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Eileen & Juan Benavidez

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Brad Nelson

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April 28, 2015

Dear Friends of the Accordion,

At the April 6th meeting, Emily Strobel, Rob Patterson, and the trio-duo-solo team of Emily Olaya, and Julie and Wayne Eckman presented us with a very memorable evening. Emily Strobel led off the night with a pair of solo pieces that appeared to be written just for her. Her nimble finger work, together with her good keyboard touch, made for a pleasant and sonorous delivery. Following Emily, Rob played five pieces from several genres of music on his Concerto. Rob possesses that special talent for selecting a combination of instruments, sounds, and timing that combine for a tasteful presentation of each piece he plays on his Concerto. Of course, he has that special electronic music stand that guides his every move on the instrument. I must admit I have been tempted periodically to hack his music stand, rearrange a few notes in a passage, and watch for Rob's grimaces as his instrument produces the ensuing piece. But then again, his music stand may have already been hacked and we were all supposed to hear Chiquita Banana and Apple Blossom Time. Somehow I think Rob will never tell, because his "response to surprise" is always to "keep calm and carry on" (apologies to Winston Churchill). Finally, we heard from that musical family to the north: The Eckman/Olaya Family, aka, The AVV Collective (Accordion, Violin, Voice). For the past six months or so, Wayne has been working out a routine on his new Concerto. His new instrument, together with his rhythm machine, gave us some very special music. In addition, Julie's violin and Emily's voice/violin accompaniments added extra depth and versatility to their overall performance. A grateful thank you to each our performers throughout that evening.

For our May meeting, two more members will be stepping up to our stage. Heading off the evening will be Jacob Ricci, a new member in our club and a student of Paul Pasquali. Jacob first surfaced with his family at our last Christmas regalia. Since then, he has made incredible progress and is quite eager to entertain us. Following Jacob will be our featured artist, Paul Pasquali. Paul has a vast repertoire of songs on his Concerto. So much so, one cannot accurately predict which songs or styles he will perform. Will he go with a classic? A standard? Perhaps a rap? Paul has the cognitive capacity to dig into his instrument's library and snag anything he wants. I'm told he once pulled out an "Octopus in a Garden", a "Bluebird over the Rainbow", and some "Cash out of the Johnny" (don't even ask!). Fortunately, Paul's instrument has everything one could ask for. Dinner for six, anyone?

For those of us still considering a trip to Las Vegas, there are still many great seats available for the 16th annual Las Vegas International Accordion Convention from June 22nd through the 25th. Rooms are \$36 per night (upgrades available) and food is plentiful. Prepare to hear and learn from Riders in the Sky, Joey Miskulin, Grayson Masefield, and a host of world-class performers. Paul has all the information you will need to get there, stay there, and Be There!

We look forward to seeing you at Kowloon Cafe, 2055 West 3500 South, Monday, May 4th at 6:30pm. Be forewarned, however. A mean couple of dudes have been spotted in the area looking for this Marasco guy. It is rumored he would be a good jester for their court. Well, actually, their words were "a good clown for their circus".

Keep Squeezin,

Dave Marasco

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