



San Francisco Accordion Club

FEBRUARY 23, 2014

NEWSLETTER

Program begins
4th Sunday
Date Change
February 23,
2014 at 2 p.m.

FEATURING

Ron Borelli

Joe Simoni
with guitarist **Joe Miselli**

Ron Harris

Don Savant

The Great Morgani



Ron Borelli

A San Francisco native and son of **Al Borelli**, a well known bandleader, Ron began playing the accordion at age seven. His first professional engagements began at age 13 playing for Italian parties. He became interested in jazz accordion upon listening to **Art Van Damme**, which led him to study with renowned accordionist, **Don Haas**. He also studied classical piano with pianist/composer, **Julian White**. Ron has performed in a wide variety of musical settings, local and internationally.

He has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, the Berkeley Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony, and Diablo Ballet, and was the accordionist for the **Three Tenors** in their 1999 Bay Area concert, and has worked with noted composers. From 2001 to 2009, Ron performed and gave workshops at the **Las Vegas International Accordion Convention**. In 2010, he was honored to perform with the **Art Van Damme Quintet** at the memorial service.

Ron Borelli performs for private, corporate, and public events. He is well versed in jazz, opera and American standards as well as Italian and French styles of music. He is a featured artist on many CD releases and lives in San Mateo, California.

DATE CHANGES FOR CLUB MEETINGS

**FEBRUARY 23 - 4th Sunday in
Feb, rather than the President's
Day Weekend**

**APRIL 13 - 2nd Sunday date
changed due to schedule
conflict with Oyster Point.**

**JUNE 22 - 4th Sunday—OPYC
request due to a Father's Day
Brunch.**



The Great Morgani

Frank Lima, aka THE GREAT MORGANI gave up a lucrative career as a stockbroker in order to pursue his love of something different — street performing! He can often be seen standing on the sidewalks of Santa Cruz covered from head to toe in elaborate costumes he creates himself, composed of shiny fabric, plastic discs, colored foil, or virtually any type of material object or decoration one could imagine! In his character of **The Great Morgani**, Frank is a highlight each year of the Cotati Accordion Festival, where he unveils 4 unique costumes, to the delight of the audience.

Ron Harris

Ron Harris began his accordion career at the age of 4 1/2, studying in San Francisco with Armand Oliveras (1941-1945); Joe Lazzerin (1946-1948); and Angelo Cagnazzo (1948-1951). While taking lessons with Angelo, he could hear fellow student Dick Contino practicing overhead, upstairs. These lessons took place in San Francisco (in the Haight/Ashbury area). Ron was about 12 years old when he began his lessons with Angelo and would ride the bus, carrying his accordion, from his family home in Daly City. He finished his studies with Leo Giusti (1951-1954) in Daly City. When he was 13 yrs. he performed on the Horace Heidt Radio and T.V. Talent Show.

Don Savant

SFAC Board member Don Savant is an Oakland native, who took accordion lessons for two years with a teacher from Menichetti Studio beginning at age ten. As a junior in high school he was re-inspired by the younger John Molinari to again pick up the instrument, and purchased his white Giulietti from John Sr. However, it stayed in the closet for years until he discovered the accordion community through a mutual acquaintance of Marian Kelly. Don now is thoroughly enjoying being tutored by Mike Zampiceni. He likes playing oldies from his parents era, and has played venues including the Filoli ballroom, and Red Wall Cavern at mile 33 of a fifteen-day raft trip through the Grand Canyon.

Joe Simoni with guitarist Joe Miselli

Joe Simoni has been playing accordion for almost fifty years and has studied with San Francisco's own Michael Corino and Professor Giovanni Vitale, an accomplished and highly respected accordion instructor from Lucca, Italy. Joe is the leader of the JPS Band, which entertains audiences from Napa to Monterey. Joe is also proud and honored to be one of the three original accordionists in AbsolutAccord.

The 2 Joe's (Simoni & Miselli) have been performing together as a duo and as part of the JPS Band for over 15 years. In addition to playing guitar, Joe Miselli plays mandolin. Their style of music ranges from European to American music from the '40s to the '80s.

Welcome New Member

We are delighted to welcome Dave Bennett, a long time friend of the San Francisco Accordion club, as a new member. For many years, Dave was our main contact with the Oyster Point Yacht Club, and he has attended almost every meeting for the last 10 years. Dave has recently returned from a long cruise in his boat and we are so happy to have him back.

January Program

Review by Barbara Bruxvoort

A dedicated group of squeezebox fans were well rewarded for skipping the start of the big 49ers-Seahawks game on January 19th. We had several visitors, including Mei and Youchien. Mei played the accordion as a teen in China and discovered our accordion clubs through casual conversations at her local library. She and Youchien visited the Silicon Valley club and then ours!

We had a great warm-up by the Accordion jam band to get us ready for the program.

Our talented president, Lynn Ewing, graced the stage first, telling us she had some retro tunes, and then came out swingin' with Magnante's *Accordion Boogie*, followed by the romance of *Moon River*. Many audience members were humming along. She took some time to encourage members to work up a piece to share at the club, and to consider the competition and workshop opportunities which will be available at the ATG Festival in San Francisco this summer, July 23-26. To back up her encouragement, she said she would "get out on the skinny branches" by playing a Pietro Diero Overture she was particularly fond of from her competition days.

The Imperia Overture definitely provided the fireworks for the set! With the beautifully met technical challenge and emotional range of the piece, Lynn showed herself at home out on the limb. She finished out her set with *Csardas* by Monti, which could have been a next-day account of a grand night of partying in a Hungarian tavern--dark smoky corners between sets of a lively dance band.

Linda Seekins, aka Big Lou the Accordion Princess led the next set with **Kit Robberson** on the Renaissance instrument viola de gamba. Kit said that the viola de gamba looks like a viola, but it is more like a bowed guitar. It is a six-stringed instrument held upright, but held with the knees (hence "gamba" meaning leg) rather than by a stand on the floor. Its mellow tones provided a lovely bass for the brighter accordion to dance above, occasionally trading melodic lines back and forth. Lou is working on a repertoire for the **Baguette Quartet**, which she has recently joined as the accordionist, and so played some of their tunes in a program which ranged from **Piaf** to **Fellini**.



Jam Band plays at meeting



Lynn Ewing



Kit Robberson and Linda Seekins

cont.

Speaking of performing and competitions, Lou regaled us with a story of being at a competition in Italy many years ago with Those Darn accordions, playing *Stairway to Heaven* and *It's Now or Never*. She said one judge just glared, and another was crying with laughter. They were awarded 4th place out of a field of 2 groups and when she and her bandmates cheered over the absurdity of it all, the judges thought that they had misunderstood, and awarded them a trophy! So, try out a competition, and perhaps you will come home with BOTH a favorite story to tell AND a trophy.

Lou and Kit started us out with *Chemin des Forains* by Edith Piaf and then led into *Valse en Due* (referring to its use of second intervals, as opposed to something like a valse chinoise which uses fourths).

Lou also shared some music by **Giovanni Nino Rota**. She learned to love his songs through his work on Fellini movies. For a long time there was no sheet music available, even in Italy, due to copyright disputes so she learned the songs from recordings. Now, however, you can purchase **The Best of Nino Rota** online. She played The theme from the film *Amarcord*. When I closed my eyes I could hear the hum of the projector and see the cloud of cigarette smoke hanging over the darkened theater. The viola de gamba underlayer was almost circular, lending the piece a darkness in a way that a wind or strummed instrument cannot. Lou switched gears into a French Polka, treated us to the classic *Fascination*, and then back to Nino Rota with *Carlotta's Galop*, the theme from Fellini's 8 ½. "Imagine a skinny, beautiful Italian woman with a tight dress and very high heels moving fast down the street, but the heels are holding her back."

La Roulette by Rob Reich was received with an audience cheer, and then the classic tango *El Choclo* with the music from both parts intertwined, like the dance.

Rene Sevieri teased us with two songs before the break: *Espana Cani* which he called the "bullfight song" so despite missing the football spectacle, we did not lack for masculine drama; followed by singing and playing *Volare* which evoked echoing choruses from the audience.



Rene Sevieri

Rene's vintage accordion was played in the Tonga Room in the 1940's—a fun SF tid-bit. Perhaps a foreshadowing of the football game's outcome he followed Granada with *Speranza Perduti* (Lost Dreams.)

He dedicated *I Left my Heart in San Francisco* to the 49ers with a full voiced rendition that was a nod to a young Tony Bennett: SF's anthem on SF's instrument. To balance out the coasts, he sang *New York, New York*, and then into the favorites *Rock around the Clock* which slid right into *In the Mood*. Then *Zorba the Greek* elicited an audience call for ouzo, with more than one person considering dancing.

Rene dedicated *The Gypsy* to the memory his aunt who passed away the previous week. Several years ago she had asked him to play and sing for her 50th anniversary party. He studied the 78 record until he could play the song.

As an encore, Rene played us out, the way the meeting began, with some swingin' music: *California Girls* and the *Tarentella Napolitano* (funiculi-funicula).

It was a wonderful meeting with the shared joy that only live music can provide—the experience is ephemeral, but the feeling is not. See you next month!

San Francisco Bay Area Accordion Orchestra Project II

Rehearsals - Saturdays March 1, 15, 22, and April 5, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Final Rehearsal - Saturday, April 12, 2014
Performance at SFAC Sunday, April 13, 2014

For Registration Form or questions about qualifications, call (650) 832-1740 or send an e-mail to ryaus@earthlink.net. Or go to: www.absolutaccord.com

The Project will be directed by **Richard Yaus**, the leading force behind the successful accordion ensemble **AbsolutAccord** and the first Accordion Orchestra Project in 2013. The goal is to bring accordionists together to create a one-of-a-kind orchestra experience that will conclude with a performance at the San Francisco Accordion Club (SFAC).

You must be able to attend at least three of the first four rehearsals; attendance is mandatory at Final Rehearsal and the SFAC performance.

Proposed music pieces:

- *A Media Luz* (Tango) by Edgardo Donato
- *Those Were The Days*, a popular 60's tune
- *Fiesta Mexicana*, a fun and upbeat Medley
- *A Walk In The Black Forest*, another popular 60's melody

Other fun and exciting pieces may be introduced depending on overall rehearsal progress and capabilities.

Music parts will be provided. There is no cost associated with attending or performing. The rehearsal site is located close to Hillsdale Shopping Mall and public transportation in San Mateo; the venue also provides plenty of parking: Laurel Elementary School Library 316 36th Avenue, San Mateo, CA

This event is endorsed by the San Francisco Accordion Club (SFAC) and the Silicon Valley Accordion Society (SVAS).



Grigory Krumik entertained us with his Bayan during the break.

SFAC member and former president Peter Di Bono entertained diners in the rotunda before the ballet at the San Francisco Ballet season opening gala at City Hall.



Carl Fortina Passes

The accordion community mourns the loss of accordionist Carl Fortina who passed away February 1st at age 84. Carl was a native San Franciscan who made his performing debut at age 5. By the time he was 18, he had the two best accordion jobs in San Francisco. Carl attended college with two of our own club's members and they founded the accordion department and major (though short lived) at their college. One went on to be a school principal (playing accordion on the side) and the other went on the road as a career accordionist. In 1949, Carl moved to Los Angeles and soon established himself as the premier session accordionist in the music business.

Because of Carl Fortina, we have heard more accordion work in films and television, and it was he that we heard making those sounds. Carl played on more than 550 motion picture scores and over 35,000 television shows and we can hear him on such soundtracks as **How The West Was Won, The Godfather, Camelot, Breakfast at Tiffany's, Gunsmoke, the Andy Griffith Show and Star Trek** – just to scratch the surface.

Carl's contribution to getting the accordion heard by the public did not end with his own performing – he developed a reference book for film and television composers, arrangers and orchestrators for the very purpose of utilizing the accordion more in film and television. He effected more work not only for himself, but others to follow.

Carl withdrew from the performing spotlight to become a musician contractor for Paramount Studios. One of his first hires was Frank Marocco, who has earned his own place in film and television musical history. So the next time you watch Raiders of the Lost Ark, or catch a re-run of Bonanza listen for an accordion in the background and remember Carl Fortina.

So who were those two college buddies of Carl's? – Frank Montoro and Lou Jacklich.

- compiled from original sources by Randy Hicks



Carl Fortina

In Remembrance of Carl Fortina

Carl Fortina and Al Borelli, my dad, became friends growing up in the Excelsior District of San Francisco and both attending Balboa High School. As a kid I used to hear stories from my dad about Carl's musical abilities and his move to Hollywood and becoming the premier accordionist for the movies. In my late teens, I remember being home and answering the phone, and on the other line was Carl Fortina, he was calling to reach to my dad's band to play at Carl's wedding to be held in San Francisco. It wasn't until many years later that Carl and I became friends, sharing music situation stories, growing up in San Francisco, and talking about accordionist/teacher-Dino Bennett. Carl always had the best musical jokes or would love to hear a new one. A few years ago I was offered an engagement to perform a couple of nights in Beverley Hills. When I talked to Carl about this upcoming gig, he invited me to stay at his place, as he had an extra room. How could I pass up an offer to hang out with Carl Fortina? For 4 days, we would drive around Hollywood and Beverley Hills, Carl showing me all the highlights of the area. Stories about Carl, going over to the Dean Martin house, recording with all the who's, who's of Hollywood. At night I would go play my gig and upon my return to Carl's he would be up waiting to hear all the details on how my gig went. Each morning I would be sleeping in late, but not Carl, he was up early, all dressed, hair immaculate combed, as if ready to go on the bandstand and play a gig. His home was exceptionally clean, you didn't see many musical items to even know that Carl was a great musician, but in his outside studio you would see all his memories, of a great musical career. I didn't see a piano or even an accordion in his home, but the music was in Carl's heart and head. At a moments notice, Carl would transcribe a musical thought on his home computer, and play back a great accordion arrangement he just completed. Carl was a gentle man, humble, gracious, and given a great musical gift and career. He will be remembered for all of this.



Message from the President by Lynn Ewing

I am so excited about the upcoming line-up of featured performers for our club! This month, of course, we have the fantastic **Ron Borelli** and **the Great Morgani**. In March, we have Alicia Baker, a young accordionist and singer that many of you may have seen at Cotati. In April, the **Accordion Orchestra Project** will be performing, along with several amazing soloists. The month of May brings us **Joe Domitrovich and Cafe Vienna**, and in July, as our meeting falls just before the ATG festival, we are delighted to welcome back **Stas Venglevski!**

For those of you who play well on the right hand, but struggle with the bass, I want to encourage you to consider playing in a group or orchestra. Our jam band is going to be playing every other month, and its a great way to join in and play without having to do "everything". Also, most orchestras and ensembles involve only right hand playing, and if your right hand skill is far ahead of your left, playing in a group is a perfect way to jump in now and start making music with fellow accordionists - there is no greater thrill!

Richard Yaus' Accordion Orchestra Project II (see info on page 5) will be a wonderful opportunity to play in a full fledged orchestra, playing an actual part (that is not always the melody). And consider participating in the **ATG Festival Orchestra**, which is designed so that players of most levels can participate. I have gained so much and felt so privileged to play with serious musicians like **Joe Smiell Senior** and **Joe Smiell Junior**, and **Richard Yaus** locally, and in orchestras all over the country with conductors Frank Marocco, Stas Venglevski, Joan Sommers, and Anthony Galla-Rini.

The Board has decided to change our meeting format slightly, and we will be starting with the February meeting. We would like to make more opportunities for our members to play.

We are going to try having more players do short sets of 6-8 minutes, so that club members of all levels can play without too much stress to come up with a lot of material. The idea is to just play a couple of tunes that you love, and share your music. Be courageous, and try it! We all need a reason to practice and a goal to reach.

We also would like to encourage everyone to bring their accordions to every meeting. We will alternate between the jam band and opportunities for informal playing before the meeting - just gather here and there around the room, and play with and for each other. You might find a duet partner! This is a good opportunity for me to say once again to **Vic and Barbara Corsiglia** - THANKS so much for taking the lead on the jam band! It has been such a fun, successful event!

On a personal note, I will be travelling to Argentina (and the Antarctic) in February, and as I look at my travel guides, there are so many pictures of accordionists playing everywhere that I can't wait for my ears to take it all in. Tango in its native habitat!

Have a wonderful month, and keep on squeezin!

SCHOLARSHIPS are awarded twice a year, in April and October. The Scholarship program is funded with proceeds from the 50/50 raffle we have each month. The only requirement is that the recipient be studying with a teacher who is a member of SFAC, and that there is a financial need. Scholarship guidelines are available at the monthly meetings, or contact secretary **Mike Zampiceni**, eclecticguy@comcast.net, 1220 Tasman Dr #106. Sunnyvale. CA. 94089.

Performing Around the Bay

Steve Balich • North Bay
www.stevebalichband.com

Ron Borelli • San Mateo
rborelli@aol.com
www.ronborelli.com

Renée de la Prade
Culann's Hounds, San Francisco
www.sfhounds.com

Richard Denier • Carmel
rdenier@sbcglobal.net

Peter Di Bono • San Francisco
www.peterdibono.com

Reno Di Bono • South Bay
ourhike@aol.com
www.italianaccordion.com

William De Michelis • South Bay
wdd777@comcast.net

Joe Domitrowich • South Bay
www.capricious-accordion.com or
www.alpinersusa.com

Skyler Fell, Hobo Gobelins
Oakland
www.myspace.com/hobogobelins

Ed Gorzynski, Jr. • East Bay
edspolkas@yahoo.com

Bruce Kirschner & The Klezmakers
kirschner@aol.com
www.klezmakers.com

Big Lou, aka Linda Seekins • San Francisco
www.accordionprincess.com

Rob Reich • East Bay & San Francisco
robbyreichmusic@gmail.com
www.robreich.com

Diana Strong • Pacifica
dianajstrong@gmail.com
http://www.dianastrong.webs.com/Diana_Strong_accordion/Home.html

Tangonero
<http://tangonero.com>

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Mike Zampiceni • South Bay
eclecticguy@comcast.net

Please Remember!

To leave our meeting hall at the Oyster Point Yacht Club clean! Clean up food or drink spills and recycle all trash.

SFAC Newsletter Ad Policy

Members may place one small ad (business-card-size) for one month free of charge in a given year; after that the charge is \$10 per issue or \$100 per year.

Monthly ad prices for members:
quarter-page ad \$25.00; half-page ad \$50, and a full-page ad \$100. Non-member rates are double the member rates.

A flyer (no larger than 5" x 8") advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$50 for members, \$65 for non-members.

PLAY FOR US!

Playing warm up or during the break is a great, casual way to share your talent and hone your performance skills. Although our featured performers are scheduled almost all the way through March, we have lots of opportunities during the first part of the meeting for people who would like to play a short 10 or 15 minute set, or even just a couple of songs. Contact Dominic Palmisano at 415-587-4423 or email accord47@gmail.com, or Lynn Ewing, 650-453-3391, or ewinglynn@gmail.com

ACCORDION EVENTS

There are events happening all over the US. Check out *AccordionUSA.com* for all kinds of cool festivals and performances. Here are just a few . . .

ATG Festival

The ATG (Accordionists and Teacher's Guild) festival is coming to San Francisco from **July 23–26th, 2014**. There will be orchestras to participate in, wonderful concerts, workshops, and competitions for cash prizes! <http://www.accordions.com/atg>

2014 National Accordion Convention

Thursday - Saturday: March 6 - 8, 2014
Southfork Hotel and Convention Center
1600 North Central Expressway
Plano, Texas 75074

Band Camp Thursday

Dance Party Friday

Two Accordion Concerts.

Appearing: Tony Lovello, Mario Pedone, John Simkus, Eli Davidsohn, Danny Malmberg, Nick Bratkovich and Ian Fries.

<http://accordions.com/naa/>

Accordionist Michael Ward-Bergeman

performed with famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma, Jamey Haddad, Cyro Baptista and the NY Philharmonic for their 2013 Opening Gala on September 25, 2013. The performance was broadcast live on WQXR radio and was televised on "Live from Lincoln Center" on PBS stations nationwide on December 31st, 2013 at 8:00 p.m. EST.



Alex Meixner is a vibrant, innovative and accomplished musician. This is the year for you to plan on seeing one of his shows. He travels extensively and always brings audiences to a high level of excitement and accordion enjoyment!

Alex Meixner's performing career began at age 6 with his two sisters and father in an ethnic folk ensemble. From these early experiences through headline appearances at music festivals throughout the US; concert performances with the London Symphony Orchestra, Sandy Duncan and his own jazz and ethnic ensembles; as well as over 50 recordings, Meixner has developed a unique musical mix that appeals to a wide cross-section of audiences.

Meixner's formative musical studies were on piano and piano accordion, but he quickly branched out on drums, diatonic button accordion, bass and trumpet, his college major. This instrumental versatility is combined with a musical background that has included intense studies and performance of jazz, classical, pop, polkas and many ethnic folk music genres with some of the leading artists in the world. His talents in music and comedy were even featured on the Tonight Show on NBC in 2004. Most recently, his "Polka Freak Out" CD with Bubba Hernandez garnered a Grammy nomination in December, 2007. Currently based in Palm City, FL, Alex is performing as a solo artist and with numerous touring ensembles. (*more at AccordionUSA.com*)

by Rita Barnea from Accordion USA

Nearby Club Meetings

Accordion Club of the Redwoods

3rd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
Hermann Sons Hall • 860 Western, Petaluma, CA
\$3 admission donation Contact: Tony Mustaro—
President (707) 318-0474 dcdacapo@gmail.com

Golden State Accordion Club (GSAC)

President/CEO: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359
gsaccordionclub@netfirms.com

The Vacaville Chapter meets monthly on the second Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Pietro's No. 2 at 679 Merchant Street, Vacaville, CA 95688 707 448-4588

The Humboldt Chapter meets monthly on the third Tuesday, 7 p.m. at Humboldt Swiss Club, 5403 Tompkins Hill Road, Loleta.

The Sacramento Chapter meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Old Spaghetti Factory, 12401 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. Contact for all three Chapters: Carole Enneking (707) 864-2359

Good Time Accordion Club (GTAC)

meets monthly on the second Wednesday, 7 p.m. at Escalon Community Center, 1055 Escalon Ave, Escalon. Contact: (209) 545-3603

Northern California Accordion Society (NCAS) meets monthly on the first Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. at Lutheran Church Hall, 6365 Douglas, Blvd, off Hwy 80, Granite Bay, CA. Contact: Jerry Choate (530) 345-2031

Silicon Valley Accordion Club (SVAC)

meets 1st Sun. of each month at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, corner of Kiely. 1 p.m. \$5, under 16 - no charge.

Accordion Instruction

Bart Beninco (707) 769-8744
Ron Borelli (650) 574-5707
David Chelini (916) 428-8764
Peter Di Bono (415) 753-1502
Lynn Ewing (650) 453-3391
Skyler Fell (415) 596-5952
Lou Jacklich (510) 317-9510
Marjorie Konrad (707) 539-5308
Marian Kelly (650) 854-1896
Vincent Rinaldi (415) 824-7609
Big Lou (Linda Seekins) (415) 468 5986
Joe Simoni (650) 867-1122
Sharon Walters-Greyhosky (650) 731-6010
Richard Yaus (650) 832-1740
Mike Zampiceni (408) 569-2579
Norma Zonay-Parsons (408) 246-3073

SFAC Officers

Lynn Ewing, President
(650) 453-3391 ewinglynn@gmail.com

Dominic Palmisano, Vice President
(415) 587-4423 accord47@gmail.com

Mike Zampiceni, Secretary
(408) 734-1565
eclecticguy@comcast.net

Elaine Cooperstein, Treasurer
510-921-9323 elainedc@sbcglobal.net

SFAC Directors

Jean Moshofsky Butler, phone 415-377-9266
threehummingbirds@gmail.com

Vincent Rinaldi, vincentrinaldi01@gmail.com
phone: 415-824-7609

Corinne Chandel chancori@gmail.com,
626-807-8147

Don Savant, donsavant@yahoo.com,
408-257-0379

Newsletter

Christina Knapp, Graphic Design & Layout
snapp.chris@gmail.com

Deeana McLemore, (650) 483-4223
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JOHN CASTIGLIONE Director

13300 E. 11 Mile Rd. Suite A
Warren Mi. 48089-1367

Tel: 586 755 6050
Fax 586 755 6339

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**Join us one Sunday each month at the Oyster Point Yacht Club,
911 Marina Blvd, South San Francisco**

Club & Musical Meeting

DATE CHANGE TO 4TH SUNDAY

next meeting February 23 @ 2 p.m.

Admission: \$6 members, \$8 guests

DIRECTIONS:

From 101 traveling either North or South,
Oyster Point exit. Turn right onto Marina Blvd.
(be careful not to turn right onto Gull Drive,
just before Marina Blvd.) Continue past the gate
house to the sign Oyster Point Yacht Club.
There is plenty of parking and ramp access.
Visit us online @ www.sfaccordionclub.com

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SFAC Membership is

\$30.00 per year for individual or family.

For membership renewal, please send
a check to: S.F.A.C., C/O Elaine Cooperstein
539 Elsie Ave

San Leandro, CA 94577

NEW MEMBERS, please include your name
and address along with your check, as well as
a phone number and email address, if you wish.

**Newsletter of the
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