

1983 - 2017

The Northwest Western Swing Music Society

Presents the

***27TH ANNUAL
HALL OF FAME
INDUCTION CEREMONY***

1:00 - 3:00 pm

August 13, 2017

***Held at the
Historic Enumclaw Field House
Enumclaw, Washington***

—Celebrating Our 34th Year—

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, music, often described as the universal language, is one of the great arts and is recognized as a source of enrichment; and

WHEREAS, western swing music is an integral part of American culture and is becoming increasingly popular; and

WHEREAS, the annual Western Swing Music Festival and Hall of Fame Celebration will be held August 11-13, 2017, at the historic Field House in Enumclaw, Washington; and

WHEREAS, during this festival, several individuals will be honored as "Pioneers" or "Honorees" of western swing music and inducted into the Northwest Western Swing Music Society's Hall of Fame;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim August 11-13, 2017, as

Western Swing Music Weekend

in Washington, and I encourage all people in our state to join me in this special observance.



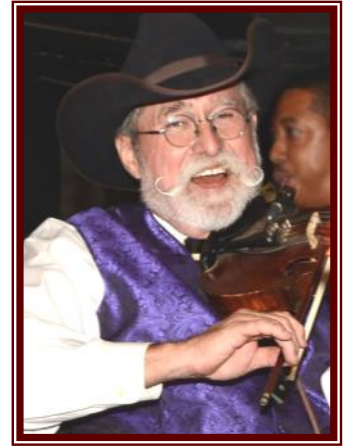
Signed this 23rd day of June, 2017

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee".

Governor Jay Inslee

J.D. BARHAM

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Joe (J.D.) Barham was born in West Texas in 1958 to a musical family. During the 1930's, the Miniard family, of Stephenville, Texas, broadcast live Western Swing radio shows across North Texas while J.D.'s mother, Alice, played rhythm swing guitar with her brother, Marshall, and Joe Holley on fiddles.

At a young age, J.D. began to learn guitar from his mother and acquired a deep appreciation for Texas swing music. At 14 he received his first fiddle and mandolin and would at every opportunity dog Hoyle Nix for pointers. Hoyle was always kind enough to oblige. By the early 1970's, J.D. was playing dances with various bands throughout West Texas and in 1978 took his music to the Texas Panhandle when he joined the Amarillo Police Dept.

Even with an active law enforcement career, making swing music was an ever-present and enjoyable pursuit. It was not until joining, in 1994, the Texas swing band **Cowjazz** that Western Swing music took on a much more prominent and demanding roll in J.D.'s life. Happily, perseverance prevailed, yielding several accolades:

- 1999 – Academy of Western Artists – Western Swing Band of the Year
- 2000 – Academy of Western Artists – Western Swing Album of the Year
- 2000 – Academy of Western Artists – J.D.'s original tune, *Where's All the Fun*, was nominated for Western Swing Song of the Year
- 2014 – Cowtown Society of Western Music Living Hero
- 2017 – Cowtown Society of Western Music- Western Swing band of the Year.
- 2017 – Western Swing Music Society of the Southwest- Hall of Fame

Increased notoriety allowed for more travel and dates at some of the best venues in Texas and New Mexico such as: Big Balls of Cowtown (Ft. Worth, TX), Buckaroo Ball (Santa Fe, NM), Willie Nelson's Picnic (Luckenbach, TX), The Cotton Club (Granger, TX) and so many more.

J.D. still plays often with his original band, the **Cowjazz Western Swing Band**, and enjoys sitting in regularly with many of his favorite artists throughout Texas and the Southwest. He has been fortunate enough to play Western Swing with some of the best musicians ever to strike a chord and, in doing so, has gotten to know and love some of the best of folks on Earth.....WESTERN SWING MUSIC FANS!

LEE BARLOW

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Born and raised in Perryton, Texas, Lee is number 5 of 6 children in a musical family. His father, Leonard Barlow, was a musician and played guitar, mandolin and tenor banjo. Lee took piano lessons early on and picked at the guitar and banjo. He developed an interest in trombone from watching the trombone section on the Lawrence Welk Show on Saturday nights. He played trombone in band up through college.

With his dad being a musician, there was always music around and/or a jam session somewhere. Leonard formed the **Barlow Family Band** with siblings Leona and DC on sax, Veta on trumpet, Keith on clarinet, Lee on trombone, Lois on drums and Leonard on guitar. They played and sang at functions, talent contests and conventions.

In 1964, Leonard Barlow, Lee's dad, brought a bass and amp home. Lee latched onto that bass which he still has and plays to this day. 2014 marked his 50th year playing bass.

Later on, Lee, Leona, Keith and DC formed a band, played around Texas and the Oklahoma Panhandle. In the 70s, Lee started playing with different groups and put together his own. During that time, he had the honor to play for the **Platters** a few times in Amarillo.

In 1981, Frankie McWhorter called Lee to play a dance in Childress with him and Jack Bailey. Frankie called on him a few more times; then, in 1984, Frankie asked Lee to play with Frankie's **Over the Hill Gang Band**. Lee stayed with the band up through 1990.

In the 90s, Frankie started playing with Don House, Stan Schroeder and Ron Howeler. He called Lee to come join them. Leroy Boyer and his son Rick (Doc) Boyer would call Lee to come play when they had Frankie McWhorter or Jack Bailey or both on fiddle.

From 2000 to 2016 here is a partial list of bandleaders/bands that Lee has played with: Frankie McWhorter, Charlie Phillips & the **Sugartimers**, Leroy Boyer & the **Smokey Valley Boys**, Jimmy Burson & **Texas in the Swing**, Rick and Brenda Sudduth & **Blue Denim II**, **Cowjazz Reunion**, **Don House Band**, **Texas Playboys** (Turkey, TX), **Henry Baker - Church of Western Swing**, **Tiny Duncan & The Country Gentlemen**, **Greg Gibbs Band**, **Billy Mata & The Texas Tradition**, **Cowjazz Western Swing Band**.

In July, 2013, Lee was inducted into the WSMSS Hall of Fame in Lawton, OK. In May 2016, Lee was recognized as a Hero of Western Swing by the Cowtown Society of Western Music in Mineral Wells, TX.

At home, Lee passes the time at the Big Texan Steak Ranch, playing bass and fiddle.

JIMMY BURSON

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Born on a ranch in Briscoe County, Texas, Jimmy Burson is at least a 6th generation rancher. He developed a love for music at an early age after his mother made him take piano lessons. While in high school, he found an old album called "Together Again" with Bob Wills and Tommy Duncan. From that day on, he was hooked on Western Swing. After teaching himself guitar and fiddle, and graduating from Texas Tech, he moved home to the family ranch where he and his wife, Rhenda, raised their three daughters.

He began playing western swing with local musicians and later formed his own band, **Texas In The Swing**. His music has taken him on tours of Russia and Austria, in addition to engagements across the United States. He has performed for 20 years at the Great American Music Festival at Silver Dollar City, Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium, National Cowboy Symposium, San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo, Legends of Western Swing, West Texas Western Swing Music Festival, along with many others.

In addition to the cattle business, Jimmy served 10 years as the Briscoe County Judge and eight years as County Commissioner. Also, he is the music director at First Baptist Church and has led music at revivals across Texas. His three western swing albums, *Texas in the Swing*, *Leanin' on the Legends* and *Back in the Swing*;, have been featured on radio stations across the U.S.A.

In 2011, Jimmy was named the Western Swing Male Vocalist of the year by the Academy of Western Artists. He was named a Hero of Western Music by the Cowtown Society of Western Music in 2012 and named to the Western Swing Hall of Fame by the Western Swing Music Society of the Southwest the same year.

He still lives on the family ranch at Silverton, Texas, with his wife Rhenda.

GENE GASAWAY
POSTHUMOUS AWARD
PIONEER OF WESTERN SWING



Gene Gasaway was born September 1, 1931, in Huntington, Arkansas, and was playing fiddle by the time he was 12 years old. He began performing professionally at 17 with **Hank Thompson**. In 1956 Gene joined **Ray Price and the Cherokee Cowboys**. After leaving the **Cherokee Cowboys** he began working on the nationally syndicated **Red Foley Show** in Springfield, MO.

In 1958 Gene went to work for Leon McAuliffe and his band in Tulsa. He was with Leon until 1962, when Bob Wills asked him to join the **Texas Playboys**. In 1967 Gene again joined **Ray Price and the Cherokee Cowboys**.

By 1969 Gene decided to stay off the road, when he and his wife, Dorothy, married. Gene taught music, tuned pianos and continued to play locally. During this time, Gene and Dorothy had two sons, Wade and Warren. Gene's passion for music was so great, however, that when Mel Tillis asked him to join his band, **The Statesiders**, in 1976, he was ready to go back out on the road. He worked with Mel for three years.

When the original Texas Playboys were reorganized under the direction of Leon McAuliffe, Gene joined them and stayed for over two decades. Gene worked with **Hank Thompson and the Brazos Valley Boys** from 1985 until 2003.

Gene had the pleasure of playing for three US Presidents, in Carnegie Hall (New York), in the Smithsonian Institute (DC) and in Geneva, Switzerland. He was also in the band that performed in Russia in 1994 for a cultural exchange between Russia and the State of Kansas, headed up by Morey Sullivan.

Gene also entertained US troops in Germany, France, Italy, Yugoslavia and the Middle East with Leon McAuliffe and Tex Ritter. He made several movie soundtracks, including the Academy Award-winning "Places in the Heart," starring Sally Fields. He recorded for Liberty, MCA and Columbia Records. He appeared on the Grand Ole Opry with the Sons of the Pioneers, Roy Clark, Willie Nelson, George Strait and Patsy Cline.

Gene has been inducted into the Western Swing Hall of Fame in Sacramento, CA, the Western Swing Music Society of the Southwest, OK, and the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame, TX. He traveled all over the world playing western swing music, bringing joy into someone else's life using the gift God gave him.

Gene passed on April 18, 2006, in Huntington, AR.

ROBERT HUSTON

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Robert Huston was 24 years old when he met his first Texas Playboy. It was William Eschol "Smokey" Dacus, the first drummer in a rural string band. That first meeting in 1982 led to an association with the band that lasts to this day.

Bob Wills Original Texas Playboys were in Fort Smith, Arkansas, to play a show. Robert was working as a television journalist who admits he "used his job" to meet his musical idols. That night Huston not only met but also filmed his musical heroes. In retrospect, he concedes it was an early precursor to his **Western Swing RULES** series.

In early 1983, Huston was selected to serve on a 50th anniversary special events committee for Fort Smith's PRCA rodeo. That year also marked the 50th anniversary of the Texas Playboy's organization. So Robert went to work to bring the two together for a concert. "I found and acquired a sponsor, organized the sound and the show, produced television commercials promoting the concert, acquired hotel rooms, organized a reception for the band and hocked tickets. . . I even went to local nursing homes to promote the show . . . Here I was, still a 24 year old kid and I had booked Bob Wills' immortal band, the **Texas Playboys**, as my first concert," Huston says. "The night of the performance, when **THE Texas Playboys** entered the arena and the crowd erupted in applause, remains one of the proudest moments of my life."

He stayed in contact with members of the band, especially Leon McAuliffe and fiddler, Gene Gasaway, who both lived nearby. In fact, Leon McAuliffe's last public performance was at Fort Smith's annual Chili Cook-off that Huston had organized years before. "He (Leon) disobeyed doctors' orders and left the hospital in Tulsa to come play that gig because he knew it was for a kid's charity. . . That's the kind of guy he and the rest of **Playboys** were. Class all the way." Leon McAuliffe died a short time later.

Robert also served as emcee for several concerts with a reincarnated **Playboy** band in 2004 and 2009. Huston credits fiddler Gene Gasaway with saving him musically. "I was about to quit playing the piano because the stuff I heard in my head, I couldn't make my hands do," Huston said. "Within my first ten minutes with Gene, 20 years of musical cloudiness just parted . . . Gene shared his music knowledge with me and it is a gift I could never repay." Now, Robert gladly shares that information with anyone who's interested.

After spending 35 years in television as an anchor, host and producer, Huston created Robert Huston Productions. In the fall of 2012 **Western Swing RULES** was created as a way to help the public at large better understand the uniqueness and significance of the genre. To date, **Western Swing RULES** on YouTube has garnered 2000 subscribers and over 200,000 views and continues to grow. He is very grateful for the professional musicians who've appeared on the program. Without them there would be no **Western Swing RULES**.

Robert's mission is to "Preserve and Promote Western Swing through Performance and Education." He feels his body of work is significant for preservation if nothing else. Already he has produced segments with Leon Rausch and another with Bobby Koefer which is still in production. Huston also has an exclusive hour long, one-on-one interview with Smokey Dacus filmed prior to his death that will be used at some point.

"Time and money are my enemies . . . We keep losing these guys before I have a chance to capture their stories on film." Currently, Huston funds **Western Swing RULES** but hopes to someday attract a sponsor.

ALFIE JOHNS

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Alfie Johns started playing the sax at age 10 and played in school bands through high school. He grew up as a rock and roll kid playing his first gig at age 15 with 3 other rock wannabees. After serving in the military, Alf caught on with a local Napa Valley, CA, band named **Brownees**, playing with them off and on for 30 years.

In 2002, on a whim, he followed his friend, Stogy Buckhorn (POWS 1996), to Turkey, Texas, to see him perform with other terrific musicians that played Western Swing songs. He fell in love with this genre and has returned every year with wife, Leila, to attend the Bob Wills festival. They even bought a home in Turkey and have made life long friends around the music.

About 13 years ago he joined Henry and Doris Baker in the **Church of Western Swing (COWS) Band**, and has been a member of the **COWS Band** since 2004. Over the years Alfie had the chance to play with top notch musicians and need to mention quite a few by name:

Singers Dayna Wills, Tommy Thomsen and Leon Rausch.

Fiddle players Bobby Boatwright, Jimmy Burson, Paul Anastasio and Jimmy Young.

Guitarists Walter Lyons, Joe Settlemares, Buster Redwing and Darrin Brown.

Steel guitarists Bobby Baker, Bobby Black and Chuck Hayes.

Pianists Wayne Glasson and Lucy Dean Record.

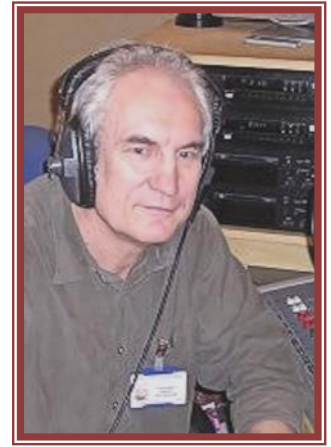
Bassists Lee Barlow and John Jones.

Drummers Odie James and Gary Johnson.

He's currently playing with two bands in Mendocino County, California. To quote Alfie, "I believe that western swing music was instrumental in the development of rock and roll and the country music we have today and do everything I can to promote it and keep it alive."

GRAHAM LEES

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Graham Lees - British Radio Presenter

As a kid, Graham was always fascinated by the cowboy, especially the silver screen cowboys including Hopalong Cassidy, whom he would see at the Saturday matinee in the local cinema. America's country music first drew Graham's interest in the early '60s when the two presenters of a children's TV show...British artist Wally Whyton and guitarist Bert Weedon included a country song in the show.

In 1969, Graham went to live in Australia, where he was introduced to America's Bluegrass music. After hearing a local band play *New San Antonio Rose*, his interest was drawn to the jazz-based western swing music of Bob Wills. He enquired about purchasing Bob Wills vinyl albums from a record dealer who attended the local Country Music Clubs. It was a privilege to meet Bob's daughter, Rosetta, in 2001.

As Nashville transformed and changed country music in the 1990's, it renewed his interest in cowboy music. Graham's first trip to the USA was in 2000 when he started obtaining more music of modern day artists.

Graham became a member of the British Country Music Association (BCMA) in 1993 when he started working as a country music journalist writing for *North Country Music Magazine*. When he started writing for the magazine he used the 'nom de plume' *Golden Graham*. (A friend's wife gave him this nickname in the 1980's.) Since that first beginning he has contributed feature articles and CD reviews on country, bluegrass, blues and folk music for several magazines. As a music journalist Graham has been fortunate to interview many artistes. For example, for western swing, he has interviewed Leon Rausch, Tommy Allsup, Red Steagall and many, many more. On his own website you have the opportunity to view a small portion of the interviews, articles and CD reviews he has done over the years. Check out www.grahamlees.co.uk

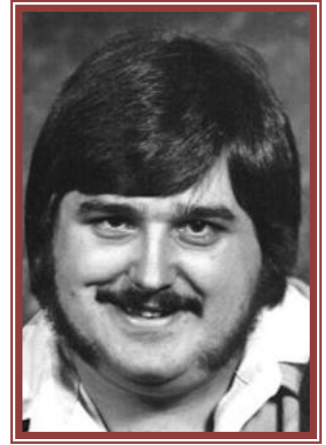
In 2001, he started as a radio presenter on community radio at Metro Radio in Lancashire with big band and swing music show 'Swing's The Thing' and his two-hour country music show 'The Country Connection and The Western Hour,' using 'Golden Graham' as his name on air. Around 2004, he started presenting radio shows on HWD Radio, West Yorkshire, where he now lives. The first hour is a mix of traditional country, plus a little bluegrass. The second hour, 'The Western Hour,' is a mix of America's Western Swing and Western music.

In 2001, Graham married Marlene and they spent their 3-week honeymoon travelling around Texas. He was thrilled to take Marlene to Texas for The Legends of Western Swing Festival (Wichita Falls) where they were made extremely welcome by the event's founder and organizer, Mrs Gloria Myers, as well as the many fans attending throughout the weekend. The musicianship of the bands playing was top-class and he returned again in 2005 and 2017.

Graham has been privileged to present awards at both the WMA and AWA over the past few years. In 2014 he was honoured to receive a Certificate of Appreciation from the AWA and a Special Recognition Award from the Northwest Western Swing Music Society at their annual event at Auburn, Washington. In 2014, he also was privileged to be nominated for the AWA Disc Jockey of The Year. The Cowtown Society of Western Music presented him with their Disc Jockey of The Year Award at Mineral Wells, Texas, on 7th May 2016. It is Graham's greatest pleasure to promote and draw fans in the UK to America's western swing music through his radio shows by playing the many CDs regularly sent to him by artists in the US.

DAN LYON

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Born and bred in the Northwest, when Danny was about 6 years old a band came to his house to practice. He was fascinated by the drummer. By the time he was 8, he was armed with a snare drum provided by the school band for practice. Danny was fortunate enough to have had not only the drum, but a benevolent music teacher who recognized that this child had a clear talent for drumming. The teacher took time out from his day to help Danny learn the basics of reading music and counting.

Danny got his first real drum kit from a discount store when he was about 13. Although it was not a name brand, he was happy to have something that he could practice on at home. He took all of the band and music classes he could during his junior high and high school years and was fortunate to have friends in higher grades, also drummers, who served as mentors. Although he never received any formal training beyond that provided in school, his abilities as a drummer became stronger and more pronounced. In fact Danny and the proprietors of Cascade Music in Marysville, Washington, were confident enough in his abilities that Danny, himself, filled in to help tutor students at the music store.

Danny's first professional job as a drummer was with a group called the **Misfits**. He was still in school when he took this job and it would be the beginning of his exposure to an eclectic array of playing styles that would enhance his drumming abilities. While most drummers his age were playing rock and roll, Danny was playing *Tangerine* and *Mack the Knife*. But, like he said, between playing with the **Misfits** and his part time job at the B&M Restaurant in Marysville, he was the richest kid in school.

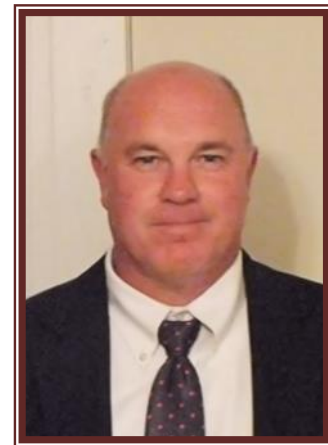
When Danny graduated from high school, he traded in his old drum kit for a Rogers Concert Series drum kit which he has to this day. He began playing with a variety of different bands in the area. When Danny played with **Music Unlimited** with Doug Egerton, Danny learned a lot of jazz and adult contemporary arrangements as they traveled from Alaska to Arizona and out to the Mid-West. But it was when Danny worked with Darrell Haddock and **Lovers and Outlaws** that he began to truly appreciate the sound of a steel guitar. During this time, Danny shared the stage with many people recognized in mainstream country circles such as Little Jimmy Dickens, Johnny Tillotson, Dave Dudley and Del Reeves. Danny then became the drummer for the **New Horizon Band** along with the **GTO Band**, with Dave Darragh on lead guitar in both bands.

It was after Danny took a hiatus of about a year that he formed another band along with Sheri Roberts, Jon Harmon and Larry Baldwin called **P.F. Flyer**. Unfortunately, fate reared its head and the days of Danny and his amazing feat of playing drum rolls on his double bass would soon be over. Like most musicians, Danny also worked a day job as an auto mechanic. In 1998, while attempting to repair a faulty garage door, Danny slipped and fell full force onto the concrete floor 10 feet below resulting in a catastrophic injury to his ankle and leg. It took five years and seven surgeries to get Danny back on his feet again. With his right ankle permanently immobilized, Danny thought his drumming days were over. But a man known as Big Ed was about to change Danny's mind. Ed needed a drummer to fill in for **Big Ed and Steel Country**. Ed convinced Danny that although he had lost mobility in his leg, with a few style changes he could still be a quality drummer.

Danny was happy to discover that Ed was right - he could do the job. Fifteen years of drumming for Big Ed has led Danny to feel a deeper love and appreciation for country music and its origins. He's proud to be a member of the Western Swing Society himself.

TONY RAMSEY

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Tony Ramsey was born on November 20, 1965, in Mena, Arkansas. Shortly thereafter he moved with his family to Southeastern Oklahoma and grew up in Poteau, OK. His first musical influence came from his father who had previously played music (steel guitar) and owned a radio station. He would bring home records for Tony to listen to and he began learning how to play the drums at five years of age. As Tony was growing up, he admired Buddy Rich, who became his first influence playing drums. He remembers watching the television show "I Love Lucy" where, for the first time, Tony saw Buddy Rich perform.

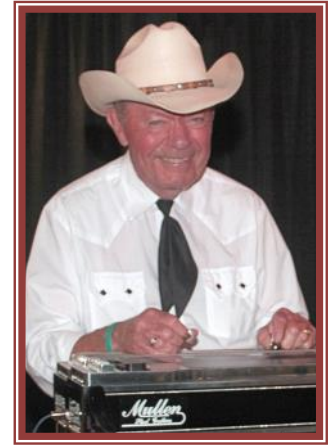
Growing up in Southeastern Oklahoma, Tony was very fortunate to have several good musicians who lived nearby and had a very powerful influence on his career. They were Bob White, who played steel guitar, and Gene Gassaway, who played the fiddle. These men also helped Tony get started playing in his first organized bands. It was during this time that Tony was introduced by Gene Gassaway to other Tulsa, Oklahoma, musicians of major influence such as Eldon Shamblin and Glen Rhee. Tony started playing drums with these men in various bands and, also, was honored to play with some of his favorite musicians, Joe Davis, who was, at the time, musical director of Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK. Tony's first love of music to this day has always been pop and big band jazz.

While in college, Tony worked in Tulsa with Roy Ferguson, a local artist who had assembled members for Johnnie Lee Wills' band. It was shortly after this that Tony landed a job with **Ray Price and the Cherokee Cowboys**. He was fortunate enough to tour all over the world with Ray Price for the next seven years. After leaving Ray Price, Tony worked short stints for other artists including Red Steagall, Louise Mandrell, Larry Gatlin and Lynn Anderson. For several years Tony worked with **Hank Thompson and the Brazos Valley Boys**. He also backed many other artists such as Janie Frickie, Anne Murray and Tanya Tucker. He has played drums in recording studios for a variety of artists. Tony worked for several years with Tommy Allsup and the Texas Playboys, playing at the Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium in Ruidoso, NM, as well as playing for President Barrack Obama's Presidential Inauguration Ball.

Tony still enjoys playing today. His most recent work is with Jason Roberts and **The Jason Roberts Band**, playing western swing music. Tony also enjoys his business career and spending time with his family.

LEFTY SCHRAGE

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Music Background

Professional Experiences: Lefty began playing professionally at the age of 14 and has been playing for 65 years.

Instruments: Lefty plays pedal steel guitar, lead guitar and bass in various genres; e.g., western swing, country, pop, and big band.

Co-Founder: Annual Northeast Iowa Steel Guitar Show (NISGS) - 1993 to present.

Co-Founder: Jump Start Academy, initiated in 2000 (sponsored by NISGS) - a program that provides aspiring steel guitar students with free instruction and free use of a steel guitar for one year.

NISGS Steel Guitar Influence Award: 1999

Performed at the following shows: International Steel Guitar Convention (St. Louis, MO); Ozark Steel Guitar Assn. Show (Branson, MO); Eastern Iowa Steel Guitar Show (Davenport); Wisconsin Steel Guitar Show (Waterloo); Peoria Steel Guitar Show, Bob Wills Tribute Show (Rio Grande Valley); Midwest Country Television Show (Sandstone).

Backed artists on various shows: Hank Thompson, Red Foley, Pee Wee King, George Jones, Roy Clark, Bobby G. Rice, Narvel Phelps, Lennon Sisters, Claude Grey, Jean Shepherd, Jim Reeves, Tex Ritter, Dale Black, Sheb Wooley.

Opened for artists on various shows: Joe Diffie, Bobby Bare, Johnny Bond, Carl & Pearl Butler, Johnny Cash, Billy Grammar, George Hamilton IV, Clay Hart, Hardin Trio, David Houston, Ferlin Huskey, Wanda Jackson, Stonewall Jackson, Sonny James, Anthony Armstrong Jones, Jerry Lee Lewis, Lonzo and Oscar, Bobby Lord, Charlie Louvin, Bob Luman, Loretta Lynn, Minnie Pearl, Joe & Rose Lee Maphis, Jimmy C. Newman, Webb Pierce, Marvin Rainwater, Hank Snow, Nat Stuckey, Justin Tubb, Conway Twitty, Charlie Walker, Kitty Wells, Johnny Wright, Marion Worth.

DUANE TRUEBLOOD

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING

Duane remembers his dad always playing country rock music in all the local clubs during his days growing up. Duane's mom joined the band basically on a dare. His dad was not happy with their drummer at the time, and stated that, "I bet my wife could play better than you, and she's never played before." Sure enough she got up during a live show and did play better. She was in the band after that.



Around 1976 Duane's family moved from Washington to Oregon, then on to Oklahoma. It was there he got his start, in a place where Country and Western Swing music thrived. He played trombone all through school, learned to read music and fell in love with music of all kinds. Around his junior to sophomore year in high school, his dad brought home a bass guitar. Duane took a liking to it. Every day after school instead of hanging out with friends, he would listen to some of his dad's tapes of their band and try and follow along. Eventually he was able to play a couple of songs.

During the week Duane's dad would play a single in one of the local clubs. Duane would join him and play just for the experience. He was eventually hired to play in what was now a family band with the name **Sundance II**.

After Duane's graduation from high school the family packed up and moved back to Washington State. With some help they got into some of the local clubs, and won a battle of the bands at the Monroe Eagles. The trophy looks a little old and run down now but it still brings back good memories. They played most of the local clubs, like the Lynwood Eagles, Monroe Eagles, the Chuckwagon in Everett, and the Hayloft in Monroe.

After several years passed by Duane's mom decided to quit playing. He and his dad continued as a duo. Just as his father's health was starting to fail and eventually was no longer able to play, Duane met a guy named Big Ed. He owned a tavern in Kenmore, Washington, called Big Ed's Tavern. First Duane would get a call every now and then to come and play. Then the calls became more frequent. Soon he had a full time job. Duane worked with Big Ed for roughly 18 years. During that time, he had the privilege of meeting and working with one of the best guitar and steel players around, Pat Rowe. Eventually, Dan Lyon joined them on drums. Ed later retired and moved to Montana.

The saddest day in Duane's life was when his dad passed away at the age of 70. He taught Duane everything he knew and he owes him all his success. Duane's father was old school and believed in treating people right and fair in the music business. Duane's love for Country and Western Swing music started with him, and is why it is important for him to keep that music alive today. Duane considers himself blessed to work with such great musicians today in the band now called **Steel Country**.

JOE WALENTA

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Joe took his first guitar lessons in 1963 in Houston, TX, from a rhythm guitar player who had many years of experience playing on the road. Although he learned to play many chords, he never got to the point of putting the chords together to form the ability to play songs. This was directly attributed to his company's workload requirements that prevented sufficient practice time. As a result, Joe quit taking lessons and stored his guitar until after reaching retirement age.

After retirement, Joe met a local opry member, Dick Moorheard, who was a guitar player. Dick invited Joe to join him, Dale Cole and Roger McDonald to his home for weekly jam sessions. It was in these sessions that Joe learned how to put the chords together and actually began to play songs. This is also the place where he learned to sing. This group became know as **The Country Gents**. They played in local parks, restaurants; for picnics, club meetings, wedding anniversaries, etc., anywhere they were invited. The three surviving members still jam every month.

About the time the jam sessions ended (seven years after they began), Joe was a guest singer in a band he knew. After he got off the bandstand, a person approached him and introduced himself as Chock Chitty. Chock Chitty invited him to sing with his band, **The Ranch Hands Band**, at the local VFW. Chock hire Joe to be a member of his band about three months later. A couple of years later, Chock developed some health issues and asked Joe to front his band until he was able to return. In 2005, Chock retired from the music business and turned over the band to Joe. The band is still going strong today.

In 2002, Joe and his wife, Cleta, ventured to the Rio Grande. As always, he was drawn to the music scene, called 'jam sessions' at various parks. Along the way, he met Bob Dolle and followed him to various parks and sang where he played. Over the years, Cleta and Joe became friends with Bob and Virginia Dolle. This friendship resulted in becoming aware of and joining the Western Swing Music Society of the Southwest (WSMSS). There followed guest singing with Bob Dolle and Friends at the WSMSS showcases in Wichita Falls, TX, and Wagoner, OK, starting in 2012. Joe had his own group on stage in Cape Girardeau in 2012 and 2013. Joe also played with Bob in Wichita Falls, TX and Wagoner, OK, in 2013.

At the conclusion of the 2013 winter season in South Texas, Bob Dolle hired Joe as rhythm guitar player and lead singer of his **Texas Variety Band**, effective with the 2014 season in the Rio Grande Valley. This band is still going strong and will return for the 2018 season.

In 2016, Joe was inducted into the WSMSS Hall of Fame. This year, Bob Dolle nominated him to be inducted into the 2017 NorthWest Western Swing Music Society's Hall of Fame. Joe is sincerely grateful to receive this honor.

PAUL TUTMARC

POSTHUMOUS AWARD

PIONEER OF WESTERN SWING



Paul Tutmarc (1896-1972) moved to the Pacific Northwest around the end of WWI from Minnesota and in the mid-20s, after settling in Seattle, he became known for his musical abilities, especially his voice. Around the time of the Great Depression he started a music studio in downtown Seattle where he taught guitar and also worked on the development of an electric guitar, a truly new innovation. Being adept at the Hawaiian steel guitar, which was popular at that time, he was a member of The Islanders, who played at parties and other venues around the Seattle area.

A large part of the Paul Tutmarc story involves his development of electric instruments -- guitar, bass, and steel guitars – the very instruments that are essential to a western swing dance band. Although he has been credited with his innovations, the patents for the most part were claimed by others, thereby eluding Tutmarc of the fame he might have had.

Paul's late son, Bud, wrote the following: "In the later part of 1930 or perhaps the very first of 1931, a man, Art Stimpson, from Spokane, Washington, came to Seattle, especially to see and meet my father. Art was an electrical enthusiast and always taking things apart to see what made them function as they did. He had been doing just this with a telephone, wondering how the vocal vibrations against the enclosed diaphragm were picked up by the magnet coil behind the diaphragm and carried by the wires to another telephone. My father became interested in this phenomenon and began his own tinkering with the telephone. Noting that taping on the telephone was also picked up by the magnetic field created behind the diaphragm, he was encouraged to see if he could build his own "magnetic pickup." As every old time steel player knows, it was difficult to make the steel guitar heard above other instruments. . . The very first thought of my father's was, with this idea of magnifying sound, electrically, how this could magnify the sound of his steel guitar. . . . He made contact with another friend, Bob Wisner, a young man with a brilliant mind, and a radio repairman of great repute in Seattle as about the only one able to repair the old Atwater-Kent radios. It was Bob Wisner who helped my dad re-wire a radio to get some amplification of his magnetic pickup. . . Once this was ready, my dad discovered the pickup would pick up the sound from a plucked string and carry it through to the 'adapted' radio."

Paul marketed his electric guitars under the Audiovox brand but his success appeared to be primarily with the lap steel guitars which were prized by the Hawaiian style guitarists.

In 1944 he married one of his guitar students, a young woman by the name of Bonnie Buckingham, who later went by the name of Bonnie Guitar and who was inducted into the NWWSSMS Hall of Fame in 2013. They played local venues, including with a band called the **K6 Wranglers**, which was the house band of the radio station KVI. With Bonnie and the **K6 Wranglers**, Paul played many of the popular venues around the Puget Sound area -- Evergreen Ballroom, Cottonwood Grove, Silver Dollar Dance Hall, Kinney's Barn, and many others. Paul Tutmarc was a part of the great era of western dance halls in the post WWII period in the Pacific Northwest.

Paul Tutmarc's legacy involves his teaching and inventing as well as his playing and performing. Further, his legacy lives on with his family, many of whom are musicians today. His great grandson, Shane Tutmarc, is a musician based in Nashville, and his granddaughter, Tiffany DePiano, lives and performs in Soap Lake with her grandmother, Bonnie Guitar. Other grandchildren play in the Shoreline area.

CHARLES “CHUCK” WEBB

HONOREE OF WESTERN SWING



Chuck Webb was born in Newark, New York, on September 4, 1942. He was raised in the small farming community of Williamson, NY. He began playing an old upright bass that he found in storage at school. Nobody was teaching stringed instruments, so he purchased the bass as surplus property with money earned from his paper route. When he was 13, he began playing with a country western band in a club a few towns south of Williamson. Chuck started playing the Fender Precision Bass when the rope holding his upright bass on the top of the car broke traveling to a job.

When he was 16, he started playing with a group called **The Rockin' Blu-Jays**, which became very popular with the younger set around the Rochester area and surrounding towns. He played with this band until he graduated from high school, joining the Air Force in 1960. Upon graduating from Tech School at Chanute AFB, Chuck was assigned to the 456th Airborne Missile Maintenance Squadron at Beale AFB in Marysville, CA. It wasn't long before Chuck was playing with a 4-piece country band in the clubs around Northern California, starting with the Melody Club in Yuba City and moving on to Barbara Jean's in Magalia, CA. In 1962, Chuck got a call from a band manager in Yuba City, offering him a position with a band that was forming called **Rick and the Checkmates**. This band played current rock tunes and catered to the high school set. They played all over Northern California, as far away as Arcata and Dunsmuir. After a year or so, Chuck went to work in a club in Yuba City called the Town Pump with Dave Brown and Art Dickens, a first cousin to Little Jimmy Dickens. This job lasted for a year or so. Then, one Sunday, Chuck went into a venue in Sutter, CA, called the Sutter Corral, to hear a band that was fronted by Harvey Brown, Dave Brown's brother. Chuck was asked to sit in and was hired on the spot. This began a relationship that lasted 25 years.

At the time, the Sutter Corral was a 500-seat venue that featured guest recording artists every Friday and Saturday night. The touring artists in that day didn't travel with their bands, so **Harvey Brown and the Sidewinders** got to back up many of these featured artists. There was even a live radio show on KMYC every Saturday night, broadcast from the Corral.

This was a great learning experience for Chuck, backing up all these different artists with their various styles of music. After 3 good years at the Sutters Corral, **The Sidewinders** started breaking away from the club scene. Chuck retired from **The Sidewinders** and the music business in 1992. In 2002 he started to regain his interest in music. In 2011 he started playing with the **Sacramento Western Swing Society Jam Band**, the core group of musicians that make the society's jam room so successful. He also worked with a western swing band called **The Fortunate Few**. In 2015, Chuck was inducted into the Sacramento Western Swing Society's Hall of Fame. In 2016, he became Vice President of the WSS and he still holds that position. Chuck has been married to his best friend, Sheri, for 33 years.