

QCBFolkNotes

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"It's all about the music"

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Leo new year to start off with music from Mustard's Retreat

By Eric Hansen

When Mustard's Retreat (David Tamulevich and Michael Hough) performs at Leo in February, expect an eclectic blend of old and new music with a dash of storytelling.

"We have never performed the same show twice," Tamulevich says in the Mustards' Retreat press package. "Each night is its own unique moment and unique audience. For us, that is the exciting thing, the magic—to craft a shared experience and leave people entertained and moved with moments and songs they will take away with them and remember, ponder and rediscover, hopefully for years to come."

Tamulevich and Hough met in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1974 when they both worked as short order cooks on hiatus from their studies at the University of Michigan. They discovered they shared an interest in music, put together three songs one day after work and took them to the legendary Ark Coffeehouse's open mic night. They were a hit and were invited back to do a 45-minute set two weeks later.

Within a year-and-a-half, they



Michael Hough, left, and David Tamulevich of Mustard's Retreat

had both quit the restaurant and were playing music full time. Folk music being what it is, not exactly a way to get rich, they both eventually developed day jobs that allowed them to put food on the table. Tamulevich became a music agent and Hough has a photo studio.

But they also continued to perform and over the years have built a body of work they take pride in.

They have 10 highly acclaimed records of their own, plus two more CDs with their songwriting collective, The Yellow Room Gang. Mustard's Retreat has performed more than 4,000 shows over the years, traveled more than a million miles and has built a dedicated and loyal

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PLAYING AT LEO IN JANUARY

JANUARY 2

7 Open mic—three 10-minute slots—arrive early to sign up, first three get to play

7:30 Red Harvest Ramblers—Tennessee to Texas, hillbilly to hill country, Leo debut of songwriters with great original music; www.myspace.com/redharvestramblers

8:15 Ricky Nye—Cincy's own award-winning boogie-woogie and blues piano great; www.rickynye.com

JANUARY 9

7 Hawaiian Shirt Night (the band)—you have to see it to believe it! The QCB's own Mike Flanders and company doing "Songs of Food, Death and Elvis." Oh—and don't forget to wear your very best Hawaiian shirt!

7:30 Chip Roop—Leo debut of a singer/songwriter from Lexington, Kentucky;

www.myspace.com/chiproop

8:15 Silver Arm—Cincinnati's premier Celtic band; www.sliverarmmusic.com

JANUARY 16

7 Open mic—three 10-minute slots—arrive early to sign up, first three get to play

7:30 The Crick Gypsies—Leo debut of a four-piece acoustic roots band playing original material; www.myspace.com/thecrickgypsies

8:15 The Marshwiggles—Dave Wolfenberger's original band project reunites for a set at Leo; www.bluejordan.com

JANUARY 23

7 Tom and Missy Strothers—dulcimer players and teachers who believe that anything can be played on the mountain dulcimer, even Moody Blues and Minnie the Moocher; www.strothers.com

7:30 Foggy Morn—A trio featuring Balladeers Bruce and Jack serving up some traditional blues and folk

8:15 Diamond Blue—original acoustic music quartet; www.DiamondBlue.net

JANUARY 30

7 Open mic—three 10-minute slots—arrive early to sign up, first three get to play

7:30 Mike Oberst—Mike from the Tillers does a solo set. He will also present a "Basics of Clawhammer Banjo" workshop beginning at 5:30; www.thetillers.com

8:15 Jake Speed and the Freddies—local faves dish up some musical treats with their homespun humor and signature folk music; www.freddiesmusic.com

FEBRUARY 6

Closed for Superbowl Sunday

DECEMBER HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS AND EMCEES

HOSPITALITY

2 Christie Brock and Pete Armstrong

9 Barb And Dennis Iverson

16 Nonie Muller and Joan Haller

23 Faith O'Brien and Charles Griffin

30 Kathy and Peter Teitelman

EMCEE

2 Papa Joe

9 Lenny Hall

16 Steve Flammer

23 Mike Flanders

30 Elaine Diehl

Keeping our music alive and well

By Steve Adkisson

As a lifelong musician who occasionally teaches others to play, I was recently reminded that traditional, folk and virtually all other kinds of music are kept alive by those who already know how to play.

My own repertoire consists of bits and pieces of what I learned from dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of the other musicians who have taken time to patiently show me how they did a certain lick or written down the chords or tablature of a new tune that I wanted to learn. More often than not, this has occurred in a one-on-one environment with me sitting directly in front of the person doing the teaching.

Let's not forget this as an inte-

gral part of keeping our music alive.

I like to think of the enduring tunes as the "redwoods" of music. The good tunes of any era are passed along but gradually fade out unless they ascend to the point of being great tunes. The people interested in learning how to play the great tunes deserve the have the benefit of those of us who know them.

My recent experience occurred within my own family. My oldest son, who learned to play guitar and bass at an early age and was attracted to some of the great music of his generation (he's 28), recently came home for a visit after several years of living overseas (Africa, Australia, India and Nepal). One of first

things he did upon his arrival in Kentucky was to buy a banjo and ask me to teach him how to play it. As you might imagine, this was like asking Br'er Rabbit to leap back in the briar patch.

It was interesting to me that my son, who grew up in a house hearing old-time banjo, fiddle, guitar, hammer dulcimer, mandolin and piano, became a rock/alt bass player but was now returning to the "roots" of his musical vocabulary.

I share this with you just as a reminder that we need to do all we can as musicians and lovers of music to keep our various styles and forms of music alive. This includes being open to teaching others how we play it and encouraging people through those points of struggle that will happen when they're leaning something new.

Starting this month, learn some exciting new music skills with QCB Sunday workshops presented at Leo

Do you want to get a better idea of how to play that banjo or dulcimer that's been sitting in the closet? Or would you like to learn more about singing, songwriting or musical arranging? Then we have just the thing to get your interest—and hopefully the learning process—going.

Consider attending one of the pre-show Sunday workshops at Leo. Each one is designed to grab your attention and is presented by an expert who can help you with what you want to learn.

All workshops are held upstairs at Zion UCC, begin at 5:30 pm and last about an hour. Admission is free for QCB members and \$5 for non-members. Watch for new workshops as they are scheduled.

Think of it as an exciting beginning—then the rest is up to you.

January 30—**Mike Oberst** of The Tillers: Basic Clawhammer Banjo

February 20—**Butch Ross**: Adapting Traditional Songs on the Dulcimer

March 6—**Jim's Red Pants**: Arranging Songs for Duet Singing

April 2010, exact date TBD—**Pam Temple** of Wild Carrot: Vocal workshop

May 8—Texas-based singer/songwriter **Dylan Sneed**: Songwriting workshop

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The Queen City Balladeers

Playing roots music since 1963

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www.queencityballadeers.org

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following, many of whom have been coming to hear them since the 1970s.

While it might sound like something out of history, Tamulevich explained that the name Mustard's Retreat actually comes from one of the first songs he wrote. "I once had a work supervisor named Nancy Mustard," Tamulevich said. "She played guitar, and she showed me a little slide that I had never seen before. So I went home and wrote a song using that slide. I named the tune, Mustard's Retreat, after her."

Years later, when Tamulevich met Michael Hough, they started to perform and needed a name. After thinking of different ideas, they eventually decided to use Mustard's Retreat as the name of their duo.

Mustard's Retreat, as Tamulevich explains, feels honored and privileged to be a part of the folk music community. "It's a very intelligent and interesting community," Tamulevich adds, "full of amazing people and their stories. We are all here because there is some common ground, values and commitment that we all share."

Tamulevich said that their shows are about sharing, a celebration of life with family, and they celebrate with their audiences and their audiences with them, and that they cannot imagine a much better life.

"We are really looking forward to meeting everyone [from the Queen City Balladeers.]"

Mustard's Retreat performs at the second QCB special concert of the season on Friday, February 11 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$10 members/\$12 non-members in advance and \$12 members/\$15 non-members day of show. Tickets are available at the Leo Coffeehouse or order online at queencityballadeers.com or send a check along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Special Concerts, P.O. Box 9122, Cincinnati, Ohio 45209. For more information go to www.queencityballadeers.org.

A special thanks to our major sponsors who so generously support the Queen City Balladeers and the Leo Coffeehouse!

