



Island Songwriters  
Showcase Newsletter

[www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org)

2001

June

## WRITING FOR A CAUSE

By Shari Diamond

We had a special guest attend our May meeting. **Mr. John Beltzer, President of Songs Of Love**, is looking for songwriters to write songs for children who have chronic or life threatening illness. He started the non-profit organization after losing his brother and realized he could make a difference to these children and their families through a song. John compiles background information about the child and then looks for appropriate songwriters and recording artists to create and perform an original composition for each individual child. The song created is donated to this organization. Generally, the songwriter has 25 days to write and complete the song. The song is often played while the child is receiving their treatment in the hospital, and often, John says, calms the child. The organization has over 2200 songs written and 350 songwriters. They even had recording artists **David Lee Roth, Ronnie Spector and Billy Joel** singing. It's a great and rewarding way to have your talents bring a bright smile to someone in need. If you think you are interested in doing this, please contact John at the Songs of Love Foundation, P.O. Box 750809, Forest Hills, NY 11375; 1-800-960-SONG; or email at [info@songsoflove.org](mailto:info@songsoflove.org), or visit their website at [www.songsoflove.org](http://www.songsoflove.org).

### OPEN MIKE AT THE CONKLIN BARN IS BACK

**Huntington Open Music Evenings (H.O.M.E.)** is back in the groove with getting the open mike scene at the **Conklin Barn** in **Huntington**. There are 3 **Friday nights** scheduled all starting at **8pm- June 8, July 13, and August 11**-with the events run by **Bob Westcott, Sonny Speed** and **Sonny Meadows**, and featuring their new **band, The Defibrillators** with **Mark Loeble** of Vitamin D on bass, **Jon Forman** on guitar and **John Robillard** on drums. The Barn is located on New York Avenue and High Street. Call Sonny Meadows for more info at 631-673-3605.

### ISS'ERS TO THE RESCUE

Many of us received an urgent email notice regarding the last minute cancellation of a performer for the **May 6 Sunday at Seven Series** at the Northport Historical Society show. "Could anyone help out?" was the plea. Well sure enough, ISS'ers **Sonny Meadows, Michael Clark** and many others rolled up their sleeves and tuned their guitars! The evening was a great success thanks to these fine people. Are you tuned in? Get connected!

### UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

WORKSHOP MEETING: **June 4 July 2**

OPEN MIKE @ BORDERS SYOSSET: **June 7 July 5**

CONKLIN BARN: **June 8 July 13 August 11 \***

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND:

@ BARNES & NOBLE, COMMACK: **June 14 July 12**

@ BORDERS, WESTBURY: **June 15 July 20**

\* these dates only

## ISS WORKSHOP MEETING

*Five Towns College*

05/07/02001

**By Mike Mattel**

**Frank Buddine** began the evening with "A Trucker's Dream" on CD, a collaboration between himself (lyrics) and **Mike Blaymore** (music). Gerry considered it great – he felt he could only nit-pick. He mentioned a missed-rime and had some musical comments. Others also liked it and could only add some minor lyrical and musical suggestions. Overall, considered a solid tune.

Next up was **Steve Lieberman** with “Punk-Rock Jethro Tull Song”. Gerry noted the drumbeat was different from Steve’s standard beat. Jamie commented that “Steve is a real freak”, in that non-offensive, Jamie kind-of-way. He finds Steve’s works compelling, but feels there’s some component missing. Others also made similar mention of the missing component. Some felt if Steve was to try a different musical approach, that missing component might be found. Someone suggested a folk style to some of his lyrics.

**Mike Clark** then performed, “Lunatics and Lawyers”. Jim Baron liked it, but had some musical and lyrical suggestions. Gerry felt the song needed focus – he felt the point wasn’t clear. Others echoed his sentiments; they were also confused about the point of the song. Overall, most liked the basic concept, but felt it needed work to clarify the piece.

**Silent Bear** then got up to perform, “Shadow lands”. Several people commented on how they loved it and compared it to an earlier song of the Bear’s, “Ghosts in the Fire”. Jim liked it, but had some suggestions to change the lyrics. Rick liked the song, but felt it missed the common thread that would put it all together. Overall, a well received song.

**Jim Baron** then performed the witty, “She Drove Me To Drink”. Andrew loved the song and the clever title. In fact, everyone loved this song, only minor comments provided. We were all glad Jim missed his AA meeting to be here tonight.

**Vince Crici** then performed “Someday They’ll be friends” on piano. This song was written for children to sing and has been performed in area schools. Many commented on the lovely melody. Shari considered it an awesome song. She felt, however, that the tempo should be a bit faster. Some discussion began on whether the song should progress outward toward the “big picture” or inward toward the individuals involved. In fact, it got so heated, Gerry and Bill Anacker had to step outside to settle it. Despite that, a well received song all in all.

**Sonny Meadows** then performed “Rules”. Stuart liked the song and added, “I know you’re a liberal; I didn’t know you were an anarchist”. Several people felt a bridge should be added that would explain which “rules”, referred to in the chorus that Sonny always breaks. Unfortunately, the commentary had to be cut short when several Suffolk county police arrived with a warrant for Sonny’s arrest.

**Bill Graeser** then performed “Driving S-U-Vs”, which was taken, at least in part, from a CNN news report. Mike Clark loved it, both melodically and conceptually. Others felt a more personal point-of-view should be used so it doesn’t seem so damning of others without including himself. Yet others thought the point-of-view was fine. Jim felt Bill should work on the meter to make it more “sing able” for others. Overall, considered a very powerful song.

**Tania** then performed “Running Around My Heart”. Andrew liked the hooks and felt there was a Joan Osborne influence in the performance. Many commented on Tania’s lovely voice. Gerry felt the music was fine, but the relationship should be explained better. Rick also liked the music, but felt the hook “running around my heart” could be improved, making a good song a great one.

A relative newcomer (one previous meeting), **Ralph Tilleli** brought “I’ll be Here For You” on tape, with Tania performing the vocals. Andrew liked the melody, but had trouble with some lyrics and recommended some changes. Others also liked the song, but had some melodic ideas, especially in the chorus. A quicker tempo was also suggested. Some felt there were weak rimes that should be worked on.

Another fairly new member, **Nolan Myerson** performed “Don’t You Miss Me”. Several suggested the hook phrase be changed to “you don’t miss me”. Many felt the melody was catchy, but some lyrical changes were needed. Overall, considered a fine song

that just needs a little fine-tuning.

**Rick Crawford** then performed "Sign of the Times". Nolan thought the song was too long and could've ended after the fourth verse. Others felt there wasn't enough melodic difference between the verses, bridge and chorus. Others felt since the lyrics are so intense, perhaps the music should be "lighter" to counter the lyrics. Almost universally Rick's lyrics are considered very powerful.

**Andrew Kirschner** then performed "Sigh". Some felt there wasn't enough melodic difference between the verses, bridge and chorus. Gerry commented on what he considered Andrews use of "funky" chords. Andrew insists they are ordinary chords; but concedes they may not all belong together. Others liked the imagery in the song. Well received overall.

**Bill Goldsmith** ended the evening with "The Laughing Girl". Andrew liked it and noted it reminded him of the Kinks. Sonny Speed felt the rhythm should change a little. Many felt the story was good and held their attention. A fine song overall.

Keep writing those songs and bring them down, with lyric sheets if applicable to our upcoming meetings –**July 2 and August**

## **BORDERS RECAP**

*Borders, Syosset  
May 3, 2001*

The open mike scene at Borders hosted by **Bill Ryan** is still going strong with performances from **Bill Ryan himself, Vincent Crici, Bill Goldsmith, Tania, Silent Bear, and Steve Lieberman**. This night is dedicated to showcasing ISS members. So this is your night and your opportunity to come down and play so bring a song and support your fellow ISSer's. *Next events are June 7 and July 5.*

## *Songwriter's Choice*

*By Gerry Dantone*

### **Silent Bear for "Shadowlands"**

I've been meaning to say this for a long time, but I've been concerned about the reaction from my fellow songwriters. It's sort of like being a magician who lets everyone in on the trick, such as demonstrating how with a little slight of hand, you too can bend spoons "with your mind," and in doing so, destroys a cherished, but false belief. Well here's the songwriter's secret: A tactic often used by songwriters is obscurity.

There! I've said it! I've just let everyone in on the big secret! It's been hard carrying this burden for so long, but I just had to set the record straight for the sake of simple honesty. Yes, songwriters, when they have nothing to say, or are not sure exactly what they are trying to say, resort to obscurity, paradox and incoherence in an effort to seem deep and profound. This is not a completely negative thing. "I Am the Walrus" is a lot of fun - but means nothing. Less creative tunes also use obscurity, and if it's done well, the listener thinks it is they who are deficient somehow, not the meaning of the lyrics! If you're a dullard like me, you're never sure when it's happening!

Our overwhelming winner for Writer's Choice this month gave us just a taste of the mysterious and unintelligible, and it worked like a charm.

"**Shadowlands**" is musically impeccable, with a melody and structure that makes the listener believe they are hearing a classic folk song that has been played for 100 years, and will be played for hundreds more. The lyrical imagery is equally moving, making one feel the angst of the singer. Add a little obscurity, and the result is a song whose meaning one continually searches for - an activity that humans never seem to tire of. **Silent Bear** writes, "And our friends are all our enemies/And our enemies are all our friends/ And we're walking on this tight rope/Just trying to make amends..."

Cool.

## SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - COMMACK

*Barnes & Noble – Commack  
May 10, 2001*

This month featured the outstanding songwriting and performing talents of two Great Duets, **DeStefano and McLeod, and Princess Peapod (Dave Cook & Michelle Firmer)**, hosted by **Sonny Meadows**. Next round is June 14 – schedule to be announced. See Sonny Meadows for more info or call him at 673-3605. Support L.I. music.

## SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND – WESTBURY

*Borders – Westbury  
May 18, 2001*

This month featured performances from host **Rich Stein, Vincent Crici, and Silent Bear**. The June 15 line-up at Borders in Westbury will feature two NEW bands. Headlining the evening will be **The Defibrillators** (featuring **Sonny Meadows, Bob Westcott and Sonny Speed**). Opening the show will be **Answers Unquestioned**, an experimental group featuring **Jon Ehlers, Tony Falco, and me (Rich Stein)**. Come by at 8pm for an unforgettable evening! See Rich Stein for more info or email him at clearsteer@hotmail.com.

## LT1 CABLE SHOW LOOKING FOR ARTISTS

**Bruce Figarsky** at LT1 TV is still looking for original Long Island artists for his show. If you want to be considered for a performance on LT1 send a press kit, bio, recordings – audio and/or video, and other pertinent information to:

**Bruce Figarsky** c/o  
Community Media Network, Inc. Dept. -A  
P. O. B. 2801  
Lake Ronkonkoma, NY 11779

**Sonny Meadows, Jeff Curtis and DeStefano & McLeod** have been on this show recently. The show's theme song was written and performed by **Jeff Curtis**, and was produced and engineered by **Sonny Speed** at his **Son Spot Studios!**

## WGBB LOOKING FOR LOCAL ARTISTS

*This email came to Sonny Speed.*

I am a radio show host on 21st Century Music Radio, **WGBB-1240 AM**. We air live every Monday night from 8-9 pm and webcast the show simultaneously with the broadcast. I just saw your website (islandsongwriters.org). Please have your artists send me their CD's and press kits/bio. My show is mainly devoted to giving airtime and exposure to the local artists in our communities and giving them the airtime and exposure that is so sorely needed.

My address is P.O. Box 0301, Baldwin, NY 11510 or you can go to <http://21stcenturymusicradio.com>

**\*\*Also, check out our radio show's songwriting contest. You can go to the homepage at [www.21stcenturymusicradio.com](http://www.21stcenturymusicradio.com).**  
\*\*

Thanks  
**Diane Corrado**

**\*\*\*\* Tania was on the radio show in April and Stuart Markus was the guest in May. It's a great experience and opportunity if you have never been on radio. What are you waiting for?! \*\*\*\***

## R&B MUSIC WANTED

*This email came to Sonny Speed.*

**Joseph Cuccia** of Music Publisher is seeking Top 10 Quality R&B hits for new female artist. Major labels are interested in her. She has major management in place. Songs must be fully produced, and available for immediate contract consideration! If interested we will need an instrumental track as well. Unpublished songs only. Visit the website for more info at [www.coochmusic.com](http://www.coochmusic.com) Make us say "WOW!" and feel the groove! Please submit songs in this style only! We need songs ASAP! Send Songs to:

### **J. Cooch Music (BMI)**

22 Williams Way South  
Baiting Hollow, NY 11933  
Attn.: Ron White A&R dir.

## MEL GLAZER SONGWRITING COURSE

**Mel Glazer** is teaching a 3-session course titled "**Poetry into Lyrics into Songwriting**". Sounds cool. It's pretty timely he says since the publication of **Paul McCartney's** new book **Blackbird Singing** just came out. There are lots of lyrics in his book that have not been turned into songs. The course is at **Hofstra University**, the dates are **June 2, June 9, and June 16** and the fee is \$85 for the 3 sessions. People interested should contact Mel at home at 516-829-2474 or email him at [melvinglazer@hotmail.com](mailto:melvinglazer@hotmail.com)

## LONG ISLAND ONLINE GIG POSTING

I received this email from **Anthony J. Batta** from **LongIsland.com**, to let me know that they have a new nightlife section and you can post a page for free in the band area. You can also link your upcoming gigs to the events calendar.

Check it out at <http://www.longisland.com> or email Anthony at [tonyb2b@yahoo.com](mailto:tonyb2b@yahoo.com).

**You can also do this through our web site at [www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org). See Bill Ryan's Scoop Box below.**



Scoop's Link O' the Month

The ISS Web Site News

[www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org)

Our web site is getting more and more state-of-the-art and we already have popular features such as Post-a-Gig, and the on-line newsletter, up and running. Post-a-Gig lets you enter in your gig dates, no need to call, or fax anyone. If you can't get to a PC, you can leave the details on the cyber-songs phone line (516) 628-1163. So check out the site, and keep coming back as it grows. If you would like to purchase a CD from many of our talented ISS members, get it via the web from [www.cyber-songs](http://www.cyber-songs) where you can listen to songs and become eligible to win a free CD! What are

you waiting for? Get with the music!

Due to the success of the Post-a-gig feature on the ISS site, we've added a discussion forum. Simply go to the Island Songwriter's site and click on the New ISS Discussion forum link on the home page. To add to the discussion forum, click on Post a new article. You can then choose a topic such as songwriting, and enter your comments, thoughts, experiences, pearls of wisdom, etc.

Any ideas on other topics let me know - [scoop@optonline.net](mailto:scoop@optonline.net).

That's the scoop for this month. – *Bill Ryan*

## MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS at FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

(Dix Hills) ~ The Island Songwriters Showcase (ISS) is a no fee organization. Group efforts include monthly meetings at Five Towns College, located on Burr's Lane in Dix Hills, Huntington, NY, generally on the first Monday of the month. **IT'S FREE.** Songs are often premiered at the meetings, and so much material is presented that there is limit of one song per writer. Writers may bring an acoustic guitar, CD, or cassette tape (no Dolby n/r reduction is best), and a piano is available for keyboardists. Lyric sheets are encouraged and ensuing discussions regarding presented songs can range from passionate to hilarious to instructive. To become a member, simply come to a meeting. That's it! Really!

**Come join us on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M. on the following dates: July 2 August 6 September 10\***

\* date change due to Labor Day holiday

Becoming an ISS member also entitles you to participate in our open mike night at any of our showcases (see highlighted below). Sign ups are at 7:30 P.M. All artists are able to play 2 original songs. Also, you can become eligible to be invited to perform at one of our Songwriters in the Round. No critiquing – just fun! Original bands are also welcome – please call Sonny in advance. Make friends. Make contacts. Get heard!

For more information call our director Sonny Speed at (631) 462-3300 or email him at [mcspeed@aol.com](mailto:mcspeed@aol.com).

### Open Mikes:

#### Thursdays

- **BORDERS** Syosset ~ 425 Jericho Tpk, Syosset, 7:00 p.m. sign-up, 7:30 p.m. start on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month, ISS exclusive showcase hosted by Bill Ryan.

#### fridays

- **H.O.M.E.** (Huntington Open Music Evenings) - Conklin Barn, New Yor Ave. & High St. Huntington Village, 8 pm hosted by Sonny Meadows, Bob Westcott, and Sonny Speed – June 8, July 13 and August 10

### Weekly Venue:

- **Sundays at Seven Series** – The Northport Historical Society Museum, Main St., Northport on the north side of the street opposite the police station. 7 PM. Contact hosted by Kate Kelly at 757-1111 for listing of scheduled performers. The Sunday At Seven Arts in Concert Series is supported by funds from the NYC Council of the Arts, distributed in Suffolk County through the Huntington Arts Council. They request a \$2 donation for the evening.

### Songwriters In The Round:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month @ Barnes & Noble, Commack,

### ISS Postcard Mailer

If you didn't receive the postcard mailer that was sent out recently, or want to receive future updates on ISS events via mail or email, please provide Sonny Speed with a completed membership form available at meetings or gigs.

### Director's Blurb

ISS workshops have become increasingly popular and we want to ensure that all members get enough time for comments. If you want your song heard but you're not looking for critique, please save the debut for the showcase. If you want feedback, **please remember to bring 25 copies of the lyric sheet** (or be prepared to pay a hefty fine – just kidding!)

### ISS Address

**ISS**  
**P.O. Box 430**  
**East Northport, N.Y. 11731-0430**  
**Phone: 631-462-3300 (Sonny Speed)**  
**E-mail: [mcspeed@aol.com](mailto:mcspeed@aol.com)**

### ISS Staff

- Ø **Director:** Sonny Speed
- Ø **Press Secretary:** Bob Catrano

hosted by **Sonny Meadows**

- 3rd Friday of the month @ **Borders, Westbury**, hosted by **Rich Stein**.

## HELP WANTED!

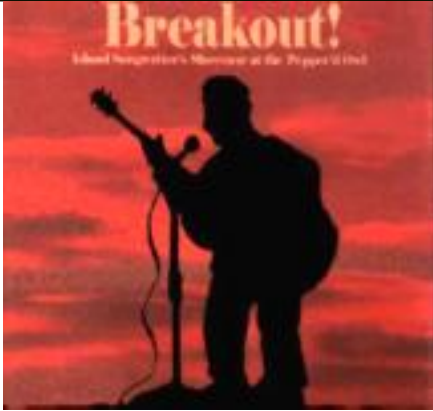
We know you can write songs! So how about helping out and writing about workshop reviews, articles, open mike scenes, whatever. They don't take much time and you get to have your name in print! Remember that the newsletter goes up on the web so your name will be out there. Talk to **Shari Diamond** or **Sonny Speed** at our meetings.

Ø **Newsletter Writing Staff:** Gerry Dantone, Bill "Scoop" Ryan, Walter Sargent, Michael Clark, Sonny Meadows, Mike Mattel, Frank Gambino, Vince Crici, Andrew Kirschner, Rich Stein, and James Yarsky

Ø **Website Coordinator:** Bill "Scoop" Ryan

**Newsletter Editor/Publisher:** Shari Diamond

If you would like to have a newsletter emailed to you, please send your request to Shari Diamond at [shari@kidtestedtunes.com](mailto:shari@kidtestedtunes.com).



**Don't forget to get your copy of the first ISS compilation CD featuring 14 ISS members recorded Live at the ISS Showcase at the Pepper'd Owl in 1996. This is a lot of talent crammed into this one CD and this is only volume 1! George Trapani made this release possible and he continues to record performances at ISS events. The Cost is \$12 per CD and you can get yours from George when you see him at ISS events, email him at [gtrapani@optonline.net](mailto:gtrapani@optonline.net).**