

Plank Road Folk Music Society



Summer - July 2022 | www.plankroad.org

In This Issue

- **"Down the Old Plank Road - Vol. 3"** *Now streaming!*
- **Annual Meeting is back!**
September 18.
- **Close Encounters Revisited**
Vicki Ingle shares another memory.
- **Remembering...** *Naomi Judd, Jim Seals, Mickey Gilley and more.*
- **Andy's Music Trivia Quiz . . .**
and more!

Yes, there will be an annual get-together!

Plank Road Annual Meeting rescheduled for September 18.

Save the date! Sunday afternoon, September 18, our popular Annual Meeting will be held outdoors in the courtyard area next to the church.

Because of Covid concerns we've not been able to have our usual annual gathering at the Log Cabin in Lombard. In 2021 we held the meeting virtually over Zoom. This year we had hoped to resume our usual in-person session in late January, but changing pandemic mandates meant we had to postpone it.

The Annual Meeting is a popular event — and throughout 2022, members have continued to ask Bob O'Hanlon when it would resume. Now, with relaxed mandates, the board felt it was safe to reschedule.

- Being outdoors will provide extra safety for those who might be hesitant to attend an indoor session.
- Restrooms will be available in the

President's Message

President's Message July 2022

I am writing this on Father's Day, so I'm thinking about my Dad, who was a major influence on my life. He was a college graduate, a WW2 veteran, a successful businessman and a Father of 8 children.



I was his first born and we were very close.

I inherited many of his traits and interests . . . he was a golfer and sports fan, an avid reader, and a country music lover. He loved to sing and always encouraged his children's music endeavors. I think he would approve of my leading a monthly country/western sing-around.

Plank Road continues to offer our regular calendar of monthly events, such as George Mattson's folk sing-arounds, a monthly song circle, the country jam and string band sessions. But Covid temporarily has prevented us from presenting other events, such as barn dances (one of our staples), log cabin parties and workshops for our members. Also, music festivals have been forced to cancel or alter their format, so we haven't been able to attend those great events for a few years.

The good news is that we are scheduling a series of barn dances this fall and winter (look for actual dates coming soon) and our Plank Road annual meeting, usually held in late January at the Lombard Log Cabin, is now scheduled for Sunday, September 18, at an outside venue near the church in Downers Grove. We will be posting details on our website sometime soon.

One more thing to mention, we have been working on a recording, featuring a number of current Plank Road members, and it has just been released and we will talk further about it below in this issue of QuarterNotes. It is in keeping with our mission to "promote and

- church.
- If the weather turns bad, those who choose can reconvene in the Coffee House or another area in the church if needed.
- Beverages will be provided.

It's been a long time since we've all been together! On September 18 we can reconnect with folks, enjoy the camaraderie — and, of course, *do some serious jamming* with George Mattson leading our sing-around.

Toward the end of summer, we'll update you via email, and posts on our website and Facebook page.

preserve folk music and dance”.

Bob O'Hanlon
President

Masks optional for all Plank Road events.

Following the latest guidelines by the State of Illinois, face masks are now optional at Plank Road sing-arounds. This is also in line with guidelines from the CDC and the church's committee on Covid protocols. While masks are not required, anyone who feels more comfortable wearing them is encouraged to do so.



Now Streaming! Down The Old Plank Road Volume 3

Plank Road Folk Music Society has released the latest recording in a series that began in 1995. ***Down the Old Plank Road - Volume 3*** is a collection of music performed by current Plank Road members, and is available at over 150 streaming sites, including those listed below.

This online album features a variety of folk, country and string band tunes, covering 100 years of American music — from traditional to contemporary — performed by a mix of established pros, and a number of our “regulars.”

As you may recall, 27 years ago a group of Plank Road members recorded Volumes 1 and 2 on cassette tapes, which were reissued last year in digital format. We decided it was time to put together another set of songs performed by some of today's current Plank Road members.

Volume 3 features 17 tracks performed by 12 different groups and individuals. Two artists from the original cassette recordings — **Mark Dvorak** and **George Mattson** — appear on Volume 3 with brand new songs. Other performers include the **Plank Road String Band**, **Ashley & Simpson**, **Comfort Food**, **Lonesome Eagle**, **Fiddle Fret n' Whistle**, and **Sons of the Prairie**, as well as solos by other current members.

Check it out! The music is available for anyone to listen to, free of charge on most streaming sites. Just go to your favorite site and look for *Down the Old Plank Road Volume 3*. NOTE: Be sure to enter the complete title. Here are some of the more popular sites:

* **Apple Music** * **iTunes** * **Spotify** * **Tidal** * **Amazon Music** * **Pandora**
* **YouTube Music** * **TikTok** * **Bandcamp**

Thanks again to all the performers who participated in this project, and to **Bob O'Hanlon** for overall coordination, **Jen Shilt** for the album cover art, **Dottie Lee** and **Bill Lemos** for publicity, and to **Joel Simpson** and **Jennifer Ashley** for their technical (and musical) wizardry in producing the album.

Thoughts on my involvement with "Down the Old Plank Road" projects . . .

By Joel Simpson

My involvement with the “Down the Old Plank Road” compilations began with cleaning out my father’s music room after he passed away in May 2020. I found a box of cassettes and ran across Volumes One and Two of *Down the Old Plank Road*.

I was excited to see that my father was featured on these recordings along with many former and current members of the Plank Road Folk Music Society. After reading the liner notes I realized that I know the producer for the projects, Maurice Smeets.

I contacted Maurice about possibly getting digital versions of those old recordings, since cassette tape degrades over time — and these tapes were produced 30 years ago or more. Sure enough, Maurice had the master tapes.

After confirming that the master tapes were available, I created a proposal for the Plank Road board to consider digitally re-releasing the recordings. The board agreed to follow through with the plan. In the end, not only did we release both volumes, but we made my father an iTunes artist posthumously.

After finishing the re-release of Volumes One and Two, I proposed a Volume Three. I am so proud that the organization chose to have Jennifer Ashley and me produce *Down The Old Plank Road – Volume 3*.

There is a sense of satisfaction in seeing the continuum of featuring artists that were on the original recordings who are still members of Plank Road Folk Music Society.

More Close Encounters of the Musical Kind

In the last two issues we featured up-close-and-personal experiences with famous music idols. Here’s another one . . .

Vicki Ingle: Carlene Carter
— ***singer-songwriter, member of the renowned Carter Family.***

It was 2014 at a live broadcast of “Michael Johnathon’s WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour,” direct from the Lyric Theater in Lexington, Kentucky, that I was fortunate to meet and have a conversation with Carlene Carter, daughter of June Carter Cash and her first husband, Carl Smith, and, granddaughter of Maybelle Carter of the Carter Family.

It felt like meeting royalty. Indeed, I think Carlene is royalty — a princess of country music with roots in gospel, folk and bluegrass genres as well.

At the time, I had only heard one Carlene song, “Me and the Wildwood Rose,” but that was enough to know that I just had to try to meet Carlene and express my gratitude for her song. The lyrics struck a strong, vibrating chord with



Carlene Carter

While waiting in line, I thought about what I would say to Carlene when it came my turn.

I’d tell her that I had performed her song several times at small, local coffee houses and song circles, and how people loved her song and that it was always well received.

I would tell her that my dad was a small-time country western singer/traveling salesman and

me; Carlene and I shared some of the same experiences in our families, though her family was quite famous and mine definitely was not, the memories were similar.

“Me and the Wildwood Rose,” by Carlene Carter

*“In my Grandma’s house her children would sing,
Guitars a twangin’ and laughter would ring.
I was little but I was the biggest kid.
I wanted to do what the grown-ups did.*

*In a big shiny car we’d head down the road,
Sing for the miners who brought out the coal.
Many times I slept on the floorboards cold,
On a quilt with my little sister,
The Wildwood Rose...”*

At that time, after each broadcast of the WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour, theater guests were invited to stand in line to meet and greet the show’s performers.



Carlene Carter and Vicki Ingle

how his family would break out the guitars after Sunday dinner and let me sit in the middle of it all and bang on spoons and sing with them!

And how, when my dad was on the road going to the next town, family in tow, I’d either be lying on the back floorboards of his new black Cadillac or sitting in his lap as he drove along, singing and yodeling the country hits of the day — I was that small and young at the time, that I fit between my dad and the steering wheel or was tucked close under his right arm! (The front seat of Cadillacs in the 1950s were pretty roomy back then!). By age seven I knew many lyrics of popular songs by Eddie Arnold, Jim Reeves, Marty Robbins and the three Hanks, among others.

While dad never performed for any miners that I know of, he played and sang for lots of other folks in small country bars and live on the airwaves as a DJ on radio stations in Waterloo, Iowa and Portales, New Mexico.

As I related my story to Carlene, she responded in kind, elaborating on her own experience with her family; she was warm, friendly and empathetic. I think we both forgot where we were as we went back in time together, having “a moment” as they say. It was a moment I’ll never forget. Our eyes were shining, teared-up with good, musical memories of times gone by.

NOTE: Vicki tells us she has a few more encounters to share with us — some of which we’ll include in future issues. *If these stories brought back memories of personal encounters for other readers, please submit them. We’ll publish more responses in the next issue. Thanks! lemos.bill@comcast.net*

Remembering . . .

Jim Schwall

Master of the blues guitar, Jim Schwall, of Chicago’s legendary Siegel-Schwall

Band, died June 19 at his home in Tucson, Arizona. He was 79 years old.

Corky Siegel remembers Jim Schwall: “Jim could do pretty much anything he wanted to do. He was a master of the guitar, an artist, an incredible photographer. He was a poet and a great songwriter. He was also a humanist. A great man.”

Born in Chicago in 1942, Schwall first picked up the guitar as a teen, and developed a love of jazz and the blues. He met Corky Siegel in 1964, when both were members of the



Naomi Judd

Naomi Judd, one half of the mother-daughter duo, the Judds, died April 30 at age 76. Cause of death was a self-inflicted gunshot wound.



The Judds dominated the country music charts in the 1980s with a blend of tight vocal harmonies, traditional arrangements and modern pop aesthetics. With her daughter, Wynonna, Naomi rocketed to country stardom in 1983 with the single “Had a Dream (for the Heart)” and, a year later, with the duo’s chart-topping first album, *Why Not Me*.

More hits followed — including 14 No. 1 songs, nine CMA Awards and five Grammys. The Judds were a leading force in the New Traditionalist movement in country music,

Rosevelt University Jazz Band. Bonding over their shared love of the blues, they began performing together as a duo, and soon formed the Siegel-Schwall Band, with Schwall on guitar and Siegel on harmonica and piano.

They would become one of the most influential bands in Chicago, playing local clubs like Pepper's, the Quiet Knight and Big John's. Schwall was well-known in the Chicago area for his technical prowess and distinctive guitar sound — an amplified Gibson B-25 acoustic.

They were often joined on stage by blues legends. "We were amazed and so lucky, hired to play from 9 at night to 3 in the morning," says Siegel. "Two young white kids just learning the blues and having this mind-blowing experience."

They toured extensively, sharing billings with such performers as Janis Joplin, Jefferson Airplane and Joni Mitchell, helping to bring Chicago blues to large rock audiences.

The band recorded a number of albums for Vanguard and RCA/Wooden Nickel, and formed a unique collaboration with Seiji Ozawa of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra — becoming the first blues band to perform with a symphony.

The band broke up in 1974, but reunited for shows over the decades. Schwall eventually left Chicago, redefining his life and making music in rural Wisconsin and Iowa for a time. Eventually he moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he earned a PhD in Musical Composition from the University of Wisconsin in 1993. He tirelessly advocated for human rights and homeless causes, and ran unsuccessfully for mayor.

Schwall "eventually gave up music and sold his guitars," according to Siegel. "We talked often on the phone and I would say that he was very happy."

NOTE: *Much of the above is from a June 28 Chicago Tribune article by Rick Kogan.*



Jim Seals

Jim Seals, one half of 1970s soft-rock duo Seals and Crofts, died at his Nashville home on June 6 at the age of 80.

Alongside his fellow Texas native Darrell George 'Dash' Crofts, Seals formed the duo Seals and Crofts in 1969 and went on to record a string of hit singles between 1972 and 1976 including "Diamond Girl," "We May Never Pass This Way Again," "Get Closer" and their signature tune, "Summer Breeze."

(*A bit of trivia:* Jim's younger brother Dan was a member of another hit duo of that era,

favoring roots-oriented instrumentation and vocals — a reaction against the glitz and glamour of the Urban Cowboy sound. At the time, the Judds were the most successful country duo in history, with more than 20 million albums sold.

But their run was brief: Naomi announced in 1990 that she had a life-threatening case of hepatitis C, and they played their last concert in 1991. Doctors had given Naomi three years to live, but in 1995 her disease was in full remission. By then Wynonna had set off on a successful solo career, and Naomi turned to activism, acting and writing.

The Judds reunited for occasional concerts or brief tours, and recently announced another tour to start this fall. At this year's CMT Music Awards, they performed together on television for the first time in years. They were inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame — one day after Naomi's death.

Naomi (born Diana Ellen) was born in 1946, in a Kentucky coal-mining town. She was an honors student with plans for college, but a brief romance with a high school football player left her pregnant at 17. Wynonna was born the week Naomi graduated in 1964.

They moved to Los Angeles, where her second child, Ashley (the actress and political activist), was born in 1968. Single and raising two daughters, she dated occasionally, but when one casual boyfriend beat and raped her, she fled California, moving back to Kentucky.

Wynonna, to entertain herself, began singing and playing guitar. Occasionally, Naomi would join in, and soon they were regularly making music together. In 1979 they decided to give Nashville a shot. The three of them scraped by, sharing a single motel bed and living on bologna sandwiches, recording demo tapes in their free time and hoping for a break.

In the Judds' songs, they spoke to millions of working-class women in the South and beyond, with songs about adult heartbreak, the solitude of family life and the breakdown of community in modern society.

Judd also became increasingly vocal about her struggles with mental illness. She recounted that struggle in her 2016 memoir, *River of Time: My Descent into Depression and How I Emerged with Hope*.



Mickey Gilley

Mickey Gilley, the country music star whose Texas nightclub served as the inspiration for the 1980

film *Urban Cowboy*, died May 7 in Branson, MO. Gilley was 86.

England Dan and John Ford Coley.)

Some critics called the duo "folk-schlock," but with Seals as the primary lead vocalist of the harmonizing duo, Seals and Crofts came to be the very emblem of "soft rock" with a run of hits that lasted for only about six years. "Summer Breeze" sold over a million copies in the US and peaked at No. 6 on the Billboard Top 100.

The pair split in 1980 but reunited in 1991 and 2004, when they released their final album, "Traces." But neither member showed any interest in chasing the limelight after the 1970s.

Seals was born in 1942 in Texas. When he was 5 or 6, he became fascinated by a visiting fiddler, and his father bought him an instrument from the Sears catalog. In a 1952 contest in Texas, he won the fiddle division.

He took up sax at age 13 and began playing with a local band, the Crew Cats, when rock 'n' roll broke out in 1955. He joined up with Crofts, and in 1958 they joined the Champs, who'd recently had a No. 1 smash hit with "Tequila."

The pair moved to L.A. and joined a band, also playing for a time behind Glen Campbell. Abandoning their former instruments for something more folk-rock-friendly, Seals took up the guitar and Crofts learned the mandolin.

When their style of music faded, Seals moved to Costa Rica with his wife, Ruby, where they ran a coffee farm and raised three children. Both Seals and Crofts were active members of the Baha'i faith.

Across his career as a singer, Gilley garnered 17 No. 1 singles between the late 1960s and 1980s, including his 1974 cover of "Room Full of Roses." His soulful renditions of early rock and roll hits and soul songs cemented him as a country artist who was able to cross genres.

Born in Mississippi and raised in Louisiana, Gilley's family included rock and country legend Jerry Lee Lewis and televangelist Jimmy Swaggart as cousins. He learned to play piano as a child and began his professional music career in the 1950s when he recorded his first single, "Ooh Wee Baby."

In addition to his singing career, he was also famous for being the face of the country music honky-tonk, Gilley's, which pushed Texas cowboy culture into a global spotlight. The nightclub opened in Pasadena, Texas, in the early 1970s, and featured performances from country music stars like Loretta Lynn and Johnny Lee.

The club included an adjacent recording studio, a massive dance floor and a notorious mechanical bull, attracting Hollywood's attention when it was featured in an Esquire story "The Ballad of the Urban Cowboy: America's Search for True Grit." The article was the basis for *Urban Cowboy*, starring John Travolta and Debra Winger.

The film, which featured Gilley's hit cover of "Stand By Me" on the soundtrack, helped popularize the club nationwide and the music it celebrated, as pop-leaning country music became dubbed "Urban Cowboy country."



Bobby Rydell

Teen idol Bobby Rydell, who enjoyed numerous hits during the early 1960s, died April 5 at age 79. He suffered complications from pneumonia, and died in a hospital in his native Philadelphia.

With songs of romance sung in his clean, hearty voice, Rydell reached the Top 10 five times with "We Got Love," "Swingin' School," his version of the standard "Volare," "Wild One" and "Forget Him."

Rydell had numerous other hits spanning rock'n'roll to swooning, string-backed balladry, including pop standards such as "That Old Black Magic."

Born Robert Ridarelli in 1942, Rydell's first break came at age nine on the talent show "Paul Whiteman's TV Teen Club." He was an adept drummer as well as a singer, and his path crossed with that of another future teen heart-throb from Philadelphia, Frankie Avalon, in the group Rocco and the Saints, before Rydell became a solo singer.

He made a brief jump to acting with a supporting role alongside Janet Leigh, Dick Van Dyke and Ann-Margret in the 1963 romantic comedy *Bye Bye Birdie*, but didn't want to move to California to focus on a film career.

Like many of his teen-idol brethren, Rydell's popularity swiftly waned in the wake of Beatlemania and the British Invasion. But his career was sustained with music and acting appearances on numerous variety shows, most notably The Red Skelton Show.

In-Person Events

Live events are back!

Plank Road's regular sing-around events

Please join us for our in-person get togethers -- co-sponsored with Two Way Street Coffee House.

Sing-Around

1st & 3rd Sat. | 2-4 pm

Vocal instrumental jam and sing-along with songbooks and leader.

Country and Western

Sing-Around

4th Sat. | 2-4 pm

Sing along with your favorite C&W songs. Songbooks provided.

2nd Tuesday Song Circle -- BYOS!

2nd Tues. | 7-9 pm

Bring Your Own Song! A monthly opportunity for musicians to perform original or cover songs for each other, within a song circle.

Plank Road String Band Practice

First Church of Lombard

630-620-0688

2nd Sat. | 2:00-4:00 pm

An old-time string band practice for intermediate/advanced players. from September to April.

Be sure to check the Two Way Street website or Facebook page, and the Plank Road website or Facebook page for details about each event.

Local venues now open for live, in-person concerts

Two Way Street Coffee House Friday Night Concert Series.

Currently masks are not required during concerts, but of course patrons are free to wear them. For those who prefer to watch online, virtual options continue.

Doors open at 7:30pm and concerts starts at 8pm. Check out each concert's details for more information on how to gain online access. [Two Way Street Coffee House](#)

Maple Street Concerts.

Live concerts have returned to Maple Street Chapel in downtown Lombard. Concerts are subject to CDC guidelines. Please check the Maple Street website for concert listings.

Other venues . . .

- Acoustic Renaissance Concerts
- Old Town School Of Folk Music
- Acorn Coffeehouse
- Tobias Music Concerts
- Friends of Lisle Library Concerts
- The Brashler Barn

Some of these venues have live concerts — check their websites to confirm.



Music Trivia Quiz

With a little help from our friends . . .

Andy's Music Trivia Quiz

Thanks for your responses. The winner is once again Bill Matthews (with some good competition this time). If you have any trivia to

Answers to previous Quiz:

Q1. Steve Lawrence was born in 1935, and had his first hit in 1952, but only had one #1 song. What was the song?

A1. "Go Away Little Girl," a Goffin-King song that made #1 in January 1963, was Steve Lawrence's only #1 song.

Q2. What Beatles and Gene Pitney songs were in the 1st Bluegrass Fake Book?

A2. The first edition of the Bluegrass Fake Book was a Xeroxed copy sold in stores. A friend of mine had it (bought it from a vendor at the Walnut Valley Festival). He loaned it to me for an afternoon, and I was surprised to find "Hello Mary Lou" written by Gene Pitney, and "I've Just Seen a Face" by the Beatles, in the book. Some local country/bluegrass guys said those songs were done in earlier bluegrass circles fairly often. Also in the book was "Genny Glenn," a Kingston Trio-written song on the *New Frontier* album. On that same festival trip, I was introduced to Green Day bluegrass songs, which you can check out at your library, or a music store, or watch on youtube.

Q3. Who Sang the theme of Adventures of Robin Hood on the 1955-59 series?

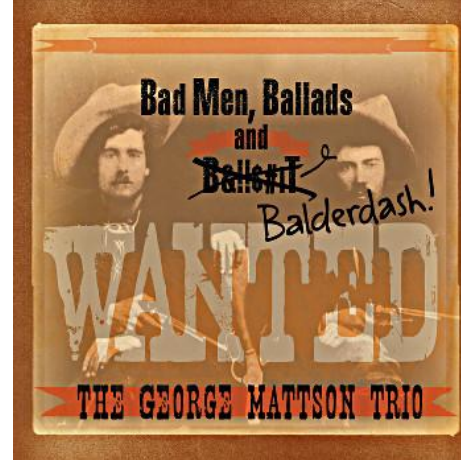
A3. The Robin Hood signature tune was sung by a small time dance band crooner called Dick James, and backed by the Ron Goodwin orchestra. Dick James had a house band and a studio in Tin Pan Alley for recording demos. The bass player in the band, Freddy, said that they sacked a piano player called Reg Dwight (took the alias of Elton John later) because he wasn't good enough. Dick James' later claim to fame was as a music publisher. He met Brian Epstein in 1962 and with him formed Northern Songs to publish The Beatles. In 1967, Dick James Music signed the unknown Reggie Dwight, and shared in Elton John's huge career.

Q4. Ray Stevens mainly did novelty songs, started in the 50's, and is still performing in Nashville today. What was his 1st recorded song?

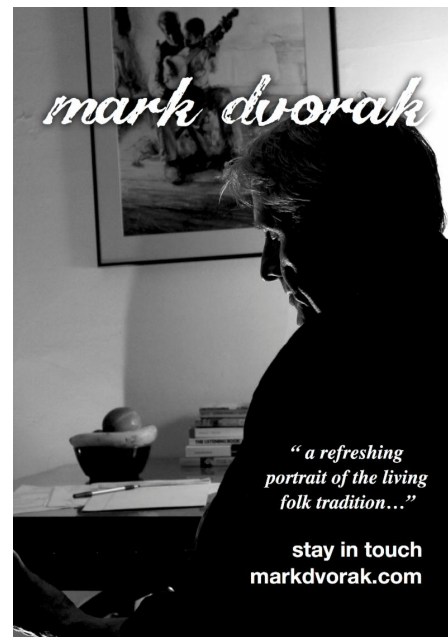
A4. "Silver Bracelet" and "5 More Steps" were recorded for PREP records in 1957, at the age of 17 while in high school. "Silver Bracelet/Rang Tang Ding Dong" came out in July, and "5 More Steps" came out in November. Neither charted, but my family purchased "5 More Steps." "Jeremiah Peabody..." was the first to chart in Sep 1961, and "Ahab the Arab" was his 1st Top 10 in Aug 1961. He had two #1 hits in "Everything is Beautiful" (May 1970), and "The Streak" (May 1974).

Q5. Adrian Cronauer from "Good Morning VietNam" was an actual Armed Forces DJ. What was the most requested song while he was there?

A5. Adrian Cronauer mentioned during in a Sirius satellite show that while he was in Viet Nam, the most requested song on Armed Forces radio was the Animals' "We Gotta Get



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gmtrio.com



Mark Dvorak
markdvorak.com

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Out of This Place." (No surprise.) It was written by Cythnia Weil and Barry Mann.

NEW Trivia Quiz:

Q1. What song charted for a 2nd time after being used in Good Morning VietNam?

Q2. Who was the first to record "Da Doo Ron Ron," and "Hanky Panky"?

Q3. What 2 Raggae tunes charted at #1 three years before Bob Marley's "Don't Worry"?

Q4. Who was instrumental in getting the Rolling Stones signed to a record label?

Q5. How did the Beatles "Rubber Soul" album get its name?

Q6. What song was sung illegally in Washington Square (March 1961) when a music ban was declared?

Keep those responses coming in to:
pictq@yahoo.com

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Contact: plankroadfolk@hotmail.com



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(630) 702-0150

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If you would like to become a member or just need to renew, here is a link to the [renewal form](#) that you can print and mail.

QuarterNotes Contributors

Bill Lemos - Editor
Dottie Lee - Tech Guru
Bob O'Hanlon
Andy Malkewicz
Vicki Ingle
Joel Simpson

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[Plank Road Folk Music Society](#)

Questions? Please send us an email at:
plankroadfolk@hotmail.com

Plank Road Folk Music Society | P.O. Box 176, Downers Grove, IL 60515

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