



Steel Guitar 'Rag'

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

Hello Everyone!

Welcome to another edition of the SWSGA's "Steel Guitar Rag", the official publication of the Southwestern Steel Guitar Association.

Our annual business meeting and spring jam was held at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel in Phoenix on February 21st. Although we did not have as many performers as usual, a great time was had by those of us who participated. Frank Carter was on hand with his Band In A Box, complete with screen and projector. Some of us had to leave early due to performances scheduled for later that day. We are planning a jam in Chula Vista, California on May 9th and 10th. If you have an RV, you can make arrangements to stay right at the venue. Call Peggy Porter for more information.

At our annual business meeting, we installed the new directors of the SWSGA. Welcome to Fred Justice, Otto Shill, and incumbent Troy Porter on your elections. We are hopeful that this team can work well together and produce a banner year for the SWSGA. The other directors are Peggy Porter and I. Please welcome the new directors



Participants at the 2015 Phoenix Steel Guitar Jam held on February 21st.

with me. In the coming months, we will be attempting to update the bylaws. We welcome input from any of the members with constructive suggestions. We promise to keep you up to date with any pending changes.

The Texas Steel Guitar Association's annual Jamboree is just around the corner. It will be held on March 12-15, 2015. Several of our members will be making the trip to the 31st annual jamboree, held at the Sheraton DFW, 4440 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX. This is always a great show, and I would encourage each of you to attend if you can.

Keep on playing and promoting our favorite instrument....THE STEEL GUITAR!!

Billy Easton, Chairman

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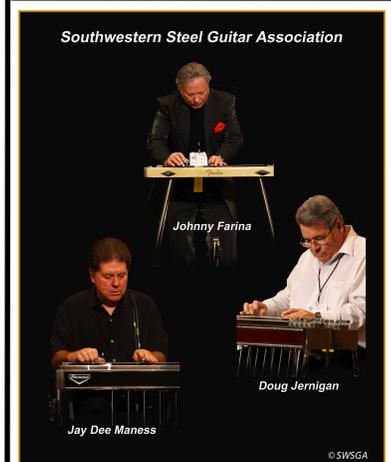
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- Fred Justice, Events Director

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).



3 Great reasons to attend a steel guitar show!

 Find us on Facebook

Treasurer's Message

As all of you are aware, the 2015 Show is behind us. I now have all the income and cost for producing the show.

Income: \$36,889.48
Costs: \$34,528.69
Profit: \$2,360.79

Thank you to all the volunteers, vendors, and donations to help us obtain this profit. A very special "Thank You" to Frank Carter, Telonics, Red Dirt Cases and D2F Covers for the Steel guitar donations and Pearson Foundation for their donation.

The attendance was up slightly from the 2014 year. There were nearly 700 badges typed. This would include staff, musicians, vendors and attendees. Ike Eickhoff brought 38

attendees from his community. Thanks, Ike, hope to see you next year.

There were 18 new members who joined at the show. There are a few 2014 members who have not renewed your membership. This may be your last newsletter until you have renewed. Please mail your dues to:

SWSGA
P.O.Box 1129
Globe, AZ. 85502

The spring Jam was held February 21, 2015. There were 8 steel players and smaller audience, probably due to the timeframe. We had a great time and fantastic music. We are trying to make arrangements to have another jam in April. Also, don't forget the Chula Vista RV Park Jam. The website if you have an RV is, <http://www.chulavistarv.com>. You do not have to stay at the park to participate. Bring your steel and have a good time!
Peggy Porter

31st Annual Texas Steel Guitar Jamboree March 12-15, 2015

Paul Franklin JayDee Maness Buck Reid
Ronnie Miller Doug Jernigan Dag Wolf
Herb Steiner Bert Rivera Joe Wright
Mike Sigler Steve Palousek
Tommy Dodd Mike Sweeney Russ Hicks
Robbie Springfield Zane King

****remember, schedules change and so may our list of confirmed players****

BUCK REID'S STEEL GUITAR SEMINAR

BEGINNER AND INTERMEDIATE
LOTS OF NEW IDEAS AND INFO
THURSDAY, mARCH 12, 9AM-4PM
\$70

Buck's contact info:

Address:
8921 - E Saundersville Rd.
Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
Email: buckreid@comcast.net

Steel Guitar and Equipment/Accessory Manufacturers

Rick Alexander Non-Pedal Show

Buddy Bryant Showcase *Free Seminars*

*Western Swing Dance, Saturday Nite

Special guests:

Johnny Bush
Curtis Potter
Mike Siler

Sheraton DFW Hotel, Irving, TX, 972-929-8400

Our overflow hotel is the Holiday Inn Express, Irving, TX, 972-929-4499

Justice Steel Guitar and Case Giveaway SD10 with 3 and 4

Sunday, March 15, 2015 about 3pm

entry available with the purchase of a ticket

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL US AT 817-558-3481 OR

VISIT WWW.TEXASSTEELGUITAR.ORG



Professor Twang's E9 Grab Bag!

Hi fellow steelers, John McClung here (aka Mr. Twang and 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: 310-480-0717. I welcome suggestions for topics for this column! <http://steelguitarlessons.com>

Resources for smarter, faster learning & improving — Part 1

THIS MONTH I HAVE LOTS TO say about “learning smarter”!

Let's start with how best, in general, to learn to play this challenging instrument. Or improve your playing, if you've already been at it a while.

There are many ways to speed up learning and improving:

- live instruction (one-on-one in-person, or via Skype)
- videos and CD's
- online video tutorials
- books

I'll discuss each method and offer recommendations in each category, but note, this is NOT a comprehensive list, we live in a world rich in resources; you'll have to do a lot of your own research and evaluation.

“LIVE” LEARNING

Hands down, **the best way to learn to play pedal steel is in-person lessons with a qualified and experienced player/teacher.**

Not all players are good teachers, mind you, so when looking for a teacher, try to find someone local to you who has a proven track record of successful teaching, not just some local musician who plays steel.

That may turn out to be impossible in your locale. In that case, I recommend you turn to **live lessons over Skype** (live video chat) with a qualified instructor. Learning via Skype

is the next best thing to in-person lessons; only a “live” or Skype teacher can observe your technique, posture and many other factors to guide you on your path and prevent you from “burning in” bad technique habits. A live teacher can also answer your specific questions and customize your learning topics.

The next best method would be special **steel guitar schools** to which you travel and attend with others in a group setting. Not only will you get a low cost/hour for an in-depth course, you'll get some personal attention and oversight from the instructor(s), plus camaraderie, encouragement, and maybe useful info from fellow attendees. I know of only one school like this, taught by great Texas steeler Larry Tolliver, who also teaches seminars at our annual SWSGA steel show:

<http://www.westtexassteelguitarschool.com>

Next in effectiveness would be to attend **online webinars**, in which the teacher instructs multiple students simultaneously, each student watching from his or her home computer. As I understand it, the instructor in an online webinar won't be able to observe you like a one-on-one Skype instructor can. The main advantage of group webinars is the much lower cost to each student for semipersonalized instruction, and the ability to ask questions and perhaps even suggest topics for future sessions. Here is one such resource for webinars:

cont.

Professor Twang's E9 Grab Bag!

William Litaker:

<http://www.williamlitaker.com/LiveInfo.html>

Steel Show Seminars

Don't forget that most steel guitar shows and conventions include great seminars taught by top professional players. On the current circuit you'll be able to study in a seminar situation with Paul Franklin Jr., Doug Jernigan, Joe Wright, Buck Reid, Jay Dee Maness and many others. Take advantage of these opportunities! I've regretted my whole life missing chances to take seminars from my idol, Buddy Emmons.

MULTI-MEDIA LEARNING

This category includes purchased CD's and DVD's, and online video, both free and fee-based.

CD's and DVD's for purchase

There have been several sources for good steel guitar audio and video instruction over the years, and perhaps the most recognized and respected source is material provided by Jeff Newman, the late lamented pedal steel instructor to the world. I heartily recommend everything he put out, and it's all still available from his website: <http://jeffran.com>, now run by his widow, Fran Newman. Jeffran sells audio tracks, with and without steel, tablature, and videos on DVD.

Other excellent resources:

Doug Beaumier:

<http://www.dougsteel.com>

Excellent tablature and tracks for a variety of styles: country, pop, standards, Western swing and Hawaiian. There's also a link to Doug's YouTube channel with many video demos of Doug playing pedal and non-pedal steel guitar.

Joe Wright: <http://www.pedalsteel.com>

Joe is a brilliant player and teacher. He's probably the most analytical of all instructors, with hyper-detailed charts to explain many ideas and concepts. He's also a master practitioner and teacher of his style of pick-blocking. Joe has many courses for sale, and teaches live via Skype.

Doug Jernigan:

<http://digndoug.com/index.htm>; there's a link on this site to Doug's store for CD's and instructional material; Doug also gives private one-on-one lessons in his home studio: learn from a modern master/monster!

Paul Franklin Jr.: <http://paul-franklin.com>;

Paul is an excellent teacher, and sells just a couple of E9 instructional videos, plus several CD's of both E9 and C6 instruction in the "talk tape" format (no tablature provided). Learn from THE most-recorded session steel player in the modern age.

Mike Neer:

<http://www.steelinstruction.com>

Mike teaches non-pedal steel via an interesting hybrid of customized video lessons and live Skype. He also has quite a bit of non-pedal instructional tablature for sale. I'd say this is for the intermediate or advanced player. If you're a non-pedal jazz guy, Mike is your man.

John Ely: <http://www.hawaiiansteel.com>

John, formerly with Asleep at the Wheel, specializes in non-pedal swing and hawaiian styles, has tab for sale, and teaches via Skype.

Part 2 continues next month:

- more multi-media resources
 - sources for tablature
 - recommended books
-

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.

Restringing

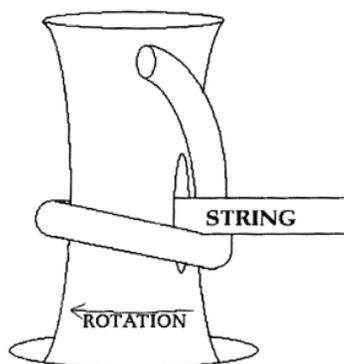
While working on my last customer's guitar, I noticed the 3rd string (.011) kept going flat. I quickly identified a recurring problem. The string was simply slipping through the tuning machine head. The 3rd, being the least rigid string, didn't allow the bend alone to hold it back. Imagine if the string was just a piece of thread. It would simply pull right through the hole in the machine head unless you outsmart it. Some people try to tie their strings in knots **GRRRR!!** The tool I created (see below) will help you untie those strings and cut time off of any restring. Just hook a loop close to the end of the string and pull it loose. It was made from a 0/3.25MM crochet needle and a piece of maple for a handle.

You'll also notice I've altered the string crank by rounding the corners. They always seem to bump stuff and slow me down if I wouldn't stay perfectly perpendicular.

Locking the String

Go through the hole in the tuning machine head. Allow about 6" lift in the middle of string. Grab the waste end and come back around and while keeping it tight, bend it around the string where it entered the hole. (See Drawing) I bend it away from the tuning head piece so the cut off end won't scratch the finish on there. Once you get that bend on there, you can cut the string. You don't want to cut a straight string. Windings can loosen and it can sound bad. Go over and over that waste end of string, pinning and locking it against the post. Wind in or out, keeping in mind you want the string to go straight over the roller nut and not pulled to one side. Also, don't end your winding with the string ending over the hole in the post. That could be a sharp edge. **Keep On Steelin' RP**

CORRECT STRINGING



By R. Pruter



Kevin's Kromatics....

Kevin Ryan here again. I hope that last month's lesson gave you some ideas on adding a passing note here and there to add some spice to your playing. We are going to continue along that line of thinking today with a phrase that can be a bit of a knuckle buster for some. Remember, take the first 3-4 notes of anything I show you and play it a million times, then the next 3 or 4 notes and practice those a million times. Try playing those 7-8 notes together, get it as close as you can and play that a million times. So far, you've played it 3 million times! Just kidding, (kind of). You really can frustrate yourself if you take on the whole phrase all at once. Often, I would walk away from something I was trying to learn because I would tell myself, "I'll never be able to play that!" Nonsense! You've got to put in the elbow grease!

Ok, it's time for lesson #2. This is a nice little phrase that keeps you in the "G" chord, but puts you on top of the "C" 8th fret open position chord or 4 chord. You might think of it as a pedals down lick at the 10th fret. Some interesting chromatic notes tie this together nicely. If you notice the last note you end up with is a "G" note. Ending up and sitting at the 8th fret allows you to choose to stay there and play into the "C" chord or 4 chord, or stay in "G" and play back up to the 10th fret. One thing, this is a basic forward finger roll exercise.

Next month I will continue with this phrase and show you some more chromatic choices. Till then, keep your fingers in the strings!

Kevin

1				
2		10L	9	8L
3				
4		10	9	8
5	9A — 10A	10A — 9A	9A — 8A	8A — 8
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

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>

Thinking C6-by Rick Schmidt

Hello again steel players...more thoughts about the C6 tuning.

I've been trying to formulate how to best approach this series, and I've decided that for now the way to go is to look at it from the perspective of the "back neck" of a D10 Pedal steel, and not so much from the non-pedal side of things. That being said, I know many of you 2 neck steel owners want to get to the pedals right away but I think to understand this tuning, we must fully understand how it evolved as a non-pedal tuning first! I just want to incorporate all 10 strings of the common D10 PSG into this discussion as soon as possible for this series of articles.

Let's start by examining preconceived ideas about the way C6 is sometimes viewed. You'll often hear, "Everything sounds like Western Swing or Hawaiian". Some folks love that sound but many do not. Why does it sound like that? Because of the note in the middle that gives the tuning it's name, the 6th or the A note. To me, it's both the good and not-so-good ingredient in the open C6 tuning. You can always tell someone who really doesn't have a handle on it because everything they play has that note coloring all the chords, mostly unintentionally. The key in my opinion is to learn the "grips" of all the major and minor triads and their inversions first and foremost, much like you did the E9, and to be very careful to know what strings NOT to play!

Here are three of the basic triads in the low to middle registers, no inversions. Notice that we have two Major triads and one Minor triad without using any pedals or slants! That my friends, is the beauty and brilliance of C6! The A note (or 6th), is what makes it all possible. That is why it was such a great tuning before the advent of pedals. Once again, both a MAJOR and MINOR chord built into the open tuning!

Example #1 Open Triads- Inversions of both the Major and Amin, showing the intervals, (i.e. the note number names from the root of the chord).

1	D			
2	E			
3	C			
4	A			
5	G			5
6	E		5	3 C Major
7	C	5	b3 A Minor	1
8	A	3 F Major	1	
9	F	1		
10	C			

Example #2 C Major and A Minor Inversions-

1	D		
2	E	0 - 3	0 - 5
3	C	0 - 1	0 - b3
4	A		0 - 1
5	G	0 - 5	A Minor
6	E	0 - 3 C Major	0 - 5
7	C	0 - 1	0 - b3
8	A		0 - 1
9	F		
10	C	0	

Last month, I implied that I believed that it is a good thing to keep the back neck tuned to C6 vs. B6 on a double neck instrument. There is a lot of arcane thinking regarding “colors” of keys. Some keys having different qualities that affect the listener in different ways. I’m not so sure about that stuff, but I do think that it can be good for the brain to exercise a bit in order to not get stuck in ruts. One of the ways I like to show students the tuning is to teach “Pentatonic” scales in the key of D, starting at the second fret and using “hammer-ons” on the open strings. It’s possible to play both a D Major Pentatonic scales and a B Minor Pentatonic scale from the same position. In other keys, it’s great to also use only the bar to create whole step pedal sounds by sliding up to the “home fret”. Think the “My Girl” riff for the Major Pentatonic!

Example #3 D Major Pentatonic Scale

B Minor Pentatonic Scale

1	D		
2	E		
3	C	2	
4	A	2	2
5	G	2	2
6	E	0 2	0 2
7	C	2	2
8	A		2
9	F		
10	C		

Next month...harmonizing scales that you can use!

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

Billy Easton, Chairman, (702) 280-9557, beaston@cox.net,
Troy Porter, Vice Chairman, (928) 200-1624, troyporter@cableone.net,
Otto Shill, Secretary, (602) 684-9228, oshill@cox.net,
Peggy Porter, Treasurer, (928) 701-1488, peggyporter@cableone.net,
Fred Justice, Events Director, (480) 986-2599, fredsmusic@q.com.

***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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