



NWWSMS

NorthWest Western Swing Music Society

Preserving, Promoting & Performing America's
Western Swing Music Since 1983
www.nwwsmo.com

PO Box 14003, Mill Creek, WA 98082

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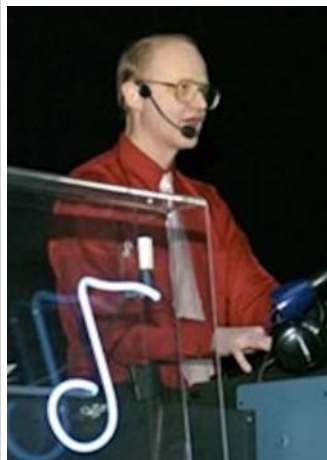
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Vol. 38 , Issue 8 & 9 NorthWest Western Swing Music Society August/September 2020

Preserving the music that is too country for Jazz and too jazz for Country

(reprinted from Ron Bolin, Puget Sound's Dancin' DJ's, newsletter, sent August 18, 2020)

Q & A about Dancing (in the State of Washington) and the Safe Start Plan



Dear Dancin' Friends,

During any pandemic where a virus can be spread via respiration, close contact social dancing with a variety of partners is one of the most dangerous activities that could be done. Social dancers in Washington State were some of the first people in the US to get Covid-19, and unfortunately some of them died as a result. As such, most local social dances were shut down voluntarily in early March even before the governor's order.

Here is a summary of where we stand in my communications with the governor's office about dancing and the pandemic:

~ **The good news** is that I finally got this response as to whether or not Phase 4 will ever come to an end:

"Although we cannot say when we will return to normal, we do know that it will occur when the state of emergency ends." I had kind of figured that, but it's nice to get confirmation.

~ **Some social dancing** can occur in Phase 4, although it will be limited to dancing with a partner that one lives with.

~ **Live entertainment** (which apparently includes DJs) is not allowed until Phase 4.

~ **The plan** still requires people in the high risk group (which includes anyone age 65 or older) to maintain social distancing of at least six feet in all four phases. I'm 66, so unless that rule changes, I can't dance until Phase 4 comes to an end.

~ **Since I'm in the high risk group**, it's not clear to me if I can DJ in Phase 4 or if I need to wait until it comes to an end. That will be my next question.

King, Pierce and Snohomish counties are all currently in Phase 2. I'm not going to make any guesses as to when we will reach Phase 4 or when the plan will come to an end ... but I will say that **the more that people stick to the rules, the sooner we can return to normal.**

Please be patient! -- Ron Bolin



NWWSMS
NorthWest Western Swing Music Society

Business Address
PO Box 14003, MILL CREEK, WA 98082

A 501(c)(3) NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION FORMED IN NOVEMBER 1983 BY A GROUP OF MUSICIANS AND ENTHUSIASTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESERVING, PROMOTING & PERFORMING WESTERN SWING MUSIC.

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Annual Membership:

Full membership (one couple at one address): \$25.00
Single membership: \$20.00

Visit us on the web at: www.nwwsms.com to read the newsletter in full color, JOIN the NWWSMS, RENEW your membership or DONATE.

Like us on FACEBOOK at [NorthWest Western Swing Music Society](https://www.facebook.com/NorthWestWesternSwingMusicSociety)

Contact the editor, jeanneyearian@yahoo.com, to receive our newsletter in your in-box.

PHOTO CREDITS:

Showcase/Festival photos by Jeanne & Fred Yearian.

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD

APRIL AND MAY, 2020

In observance of the State-wide quarantine, the NWWSMS Board did not meet during the months of June and July, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Yearian, Secretary



1983-2020 Celebrating 36 Years!

The North West Western Swing Music Society
30th Annual Western Swing Music Festival
Hall of Fame Induction Celebration

DUE TO HEALTH CONCERNS, THE NWWSMS AUGUST 2020 EVENT HAS BEEN CANCELLED AND RESCHEDULED. SAME LOCATION, NEW DATES: AUGUST 12-15, 2021
WATCH FOR INFORMATION ON THE AUGUST 2021 NW WESTERN SWING MUSIC CAMP, WESTERN SWING MUSIC FESTIVAL AND HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CELEBRATION.
... (aka: Pete's Pool) ... Event Center!

... to the left for more information on the facility or go to:
<http://www.enumclawexpocenter.com/>
Additional information on the festival and summer music camp coming soon!





President's Corner

Found this encouraging post on Facebook - Thank you, Judi Roberts and John Crawford for the sweet memories. After dancing all weekend, this energetic, supportive couple even stayed to help us pack up on Sunday night.



Jeanne Yearian

So many things have been canceled this year that I looked back to last year with great joy. The NORTHWEST WESTERN SWING MUSIC FESTIVAL took place at the Field House in Enumclaw, WA. It opened Thursday evening and went thru Sunday. My favorite dance partner and friend



NWWSMS Festival, August 11, 2019, Judi Roberts & John Crawford

John, and I danced for 28 hours during those days. We had an absolutely fantastic time. To add to the fun, we won a nice medal for the closing dance contest and a cash prize we donated back to the Northwest Western Swing Music Society in appreciation for all the fun we had and because the Society does so much to promote music across the Northwest for young and old. Also, the Festival gives musicians and friends a chance to get together and have days of good live music.

Jeanne and Fred Yearian and everyone involved did a wonderful job. Thanks Millie (Bushnell) and Gary (Moberly) for coaxing us to participate in the dance contest. And all the musicians for the wonderful dance music. We highly recommend you watch for it next year.

Judi Roberts

Around the NorthWest Support Live, Local Music

For regular appearances at a particular venue to be included in the newsletter, contact the editor. Contact information for a member band is always welcome.

3rd Sunday Western Swing Jam, Enumclaw Music, 1515 Cole St, from 2 to 5! Due to State mandate, cancelled until further notice. Jeanne Yearian & Toby Hanson hosting. Call 425-432-7888 for additional information.

Southern Comfort. For bookings or schedule updates call Shelley at (206) 235-0530. Check out The Southern Comfort Band's current activities on Facebook.

Steel Country. For bookings or schedule updates call Duane at (425) 870-7311 or Pat at (425) 745-3798.

The Barn Door Slammers. For information on upcoming play dates, check their website at: www.barndoorslammers.com.

Mike Faast and Jangles. For information on upcoming play dates, check their website at: www.janglesband.com

Sharyn Lee and the Sundowners. Dance Hall Music by **The Sundowners.** Visit their website for information on additional play dates: www.thesundownersband.com

JC McCormick & the Cherokee Band. For booking information or a schedule of upcoming play dates, call JC at: 253-268-2314.



Merle Haggard & the Texas Playboys live on TV

This video has been posted for a long time, but it was either lo rez or stretched. I decided to fix it and cut out the dull parts. Every member in this band was a Texas Playboy. Johnny Lee Wills is there today. The band is on fire! 3 classics: Ida Red - Roly Poly - San Antonio Rose. Enjoy!

radiobob805

We'll be back once the dust settles, but, until we understand the new 'normal' stay safe and let's take care of each other.

Remember: Find ways to support your favorite musicians.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS

IN LOVING HONOR OF THE HEROES

Sept 11th I REMEMBER

GOD BLESS AMERICA

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER: (To use PayPal or your credit card go to our website or click on this link:)

Become a member, renew or donate on-line or by mail.

Mail your check to: [NWWSMS, PO Box 14003, Mill Creek, WA 98082.](mailto:NWWSMS@NWWSMS.org)



Cherishing the Memories

Ed was born January 25, 1935, in Oologah, Oklahoma, to the late William Polk and Louise McAlvain, the middle child of three sons. Ed grew up with his two brothers, Harold and J.W., working the family farm picking cotton, baling hay, and raising cattle. He developed a very strong work ethic early in life that he incorporated into every aspect of his life.

Ed grew up in the Zion Hill Baptist church where he developed his love for music. Ed had a true gift from God when it came to music. He could play any instrument and reproduce a song after hearing it once. One of his greatest joys in life was entertaining a crowd with his bigger than life personality, infectious smile, and Western Swing music. He would continue this passion throughout his life culminating with his band **Eddie McAlvain and the Mavericks** and being inducted into the Western Swing Society Hall of Fame (NWWSMS HOF 1998).

On March 14, 1953, he married the love of his life Mary Frances Harrold, and soon moved to Wichita, Kansas. There he began his professional music career by playing with **The Bobby Koefer Band** at the Hi-Ho Club. Years later, Ed moved his family to Texas, settling in Wichita Falls in 1962, where he started his business, Cool-Temp Siding Company, a business that continues to this day as a benchmark for the siding industry. He was an avid Texas Rangers and Dallas Cowboys fan. Ed loved spending time at his farm and ranch. He was a lifetime member of the Texas Thoroughbred Breeders Association and a longtime member of the Mavericks, a local charitable organization. Ed was very generous with his time and talent, giving selflessly to many charities, his community, and his friends.

Memorial contributions suggested to be made to charities of choice.



**Edward 'Eddie'
McAlvain
July 24, 2020**



Western Swing Forum Keep your letters and e-mails coming!

The Answer:

Hi Jeanne!

Pictures on page 4 are of Texas Jim Lewis' side musicians from his first New Mexico dance and TV band. I'm very sure the girl in each photo is Janie Tucker (singer) and the man is Slim Dossey.

Bottom picture (left to right) are Frank Elder, Janie and Slim Dossey.

Sorry to hear about Jim Sanderson. He and I played breakfast parties at the Landin Hotel for several conventions in the 1960s, after our regular gigs. We just stayed up all night for them.

Tony Arana - always one of my very favorite drummers to work with. He was the steadiest western-swing drummer in Seattle and he was also a cherished friend . . . still is, I hope!

Thank you for the outstanding leadership you are providing in the society. Steve Vaughn and I put in many hours of organizing and making phone calls to round up things to start and The Bootleggers (Don Berkshire, Ron Hutchinson, Burt Dudder, Tony Arana and I) also worked hard to teach people what western swing was and how to play it. Of course, our wives were important with behind the scenes help. Dee Heil was the first secretary and the other girls were very supportive also.

I don't play anymore as my hands are shot. Peripheral neuropathy is what it's called and I miss my music a bunch.

Again, I thank you and Fred for all you do. I'm 96 so I guess it's time to let you younger folks 'carry the torch' from here. God Bless both of you.

Sincerely,
Dick Heil & Dee too!!



Dee & Dick Heil, 2015 NWWSMS Festival

Editor's Note: We have had a response to Kevin's question, below. Our thanks to one of the NWWSMS' founding members, Dick Heil, for solving the mystery.

The Question:

Hello Western Swing folk,

My name is Kevin Russell and I have a question for you. I'm wondering if you, or anyone you might know, can identify the people in the photographs that I'm sending over as an attachment. I got the photos from Al



Stutzke ("Fiddling' Al, your musical pal").

All of these folks were involved in the western swing music scene in Seattle in the early 50's.

I'm aware this might be a bit of an odd request but I'm hoping someone there may be able to identify these folks from this photo taken about 1952. Long shot, I know but no harm in asking, right?

Thanks very much!

Kevin Russell

If the name, Kevin Russell, sounds familiar, here is a video clip of Kevin and the Western Swing Caravan with Bobbie Black and Blaine Sprouse, among others:

**The Western Swing
Caravan**

(Continued on Page 5 . . .)



Western Swing Forum
Keep your letters and e-mails coming!

(Editor's Note: For decades, the NWWSMS has relied upon DJ/columnist/music reviewer Mike Gross to help us promote the best western swing independent artists. Mike gave me permission to share the following decision, which he announced on the Swingin' West radio show, August 23, 2020. What a loss he will be.)

Jeanne,
Just a heads up that after 40 years I have decided it is time to retire from my "Swingin' West" radio show. I am also closing down my web site. If you would like, I would be glad to write and send you reviews if I do receive any new CDs worthy of review.



Mike Gross
HOF 2002

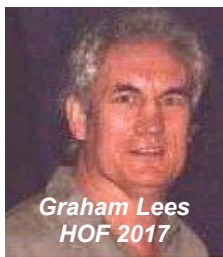
(Editor's Note: For this issue our contributors were asked to let us know how they were doing during the shut-down.)



Skeebo Norris

Ms. Jeanne, We have been very busy here with announcing rodeos. We've been very fortunate to have only 2 cancel so far. We will be MC'ing the San Angelo Cowboy Gathering again this year...so, things haven't changed too terrible much for us. Most businesses here in San Saba don't enforce the mask order. We have been to 3-4 nightclub dances and things were the "old" normal.

Thanks, Skeebo,
San Saba, Texas



Graham Lees
HOF 2017

muscles are getting stronger.... doing exercises to loosen them up and strengthen them. Covid restrictions have been relaxed here and some of the pubs are opening as well as other businesses. This month our government is giving pubs and restaurants help with funding food and soft drinks for half price to a maximum of £10 per person, Marlene and I are going out for lunch at local pub, we can take our two little dogs there, so we are all happy!!!

Howdy Jeanne and all my Western Swing friends!



Chuck Cusimano
HOF 2012

I'm still alive and kickin' but mostly kickin' about this "Plandemic" we're going through.

I haven't drawn a paycheck for playing music since March 8th 2020 but I have received some assistance from the "Gig worker's Unemployment" deal so I have groceries and I can pay my bills.

I've had a few things happen on the good side though. Red Steagal recorded my song, "We Were Cowboys" last fall and several other artists have chosen to record some of my compositions.

I guess, in a nutshell, I'm doing alright. I send my best to all my friends out there!

God Bless Ya'all,
Sincerely, Chuck Cusimano

Hi Jeanne,

Hope that you and Fred are doing well. Marlene and I are fine. I'm getting around with the aid of a walking cane (strong metal one). I've decided against further surgery, the

Cherishing the Memories

We received the sad news that our friend, Oamaru, New Zealand DJ, station manager, radio broadcaster, and strong supporter of the independent artist, Wyn Machon, lost his battle with melanoma in April 2020.



Wyn Machon

Around 2002, Wyn had the chance to volunteer at a local community station, Oamaru Heritage Radio, and served first as a radio presenter then station manager for over 16 years.

Wyn always had an interest in radio and Country music. Western Swing just seemed to be an add on to the Country. Then bands like **Pap and the Sidemen** with great swing music came his way. Pap and Wyn exchanged emails. After Pap passed on, Wyn kept contact with his widow, Louise. She sent him some wonderful Western Swing music. He shared his Western Swing collection on the old 78rpm format with his radio audience to add interest to the program.

By 2012, Wyn had expanded the broadcast from FM to Internet Radio. In addition, he was publishing a Top Ten column in Joe Baker's *Western Swing Guild* newsletter. Having an extremely tight budget, Wyn asked for donations. Independent artists from all three of our western swing societies flooded his station with CDs.

Despite his failing health, Wyn continued broadcasting and writing his Top Ten in the NWWSMS newsletter until early 2020.

Our sincere condolences go out to Wyn's wife, Joy, his family and fans around the globe.



(Editor's Note: This summer multi-instrumentalist/songwriter/performer, Tony Bachler, finished his latest CD, a compilation of his original work, with Tony providing most of the accompaniment. If Facebook is correct, on August 31, Tony will be one year older! Happy birthday, Tony.)

My dear friend Jeanne;

In my little world there is not much action. (Copies of) my (new) CD are moving much better than I had planned on. (I made a sizeable donation to my charity. All my income goes to charity.) I make them in 1000 runs. And, I will be ordering another run. Thanks to everyone. Although I am not going out to play music, I regularly have friends here at the house and play. My summer has been moving by rather quickly and I'm looking forward to re-activating the NWWSMS. Yes I do miss them. And I keep you all in my prayers. God Bless you all.

Respectfully, NWWSMS Board Member, Tony P. Bachler





*Dorrie & Morey Sullivan,
2019 NWSMS Festival*

ASSIGNMENT: WHAT I DID OVER THE PANDEMIC

by Morey Sullivan

The proverbial glass is always half-full with me. That doesn't mean I look through rose-colored glasses or believe there is not negative in the world and in my life but I try to be positive. This pandemic we are all attempting to survive is a BIG negative. I'm working daily at taking this negative life event and turning it into a positive. I'm sure many of you can relate.

The last significant trip we took was in February to Tulsa (a 4-hour car ride) for the Brazos Valley Boys to take pictures at Cain's Ballroom. The next week we were "locked down". We were lucky. I must mention Dorrie and I have a 3-year old granddaughter here in town that we keep from time to time. So, to keep her and others safe we are careful about where we go, and we always wear a mask. It's the responsible thing to do.

Shortly after that trip it was obvious there were going to be no gigs for a while and we had several on the books. So, my aforementioned cup-half-full view of life kicked in. I've been practicing one to two hours a day, learning new songs and re-learning old ones I'd forgotten about. I've added 50 or 60 new songs to my songbook. I've done several "drive-way" jams with local musician friends and entertained our neighborhood. Those are great fun.

I don't believe any of us are too old to learn something new. So, I've taken the pandemic to have some Zoom/Video sessions with a couple of great bass players just to talk

music and trade ideas. One of them is Carole Kaye, the great session player from L.A. Without the pandemic I probably wouldn't have had time to practice those ideas I picked up.

Another positive that is coming out of this crazy period is it has allowed me time to get back into songwriting. I've completed about a dozen songs with several in varying stages of completion—since February.



Morey Sullivan (rt) performing with Hank Thompson & the Brazos Valley Boys at The Cotillion Ballroom, Wichita, KS 1981

Another positive is I'm collaborating on a song with Dave Duchane Oppelt. I don't have to tell you he is a good songwriter as well as musician and singer. It's exciting to work with him.

Is this a trying time? You bet. Do I wonder when I'll be able to perform again? Yes. Did I miss our Hall-of-Fame weekend and time spent visiting with all of you? Absolutely. Do I get down on some days? Sometimes, but when I do, I get back to writing a song or singing something I've never sung before. I'm lucky (I had nothing to do with it) that I have a wonderful wife and family who understands my need for music! Let's hang together and I know we'll get through it.

Creative Strategies

Adapting to the Corona Virus Restrictions



**YES ... YOU
CAN
DANCE AT
THE
ROCKIN'
HORSE
DANCE
BARN**

GET OUT OF THE HOUSE AND DANCE! You'll need to bring your own partner and your own music, but you'll have a great floor to dance on! Of course masks and physical distancing from other couples are required. You can schedule a time that works for you. This video shows how it works:

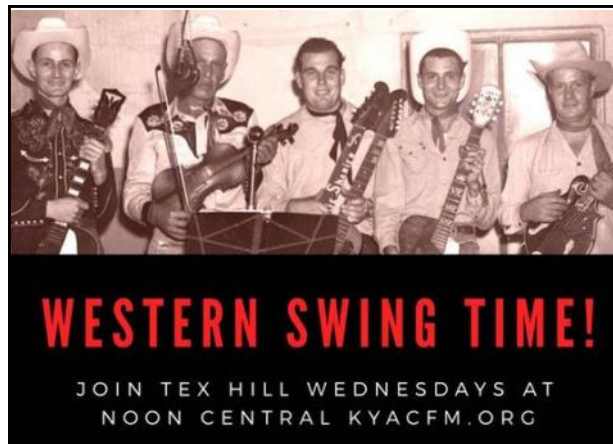
Lessons? You can schedule private or semi-private lessons in practically any dance with **DAVE SERFLING**.

Note to dance instructors: If you find yourself without a place to teach due to covid-19, you can rent floor space for private lessons.

Details and pricing: www.learn2dance4fun.com/dance-classes/dance-class-schedule

Location: The Rockin' Horse Dance Barn, 11820 150th Ave SE, Renton, WA 98059.

For more info: Call Dave at 425-255-9211, email dave@learn2dance4fun.com, or visit www.Learn2Dance4Fun.com.



Past Photo Highlights from NWWSMS Showcases and Festivals

Inspired by Western Swing music . . . made in America!



***“Put on your new shoes. Put on your gown.
Shake off them sad blues, the Big Ball’s in town. ”
(Big Ball’s in Cowtown by Hoyle Nix)***



Album/Artist:
California Skies/
Don Burnham

Album Reviews

By Mike Gross KSEY - FM
www.swinginwest.com Seymour, TX



Mike Gross

California Skies and Billy Rose penned the beautiful pop classic *It Happened in Monterey*. Other enjoyable items are *Old Songs* and the ballads, *Nobody Loves Me Like You Do* and *In the Shadow of the Valley*. There is the feeling of blues with *Woman With a Chainsaw* and *Fool's Paradise*. Western Music is represented with *Utah Moon* and the Billy Hill masterpiece *Empty Saddles*. The remaining interesting tune is *The Toast*.

This very enjoyable album can be obtained at www.redoubtablerecords.com by Pay Pal or check for \$15 US, plus \$5 for domestic shipping.

Don Burnham, longtime leader of Lost Weekend, the fantastic San Francisco, CA Western Swing band has just released a new album featuring 12 wonderful cuts on which he sings, plays rhythm guitar and produced.

For backing vocalists Don chose Bernard Peyton, Rick Dougherty, Bruce Stelter, Frannie Leopold and Sara Winge. The steel guitarist heard is Hall of Fame member Bobby Black while Paul Shelasky, Jeremy Cohen and Chad Manning play the fiddles. Mark Holzinger and Richard Saslow are heard on electric guitars, Bing Nathan and Karen Horner on bass and Scott Lawrence plays piano. Rick Alegria is the drummer, Ernie Mansfield plays sax and clarinet and Will Scarlett plays harmonica.

The album opens with a fantastic cut and probable future top 10 hit, *One Way Ticket Back Home*. Another future top 10 item is *Back in Oklahoma*. Nancy Thorwardson wrote

Mike Gross, KSEY-FM, Seymour, TX & KTNK, Lompoc, CA & www.swinginwest.com

Mike's Top 10 for August/September

Songs:

1. Wanderin' Star - Kristyn Harris
2. Little Bit of Texas - Carlos Washington's Steel Horse Swing
3. Wild Texas Rose - Jimmy Burson
4. Route 66 - Mike Faast
5. There's Not a Cow in Texas - Rod Moag
6. Don't You Dare - Curio Cowboys
7. Texas Bound - Bret Raper
8. One Way Ticket Back Home - Don Burnham
9. In the Middle of the Song - Western Swing Authority with Carolyn Martin
10. Rainbow Song - Jimmy Burson

Albums:

1. A Place to Land - Kristyn Harris
2. Little Bit of Texas - Carlos Washington's Steel Horse Swing
3. Lone Star Dust - Jimmy Burson
4. Room in Your Heart - Curio Cowboys
5. Sactown Playboys - Sactown Playboys
6. Timeless Treasures for a Living Legend - Tommy Thomsen
7. Texas Bound - Bret Raper
8. California Skies - Don Burnham
9. Swing Set - Lee Lee Robert (Musikode)
10. Ridin' Ropin' & Rounders - Rusted Spurs West

NWWSMS Application for Membership

Date Rec'd: _____ Rec'd by: _____

NAME: _____ NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

ADDRESS: _____ INDIVIDUAL, \$20.00 COUPLE, \$25.00

CITY: _____ DANCER SUPPORTER

STATE / ZIP: _____ PERFORMER VOCALIST BAND LEADER

PHONE: _____ BAND: _____

E-MAIL: _____ INSTRUMENT(S): _____

I have enclosed an additional \$ _____ donation to the NWWSMS workshop/scholarship fund

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Use the E-mail provided above to send newsletters and other NWWSMS news
- Please have someone send me a paper newsletter
(Note: the NWWSMS does not mail out paper newsletters)
- I'd be happy to print and mail _____ extra newsletters to those without e-mail access
- Please DO NOT include me in the Membership Roster.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

Cherishing the Memories

(Editor's Note: The following are excerpts first from *The Dallas Morning News* followed by the *New York Times*)

Legendary D-FW country DJ and songwriter Bill Mack dies at 91 of COVID-19, other causes

His song "Blue" launched LeAnn Rimes' career and earned both of them Grammys.



Above: WBAP's "The Midnight Cowboy" Bill Mack pictured in 1997. (Tony Gutierrez)

Article by Thor Christensen, Dallas Morning News
3:57 PM on Jul 31, 2020 CDT

Bill Mack, the legendary Dallas-Fort Worth country DJ, singer and songwriter whose Grammy-winning tune "Blue" launched the career of LeAnn Rimes, died Friday. . . . Mack shot to fame in 1969 as the folksy, slow-talking DJ on WBAP-AM (820), a 50,000-watt clear-channel station popular with truckers and country music devotees around the nation. His program changed names over the years — including *The Country Roads Show* and *The Midnight Cowboy Trucking Show* — but his languid style never wavered.

"Our shows are just kind of 'old uncle comes visiting,'" Mack told *The Dallas Morning News* in 1994.

Born Bill Smith . . . in the Texas Panhandle town of Shamrock, he worked at radio stations in Amarillo and Wichita Falls while simultaneously pursuing a career as a singer. In the early '50s, he recorded a string of proto-rock 'n' roll singles including "Sue Suzie Boogie" and "Play My Boogie." He also dabbled as a concert promoter, paying a talented youngster named Elvis Presley less than \$250 to perform in Wichita Falls.

But Mack found his niche as a DJ and conducted in-person interviews at WBAP with a Who's Who of country music, from Bob Wills to Loretta Lynn to Charley Pride. In 1999, he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame, which dubbed him "The Dean of Country Music Disc Jockeys."

For all his success behind the mike, Mack also hit career peaks as a songwriter and artist advocate. His tune "Drinking Champagne" was recorded by Jerry Lee Lewis, Ray Price and



George Strait, who rode it to No. 4 on the country charts in 1990. Four years later, Mack nearly jumped out of his chair when he came across a cassette tape of LeAnn Rimes, then a Garland (TX) grade-schooler with a swaggering voice.

"I never heard anyone sing any better at any age," he told *The News*. "Talk about way ahead of your time."

Mack persuaded Rimes to record "Blue," a melancholy ballad he'd written in 1958 and had once pitched to Patsy Cline. Rimes' 1996 version of the song — recorded when she was 13 — climbed into the *Billboard* Top 40, launched her career and earned Mack a Grammy for best country song. Rimes won the best new artist Grammy, while her version of "Blue" won her the trophy for country female vocal performance.

Former *News* critic Mario Tarradell called the combination of Mack's vintage song and Rimes' youthfulness "a strategic meshing of generations."

"This is the song we need right now," Mack told *The News* in 1996. "I love the artists we have today, but I am also a traditionalist, and we may have allowed the true roots of country to get ignored."

(*NY Times*)

Bill Mack, D.J. Beloved by Truckers and Country Fans, Dies at 91

Article by John Leland, NYT

With a signal that reached half the country, the "midnight cowboy" was one of radio's first national personalities. . . . Bill Mack found his niche as a disc jockey working the overnight shift on country radio, speaking to long haul truckers as they clocked mile after mile on the lonesome road. They anointed him "the midnight cowboy," coming through on a signal out of Fort Worth that nearly reached Canada. Often the wives of truckers phoned to say that they loved and missed their husbands, and Mr. Mack would put them on the air.

"He called them family," said his son, Billy, himself a radio host in Stephenville, Texas. Mr. Mack knew Elvis and Waylon and Willie. He wrote "Blue," the [song](#) that launched LeAnn Rimes's career and won him (and her) a Grammy Award. And he reinvented himself on satellite radio in the early 2000s, at the dawn of the medium.

(Continued on Page 10 . . .)

(Continued from Page 9, NY Times on Bill Mack . . .)

He earned a spot in the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame in the disc jockey category in 1999.

“He was one of the first truly national radio personalities,” said Lon Helton, the publisher of *Country Aircheck*, a radio trade magazine. “You could drive across state after state after state, without changing the station, and he’d talk to you for six hours every night. Bill Mack became the friend of the trucker. He created that.”

Mr. Mack, who retired from radio in 2011, died of the coronavirus on July 31 in Baylor Scott & White Medical Center in Irving, Texas, his son said. He was 91.

Bill Mack Smith was born on June 4, 1929, in the panhandle town of Shamrock, Texas, the oldest of two boys of Irene and Ernest Smith. His father worked in real estate; his mother was a homemaker.

As a boy, fascinated by radio, he landed a cleaning job at the little station in Shamrock that led to a spot on the air. Maybe he saw the gig as a means to an end; he was an aspiring songwriter and singer.

In 1963, he offered “Blue,” an aching ballad about unrequited love, to Patsy Cline, who died in a plane crash before she could record it. The song sat for more than 30 years until it was recorded by an 11-year-old LeAnn Rimes, creating an identity for Ms. Rimes as a throwback to Cline.

Mr. Mack worked at stations in Wichita Falls, Texas — “he said that was his university,” his son said — and San Antonio before moving to the overnight slot on WBAP-AM in Fort Worth in 1969, earning his nickname from a trucker in Minnesota who called in. Thanks to his clear channel signal — meaning that no other stations used the same frequency — he reached about half the country.

He interviewed performers on the radio and befriended them. When Mr. Mack’s first child was born, Elvis Presley rode with him to the hospital, his son said.

Mr. Mack was a creature of his medium, and he evolved with it, developing an intimate conversational style and traditionalist playlist for his trucker audience, who often resisted musical trends. Even when AM radio became all talk, he maintained his music show. And when he jumped to XM in 2001, he took advantage of the medium’s looser rules to throw some Bruce Springsteen into the mix.

But the truckers stayed with him, his son said. “One time I had flat tire by the side of the road,” Billy Mack said. He phoned his father. “My dad shared it on the radio. About 12 truck drivers in Fort Worth called in and said they were willing to come help me.

“That’s the kind of bond he had with them.”



(Editor’s Note: Following are expressions of love and sympathy from a few of our NWWSMS family . . . First, Billy Bowles, DJ from Sundown, Texas. The story below is taken from Billy’s autobiography as an Inductee into the NWWSMS 2014 Hall of Fame.)

I grew up in Sundown, Texas, near Lubbock. My father was an oilfield worker, driving a hot oil truck. My mother was

a homemaker. My dad was a huge fan of all the country music TV shows. That’s where I believe it all started for me. By 5th grade, I was sneaking my transistor radio to bed, plugging in the earphone and listening to **Bill Mack, The Midnight Cowboy, and his Open Road Show** on WBAP in Fort Worth.

On my radio show, *Swingin’ Country*, I did a two-part series to remember the Music of Bill Mack, his legacy in Song Writing, Singing and Radio & Television Broadcasting in a Career spanning over 60 Years!!!

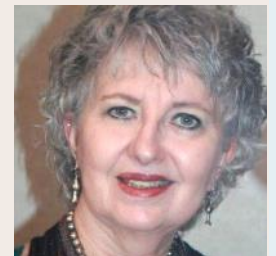
(Below is a link to part 1 of Billy’s tribute)



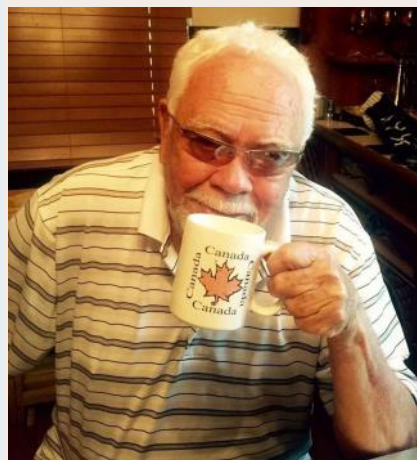
DJ Billy Bowles (HOF 2014) with Bill Mack, during the 2018 AWA Awards.

(Editor’s Note: The following is from one of our Canadian contributors, Denise Pederson. Knowing how much Bill Mack influenced DJ Billy Bowles, Denise arranged for Billy B. and Bill Mack to meet—a dream come true for Billy Bowles. Despite a vibrant long-distance friendship, Denise never met Bill Mack in person.)

So many Blessings this dear man brought to his fans - and that



NWWSMS Contributor Denise Pederson, Bentley, Alberta Canada



Bill Mack saluting his Canadian friend

includes me!!!! He sent this photo to let me know he and Cindy were thinking of their Canadian pal. So thankful for the friendship, encouragement, email conversations and all the precious hours of excellent shows that will always be treasured.

AWA **AWARDS.ORG**



Editor's Note: This additional information is from Bobby Newton, President of the AWA:

"These statues (pictured left) are exclusively made for the AWA Awards and all the work is custom, one of a kind by skilled artisans. They are available at no other location in the world and are not for sale to the public. As for the statue, it is a stylized (one of a kind) statue of Will Rogers from the Ziegfeld Follies pose. They are custom-made, pure white marble resin statues on an imported Italian marble base, with an antique bronze raised letter plaque."

24th Annual Academy of Western Artists

"Will Rogers Awards"

Rescheduled for August 12 & 13, 2020
Brown Lupton Ballroom on the campus of
Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, Texas

★ **WESTERN SWING MALE**

...Johnny Angel

★ **WESTERN SWING FEMALE**

...Kristyn Harris

★ **WESTERN SWING DUO/GROUP**

...Tommy Thomsen & the
 Ambassadors of Western Swing

★ **WESTERN SWING ALBUM**

...Hiram Posey/Lonnie Spiker - *A Tribute to Bob Wills*

★ **WESTERN SWING SONG**

...John Arthur Martinez - *For the Love of Western Swing*

★ **INSTRUMENTALIST**

...Mark Abbott

For a complete listing of the Award Recipients and top 5 Nominees for 2019, visit the event website at: awaawards.org

*From your Western Swing family
 here in the Northwest,*

**Congratulations to all of the
 2019 Nominees and Finalists!**

One of the benefits of being part of a 'family' is that it makes your achievements a group experience we can share!



August/September Playlist for "Skeebo's Line Shack Review"

We here at Pickin' On The Oldies want to thank all of our very loyal and "new" listeners to our internet station. One thing we strive for is "Traditional Country and Western Swing," featuring the classic great artists and all of the upcoming new independent artists who are continuing to produce "Dance Music."....plus, we air old radio versions of Gunsmoke on Sundays at 6am and 6pm, along with Luke Clayton's Outdoors Show at 7am-8am on Sunday morn and archived editions of Glory Road, the old Quartet Gospel Music, with the late great Larry Scott as host at 9am-10am also on Sundays ...We'd LOVE to have you join us.... If you like us, please share with your friends who enjoy this music as well at www.sansabaradio.comwe are the Academy of Western Artists, STATION OF THE YEAR FOR 2018.....streaming 24/7.

Bret Raper - *Texas Swing*

Jeff Woolsey - *The Other Woman*

Bob Boatright - *Remember Me*

Tommy Thomsen - *Heart to Heart Talk*

Scott Southworth - *Break My Honky Tonk Heart*

Wade Benson Landry - *Faded Love/Maidens Prayer*

Billy Mata - *Honky Tonk Stardust Cowboy*

Jody Nix - *Shoes*

Kelly Spinks - *Darlin', Who's the Stranger*

Artists may send mp3 submissions to

production@sansabaradio.com

and personal messages to skeebo@sansabaradio.com

We are on Facebook as well... Pickin' On The Oldies.

To listen go to our website www.sansabaradio.com



www.westernswingsociety.net

**Join the conversation on Facebook:
 Sacramento Western Swing Society**



Bob Wills Day 2020 Rescheduled October 8, 9, & 10

Make your plans now to be in Turkey, Texas for this annual must see event!

THE SLAB

FREE LIVE BAND & DANCING

Location: SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET, TURKEY, TEXAS

Hours: BOB WILLS CELEBRATION WEEKEND, LAST WEEKEND IN APRIL

Cost: Free



BOB WILLS DAY EVENTS

Parade

Fiddle Contest

BBQ

Concerts

Dances

Concessions

Vendor Booths

Bob Wills Day Gear

[The Slab](#)



Editor's Note: At this time the festival is still taking place as scheduled; however, tickets are not yet available. The manager of the Greenville Municipal Auditorium is still waiting for more information on how much of the facility will be available for ticket holders. There will be new developments later this summer. Keep posted.

September 11-12, 2020

A Gathering to celebrate the cowboy way of life and western swing music, all to benefit HOUSE OF FAITH, a local non profit!

SEPTEMBER 11-12, 2020 HEB COMMUNITY CENTER, 50 E. 43rd, San Angelo, Texas

Visit the website or Facebook for additional information on COVID Requirements/Protocols



September 11-12, 2020
HEB Community Ctr 50 E. 43rd,
San Angelo, TX



September 11, 2020 Door opens 11 AM

The Old Hat Band Noon—1 pm
Monte Good 1:15 pm—2:30 pm
Landon Dodd 2:45 pm - 4:15pm
Darrell McCall & Tony Booth 4:30pm-6 pm
Jake Hooker & Tommy Hooker 6:30-8:15pm
Jeff Woolsey & The Dancehall Kings 8:30 –close



September 12, 2020

Cowboy Church @The Gathering with
Ricky Boen & Darrell Boen 10-11AM
Greg Gibbs Noon - 1:15pm
Brady Honeycutt 1:30 - 2:45 pm
Billy Mata & The Texas Tradition 3pm-4:15pm
Justin Trevino & Myra Rolan 4 :30-5:45pm
Rocky King Band 6:10pm-7:15pm
The Jason Roberts Band 7:30pm-8:45pm
Jody Nix & The Texas Cowboys 9-close



Tickets are \$45 per day or \$70 for 2 day pass
Call 325-763-9923 or 325-486-8637
For RV hook-ups call 325-653-7785
Pearl On The Concho Hotel 325-653-4500

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terri@sanangelocowboygathering.com