



Steel Guitar 'Rag'

April "Official Publication of the Southwestern Steel Guitar Association" 2015

Hello Everyone!

Looks like warm weather is nearly here! And I for one, prefer the warm/hot to the cold! Good thing I live in Arizona! And I am glad I do.

The Board of Directors has already started planning a great year for the SWSGA. We welcome new board members Fred Justice and Otto Shill. They are bringing some novel and exciting ideas to our organization. It is going to be a great year for us!

As I write this, Thursday, March 26th, will be Bud Isaacs' 87th birthday. I just called and sang Happy Birthday to him, and he said he is fine and to say hello to everyone for him. Bud is a legend in the steel guitar world, and we all owe him a lot. Happy Birthday my friend!

Don't forget to put the Chula Vista, California dates on your calendar. On May 9th. and 10th, we will be having a Band In A Box Jam at the Chula Vista RV Park. If you can attend, you will not regret it. This is a chance to join in and play, or just come to listen. We usually get to see and hear some of our California friends who do not come to our Arizona jams. Many great players will be there; JayDee Maness, Frank Carter, and many others. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy our favorite instrument and it's music. There are several hotels in the area, and if you have an RV and would like to stay at the facility, call



"Happy Birthday Bud Isaacs!"

Peggy Porter at (928) 701-1488 for more information.

This has been a busy season for many of the working musicians. I, for one, have been very busy between working in the Phoenix Valley, Yuma, and all points between, and loving every minute of it! I am also honored to say that I have been hired to play steel guitar with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra on April 25th and 26th for their pop series salute to Nashville. I have never before had the opportunity to work with such a large prestigious orchestra, and I AM CRANKED! This is an experience of a lifetime for me.

We do hope you are enjoying steel guitar and it's music. Our favorite instrument is not dead. Let's keep it in the forefront!

Till next time,

Billy Easton,
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Board of Directors:

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Otto Shill, Secretary

Peggy Porter, Treasurer

Fred Justice, Events Director

This newsletter is published monthly from P.O. Box 1128, Globe AZ. 85502 and presents information for the members of the SWSGA, a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization.

Editor: Bill Tauson

** Upcoming events **

Chula Vista Ca. jam on May 9th & 10th. Make your reservations at (800) 741-6878. [Http://www.chulavistarv.com](http://www.chulavistarv.com).

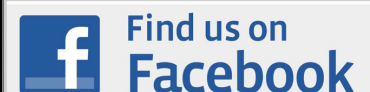
"It's your turn!"

As you know, we are so fortunate to have instructional and informational articles by some of our members, who share their time and talents. We also value your input to help us tailor those articles to your needs and interests.

Please take a moment to give us some feedback and tell us what you would like to see.

It is important to all of us that this be your newsletter

Bill Tauson-SGR editor.



SWSGA MEMBERS

Spring time is here. However, the weather is a little warm. Some of the winter visitors probably are heading home. Have a very safe trip home and we'll see you in the fall.

The Chula Vista Jam will be on May 9th. & 10th. in the San Diego area. The climate will be great, and of course the music and friends will be fantastic. We will have the usage of the club house next to the pool for the jam.



Lots to do for the girls that want to shop! We have traveled on the El Train to Old San Diego and Glasslight District, nice shopping.

Contact Chula Vista RV Park at 800-741-6878 or <http://www.chulavistarv.com>

Peggy Porter

Kevin's Kromatics



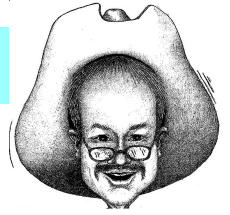
Well here we are again and today I am going to show you a real gem. I use this all the time and it is pretty easy to play. Many chromatic half steps throughout the phrase. Remember, it is a forward roll and learn one section at a time. It really works well with the phrase I showed you last month. It can actually be a continuation of that phrase, with some modification.

These little passing tones really can spice up your playing and really set you apart. Next month, we will pick apart a real knuckle buster!! Till then, keep those fingers in the strings!!

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3									3
4		10	9R	8	6R	5	3		4
5	9A—10A	10A—9A	9A—8A	8A—6A	6A—5A	5A—3A	3A—3		5
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9									9
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Click on the link below to go to Kevin's website. The above lesson is tabbed and an audio sample of Kevin playing the lick is available.

<http://steelguitarcafe.com/sgr>

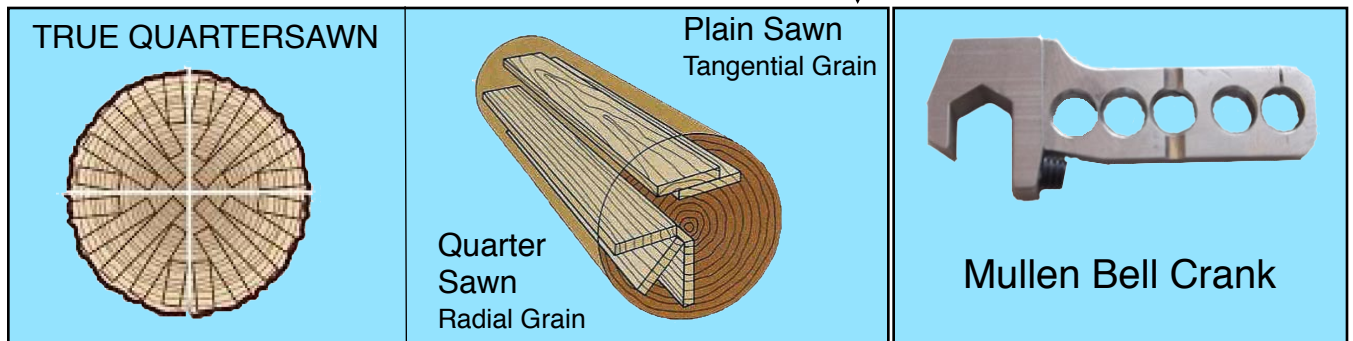
Ax Ron ????????**By Ron Pruter**

Welcome to my latest addition to this fine publication. Please Email me at ronprutermusic@outlook.com and I'll try to answer your questions, each month, as space allows. Questions like, what's a comp, what's a split, why gauged rollers? You name it. Sounds like fun. I'm looking forward to your questions.

Subject #1

QUARTER SAWN WOOD Cabinet drop, don't you hate it!! Quick definition. The going flat of (by-standing) strings when you apply downward force, or even a tightening force, to your steel via pedals or levers.

At the last SWSGA show I had a discussion with some prominent builders about my idea of using quarter sawn wood for tops. QS wood is cut in a manner to produce a much stiffer board with more stability. QS wood has the grain marks running straight up and down, as seen from the end of the guitar. The more grain lines the better. (That's where the strength is.) My idea was pooh poohed by a couple of builders. Mark Giles then entered the conversation and totally agreed it would be a good thing to do. QS boards are cut from the tree as shown in the following illustration. Notice the amount of waste. This is why QS cuts cost more and hence the lack of use. ↓

**Subject #2**

You'll notice this Mullen "bell crank" has a severe wear groove right across the center hole. This was actually caused by another pull rod being dragged across it for a long time. Of course this situation would not have come from the factory but was done by well meaning mechanic. This situation creates much unnecessary drag and friction that surely made the pedal/lever feel draggy and unpleasant. For this reason, check under your guitar and make sure none of your pull rods are rubbing another puller when a pedal or lever is engaged. Fun Fact- Did you know Balsa wood is a hardwood? It's in the angiospermae family (Loses its leaves in the winter) making it a "Hardwood".

Keep On Steelin' RP



Professor Twang's E9 Grab Bag!

Hi fellow steelers, John McClung here (aka Mr. Twang / Professor Twang) coming to you from Olympia, WA. For questions about this lesson, or inquiries about private Skype lessons, write to me at: steelguitarlessons@earthlink.net, or phone me at 310-480-0717. I welcome suggestions for topics for this column!
<http://steelguitarlessons.com>

Resources for smarter, faster learning & improving — Part 2

(Continued from March 2015 column)

MULTI-MEDIA RESOURCES

Frenchy Messier:

<https://sites.google.com/site/frenchypedals/teelguitarstore/new-items/new-cds-and-tabs>

Frenchy operates a complete steel guitar retail store in New Mexico (steels, amps and accessories), gives live in-store lessons, and has written some excellent courses for all levels of players. He also carries courses written by other players.

Mark Van Allen:

http://www.markvanallen.com/store_books.html

Mark records instructional courses in the "talk tape" format, explaining very clearly how to play licks, intros, and solos note by note, but does not provide written tab. If you can live without tablature, his courses are very good.

For a longer list of instructors and instructional materials, go to this page on the Steel Guitar Forum:

http://b0b.com/wp/?page_id=121

then from the category dropdown menu, select Steel Guitar Instruction, then click GO.

Paid Online Video Instruction

There's not a lot of this available, but here are a couple of recent and interesting sites:

<https://nashvilleprosteel.com/info.cfm>

This site offers, for a paid monthly or quar-

terly subscription, a number of videos of well-known Nashville session steel players (Mike Johnson, Randle Currie, Gary Morse, etc.) doing their thing and explaining what's going through their minds as they listen to tracks, then work and rework their overdubbed steel parts. Quite a unique approach, it's more a sharing of the session players' mindset and stylistic approach, not specific instruction on licks and phrases. Worth a look, I think, and there are short, free video samples you can watch to try it out first.

<http://radyguide.com/pedal-steel/>

This site offers E9 instruction from someone new to me, Jeff Rady, on a paid subscription basis. Free demos available when you sign up. Clear instruction with a helpful 3 camera view. Couple of quibbles I have: the teacher is playing to a track which is barely audible; and he mentions song title but not artist, so tracking down the original song with the recorded steel parts is a little harder than need be. Still, there's useful stuff here.

Free Online Video Instruction

Happily for students, there is a ton of free online video instruction. For instructors hoping to make a living at teaching, "free instruction" is not welcome news. But again, this is where a live teacher still has the advantage in being able to coach a student in many custom ways that are impossible with canned videos.

continued ►

Professor Twang's E9 Grab Bag!

Simply go to <http://youtube.com>, type “pedal steel lessons” into the search field, and you’ll find enough material to keep you busy forever. Prominent teachers include: Mickey Adams, Dave Anderson, the late Bobbe Seymour, and Zane King. Less-known but worthy teachers include Paul Sutherland, Troy Brenningmeyer, and Johnny Up oK, who plays left-handed, so you lefties will find his tutorials particularly helpful.

I especially like a series of tutorials by Jonathan Gregg on the howcast.com YouTube channel (<http://www.howcast.com/> then type “pedal steel” in the search field) which are extremely helpful for beginners, with good camera work and sound, and down-to-earth advice on how to start learning the E9 neck, what pedals and levers do, what a co-pedent is, explanation of pedal/lever “splits”, etc. Very annoying video ads between segments, and no way to make them go away, unfortunately.

LEARNING FROM TABLATURE

While I strongly feel that transcribing steel parts yourself will really help you become a better player quickly (see my October 2014 SG Rag column for more about that), there will be times when you can’t quite figure out how a pro player plays a lick or solo on a record, or you might not have time to do it yourself, or just don’t feel like doing it. What then?

Try to find someone else’s transcription! It may not be 100% accurate, but it will probably be in the ballpark, and at least get you very close to playing a part, lick or solo you like or need to learn.

We live in this wonderful age of the Internet, where anything you want to know can be found in just seconds with a good online search via Google, Bing, etc.

So in a general internet-wide search, you might type in “John Hughey intro look at us tablature,” and chances are you’ll find it somewhere. In fact, I just did that, and even found John Hughey’s own tab of “Look At Us”—for just \$11.00, postage included!

That’s another related topic: I strongly urge you to support the original recording artists when you can, by purchasing their recordings and authorized tablature. Many others now sell their transcribed tablature of various songs and steel parts, but chances are they aren’t completely accurate, and rewarding the artist (when possible) who created the part in the first place is just the right thing to do, I hope you’ll agree.

Tablature Sources

There are more and more 3rd-party sources for very good tablature, and many can be found online at the Steel Guitar Forum > Steel Guitar Topics > Tablature, and also on the Forum > For Sale: Music, Lessons, etc.

If you can’t find tab you want anywhere, either of those spots on the Forum are the place to ask others if they have it or know where to find it; often, someone will volunteer to transcribe a solo or intro for you, just for the challenge, usually no fee for that!

All the multi-media resources cited previously are also good sources for high quality tablature.

BOOKS

Even in this digital age, there’s still a place for books. You can probably learn something from every book and course written, but here’s my personal list of highly regarded books you should look into:

Pedal Steel Guitar, by Winnie Winston (Oak Publications). A classic!

continued ►

Professor Twang's E9 Grab Bag!

Books by "Scotty" (DeWitt Scott):

Mel Bay's Anthology of Pedal Steel Guitar, E9 Chromatic Tuning

Mel Bay's Deluxe Pedal Steel Guitar Method, E9th Chromatic Tuning

First Lessons Pedal Steel, by Jay Leach (also an SWSGA show seminar instructor); Mel Bay Books

How to Play By Ear, by Jack Hatfield, a great general music skills book full of essential info for would-be musicians; clearly explains the Nashville numbers system of chords, and much more. I require my students to buy this book, it's that good.

So there you have it, a pretty good list of learning resources!

When you combine these resources with my

tips for smarter home practice (*Steel Guitar Rag*, February 2014 column), you should find yourself racing ever-faster on your path to steel guitar "mastery." I put that word in quotes, because I don't think anyone ever truly masters this amazing and challenging instrument— we just become "betterers."

Remember, becoming a good steel player **requires** 5 things: patience; practice; persistence; available time to work at it; and **faith** that you can do it. You really can!!

I apologize if I've left out a teacher or resource that you've found valuable and feel should have been included...I don't know everything and everyone!

Till next time...play party!

Professor Twang

In Memory of Sandy Brandt

Sadly, a few weeks ago we lost one of the steel guitar's most ardent supporters, Sandy Brandt.

Sandy and her husband, George, have supported the SWSGA and have been fans of the instrument for many years. With her passing, George is interested in finding a good home for her steel guitar, volume pedal and practice amplifier.

The guitar is a professional grade and pro-equipped instrument. It is a Pre-RP Mullen Double 10, black mica instrument with 8 foot pedals and 8 knee levers, S/N 2316. This is the model with the tuners built into the key head. Some people feel that this increases the sustain. The levers and pedals are black anodized and the E9th neck is fully functional, as Sandy played only E9th. The C6th neck is in good order and the 10th string has been removed. It presently has a George L E-66 pickup on the E9th neck and a stock Mullen, single coil pickup on the C6th neck. Dave Beaty tuned the guitar and setup the E9th pulls and it was tested by Troy Porter. It plays easily and sounds wonderful-great tone! It needs a cleaning/detailing and new strings and it will be ready to gig 6 nights a week.

The guitar's carrying case is heavily worn and while functional, it should be rebuilt or replaced due to road use before it was purchased by Sandy and George.

The pedal is a Telonics Model FP-100 and works well. Its power supply is used, but serviceable. It carries a lifetime warranty.

The amplifier is a Yamaha G50-112 Reverb Amp, S/N 5437 (one 12" speaker).

At the moment, the equipment is currently being stored at Telonics in Mesa, Arizona for those wishing to have a look at it.

If it doesn't sell right away, George may take it back to Wisconsin in early April. George can be reached via his cell phone at (920) 763-5362.



Steel Guitar Instructors:

Troy Porter in Globe Az. is available for E-9th instruction at any level. Call Troy at (928) 425-5520.

Daun Suarez is available for beginning and intermediate instruction in the north Tucson/Marana area. Call Daun at (520) 682-6609.

Rich Brennion is available at all levels for E-9th instruction in the Tucson area. Call Rich at (520) 661-5682

Blackie Taylor, at "Blackie Taylor Music", in Riverside, Ca, is available to teach all tunings, pedal and non-pedal guitar, dobro, reading music, etc. Blackie is located at 5950 Mission Blvd., Riverside, Ca. from noon to 6:30 P.M. (951) 686-4010.

John McClung teaches E9 lessons in his Olympia, Wa. home studio, or online via "Skype". Call John at (310) 480-0717 or email him at, "steelguitarlessons@earthlink.net".

Margie Mays is available for teaching non pedal, all tunings, E9th pedal steel and learning to read sheet music. Call Margie in Mesa at (480) 807-5443, or email her at, "margiendon@aol.com".

Rick Schmidt is available to teach bass, non-pedal steel, and pedal steel guitar, both E9th and C6th tunings in the North San Diego County area, or online via, "Skype", specializing in improvisation and harmony. Call Rick at (951) 442-9621 or email him at, "questforgigs@gmail.com".

Fred Justice teaches steel guitar in the Phoenix/Mesa area. Call Fred at (480) 986-2599 or (480) 235-8797, or email him at, "fredsmusic@q.com".

Chuck Lettes teaches pedal steel guitar, (E9th and C6th), and lap steel lessons in the Denver, Co. area. Contact Chuck at (720) 545-4803, "clettes@comcast.net", or his website, "chucklettes.com".

Contact Billy Easton (702) 280-9557 and your listing will appear here!



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Mr. Twang

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www.swsteelguitar.com

**Please feel free to contact any member
of the Board with questions or concerns:**

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***Regarding this newsletter,
or material for future issues, contributing articles, photos, etc,
contact: Bill Tauson, Editor, (562) 652-9977 or email at,
"swsgaeditor@icloud.com".***

******Invite a friend or fellow musician to join the SWSGA!******



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