

ACCORDIONAIRES

Sharps 'N' Flats
Monthly Newsletter Since 1996

Volume 2009, Issue 9

September, 2009

*CORY PESATURO WINS FOR THE USA
AT THE 2009 COUPE MONDIALE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS*



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**OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE
TUESDAY, September 15, 7 PM**
**VICTORIO'S RISTORANTE, 10901 VICTORY BLVD.,
N. HOLLYWOOD, CA. 91606**
(818) 762-9000 or (818) 762-9951

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A Special Invitation for the Accordionaires,



Please join us for an exciting evening of Accordion music at the Roland Corporation's "V-Accordion Festival – National Finals". One of the lucky winners will travel to Rome for the Accordion International Festival in November 2009.



Our preliminary competition has given us an opportunity to hear a number of promising players of different ages perform a wide variety of different musical styles. We are now preparing for our National Finals, Los Angeles, Ca. on Friday, September 25.

This is an invitation – **on a first-come, first-served basis** – to attend this special event at the Doubletree Commerce Hotel at 6:00 PM. Seating is limited. **Please call our dedicated V-Accordion Festival "Hot Line" at (323) 890-3757 to reserve your tickets.**

Roland Corporation U.S. presents:



National Finals
Friday, September 25 - 6:00 PM
Doubletree Commerce Hotel
Grand Tree Ballroom
5757 Telegraph Road
Commerce, California



In addition to hearing the talented finalists perform on our full line of Roland V-Accordions and seeing the winners selected, we have a featured special guest who will perform a special "mini-concert" on our top of the line V-Accordion. This promises to be a memorable and musical evening. We look forward to welcoming you.

Roland Corporation U.S.



ON THE CALENDAR

Upcoming events that are certain to be interesting....

● **SEPTEMBER**—Accordion Extravaganza Festival, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada Email: accordion@geri.ca

● **OCTOBER**—Las Vegas International Accordion Convention—Oct 19-22, Gold Coast Hotel. Phone 800-472-1695 or email vegas@accordioninfo.com

● ANNOUNCEMENTS



● **Donna Douglas Massey**, a member of the Accordionaire's Orchestra, a student of Frank Marocco, and a member of the Reunion Accordion Ensemble (Orange County) took first place in both the adult pop and polka categories at the American Accordionists' Association annual festival & competition (Memphis, Tennessee this July). Donna commented, "It had been 50 years since I last competed and won the title of Queen for the Western States Accordion Festival. It was more "natural" to compete as a teenager--I thrived on it. My goal was to enter this contest and JUST GET THROUGH my fear of playing in public. The discipline in preparing for the contests and then following through was great therapy." **And, obviously, her talent is as strong as ever. CONGRATULATIONS, DONNA!**

● **Mary Pavia and Sal Caro** will soon be cruising the Mexican Riviera. Mary hopes more Accordionaires will join her and Sal. The cruise begins on 9-27-09; call Mary for last minute details—(805) 583-3979.

● **Bill Centonze** announced a Club Picnic was in the planning stage. Bill said we need to have a firm commitment from members who will attend since the park rental and food costs have risen considerably. If interested be sure to attend the September meeting for the final round of discussion.

● **Joann Pompeo**, Joe DiGiacinto's daughter, wants to thank the members for the many cards and calls the family has received. Lina, Joe's wife of 63 years, is getting out more often, and she and Joann hope to visit the Club soon.



• ACCORDIONAIRES MONTHLY MEETING

August 18, 2009

Misha Pak was back for a visit, and ready to provide our opening music.



Heinz Trilck was our first performer of the evening. As always with his big smile Heinz' presentation was the perfect way to start.
 Lonely Is A Man Without Love
 Violetta
 Yes Sir That's My Baby

Janet Hane's student, **Wilma Rodriguez**, was the next to perform. Wilma has played for us many times, and each time she is better than ever.

El Comanchero
 Danube Waves
 Jamboree



It's not too often we have a stage visit from **Azad Haghverdian**, but he was ready for us tonight with his excellent Excelsior.

Louis Polka
 Lina Mazurka
 Espana Cani

Tyrolean music—you want it? You'll get it with **Karl Nagele** (right) at the keyboard. Tonight Karl included midi accompaniment which was great.

Hoch Heideksburg
 Erinnerung
 Musikanten Spielen





Always ready to go with the great songs of the 50's and 60's we had **Paul Tripodi** on stage to play:
 O Sole Mio (aka, It's Now or Never)
 Always in My Heart (in memory of Joe for Lena and Joann)
 Jealousy
 Make Believe



Ready for some fun? It's guaranteed with the **Sardo Brothers**.

I Don't Why But I Do
 Let It Be Me
 Mala Femmena
 More

We took a 7th Inning Stretch followed by the 50-50 which was won by Karl Negele.

Storma Edlebrock and Bill Centonze were next. We had duets and solos, but either way you can't beat that team.

Pennies From Heaven (Storma and Bill)
 How Important Can It Be (Storma and Bill)
 Alley Cat Song (Bill)
 Volare (Bill)



Always a favorite, **Father Militello**, was on stage with his new accordion. They were a great combination.

Rapaz Band
 Czardes
 Beer Barrel Polka

Our next club member, **Bob Moloznik (right)**, didn't play the accordion for years and then dived back in—like wine he gets better and better with time!! He had an outstanding performance playing:

Honky Tonk Trail
 Tea for Two
 Dance With Me
 Minute Waltz





Another musician who can handle any piece with ease is Mike Belitz. Mike gave us beautiful presentations of:
Edelweiss
Just Because Polka
Stardust



Shari Osen was up next with **Norm Panto** for backup (you can't do any better than this). Shari's songs for tonight were:
Summer Time
Moon River
On A Clear Day



Norm Panto stayed on stage to play:
So What's New?
Under Paris Skies
Ruby

Well folks, that's the story for August. Thank you to all of our wonderful performers, and to all the members who came for the party. Let's do it again in September.



CORY PESATURO took the winner's cup in the **DIGITAL DIVISION** of the August, 2009 Coupe Mondiale held in Auckland, New Zealand. Cory used a Roland FR7 digital accordion for his championship performance.

There were two other contestants for this class. The contestants and their music choices follow.

Brazil, Sarah Assis

Antonio Carlos Jobim, arr. Sarah Assis; Chovendo Na Roseira
Heitor Villa Lobos, Tom Zé, arr. Sarah Assis; Trem Caipira/Xique-Xique
J. S. Bach, Luiz Gonzaga, arr. Sarah Assis; Bach-Ião

United Kingdom, Larysa Bodell

**Victor Chernikov; Voronezh Cowboy
Astor Piazzolla; Ave Maria
Petri Makkonen; The Flight Beyond The Time**

United States, Cory Pesaturo

**Spain (with improvisation)
World Music Medley
European Medley
La Campanella
Jazz - slow jazz tune**

There is no limit to the number of candidates from each country. Candidates up to 32 years of age are allowed to enter the competition. All entrants are required to provide proof of age and nationality (passport). Candidates must be entered through the CIA voting member organization(s) in their respective countries. All entries are subject to acceptance by the CIA Executive Committee. No applicant may be refused entry for religious, political or racial reasons, however suitable ability and compliance with the rules of the competition are required for final acceptance.

Playing time for contestants was limited to 15 minutes. Failure to observe the maximum playing results in a penalty. External sound modules, MIDI modules, backing tracks including SMF, audio files, CD or MP3 player etc. were allowed. All types and makes of digital accordion were allowed, but required the bellows as the primary volume control for digital sounds. Digital accordions with acoustic, amplified reeds were also acceptable so long as the bellows substantially controlled the digital sounds.

The judges calculated marks based on showmanship, entertainment, musicality, and digital technology usage.



CONGRATULATIONS, CORY PESATURO!



Carl Fortina

Career Path to the Stars

Have you ever asked a child what they want to be when they grow up? The answers usually are pretty much the same: fireman, nurse, teacher, doctor, sports and so on. Wait a few years and ask teenagers what career path they are thinking about and suddenly the answers are fewer and definitely less certain. "I don't know" becomes a very frequent response. One wonders who is happier--someone who has always known what they wanted, or someone who has faced life responding to opportunities as they come along? We often envy the person who has a life-long commitment to their profession, but at the same time we love to hear about the explorers who treat life like a food festival, tasting a little here and a little there.

What would you think about the "world's most recorded accordionist" for an answer? It's quite unique. As a child, Carl Fortina would not have thought of it as his answer, but his father had other ideas. And, as you are about to read, the result is the life of a man who knew what he wanted to do, but also had the luck, talent, and perseverance to respond to a wild myriad of opportunities that came his way.

Mr. Fortina, Carl's dad, played the accordion himself (Carl described his dad as having the drive and ambition to be a great accordionist, but not the talent). As a father he was eager to find, with his guidance and from others, if Carl would become the world's best accordionist. He felt certain it could be done, and he started Carl (age 4) down that path by buying the smallest accordion he could find. Carl remembers the accordion was a mere 8 inches long with 24 piano keys and 12 bass buttons. Back home Carl's father helped him put on the tiny accordion, then facing his son, dad played a simple folk tune on his adult accordion. To his amazement, and delight, Carl played back the same song on his little accordion.



Six months later Carl was taking lessons from John Pezzolo, a famous San Francisco accordion teacher. Carl had two God given talents, memory and perfect pitch—both of which were the foundation of his musical learning. His first major public performance came at age 5 (left) when he played at an accordion festival held in Marin County, Ca. with 15,000 people in the audience.



His talent merged into a professional career early—age 6. In 1935 he and his sister, Chickie (age 3) were on the vaudeville stage (left) with Carl playing the accordion and Chickie singing and dancing. Later Chickie became an accomplished accordionist as well and by the time she turned 6 (and Carl was 9) they had performed on the Bob Hope radio show which broadcast from the San Francisco Civic Auditorium. At the beginning of WW II both Carl and Chickie joined a U.S.O. troupe entertaining soldiers, performing at War Bond rallies, and making several appearances at the famous STAGE DOOR CANTEEN.



After the war Carl worked many venues in Northern California with well known bands like the Nat Brandywine Orchestra, the Chuck Roberts Trio (left), and Dusty Rhodes and the Trail Blazers (right). In 1949 Carl's path took a turn that sent him in a new direction, one that would shape the rest of his life. Ted Rio Rito of Hollywood's COCONUT GROVE fame convinced Carl that LA was the place to be.



Once there Carl soon realized he wanted to work for the studios, but those jobs were tough to come by so Carl kept the rent paid and food on the table working the Hollywood private party circuit. Soon his accordion talent was known and requested by celebrities such as Shirley Temple, Dinah Shore, Ginger Rogers (right), Tony Curtis, Joan Collins (left),

and dozens more. Things were moving along in Carl's direction when Uncle Sam tapped him for two year's duty in 1951. Even in "this man's army" his musical talent was immediately put to use by the 6th Infantry Division Band. The accordion in a military band? Not exactly—in the band Carl was a drum major and was available to play the trombone, glockenspiel, baritone horn, and tuba. Once in a while he played the accordion for shows produced by the Special Service Unit.



As the fates have a way of doing things, Carl's return to Hollywood two years later came as the right stars (in the sky) crossed paths. Dominic Frontiere had been the busiest recording accordionist in Hollywood for many years, but at this time Dominic made the decision to stop playing and concentrate on becoming a full time composer. Suddenly all of Dominic's jobs were open to Carl. For the next 35 years Carl Fortina was the "First Call" accordionist in Hollywood. But "First Call" was just the beginning for this dynamo as he began studying orchestral composition and arranging with Mario Castelnuova-Tedesco, and conducting with Felix Slatkin (world famous conductor of the Hollywood Bowl). And then there was TV; by 1956 Carl was appearing with the Spike Jones Band on CBS Television (and other guest appearances including the Lawrence Welk Show--left).



That was merely the beginning as Carl appeared on such programs as:

Dean Martin Show
Carol Burnett Show
Dinah Shore Show
Rosemary Clooney

Playhouse 90
Colgate Comedy Hour
Climax
Tim Conway Show

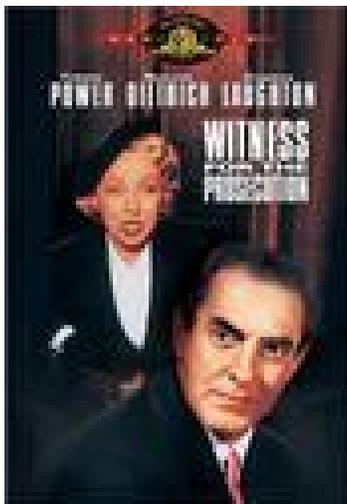
Club Oasis
Lawrence Welk Show
Sonny & Cher Show
Steve Allen Show



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 "YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG"
 A Paramount Release In VistaVision Color by Technicolor



Because of his studio work Carl also met movie stars who played the accordion. The movie NIGHT PASSAGE has a scene in which Jimmy Stewart is playing an accordion. Mr. Stewart did know how to play an accordion, but opted for Carl's music to support his film persona. Carl prerecorded the part and coached Jimmy so that his movements on camera coincided with the accordion music.



Universal Studios was delighted with the result and later when Marlene Dietrich's role in the movie WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION included an accordion Carl worked with her. Marlene Dietrich knew how to play the accordion, so she practiced playing along with the piece Carl recorded for her until she had the song memorized perfectly.

Carl continued to be heard on the soundtracks of such famous movies as:

Butch Cassidy & The Wild Bunch	The Godfather (all three)	The Sun Dance Kid
Paint Your Wagon	Silverado	Doctor Doolittle
Annie	Dr. Zhivago	How The West Was Won
Irma La Douce	Camelot	Cat Ballou
Nevada Smith	Mame	Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid

Carl has amassed astounding numbers including, accordion parts for more than 550 motion pictures and more than 25,000 TV episodes. You may be surprised to learn the accordion had its voice heard (as played by Carl) on programs like:

Bonanza	Gunsmoke	Cheers
Dallas	Star Trek	Hill Street Blues
The Addams Family	The Brady Bunch	Deep Space Nine
Mission Impossible	Taxi	Benson
Knot's Landing	The Untouchables	Soap

Carl's work also extended to recording artists you may recognize (if you don't know these names, where have you been?):

Elton John	Rod Stewart	Frank Sinatra	Luciano Pavarotti
Dean Martin	Tony Bennett	Nat King Cole	Bob Dylan
Elvis Presley	Barbara Streisand	Cher	Chicago
Quincy Jones	Diana Ross	Ringo Starr	Gladys Knight
Liza Minnelli	Jose Feliciano	Dionne Warwick	Linda Ronstadt

Telling Carl's amazing story would not be complete without mentioning some of the world's best loved modern composers who included accordion music interpreted by Carl in their scores. You'll know these folks:

Jerry Goldsmith	Marvin Hamlisch	Dimitri Tiompinkin	Elmer Berstein
John Williams	Henry Mancini	Pat Williams	David Rose
Alfred Newman	Max Steiner	Alex North	Maurice Jarre
John Barry	Andre Previn	Ernest Gold	Lalo Schifrin

Carl is a performer, a composer, an arranger, an orchestra manager, an author (THE ACCORDION AS WRITTEN), and above all, a man who took the dream his father had and turned it into reality. “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Taking in consideration the breadth and many aspects of his career, you’ll have an impossible task to match other accordionists with Carl’s life. The songs and programs listed in this article are a mere fraction of what he has done, and it is fascinating to realize so many venues contain accordion music. Most of us would be hard pressed to recall the music itself, but from the list of stars and composers cited here, we can discern these professionals recognize the unique and loved sound that accordions produce. That accordion sound has associations for us with thoughts of home, fond memories, summer evenings, life from a quieter time, cabaret clubs, restaurants, weddings, parties, and happy occasions of all types. Daily life often includes the sound of an accordion. We may be thinking of other things as the music goes by almost imperceptibly; but it’s there. And, for many of us, the accordion music that accompanied those memories, and moments of our lives came from the talented work of Carl Fortina.



Carl Fortina (center, front—practicing with the ACCORDIONAIRES ORCHESTRA), we are proud to say, IS AN ACCORDIONAIRE.

Edited and written by Ron Schwarz with thanks to Carl Fortina for the time and information he provided that made this article possible. This article is a compilation from CARL FORTINA, THE WORLD'S MOST RECORDED ACCORDIONIST.