

# Mad Folk News

## Special Summer Concert!

### Brother Sun and Joe Crookston coming to The Brink in August!

**B**rother Sun – “Three magnificent male voices--together. Gives me the chills--in the nicest way ever!” -Gene Shay, WXPB – Philadelphia

Joe Crookston – “He exudes so much energy on the stage with his strong voice, lively finger picking and a stomp box that he literally jumped up and down on.” - James Killen, Houston Music Review

Summers in Wisconsin are for festivals, so the Madfolk concerts usually take a summer break, but when we had the chance to bring the headliner of the Shawano Folk Music Festival to us, we just couldn't pass it up!

Brother Sun, the trio of Greg Greenway, Pat Wictor, and Joe Jencks, wowed us at the Phil Ochs tribute concert, and we have been wanting to bring them back for a show of their own. They will be bringing their friend Joe Crookston as a co-headliner to introduce him to Madison.

Greg Greenway, Pat Wictor, and Joe Jencks have made their mark as veteran touring singer-songwriters, but collectively as Brother Sun, they truly have become something special. The trio's harmonies, as much as their lyrics, tell what they are about: warm as a campfire, stirring as a gospel church, rousing as a call to arms. Fusing folk, Americana, blues, pop, jazz, rock, and a cappella singing, Brother Sun is an explosion of musical diversity and harmony, in the finest of male singing traditions.

From three major points on the map Boston, New York, and Chicago - Greg, Pat, and Joe have blended themselves into Brother Sun: a unique celebration of the amazing power of singing together. As they will tell you, the music of Brother Sun is not resident in any one of them – but rather it exists in the space between them.

Audiences feel this sincerity immediately. Their combined musical skills make for an unforgettable experience - three rich voices blending on a well-crafted foundation of guitar, slide guitar, piano, ukulele, and bouzouki.

Brother Sun's debut CD announced to the world that these respected singer-songwriters had banded together to produce some of the most powerful male harmonies on the acoustic music scene. After two years of nationwide touring and performances marked by outstanding songwriting, ethereal harmonies, off-the-cuff humor, and standing ovations, they have released *Some Part of the Truth*: a CD that goes a large step further in revealing Brother Sun not only as singers, but as complete musicians.

Joe Crookston is an artist, writer, guitar picker, painter, claw hammer guitar player, eco-village member and believer in all things possible. You'll be pulled in by the magic and musical world that he creates and you'll end up in the moment, celebrating together with the rest of the audience. He'll sing to you ~ You'll sing with him... His music embraces the universal, connects us, is masterful and downright fun.


Come to a show. You'll travel with him along mystical, historical, and humorous roads, and twist through personal stories along the way. Amber eyes, Oklahoma towns, rattlesnake tails, Grandmother Moons and silver crowns. At the end of the night, you'll likely leave inspired, taking home a renewed sense of what's possible. In Irish culture, there is phrase called the “The Long Note” ~ “The Long Note” is that place of resonance and transcendence where the music, the voices, the instruments, and the community ALL come together and unite...There IS a “Long Note”

and Joe is courting it and always reaching for it.

From the first strum of his 1948 Gibson, through stories of ruby red dresses, Tinian Island, Dylan Thomas, Taoist parables and drunken roosters you'll be drawn in and deeply moved by his music. It happens every time. Watch a YouTube video. It's good, but it's not the same. You gotta come to the show.

Through his spirit and playfulness and his unwavering courage to be himself, you will be moved in ways you didn't expect. He is literate, poignant and funny as hell.

#### Mad Folk Concert Tickets

When you see this symbol –  – you'll know that you're reading about a Mad Folk sponsored event. Advance tickets for Mad Folk shows are available online at [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org) and at these outlets:

- Orange Tree Imports, 1721 Monroe Street
- Spruce Tree Music, 851 East Johnson

Purchase tickets ONLINE for Mad Folk concerts via Brown Paper Tickets (with \$1.62 service charge):

<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/producer/10879>

You can also purchase advance tickets by mail. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope with your check payable to Mad Folk, PO Box 665, Madison, WI 53701. If all else fails, call 608-846-9214 for information.

EASY GONE - RAY BONNEVILLE  
 RED HOUSE RECORDS~ 2014



Review by Kiki Schueler

Ray Bonneville may have been born in Canada and lived there most of his childhood, but his music is rooted in the southern Delta blues of artists like Muddy Waters. Much is made of the fact that he didn't release his first record until he was in his mid-forties, but it seems pretty obvious to me that he needed to live all those stories before he could write them. And he has to have a lot of them; his is among the most interesting bios I've seen. He spoke only French when his family moved to the United States when he was twelve. He was expelled from school and ended up in Vietnam for a year. He was a bush pilot in Quebec, where he also gave flying lessons. He drove cab in Boston, teaching himself harmonica between fares. He's lived in Canada, France, Boston, Seattle, Colorado, Maine, Alaska, and New Orleans. It's the last that's probably had the biggest effect on his music.

While the record's name makes "easy" sound like an adjective, in listening to the title track, "Where Has My Easy Gone," it becomes clear that easy is quite definitely a thing. It could be a way of life as he alludes to in the first verse, "Tell me wide river, you used to take your time, lately you only want to run high. I used to rest easy, by your edge, you held the stones that used to be my bridge." Or it could be "The Big Easy," New Orleans, "Home ain't

home, some elusive thing, I looked in the endless sky, down along the sea, I could not find my easy." Bonneville is often compared to bluesman JJ Cale, who wrote hits like "After Midnight" and "Cocaine" for Eric Clapton, but the record's title track and the hauntingly paranoid ballad "Mile Marker 41" echo Bob Dylan's later catalog more than anything. The narrator in the latter is quite definitely planning something, "Meet me when the sun's gone, mile marker 41, cut the motor, coast in. If it don't feel right, try again tomorrow night. I'll be waiting," but he never tells you quite what it is. All we know is that by the end of the song there's "still one thing left undone." It makes a fitting companion piece to Dylan's equally cryptic "What Was It You Wanted?"

Opening track "Who Do Call the Shots" is a sexy, snarling track with an addictive guitar. It definitely owes a debt to Bo Diddley's "Who Do You Love?" and you almost expect him to sneak "I walked forty seven miles of barbed wire, wear a cobra snake for a necktie," after his own parallel lines, "Riding a line as thin as a razor between eternities, used up luck against a long cold sleep." In the same song he reflects both poetically and honestly on the life of a traveling musician, "I said 'I do' to a highway, what was I thinking of? She's mean, full of spite, and she goes on and on." The record's most lighthearted track, "Shake Off My Blues," tries to do exactly that. The hopeful, harmonica-heavy "When I Get to New York" looks forward to seeing an old lover whom he's not sure he can still trust, but he's determined to find out, "my question is loaded and needs to be satisfied." It turns dark when you suspect the question may not be the only thing loaded.

The only cover on the record is

an appropriately bluesy take on Hank Williams's "I'm so Lonesome I Could Cry." He sounds less the victim than the narrator in the original, and I don't really believe that there will be any tears shed. But thanks to a freight train harmonica and rat-a-tat snare, Bonneville makes it his own. Like the other songs on Easy Gone, it's just one of his stories. And like those, it's a good one.

Ray Bonneville will be appearing at Kiki's House of Righteous Music in November.

Mad Folk News is published monthly by the Madison Folk Music Society, a non-profit, volunteer-led society dedicated to fostering folk music in the Madison area. Contact us at [madfolk@charter.net](mailto:madfolk@charter.net). Learn about concerts, membership, scholarships, and volunteer opportunities at [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org).

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# Miltonian Dulcimarria

Dulcimer Workshops and Concert

## July 12, 2014

### Hammer Instructor



**Rick Thum**  
**St Louis, MO**

### Mountain Instructor



**Stephen Seifert**  
**Nashville, TN**

3 Workshops (1 for \$23; 2 for \$38; 3 for \$48) (9:30 AM – 4:15 PM)

Pot Luck Lunch (11:50 AM – 12:55 PM)

Concert \$8 (4:40 – 6:00 PM) / free with workshop registration

## Rock Prairie United Presbyterian Church

8605 E. County Road A

Janesville, WI

4 miles east of Hwy 14

### Sponsorship:



3503 Mt. Zion Ave.  
Janesville, WI 53546  
(608) 754-2255

### Organizers:

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Dulcimer Club

&

Rock Prairie Dulcimers

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## Does Truth Matter

Years ago I was watching Johnny Carson. In his monolog, he told of something that really happened to him. He said that there was remodeling going on in his house, and things were in some confusion. After taking a shower, he found a can of spray deodorant he wasn't familiar with, but used it anyway. And he liked the scent. So he used it for the next week or so, until he discovered that it wasn't deodorant at all, but room freshener.

The audience howled with laughter; it was a pretty impressive bit of entertainment. Then it dawned on me that this would not have been a funny joke at all, except for the fact that it was a true story.

This brought up a question that I always wrestle with, as an arts dabbler: Does truth matter in the arts? Do you have to know the makeup and situation of an artist, singer, songwriter, painter, photographer, and the truth of their product, before you can appreciate it? Now that's a pretty broad question, and I almost didn't write this Whither Zither because of its breadth, but I keep coming back to it. It hounds me. So this episode just touches on the tip of this tricky subject, in hopes of unloading my sleepless nights of agonizing onto others.

Years ago a story made the rounds about someone who woke up in the middle of the night to the buzzing of a squeezer, grabbed what he thought was bug spray, and, in the darkness, sprayed his whole bedroom with black paint. That was a funnier story than Carson's on the surface. But if you think it didn't really happen, it wouldn't be as funny as Carson's. If you think it really happened, it would be funnier than Carson's. That is so weird.

A video popped up recently and went viral, showing a bride, groom, priest, etc, all tumbling into the water somehow.

This footage circulated until it was proven to be a set-up, and not an actual mishap. Viewers were outraged, as though their laughter had been stolen under false pretenses!

So in this sense, the answer to the question "Does truth matter?" is yes, it seems to, at least with humor. And maybe, taken further, the sadness of a sad story is deeper if you think the story is true. Maybe adventure stories you think are true are more thrilling than fiction adventure stories. Maybe erotic stories are more sexy if you think they really happened. And so forth.

Then there's another level to all this: how you come to think something is true. Carson, a comic genius, could have made up his story, and knowing his audience, knew that if he TOLD them it was true, he'd get a bigger laugh. So you have to know the artist well enough to know if he or she is telling you the truth when they say they are. If you want a strong reaction from people to your art, you have to maintain your reputation as a truth teller on some basic level, at least to the point where you somehow let it be known when you are lying that you are lying.

Because, of course, if the story is strong enough, it can stand on its own, even if it's not true. That's what fiction is. Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill are stories that obviously are fabricated. Those tall tales actually poke fun at the idea of truth in story-telling. Garrison Keillor is completely out front about his stories being phony baloney, so he has done all right for himself.

There are more nuanced considerations. Think of Carson telling the story, but saying that it happened to his wife, or his neighbor. It would have been funnier than if it was obviously made-up, but not as funny as it was with the punchline happening to Carson. Why is that? Is it because you can feel the opportunity for fiction to creep in the cracks if Carson is telling a second hand story from a person whose truth-creds are unknown?

This all figures more or less into my chosen role as one who sings his own

songs. Though there are no rules written in stone about all this, you have to wonder what is accepted, what is expected, what is self-defeating, what is deceitful beyond the pale, when it comes to the use of untruth in this job. Or is creativity just plain another term for lying, and to hell with truth? Songwriters have often been scoundrels when it comes to the truth, as with all the cowboy songs written by Tin Pan Alley writers who had never been west of Utica.

The folk music subculture is constantly dealing with truth questions. Did Alan Lomax teach songs to the prisoners so he could come back later and record them? Did Bob Dylan really write Blowin' in the Wind? If you go to see a folk singerish performer, and they sing a song about their mother being a drunk but nonetheless supporting a family of eight and an ostrich, does it matter to you if the story is made up or not? Do you have to put your appreciation of a painting on hold until you find out about the character of the artist? Does it matter if that glorious photograph of sunset over Famous Footwear involved Photoshop? I mean, it does affect your reaction, if the Johnny Carson phenomenon is a factor, but should it? Have you ever had your opinion of a song or other work of art change after hearing some back-story about it? Does it matter that young white people sing first-person blues by old black people, or that blacks make Native American art, or that Japanese do rosemaking? If I told you now that I made up the whole bit about Johnny Carson and his deodorant story, would it make a difference?

Sometimes in this world of 3D animation, synthetic wool, sampled piano, photoshop, statistics, and nonfat sugar-free ice cream, I find myself looking out the window of an airplane at the view and thinking, "Gee, that's realistic."

And sometimes I think my favorite philosophical blockbuster of a lyric is "Row row row your boat, gently down the stream; merrily merrily merrily merrily, life is but a dream." But does that matter?

**Shawano preview: Magnificent singing, images, stories**



**Madison Folk Music  
Society PRESENTS**



# **Brother Sun & Joe Crookston**

**Thursday, August 7, 2014**

**7:00 pm**

**THE BRINK LOUNGE, 701 E. Washington, Suite 105**

Tickets \$15 advance, \$18 day of show

Available at: [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org),

Spruce Tree Music, Orange Tree Imports

Non-perishable donations of food will be collected for local food banks.



# The Mad Folk Refrigerator Cover

July 2014

## Mad Folk Events



### Summer Sing-Along w/ Mac Robertson & David Eagan

Friday, July 25  
Blue Mounds Main shelter, top of the hill -- 8pm  
Free! (State Park sticker req. for entry)

### Brothers Sun AND Joe Crookston

Thursday, August 7 -- 7pm  
The Brink Lounge -- \$15 adv, \$18 d.o.s.

## Venues



### The Brink Lounge

- Thursday, July 10, Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo, 8pm, no cover
- Wednesday, July 16, Daniel Anderson Trio @ lounge, 7pm, no cover
- Thursday, July 17, Dietrich Strause @ lounge, 8pm, no cover
- Thursday, July 31, Aaron Williams and the Hoodoo, 8pm, no cover

701 E. Washington  
thebrinklounge.com  
608-661-8599

### Mother Fool's

- Fri, July 11, Brian "Looper" Lucas & Frankie Lee, 8pm
- Sat, July 26, Nouveau-Expo, 8pm - \$6

Mother Fool's  
Coffeehouse  
1101 Williamson St.  
motherfools.com  
608-259-1030

### FOLKLORE VILLAGE Folklore Village

- July 17th - 20th : Hardanger Fiddle Association of America's Festival

3210 Cty Hwy BB  
Dodgeville, WI  
folklorevillage.org  
608-924-4000

### Cafe Carpe

All shows at 8:30pm unless indicated otherwise

- Thursday, July 10, The New Pioneers - \$9 @ 7pm
- Saturday, July 12, David Stoddard / Beth Wood
- Thursday, July 17, An Evening with Slaid Cleaves - \$25 adv @ 8pm
- Friday, July 18, Colin O'Brien / Marry Gaines & Chris Wagoner - \$10
- Saturday, July 19, Karen Johnson - \$5 @ 8pm
- Thursday, July 24, Steve Young - \$20 @ 8pm
- Saturday, July 26, Bill Camplin & The July Ranchers - \$9



18 S. Water St.  
Ft. Atkinson, WI  
cafecarpe.com  
920-563-9391

## Gigs

### Kiki's Righteous House of Music

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, contact Kiki at  
righteousmusicmgmt@gmail.com

- Thursday, July 3, Tommy Keene & his band w/ guest Jimmy Murn - 8pm  
- Suggested Donation \$12
- Saturday, July 5, Jon Dee Graham & the Fighting Cocks - 9pm  
- Suggested Donation \$15

### Middleton "fairyland" Yard Concerts

Invitation & Advance RSVP required.

For full details or to request an invitation, email  
middletonhouseconcerts@yahoo.com

- Saturday, July 5, Mark Croft - potluck 6pm - music around 7:30
- Saturday, July 19, Count This Penny - potluck 6pm - music around 7:30
- Saturday, August 30, Daniel and the Lion - potluck 6pm - music around 7:30

### Miltonian Dulcimer Workshops and Concert -- July 12 --

3 Workshops (1 for \$23; 2 for \$38; 3 for \$48) (9:30 AM - 4:15 PM)  
Pot Luck Lunch (11:50 AM - 12:55 PM) Concert \$8 (4:40 - 6:00 PM) / free with workshop registration  
Rock Prairie United Presbyterian Church 8605 E. County Road A Janesville, WI 4 miles east of Hwy 14

## Misc

### Old Time Jam

Monthly - 2nd Sunday of every month, 4 to 6pm  
EVP West 3809 Mineral Point Road  
Coordinator: Al Wilson  
cell: 608-572-0634  
afwilson@pediatrics.wisc.edu

### Madison Ukulele Club-- Singalongs 1st and 3rd Weds 7:00-9:00pm -call for location- 246-8205 (Andrew)

Cajun jam held every first Sunday 3 p.m.-5 p.m. There will be no jam in July.

At the Froth House: 11 N. Allen St., Madison We welcome all levels of experience with instruments and Cajun music.  
Call Karen at 608-238-6039 for more info. www.prairiebayoucajun.com

## On the Air



### Simply Folk on Wisconsin Public Radio w/ Stephanie Elkins, Host

Sun 5:00-8:00pm

Concerts recorded in Wisconsin, music and dance of people the world over. For playlists, calendars, station listings, and more, visit [www.wpr.org/simplyfolk](http://www.wpr.org/simplyfolk).



### WORT 89.9 FM community radio

Sun -- 3:00-5:00pm

- On the Horizon (world music) w/Ford Blackwell, Paul Novak & Dan Talmo
- Weekdays 9:00am-noon
- Mon - Global Revolutions (folk from the world over) w/ David & Martin Alvarado & Eugenia Highland
- Tue -- For the Sake of the Song (traditional American folk) w/Jim Schwall
- Wed -- Back to the Country (country music on a theme) w/Bill Malone
- Thur -- Diaspora (folk and international) w/Terry O'
- Fri -- Mud Acres (bluegrass and acoustic) w/Chris Powers

## Madison Dance

- African/African-American Dance classes with live drumming -- Sun, 7:00-9:00pm -- Metro Dance, 3009 University Ave. -- 255-3677 / 251-4311

- SpiritMoves Ecstatic Dance 2nd and 4th Weds, 7:00-9:00 pm -- The Center for Conscious Living, 849 East Washington Ave. -- \$7 min. donation

- English Country Dance taught -- 1st and 3rd Mon, 7:30-9:30pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 238-9951 or 238-9951

- International Dancing -- Wed and Sun; classes 7:30-8:30pm, request dancing 8:30-11:00pm -- The Crossing, 1127 University Ave. -- 241-3655

- Irish Dancing -- Monthly Ceili and set dance events are posted at [celticmadison.org/dance](http://celticmadison.org/dance)

- Italian Dancing -- Tue, 7:00-9:00pm, no experience or partner necessary -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 838-9403 (Philana)

- Madison Contra Dance Cooperative -- Tue; 7:30 jam band practice, intermediate level dancing 7:45-9:40pm -- \$5 for non-members -- Gates of Heaven, 302 E. Gorham -- 238-3394 (Steve)

- Morris Dancing -- Wed, 7:00pm -- call for location -- 238-9951

- Scottish Country Dancing -- Sun, 7:00pm -- Wil-Mar Center, 953 Jenifer St. -- 835-0914

# Is this your last copy of *Mad Folk News*?

There are two ways to renew your **tax-deductible** membership

## Way #1 – online

Visit [www.madfolk.org](http://www.madfolk.org) and click on “Join MFMS”

## Way #2 – unplugged

Complete, clip, and mail this form

Madison Folk Music Society  
P.O. Box 665, Madison, WI 53701  
Address Service Requested

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### Madison Folk Music Society

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Student	\$10	_____
Regular	\$12	_____
Family	\$15	_____
Friend	\$25	_____
Contributing	\$50	_____
Life	\$500	_____
Scholarship fund donation (optional)	\$	_____
Total	\$	_____

GOING GREEN - Send my newsletters electronically by email

Send your check, payable to MFMS to: Mad Folk c/o  
Tracy Comer, P.O. Box 930446 Verona, WI 53593-0446