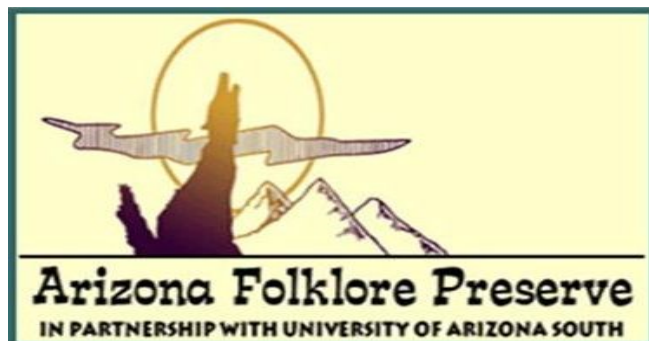


Here's what is happening at . . .



March 2024



Editor's Note:

For those of you who follow our Balladeer, Dolan Ellis on his Facebook page, you would have seen this link to a radio interview he did on the Seth Leibsohn Show out of Phoenix on February 15. If you missed it, here is the link:

[The Seth Leibsohn Show](#)

Dolan says, "The existence of "The Mogollon Monster" was in question and we set the record straight."

Be sure to catch Dolan's Blog on Page 3!

We welcome our many new subscribers to the AFP News!

Your comments are welcome at:  
cng.gruenhagen@cox.net

Look forward to seeing you at the AFP!

- Carolyn G.

**Happy Birthday Dolan!**



## Look who's coming this month!

**Saturday & Sunday  
March 2 & 3**



**Liz & Pete**

[Petie Ronstadt](#) is a popular performer at the AFP, a writer and interpreter of song, a recording engineer and producer, a poet, and lyricist. He is an all around post-modern American songster from the great American Southwest.

Liz Cerepanya is an accomplished vocalist from Tucson and frequently performs with Petie.

*"Liz and Pete, lovely fresh harmonies and a secret cache of original songs."* - Linda Ronstadt

**Saturday & Sunday  
March 9 & 10**



[Dan McCorison](#) lives in Arizona with his wife, June and their dog, Daisy. He formed his first band, Dusty Drapes and the Dusters back in his native Colorado after college. Known for country music and Western swing they were soon touring and opening for Merle Haggard, Willie Nelson, Flatt and Scruggs, and even Linda Ronstadt. After leaving the Dusters he signed to MCA records and then he was off to Nashville where he lived writing and recording with some of the finest in country music for twenty years. He was named the 2021 IWMA Songwriter of the year and his album *Me and Les* was named Traditional Western Album of the year 2021!

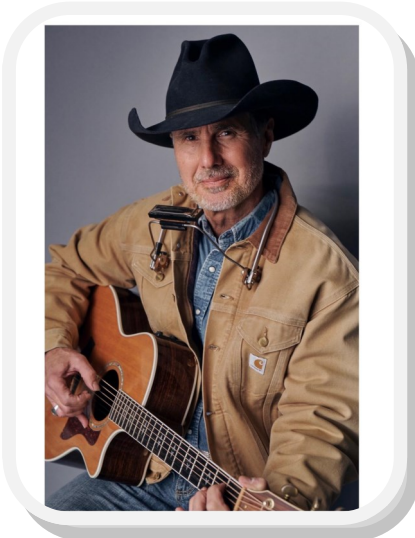
**Saturday & Sunday  
March 16 & 17**



**Steve Jones** plays guitar, sings, and writes songs, and was formerly with the Yampa Valley Boys. His first solo CD, *That Irish Kid* contains original, traditional and cover songs with an Irish theme. He says, "I have been dubbed by some as the 'cowboy Irish tenor,' so I am always on the lookout for a western song that has an Irish connection. I also have an interest in the songs and music of John Denver, the Eagles, classic country, and any song about the west."



**Saturday & Sunday  
March 23 & 24**



**Gary Allegretto** was named the 2019 International Western Music Association (IWMA) Performer of the Year. *Western Horseman Magazine* says, "Gary's music transcends genres, generations and cultural barriers, yet is so professional, engaging and core to the cowboy that listeners can't help but want to ride along a while longer and discover something new in a song." Gary's engaging and often laugh-out-loud songs tell stories drawn from his rich and diverse life experience in the West (including ranch hand, forest firefighter as a USFS Hot-shot, and bouncer in a couple of rough honky-tonks). Don't miss a rare opportunity to witness the world's top Harmonicowboy!"



**Saturday & Sunday  
March 30 & 31**



**Jim Jones & Mariam Funke**

**Jim Jones** does it all—Musician, Performer, Author! He was Western Music Association's 2014 Male Performer of the Year and winner of both the Academy of Western Artists 2016 Western Song of the Year and Western Writers of America 2013 and 2017 Spur Awards for Best Western Song as a storyteller. His songs and books are about the West...cowboys, horses & cattle, cattle rustlers, the coming of the train, songs about people and land, rivers and mountains, and the beauty of the Western sky.

**Mariam Funke** A native of Germany, Western music performer and composer Mariam Funke found the home of his heart in New Mexico. He is a Musician, Producer, Singer, and Songwriter. His many awards include 2019, 2022 & 2023 Duo or Group of the Year (The Cowboy Way), 2022 Instrumentalist of the year, and 2015 Song of the year.



## Balladeer's Blog #55

### THE END OF AN ERA...

It saddens me to have to report to you that we lost a major icon in folk music this past month. Randy Sparks, founder and leader of "The New Christy Minstrels," my long-time friend and team-mate...has died. Now, I realize that the word "died" may sound a bit blunt or harsh to you, but I also know that Randy would not have wanted me to say that he "passed away." For I remember this story that Randy use to tell about a private conversation that he had with Burl Ives about death. I've heard him tell this story many times, and on various occasions whenever he thought he might be in the presence of someone who needed it. I'll let Randy tell you his story in his own words...

- The Balladeer

#### 'OLD FOLK SINGERS DIE'

(An excerpt from Randy's writings)

...Burl suddenly turned to me and said, "You know what I'd hate to do?" I told him I didn't know. "I'd hate to pass away," he said. I was shocked! We never talked about death. He was very old, and the subject was painful for me. I think he knew that. I tried to make light of his comment. "I'm not an expert on the subject," I offered, "but I think you ought to get used to the idea; I don't see how you're gonna get out of it." "That's not what I mean," he scolded. Then there was a long pause, so typical of pipe smokers. "Look," he said, "if a person does everything there is to do in this life... if he plays every damned game they throw at him, and he wins every time, I don't see why he has to sneak out the back door. I don't want to pass away. I want to DIE." Suddenly a great weight was lifted from my shoulders. He had shared with me his secret for dealing with death. He lasted another two years, and when he was gone, some people in my town came up to me and said, "We're sorry to learn your friend Burl passed away." "He didn't pass away," I corrected; "He died." They stared at me blankly. I had such difficulty explaining what I meant, that I decided to write a small verse to pass along the lesson he had taught me...

(Exit Lines)

Bankers and preachers pass away. Cowboys and heroes die.  
Counting down to Judgment Day, I can't tell you why.  
Some folks ride in the buckboard, And quietly disappear.  
Some folks grab this life by the horns, And ride it like a rodeo steer.  
When you've figured out what's all about, And it's time to say goodbye,  
Why whisper? Why not sing and shout?  
Old folksingers die!  
(R.I.P. Randy Sparks)



<b>AFP April Performers:</b> April 6/7 Randy Huston	April 13/14 Old Pueblo Bluegrass Band
April 20/21 The Mule Boys	April 27/28 Eric Ramsey

[www.arizonafolklore.com](http://www.arizonafolklore.com)

All Saturday and Sunday shows  
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\$20 adults - \$10 age 17 and under

Physical Address:  
[56 East Folklore Trail](#)  
[Hereford, AZ 85615](#)

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 235  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85636

**Reservations**

**Arizona Folklore Preserve a 501 (c) 3** cultural and performing arts center.

*"Where Arizona's songs, legends, poetry, and myths are collected and presented, and preserved for the enrichment of future generations."*