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Original Painting by Neptune for NAJHF 2008
[processed for newsletter - Ed.]

Annual Festival Issue

North America JHF 2008
**Ancient Trance Jew's
Harp Festival (Germany)**

We feature two very different events in our annual Jew's Harp Festival issue. Both are "grassroots" festivals started and organized by people that love the instrument. From the NAJHF 2008 Eldorado Gene Ralph poetically reports from his own very special point of view. Then, from Germany, Sven Otto's report shines a light on the happenings at the *Ancient Trance Festival*.

The reports and photos exude the kind of wonderful feeling one may get by attending. I hope you enjoy them and please feel free to contact us with photos, reports, news and comments about festivals in your area.

2009 Harp Guild Membership update

"Go Green" - No matter at what level you support the Guild, you will receive a \$5.00 membership discount and a free bumper sticker ("Harpers Do It With Spring") if you elect to receive your Pluck 'n' Post newsletter electronically via the Internet. We encourage each of you to become more "green" and help the Guild save paper, ink, labor and postage costs by taking advantage of the "electronic subscription" discount.

In 2009, we will start offering three levels of membership:

- Grass Roots Level: Basic Single donation will be \$20 per person, per year; Basic Family donation \$30 per family, per year
- Supporting Member Level: \$50 yearly donation (includes a 1998-2000 NAJHF highlights CD)
- Top Twanger Level: \$100 yearly donation (includes a 1998-2000 NAJHF highlights CD and 2008 NAJHF T-Shirt [while supplies last])



A Word from the Executive Director

JANET GOHRING

Hello Harpers,

Many things are changing in the world around us and the Jew's Harp Guild is no exception. The Guild is in the same situation as many other organizations... we struggle to keep membership numbers up and spiraling costs under control as we strive to provide a quality website, newsletter and festival.

As we continue to deal with leadership and organizational issues, I find myself again in the role of Executive Director. I continue to hope for the day when someone else will be able to take over the position; but, until that happens, I am committed to doing what I can to keep the Guild alive and well.

We continue to be very grateful for the efforts by some of our "key" Guild Members. Webmaster and PNP Editor, Mark Poss, deserves a special thank you for his continued innovative and quality work on both of these. This issue of PNP is our annual Festival issue, highlighting the events of the 16th annual North American Jew's Harp Festival. Another special thank you is due our Festival Collective Committee for their tireless efforts to host our annual Jew's Harp Festival: Coordinator Ingrid Berkhout, Denise Harrington, Jim Nelson, Gordon Frazier, Ralph Christensen, John Palmes, the Bay City

Arts Center folks, and all the others who "chip in" with their help at the festival.

I'd like to take this opportunity to review the highlights of the annual post-festival membership meeting in Bay City, Oregon this past August:

- The **2009 North American Jew's Harp Festival** will be held in Bay City, Oregon on **July 30, 31 and Aug. 1**

- Board Members – The number of Guild Board Members will now be 3: Janet Gohring, Executive Director; Ingrid Berkhout, Festival Collective Coor-dinator; and Ralph Christensen, Board Member at Large.
- Honorary Lifetime Board Members are our "Founding Fathers" Bill Gohring, Gordon Frazier and Bart Wood; and Larry Hanks.
- Festival Collective Committee – Ingrid Berkhout, Denise Harrington, Gordon Frazier
- Election of Officers – Officers will be nominated and voted on at the annual post-festival meeting each year. Those attending the meeting will vote 'in person'. Those who cannot attend the meeting will receive a ballot included with their fall quarterly newsletter. If you were not present at the post-festival meeting in August, your ballot for election of officers will be included with this newsletter.
- Membership – We are restructuring membership fees to include different levels of support (see related article in this newsletter). By doing this, we hope to encourage a higher level of commitment by our members. All 'membership fees' will now be 'donations'. (*The Jew's Harp Guild is a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization so your donation is tax deductible.*) If you have not already renewed your Guild membership for 2009, a renewal form will be included in the next newsletter.

I'd like to close by encouraging each of you to help us solicit more members for the Jew's Harp Guild. Membership donations are the basic source of income for the Guild and provide the financing to ensure the Guild, website and newsletter will continue.

As always, I welcome any comments or suggestions from you.

Be well, be happy ... and keep twangin' !

Janet Gohring - Executive Director 



Handmade Harp by Wayland Harman
Pictorial Archive #95

Welcome to our newest Guild Members

Jerry Stutzman – Hillsboro, Oregon

James Kielma – Malvern, Arkansas

Joshua Creek – Ann Arbor, Michigan

Allen Down – Tulsa, Oklahoma

Dutch Kopp – Mendham, New Jersey

Marcus Tenaglia – Portland, Oregon

Sylvia Balance – Tillamook, Oregon

PLUCK-N-POST

is published quarterly by the Jew's Harp Guild, 69954 Hidden Valley Lane Cove, OR 97824 USA. Subscriptions and ad space are included in JHG membership. Information in this newsletter is also posted on the Jew's Harp Guild Website (<http://www.jewsharpguild.org>). Newsletter submissions or comments may be sent to the above address or by email to:

newsletter@jewsharpguild.org

Janet Gohring - Executive Director, Secretary

Mark D. Poss - Editor, Pluck-N-Post & Webmaster

The Jew's Harp Guild is a non-profit organization under section 501C(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code of 1954.

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We're on the Web
www.jewsharpguild.or



NAJHF 2008 PICS



Thank you to our photo contributors:

Dan Gossi, 'Dutch' Kopp,
Karen Kvernenes (from
video)

Notes from the 2008 Jew's Harp Festival

by **EL**

Sunday morning, just past midnight, we watched shooting stars splash down near the Bay City oyster bar. Well, I didn't actually see the water fly.

The preceding Friday, the weather had turned off fantastic. We needed a week's worth of funsies to take advantage of this intermingling of positive elements and vibrational tones. I enjoyed the surprising number of delightful newcomers who showed up.

Dutch, from new jersey, is an amazing percussionist and a genuinely personable fellow. Great to meet you, Dutch! David & D.K., more super musicians traveling from Eugene, Oregon, said 'we'll be back'. Karen, another beautiful soul from Seattle, captured our moments in time at every chance. I think we've barely begun to see how talented these new meteorites are which recently landed in our mists.

Do you suppose there's any communication between the metal in jews harps and those falling meteors we spotted? Didn't I hear a twanger on the program playing 'Telstar'?

Many others came who I never even got a chance to meet. I'm still stoked from the fest and ready for the next one. Alice, my love, who usually enhances our stage with her interpretive dances and dancing lessons says she had a great time! My little lady is a wonder. Thank you dearest, through these past miles, for your frequent smiles! This year's event was especially sweet for yours truly since, at last summer's event, I abstained from participating in very many activities. It was nice to once again get into the swing of things.

Sadly, several Jews Harp Guild & past festival notables, namely, Janet and Bill Gohring, Wayland Harmon, Mark Poss, Mile Stiles, Jack Roberts, Jules, and other stalwarts with long-time involvements and past contributions to this organ-ization and event, couldn't make it. Bart Woods was missed too. If they had only known what they'd be missing... Alas, no one can read the palms of such events. Armed with foresight, one could see this was going to be an outstanding festival. We were indeed blessed with a stellar cast of live wires and assorted eclectics. In my travels, I always considered that a good thing. Isn't our

diversity, after all, what makes the human race so interesting?

Neptune's magical mystery artwork, captured on a giant bed sheet for a canvass, came to life right there on BCAC's 2nd story dance floor. This mystical collaboration really helped take what is possible for these events to an entirely new level of multimedia-production. Jim Nelson and Denise Harrington set the stage for this exciting, living-art project to happen. Once Jim had made preparations and 'd' had produced the medium, Neptune dove into his cosmic assignment with great gusto. John Palmes, Karen, and others, assisted in what soon became a grand collaboration of artisans. My skeleton creaks painfully to think of these wonderful folks writhing on the floor for 12 hours so they could better apply the desired paint strokes.

But back to the music. If there are better Jews harpers somewhere in the universe, our young prodigy, Neptune, must be their point man. His Saturday evening performance was one for the ages. Gordon Frazier also discovered some fine grooves in 2008. Our Jews Harp Guild godfather brought along a full bag of learnedness, educational aids, and instrumental mastery all the while pulling off MCing duties. Many thanks, Gordon!

Then, all-a-round gifted musician/mouth bowist/author John Palmes appeared like a rare Amazonian orchid to grace the Jews harp stage. With humor and immense musical diversity, he consistently 'brought it' with fine mouth bow performances, vocal harmonies, and incredible backup chops. Thanks for making that long haul from Alaska, John. see you 'further up the road'. Good fishing!

Thanks to both these guys for dedication to the cause. Their organizational and artistic efforts throughout the year, which ultimately entertain and benefit a great many Jews harp aficionados, are much appreciated.

You who are just meeting Jerry Stutzman, and who are sensitive to the artistic temperament, are in for the ride of your life. I'm happy he and I hooked up in Hillsboro so this exchange of vital information could took place. Observing the unlimited, human creative horizon, this man fills me with absolute amazement.

As for Jim and Denise...what can I say? My heroes! a very special 'thank you' for your sweetness, generosity, hard work, and ►



patience towards the likes of this sometimes surly old desert rat. Thursday's party/guild meeting at your hillside hacienda was a gas! I really missed hearing your songs this year, Jim.

Talkin' about 'roots and shoots', whether dancing, harping, or singing, Liz and Martin Nelson-Harrington continue to exhibit astounding potential and growth as artists and all around cool kids.

Thanks to Curtis and Nikki for contributing so much time work-shopping, networking, advertising, et al.

Another key element and savvy jaw harper, Dan Gossi, filled his gas tank (at great expense) and made the long trip from Garden Valley, Idaho. Thanks, Dan! May the joy of new love last forever. The fest wouldn't have been 'the fest' without Mouth Press Music Inc.

During the festival, whenever I wanted to jam or fraternize, I sincerely appreciated Ralph, Laverne, Joan, and Lizzie babysitting Yorkie Dog (that would be 'Missie'). Doc Roger performed on-the-spot miracles for mi esposa. Thanks doc! Bruce, if you're not on the throne already, you might be soon-to-be crowned king of the techno-jews harp scene. That's some killer album! It's always great to see and hear multi-talented Rick Myers. Another fantastic teacher and all around good guy who lends an immense array of talent to our celebration. Looks like those wheels have been repaired because he was sure on a roll.

It was good to hear Roger Tedrick playing his mean harp again! Great to see you, man! Many thanks, Bob, for the royal treatment out front by Playstation Zebra. You guys rock!

Rob's newest gadget was perfectly awful, but I'm sure he'll get the kinks worked out. :) Thanks, Lorene, for everything you do.

Ingrid, thank you for your wisdom, your labors of love, your good-nature, grace, and kindness. You continue to work wonders serving the good of the guild and the greater family of man. With Karen appearing like a halo out of the blue and thrown into this year's mix, we know Des was there sprinkling in her magic stardust.

Such gems! Janet and Bill, naturally, have a very special place reserved in my heart always. Thank you, again, Janet, for co-authoring the script to this years successful festival saga. Bill wasn't there in the flesh, but things got zany enough to know he was there in spirit.

Spontaneous downstairs jams were an especially tasty musical treat this year, almost as good as the banquets being served and the aromatic scents emanating from the arts center kitchen. Locally-caught Astoria sole was divine as was Friday night's spaghetti feed. Pat Vining's home made peach cobbler topped it off perfectly (yum!)

Dia, Charlie, Pat, Alex, Kay, Amy, (Helen, who was performing culinary miracles elsewhere) and the other BCAC volunteers, with nary a whimper, served it's motley crew (meaning 'us') the most scrumptious meals. you know it wouldn't matter if you didn't have a nickel, you'd be treated like a king at the BCAC.

Peace and love to all of you- El 🌍

Check out the YouTube Slide Show of NAJHF 2008 from Karen Kvernenes at:

<http://www.jewsharpguild.org/fotoindx.html>

Do you have more photos of NAJHF 2008?

Please contact the editor at: newsletter @ jewsharpguild.org so we can add them to the on-line slide shows

IJHS Goes Live!

We are delighted to announce that the IJHS website is now accessible. This site is our first step on the internet giving basic information on who we are, what we do and how to join. It should evolve to be a good starting point for Jew's harp enthusiasts. Although the page is still static we are hoping you will contribute with your musical findings, news about the instrument, strange Jew's harp inventions. This, though, will rely on finding volunteers to monitor what's coming in, so any web-buffs willing to give up their time would be appreciated. Click on the site below and explore. (feedback is also appreciated)

So, from now its easy to join and pay your subs – just click on the „Add to cart“ and follow the instructions. Newsletters will be posted on the site from now on and we are looking at member access to previous issues of the Journal. This is a major step for the Society and could not have happened without the work put in by Danibal. We would also like to thank Gerben Schmidt and Micha Zee for their input and cooperation in setting the site up.

Access to the site for the time being will be: <http://www.widgetwell.com/internationaljewsharpsociety> , but we hope before long to transfer to the domain jewsharp.org in the very near future – so look out for further announcements. *Michael Wright*

"We are family..."

by Sven Otto

A Report on the Ancient Trance Jew's Harp Festival (Germany)



From November 7th till 9th the Second **Ancient Trance Jew's Harp Festival** in Leipzig (Germany) welcomed more than 700 passionate jew's harp friends, manufacturers, musicians, and lot's of curious people from all over the world to listen to the sounds of our most favorite musical instrument.

Driven by pleasant anticipation the organizers *Clemens Voigt* and *Sven Otto* opened the festival on Friday afternoon almost on time and invited all guests to three days and nights of lively sessions, conversation and exchange. Right after the opening the festival's atmospheric prelude took place at the backyard of the festival building. The *Lichtgestalten* (light guises) from Leipzig performed a magical and intense juggling fire show accompanied by a medley of the *Little Tongue Vibration Orchestra* (D). They deserved the first applause of this evening.

Back in the warm and atmospherically illuminated festival hall *Iwan Schumacher's* (CH) film *Trümpfi* invited us to a musical journey with *Anton Bruhin* (CH) to Siberia and Japan. After a short break the "grandmaster" himself inaugurated the stage with the festival's first live music. Again, *Anton* successfully fascinated the audience with his wicked musical gadgetry, his own compositions and his skillful interpretation of traditional songs.

Pause. Removing chairs.

Get the stage prepared for: *Call of the Wild* (F)

With their impulsive jew's harp/didgeridoo/human beatbox music it took *Raphaël Coz*, *Tikaille* and *Flo* less than ten minutes to crowd the dance floor with the thrilled public. Together with other instruments like the Persian flute *ney* or the harmonica also the more calm compositions emerged as a harmonic delight.

After two hours of concert, many encores and a heady applause *Mike Hentz* (D/USA/CH) took over the stage to celebrate the Open Stage. By the way, many thanks to *Claudio* from Roma – what a surprising performance!



ANCIENT
t r a n c e
2008

Saturday started early with a rich breakfast we had together with the artists and the volunteers in the festival hall. In the daytime there were a handful of workshops, the jew's harp market and some intensive conversations. Once in a while we enjoyed the spontaneous session in- and outdoors.

In the pole position on Saturday *Steev Kindwald* (USA) invited us to listen with open ears and hearts his virtuous performance on various jew's harps and the Indian double flute. Like our French friends on Friday night, *Airtist* (HU/D) put the crowd moving – and the house quaking. Due to so many glowing dancers during their 90 minutes program the humidity in the hall reached 100% and the oxygen content sank and sank and sank...

So, we have been thankful for the 30 minutes break to take a deep breath before the *Little Tongue Vibration Orchestra* (D) entered the stage with their considerable instruments collection. The new formation around *Clemens* and *Sven* impressed particularly with their warm hearted music and their diversified program made of fast danceable tunes, hovering atmospheric sound shapes and improvised songs. Vocalist *Misa* even performed with her little son on her back, who did not want to be without mama. Family life on stage!

After about two hours program and two encores it was again *Mike Hentz's* turn to conduct the Open Stage, which he developed artfully into a rousing interplay of all musicians – again a gorgeous aural and dance pleasure.

The last day started with a not too late breakfast, which was finished when about 150 kids entered the festival hall to watch and listen this Sunday's real jew's harp fairy tale puppet theater play: *Von der Königin, die keine Pfeffernüsse backen, und dem König, der nicht das Brummeisen spielen konnte* (About the queen who wasn't able to bake spice nuts and the king who couldn't play the jaw harp). *Christiane* from *Puppen etc.* (D) from Berlin made this puppet theater adaption and *Sven* composed its music. ►



Report translated into English by Oli from Dan Moi

www.danmoi.de



Sunday afternoon was Jew's harp market and workshop time. In the early evening *Hanquito (D)* asked the audience to sit down and listen peacefully to his magically playful melodies on his Hangs. After that we were happy to welcome multi instrumentalist *Nadishana (RUS)* on stage, who – supported by *Armin Metz (D)* at the bass and *Erik Manouz Wisniewski (D)* at the percussion /drums – carried us away for an acoustic journey to “Ancient Kuzhebar”. Accompanied by his stories, these wonderful instruments made this concert another gorgeous aural and visual meal.

Fortunately, *Mike Hentz* was not able to bring the Open Stage to a wonderful end – who wanted to stop? Who wanted to go home? Nobody! So it was party until the early morning, but unfortunately without me. My daughter became ill and I had to go to the hospital. Therefore I could join the last part of the festival only in my mind, thinking about a wonderful time we spent together with lovely people from all over the world.

We received a lot of feedback from many people. Their conclusion was always that they experienced a festival in such a deeply amicable atmosphere, which is hard to find elsewhere. We want to say Thank You to our 40 volunteers, without their help this festival would not have had such a pleasant environment and warm hearted mood, the artists, whose performances formed the enchanting core of our festival, and of course the many guests who enriched our event with their life force. We were glad to see many “old faces” and we were happy to meet new friends who have been at the Ancient Trance festival for the first time, too. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Thanks to a surpassing media interest with a lot of articles in the newspapers and culture magazines in this year, we hope we were able to make a small contribution to our most favorite instrument. We are looking forward to the next (international) **Ancient Trance Jew's Harp Festival** in Leipzig.

Photos and video clips will be published (hopefully) soon on www.ancient-trance.de

Sven Otto 

Bulletin Board

Scottsdale, Arizona Jew's Harp Jam

Announcing an informal Jew's harp jam every Saturday morning between 9-10am on the patio of the Coffee Plantation. The address is 7366 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale, Arizona. Look for Hank in the big black cowboy hat. 

Questions? Answers?
News? Events?

Write to:
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c/o Mark D. Poss
33640 Gypsum St.
Menifee, CA 92584

email:
newsletter@
jewsharpguild.org

Or use the
Feedback Form at:
www.jewsharpguild.org

Fred Whitlow Remembered

From Don Gamber - Parrish, Florida

Hello Jews Harp Guild,

My name is Don Gamber and I was saddened by the news about Mr. [Fred] Whitlow and his wife. I have what is most likely the last Jew's harp that Mr. Whitlow made. You see, I went down to Mr. Whitlow's home to stay with them for eleven days in 1999 and Mr. Whitlow and I went out to his little shed and we made it together. Upon my return home I had the pleasure of being invited onto the local tv morning show and Mr. Whitlow mailed me a Jew's harp he had from Russia and I played them both on the show. It was great and I even mentioned how Mr. Whitlow had inspired me since I was 14 years old. I'm now 50 and I still have the harp. He was a very gentle man with a big heart and his wife and daughter to even though I didn't get to meet her, although I did see the job she did on the shirts with the harps on them. I sure would have liked to be at one of your festival's but they were so far away and I could not get there. Now I live in Palmetto, FL not far from Mr. Whitlow's home. Maybe they will have a festival close to Florida. If so please let me know. As he would always say (HAPPY TWANGIN). 

Lost 'Harps at NAJHF 2008

Beavercreek Bob writes:

"Help!! I lost two Jew's Harps in small Crown Royal bag at the North American Jew's Harp 2008 Festival in Bay City. "

Anybody find them? Please contact the editor and I'll let him know. 

Discuss Your Favorite JH CD

Join the Jew's Harp Guild Online Discussion Group

jewsharpguild.org



CD Review by M.D. Poss

**AYARKHAAN
ECHO OF THE PAST**

ISBN 978-5-7696-2816-0 [CD & Booklet]
CD also sold separately

From the very first dramatic musical tone, you know that this CD holds extraordinary Khomus (Jew's Harp) content. That first long, sustained, low pluck on the khomus exhibits skill of an experienced player and recording with attention to detail.

The ladies of Ayarkhaan are: Albina Degtyareva, Yulinana Krivoshapkina and Olga Podluzhnaya. Each are skilled in Khomus and the traditional Yakut singing styles of "jieretii yrya" and "degeren yrya." The group was formed to promote, preserve and popularize these traditions of Yakut folk music. Ayarkhaan was awarded "best group" at the 5th International Jew's Harp Congress in Amsterdam in 2006.

While the Khomus throughout can be wonderfully whimsical, moving, or confusing, the vocals, though a bit uneasy on the "western ear," are magical... one wonders how such sounds are made by a human.

The CD as reviewed comes with a ultra-classy 80 page booklet that includes Russian (I assume), Yakut, and English texts of the history of the Yakut people; Iron working within the Yakut culture; the Khomus; traditional singing; and Ayarkhaan and their achievements, as well as many beautiful photographs.

This product is not on sale in USA. Available at cafePress.com

<http://www.cafePress.com/2yara.296509016>

North American Jew's Harp Festival CD Track Selected for Documentary

The track "Hard Times" (by Stephen Foster) from North American Jew's Harp Festival 1998 - 2000 Highlights CD was selected by the creators of the documentary film "**Being Lincoln—Men With Hats**" to be the soundtrack over the finals credits of the film. The impact of this particular song at the close of the film was particularly moving.

The performers on the song; Rick Meyers (guitar, vocal), Wendy Carson (guitar, vocal), Mark Poss (JH) were thrilled to receive DVD copies when the film was complete and grateful to the producers for the monetary contribution that was made to the JHG for the song's use.

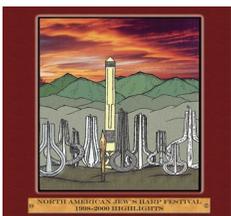
From the Being Lincoln website:

"Being Lincoln is an upbeat, up close look at the lives and motivations of a few of the over 160 men across the United States who are dedicated to bringing Abraham Lincoln to life. These "honest Abes" are living tributes to our 16th President, and a testament to the power of Lincoln's legacy. But what kind of man would spend \$400 on a stovepipe hat, glue a pencil eraser on his face, and spend most of his time walking in someone else's (very large) shoes? Find out in Being Lincoln—Men With Hats."

Contact:

Vicki Radford and Elvis Wilson
3517 Pleasant Valley Road
Nashville, TN 37204

Email at: abraham@beinglincoln.com



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The Jew's Harp Guild

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Specify Style, size and quantity when ordering. Price plus shipping (within the United States: Add \$3; Canada add \$4; All other countries add \$6). All prices in US dollars.

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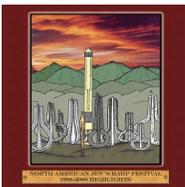
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- Fred Crane, PNP 2003



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