

Songmakers June/July 2024

Prez Sez - How We keep Homemade Music Alive - Steven Berman

Songmakers motto is: “Keeping Homemade Music Alive Since 1953”. How do we do that? The most common ways are by opening our homes for music on a regular basis, finding other places for Hoots and Song Circles, and inviting our fellow Songmakers and friends. Other ways include supporting and performing with like-minded organizations like Topanga Banjo and Fiddle Contest, Folkworks, Theatricum Botanicum in Topanga Canyon, local open mic performances like Guitar Merchants, and House Concert series like Russ & Julie’s or Julie’s Joint in the valley. We include music workshops and educational programs at many activities and our fabulous special events including four annual Kenney Grove Park Music Camping weekends, RoundUp in February (with our annual elections), Music in the Mountains (March and November), the Gelencsers annual cabin camping weekend in Landers in November, and two Summer picnics. These are great ways to spread the joy of music! Our Songmakers’ friends have also initiated farther afield jamming trips including Sandy and my first ocean cruise, to see the total eclipse off the Mexican Riviera in 2024 (what a blast!!), and planning a jamming trip to the south of France for June 2025!

Since 2015, we have also contributed almost \$9000 to other Music nonprofits including “Music Mends Minds”, “Playing For

Change”, “Music Cares” and programs teaching music to YMCA children, and special needs children through the Valley Help Group. Both the latter programs were initiated by Songmakers. (<https://songmakers.org/philanthropy-2>)

When COVID made it impossible to play face-to-face until vaccines were developed, we started Zoom song circles that continue to be open to everyone with a smartphone or computer about every other day. I host every Sunday 7-10 pm. The Zoom circles have been a wonderful way to keep making music with friends who’ve moved away, and to make new friends, some of whom are in hospital beds or isolated in other ways, and really treasure the musical connection.

So what’s coming up in 2024? The first Summer picnic will be at Somis Community Church, Saturday July 13, 11:30 – 7. The picnic at this church last Summer drew over 60 Songmakers to 3 wonderful song circles, so you don’t want to miss this one! Your Songmakers’ club will grill hot dogs and burgers for all. You can bring side dishes, drinks and desserts (no alcohol please).

It has been Songmakers tradition to have a weekend pool party for the 2nd Summer picnic since the days of the Orange County hoots at David and Ann’s. If anyone knows an available Southern LA or Orange County location, please let me know. We’ve tried to honor the tradition by offering our LA County pool and yard. Hoot Liaison Sandy and I invite you to Agoura again on Sunday, September 15, 2024, from 3-10 pm. We’re hoping to host longtime Songmakers from distant counties, including the Bergerons, Jackie Smith, Bob Hall & Tony Clegg, and Brad Elias / Jerome Rubin who both live in NoCal now. Your Songmakers club will provide hot dogs, burgers, and ice tea. You bring whatever you would like to share. To make it worth the pilgrimage, we will jam Saturday evening as well, and I’m hosting a House Concert on my 75th birthday, Monday 9/16, as well as

our usual 3rd Tuesday Agoura Hills Song Circle on 9/17, so come make music for the whole 4-day weekend!

Please RSVP separately via our Songmakers' MeetUp groups (which are free to join) for both Summer Picnics (Meetup Group Songmakers Ventura County), the 9/16 Andy Hill/Renee Safier House Concert (potluck 6-7, concert 7-10, followed by a song circle), and the 9/17 Agoura Hills Song Circle (Meetup group Songmaker). The RSVPs tell me how many hot dogs and burgers to buy. You can also call me at (310)699-5755.

One final word about House Concerts and Andy & Renee. House Concerts, where every \$ collected goes to the performers, allows more talented musicians to make a living playing the music we love in small intimate settings. Andy Hill and Renee Safier (see andyandrenee.com) are award winning South Bay folk musicians that we have been huge fans of since meeting them at the Talking Stick coffeehouse in Venice 15 years ago. They've hosted a Bob Dylan birthday concert featuring about 50 musicians playing 8 hours of Dylan songs for over 30 years in Torrance! We always volunteer, and it is one of our favorite music days of the year. Our only previous backyard House Concert featured Andy and Renee for my "Hooray for Medicare" 65th birthday. It was so much fun, I wanted to do it again for my 75th and this is the year! In hopes more Songmakers will attend, Sandy and I are giving Andy and Renee \$400 to let all Songmakers in for the amazing pre-pandemic price of \$10! Others will pay \$20, and if any Songmaker doesn't think it's a great concert, I will personally refund your \$10! I hope you'll join us, because I love being your Songmakers Prez!

Steven Berman

Topanga Banjo and Fiddle Festival

Congrats to Helene Doman for her first place win in the Intermediate Other Instruments! Here is a link to her performance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4jMf7x_haM

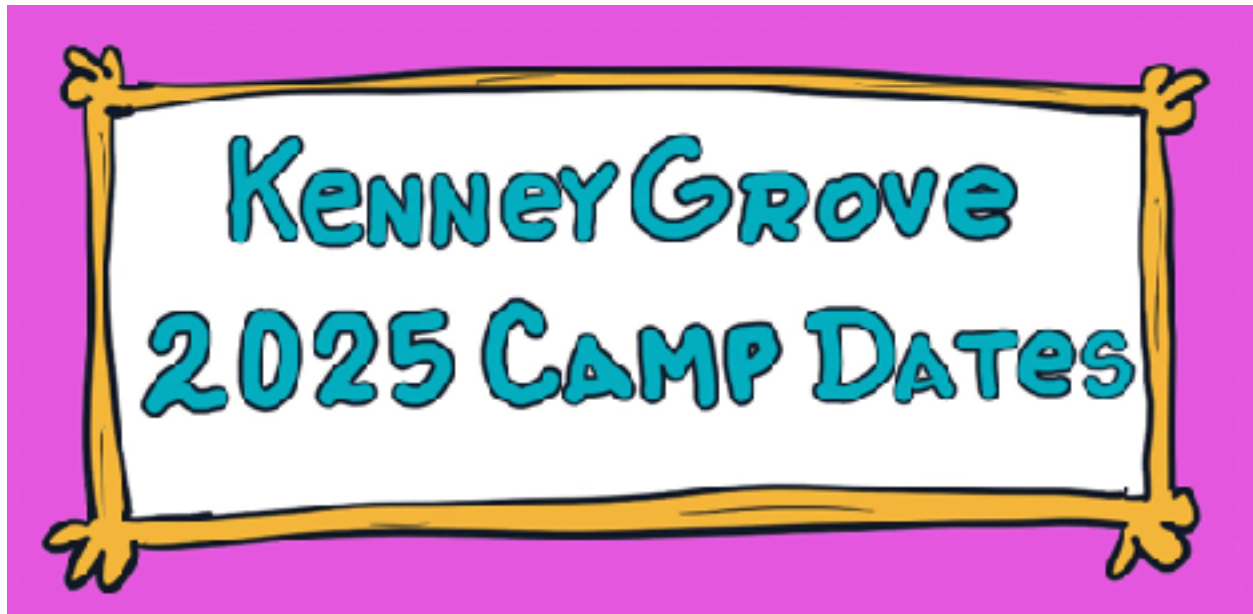
Thanks go to Louise Dobbs and her Topanga Committee for the great job of organization, setting up and tearing down. (Lousie Dobbs, Andy and Janice Gelencser, Sally Charette, Steve Berman, Chuck Behrman, Linnea Richards and Mary Zangerle).

My musician friends and I had the hour from 1-2 pm and we had a great audience turnout in addition to existing Songmakers already under the pop-ups. Thanks go to Mike Zangerle, Irma Tucker, Scott Robertson, Steve Berman, David Steinhart, Ken Krupnik, Michelle Nosco and Ben Griffes for leading songs. We chose a songcircle format and invited anyone to sing and play along from the audience. We had some obscure songs, an original, some bluegrass and a lot of common well-known songs such as Wagon Wheel and Get Together. A cajon player and a washtub bass player joined us and many beginning guitar players also joined in from the audience.

Next year we are thinking of having a songcircle workshop for singers and guitar players and we might add a harmony workshop. We will have these added to the published Topanga Festival workshop schedule.

Mary Zangerle





KENNEY GROVE 2025 CAMP DATES

Here are the dates of the 2025 camp outs, and the approximate dates when you can reserve your site. Ventura Co. Parks says you can reserve 180 days in advance, but I just checked and reservations for KG are currently open through December 21, which is almost a week less than 180 days from today.

We tried to space these well, not bump into holidays, and not start when it's too early and cold!

Spring Break

March 27-30, 2025

[Reserve c. Sept 18, 2024]

Spring Fling

May 1-4, 2025

[reserve c. Nov. 2, 2024]

Summer Camp

June 19-22, 2025

[reserve c. Dec. 21, 2024]

Fall Out
October 16-19, 2025
[reserve c. April 4, 2025]

And of course, we are still on for this year's Kenney Grove Fall Out,
October 17-20. Reservations are open for this weekend.

To make reservations up to 6 months in advance, go to <https://www.venturaparks.org> click on Camping & RV at the top, Select Kenney Grove Park and find your site.

Sally Charette

Songmakers Annual 2024 Picnic and Song Circle in Somis

Saturday July 13, 11:30 am - 7:00 pm

SONGMAKERS ANNUAL PICNIC & Song Circle!

We will eat & play from 11:30 am until 7 pm Saturday 7/13 at the welcoming Somis Community Church, 3300 West St, Somis, CA 93066. To get more turns, we will probably form 2 or 3 circles. Grilled Hamburgers and Hot Dogs (beef & chicken) with condiments will be provided by Songmakers!

We sit in a circle to play. Every person in the circle gets one or more turns at which time they may either perform a song (alone or with selected friends), lead a sing-along song (the most common option), ask for a favorite song/artist, or simply "Pass." You are the boss on your turns. When it is not your turn, make

sure the leader can be heard at all times, unless they ask you to take a solo.

What to bring: instruments, songs, voices, and friends. Our motto is "You can't have a bad time playing music with friends!"

Optional: a chair you prefer, songbooks, a music stand, a side dish, nonalcoholic drink or dessert to share

Where: Somis Community Church, 3300 West St, Somis, CA 93066

Directions: Take US101 and Somis Rd (CA 34) to Somis, Take Bell St to West St and the church. There is ample parking.

Questions? Send an email to the event coordinator:

president@songmakers.org or call Steve (310)699-5755

We usually have 12-30 participants at our Song Circles, but had 60 for this picnic last year. Please call me if you want to bring guests so I know how many dogs/burgers to buy.

This year we will be having one circle dedicated to full participation. Anyone can sing and play along on any song. Since there is no concert at the summer picnic, another circle might be designated for solo performances depending on the interest.

Calendar

All of our events can be found on our website. The calendar link is: <https://songmakers.org/events/month/>

New Events:

Mt. Baldy

Helene Domon is inviting day trippers to her cabin 6,000 ft. up near Mt. Baldy for the weekend of September 20 - Sept 22.

Caution: The cabin is located 4 miles above Mt Baldy village, at 6000 ft altitude. There are about 50 rather uneven steps to climb to the cabin.

Contact: Contact H el ene Domon at hdomon@fullerton.edu for reservations, address, and more details.

Fireside Concert June 21 at Borchard Community Center

SAVE THE DATE for our next Fireside Concert which will be at the Borchard Community Center this Friday, June 21 at 7:30pm with two fine entertainers. Freebo & Alice.

Freebo is the Folk-Rock-Blues icon who first came to national prominence as Bonnie Raitt's bass player for 10 years beginning in 1971. He has also appeared on Saturday Night Live, Midnight Special Muppets Tonight, and in concert with the legendary Spinal Tap. Freebo's music and message touches your heart with songs of life, love, the human condition, and even dogs! Freebo and Alice Howe met in 2016 at the Northeast Regional Folk Alliance conference and began a recording collaboration with symbiotic, musical chemistry. Howe's music evolved from her New England roots influenced by blues, bluegrass, folk, and pop-with Celtic nods and anchored by her rich soprano vocals.

The venue will be at the Borchard Community Center-190 N. Reino Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320 (Corner of Borchard Rd. & Reino Rd.). \$20.00 at the door. Show starts at 7:30pm and seating is First Come First Served. Adults Only. For more information, please see attached flyer or call 626-244-7698/ email ronbloom2014@yahoo.com. Come on out and be entertained!

Round Up Video February 2024

The concert video has been edited and is ready to view. Here is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WDXwgpLXwU>

Newsletter Articles

We welcome any articles and pictures you would like to share for the website and for future newsletters, ie a recent event, history of songmakers, funny and poignant memories, etc. Send them to webmaster@songmakers.org.

Sunshine and Showers

We are sad to report that Shirley Brown passed away suddenly in May after a brief illness. A memorial tribute is posted here: <https://songmakers.org/shirley-brown>



