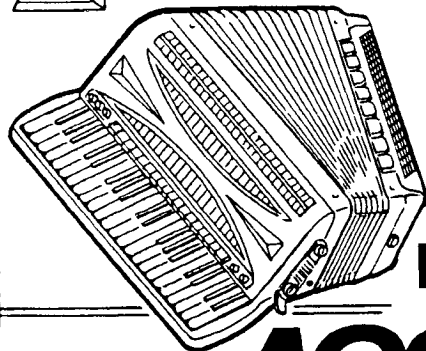


Newsletter of the

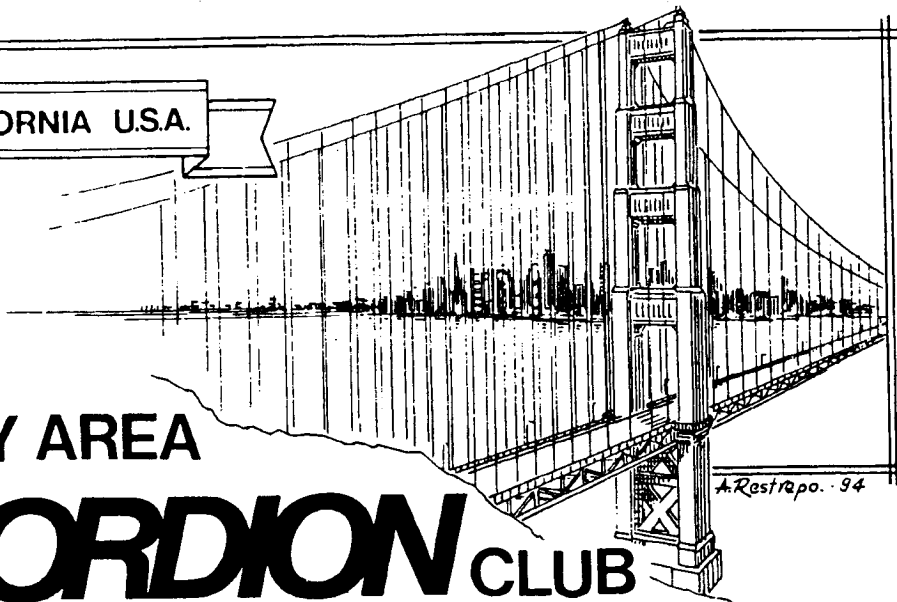
SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB

March, 1999



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Marian Kelly

Dear Members and Friends,

This month I want to make use of the fact that this column goes into such a marvelously visible spot in your newsletter. I want to talk about several issues which we'd like your input on, and then to ask you to respond either by phone or by email.

ACCORDION TEACHERS

We want to expand BAAC's web site (www.accordionclub.com) as soon as possible. That site must include a page on which we list all our Accordion Teachers. It can't be just a list. It should include enough information about each of you so that potential students will be able to choose from that page who in our club might best suit their particular needs.

Let me add that we are particularly interested in locating people who teach some type of button box or chromatic instrument, which is a frequent request. I'm trying to fill such a request from a fellow in San Francisco as I write this, but few members' names come to mind!

So, if YOU would like us to include your name on our webpage for Teachers, please give us the following information:

- Your name, address, phone/fax numbers, email address (if any).
- Type of accordion you play/teach.
- A few sentences about your teaching style. How rigorous are you? Must the student read music? Do you use a specific repertoire? Will you craft your lessons to the student's requests? Suggestion: you might ask yourself which students you would prefer NOT to take, then phrase your ideas for the web site in positive terms.

Send us your information either by mail to the Club address, by email to mkelly@best.com, or use our voicemail phone at (415) 974-9210.

We will add a sentence to that page which says that the Accordion Club is posting this teaching information as a service only and that we have no club opinions on which teachers are preferable.

Cont. page 4

Mark Your Calendars

April 6 (Tuesday). BAAC General Membership Meeting at *Verdi Club in San Francisco*, 2424 Mariposa at Potrero. 7:00 - 9:30pm+. **Annual Desert Night** bring goodies to share with your fellow members. Special guest appearances by Rahman Assadollahi, Robert and Brian Campanella and others. Contact Bob Berta at 510-450-5766 if you would like to play.

April 8 (Thursday). (And every 1st. Thursday) Meeting of the Accordion Circle of the East Bay. 7:30pm. 951 Aileen, Oakland. For info call 510-653-6983.

April 11 (Sunday). (and every 2nd Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. Germania Rest. 261 N. 2nd. St. 3:00pm to ? Bring your accordion!

April 11 and 18 (Sundays). The San Francisco Accordion Chamber Ensemble in concert. See insert.

April 11. Klezmer Workshop with Jeanette Lewicki. \$25 per day. At Boaz Accordions 2:00-4:00pm. Call for reservations and location...510-653-6983.

April 12. (Monday). 7:30pm. BAAC Board Meeting. Val Kieser's home at 3437 Crane Way, Oakland 510-531-4836. Guests welcome.

April 12 (Monday) (And every second Monday). Accordion Circle of the East Bay Ensemble practice. Beginning and intermediate players. 7:30pm, in West Berkeley at 816 Bancroft. Cost: \$10 per practice. Led by Henri Ducharme, 510-526-3255 or Jean O'Malley, 510-843-9958.

April 13 (Tuesday). (and every second Tuesday). Meeting of the Golden State Accordion-Aires. 7:00pm. Pietro's No.2. 679 Merchant St. Vacaville. Ca.

Cont. page 2

March Meeting Review

by Herb Meier and Bob Berta

The March meeting was a chance for some of our members to showcase the talented members of their families at our third annual **Family Night**.

MC, for the night, Herb Meier introduced Bob Berta on MIDI accordion and his daughter Kristine on flute. Bob performed *The Accordion Club March* which was written by a local teacher named A. Archivi in the mid 1920's and dedicated to the SF Accordion Club. Bob followed this up with a sequenced arrangement of Bizet's *Minuet from L'Arlesienne*. Kristine then performed *Tambourin* by Gossec accompanied by dad. Bob ended his program with a tribute to the Three Sons group by performing the electric guitar, organ and accordion parts simultaneously on his MIDI accordion in a medley of tunes..



Berta Family

Next up were John and Gwyn Lister, both on accordion. They performed *Julaida, Valley of the Moon* and *Wine Song*. We enjoyed the tunes but we did miss the rest of the family that played for us last year...hopefully we can get all the family back on our stage again.

Val Morris was joined by Sharon Walters, Steve Albini and Ron Borelli...all on accordion, Ben Sibley on drums, Fletcher Fleudujon on trumpet, Herbie Lewis on upright string bass (fabulous bass player with over 50 recordings to his credit!), and Aaron Novik on Bass Clarinet. They group performed Val's compositions *Past Eleven* and *Around the Corner*. These tunes are from Val's new CD which was reviewed in last months newsletter.



Lister Family

The intermission gave us a chance to again enjoy the goodies and "liquid refreshment" offered by the Verdi club to the soothing strains of Val Kieser's accordion.

Aldo Argenti was joined by daughters Diana and Gina and Aaron Schultz in *Ain't Misbehavin*, *On My Way*, and *I Get a Kick Out of You*.

Past president Peter DiBono joined Verdi Club manager, Jim Hillman in what had to be one of the most amazing duets we have witnessed in a long time. They were backed up by Herbie Lewis on bass, Ben Sibley on drums and Aaron Novik on Bass Clarinet. They performed *Embraceable You*, *There Will Never Be Another*



Val Morris and Friends

April 19 (Monday). (and every third Monday). Meeting of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods. 7:00pm. Volpi's in Petaluma.

May 4 (Tuesday). BAAC General Membership meeting featuring the ladies of the club. Contact Bob Berta to arrange a spot on the program for yourself by calling 510-450-5766.

May 8 (Saturday). Barbara Ann Barnett and the trio, 'Belle Beaucoup', will be playing at the Berkely Free Folk Festival at the Unitarian Church, corner of Cedar & Bonita at 4:30pm.

May 9 (Sunday). (and every 2nd Sunday). BAAC San Jose meeting. Germania Rest. 261 N. 2nd. St. 3:00pm to ? Bring your accordion!

May 28-30. 21st Annual Far West Button Box Jamboree. Fontana, Calif. Call Frank Vidergar at (909)422-1994 for more info.

July 16-18. Accordion Teachers Guild (ATG) Festival. Branson, MO. Call Amy Jo Sawyer at (618)632-2859.

June 17, 18, 19. Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration and Competition. Leavenworth, Washington. Call (509)548-5807.

July 31 (Saturday). Accordion Club of the Redwoods Summer Picnic.

August 28-29. Cotati Accordion Festival.

Sept. 18. (Saturday). BAAC annual picnic at Nature Friends picnic area in Oakland. Details to follow.

BAAC Ensemble practice first and third Wednesday of each month at Moose Lodge in Colma at 7535 Mission St. from 7:00pm-9:00pm. Contact Frank Montoro (650)574-4757 for additional information.

BAAC Fun Band practice fourth Wednesday of each month at Moose Lodge in Colma at 7535 Mission St. from 7:00pm-9:00pm. Contact Tom Cordoni @ 415-333-5625 for more information.

Beginners Support Groups/Bands
 East Bay 510-843-9958
 San Francisco 415-673-8835
 South Bay 408-258-1258

Please send Calendar Information to your Editor, using the address on the last page.

ACCORDIONIST WANTED

Versatile accordionist, all musical styles, wanted to form duo with Italian folk singer/guitarist. CD and gigs. Sal Di Maggio (415)566-6377

You, You Stepped Out of a Dream, Here's That Rainy Day

and *On a Clear Day*. Jim was a professional accordionist with the famous "Rat Pack" (Sinatra, Davis, Martin and the rest) and clearly is an amazing musician. It was hard deciding who was having



Argenti Family

the best time....the audience or Peter and Jim! Jim has some amazing stories to tell about his days with the Rat Pack. I am sure he would love to share them with us....perhaps he will be the subject of a interview column in a future edition of the Newsletter.

Final performer of the night was Ron Borelli. Ron performed *It Had Better Be Tonight*, a medley of *Carmen* and *Habanera*, a fantastic arrangement of *It's Wonderful* and ended with an inspired arrangement of *Under Paris Skies*. Ron is a performer with wonderful technic, great musicality and is an arranger without peer.



Jim and Peter

Bring desserts to share with your fellow club members next month at our annual Dessert Night. A very special guest is slated to appear.

Starting with the March meeting we will provide an escort to your car after the meeting if you have concerns about your safety. We haven't had any problems but we don't want to take a chance. If you need an escort contact any of the board members at the meeting.

Make sure you save the July meeting date. We are planning a HUGE event honoring the life accomplishments of Art Van Damme. Also mark your calendars for the September meeting for our big concert of the year featuring Peter Soave.



Ron Borelli

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A CHROMATIC ACCORDION

Similarly, we must have a Sales/Repair web page. We would like to include information about every club member involved in any aspect of this important area.

So tell us to include you. Please send us:

- Your name, business name, address, phone/fax numbers, hours of business, email address (if any).
- Describe briefly (max. 3 sentences) what service you have to offer the accordion community.

And send that information as directed above under Teachers.

WHO IS AVAILABLE TO ENTERTAIN Dec. 31, 1999?

We've received our first request for an accordionist to help welcome in the new century, and I'm convinced it will not be the last. This New Year's Eve promises to be a standout evening for not only revelers but also for musicians, because the fees are certain to be more in line with what good musicians deserve than is usually the case! The web site would be a good place to post both requests and names of persons willing to entertain, but it's not enough, since many don't have web access.

Therefore, if you would consider a New Year's Eve gig, please let us know, and give us enough specifics that we can recommend you to people who ask.

The current request comes from a restaurant on the West side of Lake Tahoe (Lakeville). In addition to a generous reimbursement, they offer food and lodging for that night. Richard Yaus has done this for the past two years, but can't do it this year. If you're interested, call Richard for details....

KQED

In December, 1997, you may recall that 60-or-so BAAC members manned the pledge phones at KQED one evening, raised an enormous amount of money, and were also allowed to feature accordionists playing on camera in 30-second spots six different times. We've wanted to schedule a repeat performance, but we're having difficulty identifying a date so that we can announce it in at least two newsletters, giving folks enough notice. (Gathering 60 volunteers that first time with three weeks' notice was not an easy task....).

We want to schedule another BAAC/KQED evening in August, but we're still unsure of the exact date. So, to all of you, please respond to this question:

- Can you please indicate to us your interest in helping at KQED one Thursday evening in August, specific date to be determined?

We're only asking for a statement of interest, not for a commitment right now. If we can start with names of interested folks, it will help considerably when we are actually assigned a specific date. We'll still need to make phone calls, but we won't be starting from scratch! Dick Schiller, who works at KQED, has suggested Thursday, and will help us negotiate with the station for accordion visibility.

Last time, some hearing-challenged members had difficulty because of the ambient noise level in the room. This time, we'll give such folks a separate, quiet room, where they'll be better able to handle calls.

So please, please let us know if you're even remotely interested in helping. Call (415) 974-9210 right now!

TEXAS CONVENTION

The Texas Accordion Association's annual convention in Plano, TX is coming up fast (April 8, 9, 10). A main feature of that convention is always a massed accordion band, conducted last year by Anthony Galla-Rini, and this year by Arlene Boddicker,

who has taught accordion since 1946, and who has provided 4-and 5-part music for half a dozen selections such as Granada; New York, New York; The Entertainer; and Bach's Sinfonia in B-flat.

I have all the parts for all the massed band music. So if you're thinking about attending TAA's convention, I'll be glad to send you a set of parts to let you really join in!

Norman Seaton, the genial President of the TAA, organizes this convention every year, and it gets better every time! This year he has talked Val Kieser into presenting a workshop on button box left hand. There will be a seminar on switching to a chromatic accordion, one on jazz accordion presented by Tony Dannon, one on going professional presented by Peter Soave, one on basic bass patterns plus bellows shake. Also expect a dealers' showcase, accordion swap shop, a vaudeville show, and an accordion concert.

For info, contact Norman at 11240 Drummond Dr., Dallas 75228 or nseaton1@ibm.net or (972) 270-3791 or the TAA website at www.accordions.com/taa.

.....
Pietro Deiro Trivia

by Vince Cirelli & Bob Berta

The restoration process is proceeding rapidly on Pietro Diero's 1917 accordion. Here are a few more historical bits of information and trivia about Pietro.

Pietro was born in Italy in 1888 but moved to the US and traveled through the state of Washington to Oregon and gradually ended up here in San Francisco, Calif. in 1909 at 21 years of age. He performed in all the Barbary Coast bars and after a spectator heard him play at one of these bars he was offered a job on the Orpheum circuit. He traveled throughout the US playing at major theatres. The accordion being restored was bought from Guerrini (dated June 6, 1917) in San Francisco although in one photo an identical accordion was seen but with different labeling indicating that a "twin" may be out there that was made in the mid-west by one of the other Piatanesi clan.

An interesting bit of incorrect accordion lore is that Pietro had crooked 3rd and 4th fingers. To accomodate this his keyboard was supposedly cut differently than the standard of the day. Actually this is not correct. His fingers were perfectly normal...but his accordion keys were cut out slightly near the E, F, B and C keys. This was not to allow for crooked fingers but instead to allow him, for instance, to depress an F while his fingers were located between the black keys. This modification allowed him to do arpeggios in that position more effectively. Prior to Pietro, the keyboards had much shorter keys and were narrower. The modifications he developed have seen their way onto all modern PA keyboards. Thanks to Pietro your modern accordion is a better playing instrument!

For Sale

Yamaha EM85 P.A. System \$449 and Polytone MINI S15B \$325 Mint Conditon - Paul - 925-830-2935.

BAAC Scholarship Program

by Val Kieser

The BAAC Scholarship Committee is up and running again. On the committee are: Ed Massolo, Chairman; Mary-Alice Eldon, Lynn Ewing, Val Kieser, and Sharon Walters.

With the money already available in the Scholarship Fund, we are launching a program wherein we will select four applicants in the coming months who will receive up to \$300 apiece toward learning to play accordion with qualified teachers.

Meanwhile, we will be launching a major fund-raising effort for our future Scholarship activities. Our aim is to impart the joy of accordion music and accordion playing to students and potential students who otherwise would be unable to study or to continue to study accordion.

Tax-deductible donations of accordions are also welcomed. Surely there are hundreds of accordions sitting in Bay Area closets, unused for many years. We will attempt to get word out to the general public that donations of such accordions would be most welcome-or, perhaps we can invite these people to learn the joy of playing their accordions themselves. So, spread the word!

We are all familiar with the wonderful work Lynn Ewing is doing in encouraging young people in her school to play accordion, at no cost to them. Some of them have already decided they like it and bought their own accordions. Congratulations, Lynn!

A copy of our Scholarship application will be found as an insert in this newsletter. Stay tuned for more news of our scholarship activities.

.....
Great Giulietti Give Away

The winner of the Great Giulietti Give Away featured in last months newsletter was Barbara Corsiglia. Several members tried to guess the accordionist, the group's name or the name of the TV show the group performed on occasionally.

The accordionist in the picture was non-other than Newsletter editor Bob Berta at around 12 years old. The group was the Jerry Herman Accordion Ensemble and the TV show they appeared on was "Western Dance Time". They also appeared at many civic performances in the cities around Eureka.

Jerry Herman was a prominent and very popular music teacher in Eureka, California and still resides there.

The prize Barbara won is a Giulietti accordion...well sort of...it is a 45 year old Giulietti cloisonne pin miniature accordion that is a real collector item.

FOR SALE

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Accordion to Boaz

by Boaz Rubin

CHANGING THE BASSES

I have been getting a lot of questions about converter bass accordions lately. The converter bass allows musicians to expand the number of sounds available and the ways that those sounds can be used, but unlike MIDI or electronics, all the sounds have the richness and warmth of a true acoustical instrument. So how does a converter bass work and what does it do?

To begin with, the combination of chords, basses and counter basses that nearly all of us learned to play on is called a Stradella bass system, named after a town in northern Italy that used to be a major center of accordion building. Stradella bass systems commonly come with either four or five sets of reeds.

The classic converter bass system that was developed for the American market some years ago is actually a modified Stradella system, with a switch that eliminates all the notes out of the chord buttons, except one which is kept to form a scale. This is done with sliders such as are used to effect the register changes on both the left and right hand side of ordinary accordions. The effect of the sliders is to leave the third in the major chord and the tonic in the minor, then repeat the third again but this time an octave higher in the 7th chord, and then the tonic again, but this time an octave higher in the diminished chord. The result is two repetitions of the bass and counter bass row, with each repetition an octave higher than its predecessor.

This system has the advantages of familiarity and low cost but is technically challenging and is normally limited in range because of the difficulty of putting more than five sets of reeds in a Stradella system bass machine.

In the European market, the top accordion builders have been supplying a converter bass accordion that is at heart a free bass instrument - that is to say, an accordion where the bass machine alone functions like a button chromatic keyboard with as many as seven sets of reeds - and that's not including the reeds on the right hand! An additional mechanism allows the free bass to be converted to Stradella bass at the flip of a switch. The resulting range facilitates so many different reed and tone combinations that the instrument is one of the most expressive acoustical musical instruments being built today. These accordions are beginning to appear in the Bay Area. The early adopters are musicians oriented toward classical and experimental music. I have reason to believe that the jazz world is beginning to discover this instrument. A whole new world is opening up to accordionists and I'm looking forward to seeing where it will take us.

Accordion answer man Boaz Rubin is a professional repairman based in Oakland. Send your accordion-care questions to Boaz care of this newsletter or e-mail Boaz directly at <schmatte@well.com>.

Man With An Accordion

by Judith Rubin

A total of 420 (wow...what a great turnout....editor!) people turned out to enjoy an unusual combination of accordion and silent film at Berkeley's Fine Arts Cinema, March 3-6.

Local accordion virtuoso Henri Ducharme created a powerful new score for the 1928 Russian silent classic, *Man With A Movie Camera*. The 69-minute film, directed by Dziga Vertov, is well-known among movie buffs and a staple in film education today.

Opening night was especially festive, with a special pre-show performance from the East Bay Accordion Circle Parade Band. The band set up in front of the theater and drew a small crowd, including a troop of 25 Girl Scouts who had come all the way from Sonoma for the show. (They ate all the Hershey's kisses, too!)

Ducharme's score was inspired by a variety of sources, including Russian folk and pop music and the theme to *Captain Kangaroo*. The music was rich and dramatic, and executed with artistry and feeling on a custom Armando Bugari accordion. It was well tailored to the imagery and pace of the film, which told



its story at a crisp, coherent but increasingly frantic pace. Although the original score of the film was lost, Dziga Vertov's original, detailed instructions for how the film should be accompanied survived.

Some members of the audience were attracted primarily by the film's reputation; others came for the music and knew nothing of the film. Quite a number were drawn principally by the words "live accordion music" in the press notices and several had driven from as far away as Sacramento and Placerville. Many familiar faces from the accordion community were seen, including Lou Jacklich, Tom Torriglia, Jim Rebhan, Jean O'Malley, Linda Peach, Ron Borelli, Steve Mobia, Jeanette Lewicki, Burt Pankler, Michael Moser, Sarah Pope, Joanne Hipp, Robin Goodfellow, Tom Larson, John Tarbot, Tessa Morrone and Donald "Duck" Bailey. (Apologies if any names are misspelled, or if we left you off the list by mistake.)

On closing night, as the tuxedoed Ducharme took his final bow, he was presented with a dozen roses. The event was sponsored by Boaz Accordions. Thanks to everyone who attended, and to the Fine Arts Cinema for their bold programming and support of our great local music community.

Two Tips On Sight Reading

by Jim Holliday (Bay Area Accordion Club)

Basically, sight reading is a matter of seeing a note on a staff, identifying the note, locating it's exact left hand or right hand keyboard position and then playing it.

Location of a note can be aided by developing tactile awareness, or touch sensitivity in the fingers. The right hand fingers can use the groups of two and three black keys as "feelers" to assist while the fingers of the left hand use marked bass buttons.

Identifying notes, using two different clefs with their respective leger lines can be a lifelong problem for some of us. Here are two tips that MAY be of some help to those people.

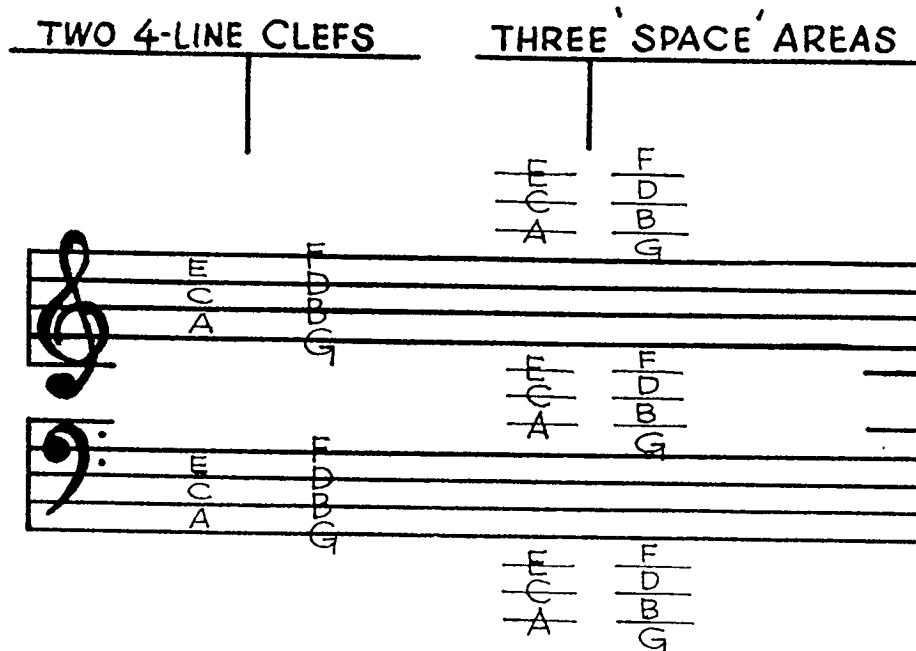
Method 1.

Emphasize the upper four lines of the Treble Clef, and the lower four lines of the Bass Clef.

This creates two 4-line clefs that are identical to each other, and three 'space areas' that are identical to each other.

The note 'C' is always in the center of each 4-line clef.

The note 'C' is always two leger lines above, or below each clef.



Method 2.

Whenever you look at a bass clef, mentally visualize an extra line under the clef. This is an 'E' line which then converts the bass clef to sight read exactly the same as the treble clef.



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If you would like to play at a meeting contact Bob Berta at 510-450-5766

