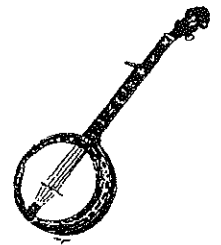




# The Folk Club

*of Reston-Herndon*

...Preserving Folk Traditions



Vol 8, No 3; March, 1994

## Handling Stage Fright

**Dan Grove**

The “butterflies” we experience when we get up to perform can make us want to go hide and never try it again. Actually, feeling nervous before you go on is healthy. It shows that your performance is important to you and that you care about doing well. But unless you learn to control the nervousness, it can control you. So, here’s how to make your butterflies fly in formation:

1. **Know your material.** If you’re doing new songs, or songs that stretch your abilities, your nervousness will naturally increase. Practice your material until you can perform it with ease.

2. **Make a play list.** Know what songs you will do, and in what order. Sequence the songs to minimize instrument changes and re-tunings. If you can’t warm up in a soundproof room offstage (you can stop reading this if they’re paying you

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that much already), start with vocally easy songs, and warm up that way. Practice the songs in play list sequence, including re-tunings and instrument changes, and work on continuity and flow. Think about what you’ll say, when you first get up there in particular.

3. **Know the room.** Become familiar with the place in which you’ll be performing. Arrive early

and walk around on the stage. Check out the sound system and set up in advance, if possible. Walk around the area where the audience will be seated. Walk the path you’ll follow to get to the stage when you’re introduced.

4. **Know The Audience** If possible, greet some of the audience as they arrive, and chat with them. It’s easier to play for friends than it is for strangers.

*Continued*

## Showcasing Ray Kaminsky

Our showcase performer March 1 is Board Member Ray Kaminsky. He graciously agreed to answer a few questions about his music and performing.

**Q:** *When did you first get interested in music?*

**Ray:** I was kind of a late bloomer. I was a freshman in college before I started playing the guitar. I had a friend who played banjo, so we ended up playing together.

**Q:** *Does singing in front of people make you nervous?*

**Ray:** More so at the Folk Club, because they play attention. At a lot of other places you’re lucky if you can be heard over the blender. The Folk Club tends to be a bit more intense.

*Continued*

# Stage Fright

5. **Tune** Don't wait until the last minute, and don't be sloppy. The audience heading for the exit when you play your first out-of-tune chord will make you REAL nervous.

6. **Relax** You can ease tension by doing exercises. Sit up straight and breathe in slowly; hold your breath for four or five seconds; then slowly exhale. S-T-R-E-T-C-H. If possible, stand and touch your toes, letting your body hang loosely, while doing the breathing exercises.

7. **Visualize yourself performing.** Imagine yourself walking confidently to the stage as the audience applauds. Imagine yourself singing, your voice clear, assured, and responsive. Imagine yourself playing your instrument. Picture the audience applauding as you finish each song. When you visualize yourself as successful, you will be successful.

8. **Realize that people want you to succeed.** Audiences want performers to be entertaining, stimulating, amusing, and moving. They want you to succeed - not to fail. This is especially true at the Folk Club, which is a wonderfully supportive group of people (heckling is the highest form of flattery...).

9. **Don't Apologize.** Most of the time your nervousness doesn't show at all. If you don't say anything about it, nobody will notice. If you mention your nervousness or apologize for any problems you think you're having, you'll only be calling the audience's attention to it.

10. **Concentrate on the songs not the singer.** Your nervous feelings will dissipate if you focus your attention away from your own anxieties and turn it to the songs and the audience.

11. **Turn nervousness into positive energy.** The same energy that causes nervousness can be an asset to you. Give a vital and enthusiastic performance, because those butterflies mean you'll never be more alert and alive.

12. **Gain experience.** Experience builds confidence, which is a key to successful performing. Most beginners find that their anxieties decrease with each time up there. So... come back again next week!

Stage fright was a real problem for me when I started playing at the Folk Club. To help deal with it, I joined Toastmasters International, a public speaking group that provides specific advice and practice at getting up in front of an audience. The butterflies you get from speaking are the same as the ones you get from singing or playing, believe me! Some of the ideas above come directly from a Toastmasters manual.

If you're interested, the Reston Toastmasters meet at 7:15 PM on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at the Reston Regional Library, and other clubs meet throughout the area. Visitors are welcome, and the speaking skills you learn are valuable for musical performers. People wear everything from business suits to jeans, and, if you miss the Folk Club ambiance, I'll be happy to heckle you on request!

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## Showcase Profile (Continued)

Q: *What kind of music influences you the most?*

Ray: I've gone through a variety of phases, including Folk, Acoustic, Jazz, Blues and Singer/Songwriter stuff. I sang my way through piano bars in college playing torch tunes. This last year I've played almost exclusively Blues.

Q: *What are the five best songs ever written?*

Ray: Oh God, let's see. Well, *Bridge Over Troubled Water* is very well crafted, both musically and lyrically. I think *You Don't Know Me* is a great song. I'd also mention *Greensleaves*, just because it's 400 years old and we still know about it. That says something.

# Folk Club of Reston-Herndon

February 27 - April 9, 1994

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Feb 27 IONA at the Old Brogue - Great Falls	Feb 28	Mar 1 <b>Showcase Performance</b> 7:30pm Folk Club	Mar 2	Mar 3	Mar 4	Mar 5 8:00pm Open Door Coffee House - Fairlington Methodist Ch
Mar 6 IONA at the Old Brogue - Great Falls	Mar 7	Mar 8 7:30pm Folk Club	Mar 9	Mar 10 8:00pm Frederick Folk Club - Deli Creations	Mar 11	Mar 12 8:00pm Nancy Magill - Songwriters Cir - Glen Echo Park
Mar 13	Mar 14	Mar 15 7:30pm Folk Club	Mar 16	Mar 17	Mar 18	Mar 19 7:30pm Red Leaf hosts the Potomic Overlook Coffee House. Guest Band is Second Wind
Mar 20	Mar 21	Mar 22 7:30pm Folk Club	Mar 23	Mar 24 8:00pm Frederick Folk Club - Deli Creations 8:00pm Nancy Magill-Fokal Point-Hobbits-Columbia Md	Mar 25	Mar 26
Mar 27	Mar 28	Mar 29 Showcase Lottery Draw <b>Anne Hills (\$7/6)</b> 7:30pm Folk Club	Mar 30	Mar 31	Apr 1	Apr 2
Apr 3	Apr 4	Apr 5 <b>Showcase Performance</b> 7:30pm Folk Club	Apr 6	Apr 7 8:00pm Frederick Folk Club - Deli Creations	Apr 8	Apr 9

## Coming Folk Club Events

- March 29 - Anne Hills \$7/6
- April 26 - David Massengill \$7/6
- May 17 - Tommy Sands \$10/9
- June 14 - Bill Staines \$8/7
- July 26 - The Mollies \$6/5
- August 23 - Pete Kennedy & Maura Boudreau \$7/6

## Showcase Performances

March 1, the featured performer will be Ray Kaminsky.

On the first Tuesday of every month we feature a Folk Club member in a showcase two-set (25 minute) performance. To become one of these "showcase" specials all you have to do is 1) be a member of the Folk Club, 2) fill out a lottery slip by the last Tuesday of the month, 3) win the drawing and 4) practice, practice practice!

### The Folk Club

President, Larry Mediate

Treasurer, David Hurd

Members of the Board:

Ray Kaminsky, Ellen Kaminsky

Lynn Jordan, Bill Davis

Richard Flinchbaugh, Liza Cobb

Jim Rosenkrans, T.M. Hanna

Brian Gilmartin, Nina Gilmartin

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**ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!**  
Check your Label - Are you expiring? "19940301" is expiring with this issue. Don't miss an issue - Don't miss the benefits of the Folk Club. Please send in your membership check (\$12.00) to keep your membership active!

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