening to Willie in 1963 at Panther Hall in Ft. Worth. A young freshman at TCU. I read this book to find out more about Willie!

I loved the booksigning at Fisher Hall where we also heard great music. But when daughter, **Susie Nelson**, came to speak to my women’s literature class in May, I heard here own heartfelt story of her dad, and that one contained the heart and soul missing in Joe Nick’s. I mean, how could he get a daughter’s perspective? Susie’s book, published in 1987, is a great read and a must for all music libraries. HEARTWORN MEMORIES moved my heart as I reread this, moved my imagination as we heard Susie tell her story, moved my own creative vision as I invited her back to the Living History Day and to my Texas music class. We both have the Belle Starr black velvet to wear, expect us to be “on the road” on day with our own stories! She offered to collaborate with me on a children’s book I have started where two horses “listen” to wind, rocks, trees and cactus. I need the encouragement and “kick” to finish up this new creative venture.

I am taking a seminar called “Causing the Miraculous” with Landmark education. Wow is all I can say about my life right now. Rather miraculous. Looking forward to the Chelsea Hotel in June as I accept the Peabody for the THMF and the **Monterey Bay Blues Festival June 27-29**. Always a great lineup, often featuring Texas artists, this festival in one of the best I attend. Well-organized and loaded with great food, nice folks,

and great music. This year **BB King**, who wrote the introduction to my first book, will be headlining, along with James Cotton, Susan Tedeschi, Clifton Chenier, Blind Boys of Alabama, Keb Mo, and many, many more. www.montereyblues.com Hey, it's not too extravagant to plan a trip to San Francisco, Big Sur and Monterey at the end of June. Texas has that California connection historically, and the Beat writers have influenced the likes of Joe Ely. Kerouac spent some significant time in Big Sur, and this festival is the home of both Monterey Jazz and the infamous Monterey Pop. A salute to the Texas woman, Janis Joplin!

Yes, I bought "**I'm Not There**," the dvd of the Bob Dylan film, the minute I could. A "must have" for all music fans, for fans of creative vision, for fans of biography, for fans of Texas music. Brilliant to introduce various perspectives of this man, and, true to his life, no one story says it all! We enter the world of quantum physics with this film and it's layered perspective. A deep mine, a rich tapestry, a luscious meal to consume. I'll be thinking of this story as I stay at the Chelsea Hotel, knowing the Dylan also breathed this air. And I'll be knocking on the door of his publisher to see if Mr. Dylan might be interested in some THMF projects!

My last comment on a discovery is to mention the two cd's by **Robyn Ludwig** that I'm listening to these days. And the songs grow on you, getting even better with each listening. Of course, I began by liking her family story, brothers Bruce and Charlie Robison, Bandera boys. But I have quickly developed an appreciation for her voice, her words, her presentation. "What Do I Know" could be an anthem for me? "Desire," "Pleasure and Pain," "No Way Out," all speak right to me. Yep, Robyn, you've read my mail. Check out "Desire," and "Robyn Ludwig: For So Long."

June 11th I'll be at Book People in Austin presenting my research on my book on the women of Texas music. I'll include my new discoveries as well, women I've heard since the book went to press. The **Texana Dames** will join me in Austin, along with **Susie Nelson, Karen Abrahams, Mandy Mercier, Barbara Kooyman, Christine Albert**, and more. Join us for the party. About 7 p.m. (check website for Book People) for stories and songs.

Ils sont partis.....kh