



X It's time to get your nominations in for Hall of Fame nominees! See pg 5.  
 X Once again we will HEAT the hall for the dance!  
 X Bobby Giasson Celebration of Life will be March 26, 2022 See on page 8



**RIP BOBBY GIASSON**

*Inducted Oct. 6, 1991*



**WHIT SMITH**

*Inducted Oct. 3, 2021*

*Western Swing Society Hall of Fame Profile ~ Page 3*

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**GUEST BAND**  
**Sunday, March 6, 2022**

**Lincoln Highway**  
**1:00 to 3:00pm**



**Followed by**  
**The "House Band"**  
**3:00 to 5:00pm**

**The Western Swing Society**

PO Box 2474

Carmichael, CA 95609

westernswingsociety.net

Facebook: SacramentoWesternSwingSociety

Founded in 1981 by Loyd and Perry Jones to enable performance, preservation and perpetuation of the unique American art form known as Western Swing Music.

**Officers:**

President, Rex Barnes (916) 704-1566  
 Vice Pres, Ronnie Elkan (916) 765-4345  
 Treas, Linda Swanson (530) 383-1129  
 Secretary, Doug Weiss

**Other Directors:**

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 Dave Rietz (916) 806-0520  
 Jeff Tilton (916) 798-9377  
 Mary Harris (916) 991-3100  
 Mae McCoy (916) 873-2023

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**Western Swing Society Music News**

is published monthly by the Western Swing Society

Views and opinions expressed by contributing authors are not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the Society.

Submitted articles, publicity notices and letters not relating directly to the Society or its members may be published at the discretion of the Editor, as space permits. The staff reserves the right to edit any and all items submitted for publication.

**Deadline for Submittals:**

All items, photographs, articles, and ad's are due to the Editor no later than the 10th of the month.

**Letter from The Editor**



Hey Folks  
 I can't wait to get back to the Machinist Hall for our next dance. Once again we will rent a portable heater that sits outside. It seems that the hall is still in the process of getting costs together for the replacement of the heat/air system. I'm happy to say that the company that supplied the heater for us is available.

Gary Blodgett is a "treasure" for our society. He brought a great band in, had us all dancing, ran sound and then took part in the "House Band". Then he packed it all up before he went home. Once again Gary, thank you!



Gary Blodgett led his band playing lead guitar and singing. Dave Channell added acoustic guitar and vocals; Dan Rupley on lead guitar and vocals; Steve French on pedal steel and vocals; Steve Clark on bass and vocals; Chris Cacace on keyboard and vocals; Brad Barnett on drums and vocals; and guest drummers Arron Smith from the Buck Ford Band and Clete Berg from the 27 Outlaw Band. Dang that's a talented bunch and I hope they come back soon. Thanks a lot you guys.

"House Band" did their usual great job. Only problem was running out

*Continued on page 4*

**JAM ROOM JAMMERS**



We'd like to have you write to us about your experience if you play in the jam room or go in to listen. We'll share your comments here in this column. Just send your thoughts to this email: [ronnie.elkan@gmail.com](mailto:ronnie.elkan@gmail.com) or send us a letter via snail mail. In the meantime we'll list the players who joined us last month.

Come in and join in, you can listen or sign up to play and/or sing.



**RIP BOBBY GIASSON**

Inducted October 6, 1991  
Born July 17, 1935 Died January 27, 2022



Born 1935, youngest of nine was introduced to music at an early age. Father played piano and fiddle, brothers and sisters sang and accompanied themselves by strumming chords on the guitar.

“The first time I picked the guitar up I knew this is something I wanted to pursue. I remember my sister pointing out to me, as

we were listening to Merle Travis, that he's doing that alone. At first I didn't realize what she was trying to tell me. Then it hit me, he was playing chords and melody together on one guitar and this is when I knew I wanted to play like that. I did a lot of listening and many hours of practicing after that”.

First Professional Gig: At the ripe old age of fourteen I played my first Grange Hall with the group “Rocky Mountain Ramblers” for \$5.00. We traveled to the gigs in a 32 Chevy that only had rear brakes and these brakes only worked when someone would yank hard on the emergency brake.



A couple of years later I joined a new group “Guitar Trio”. Hawkshaw Hawkins came to our town and my brother couldn't attend the show because of an accident that had left him paralyzed. So we asked Hawkshaw if he would come to the house to see my brother and he graciously accepted our invitation. Eddie Miller, who was Hawkshaws fiddle player, came over too and we jammed a little. This happened on a school day so I skipped that day. The Vice Principal didn't believe me when I told him my reason for skipping and gave me 2 hours detention. The next day there was a big article in the local paper on Hawkshaw's visit to my house. I got an apology fro the Vice Principal but it was too late to take back the detetion.

1953 and 1954 I was playing with “Riders in the Sky” and I first met my wife to be, Jeanette Fortin. She entered a talent contest we held at one of our

*Continued on page 11*

**WHIT SMITH**

Inducted October 3 2021



Whit Smith was born in Greenwich, Connecticut and spent his earliest years in New Cannan, Connecticut and later Wellfleet, Massachussetts. Born to musical parents Whit was exposed right away to a life of practicing and performing. Says Smith, “My mom

and dad used to sing and play folk music every night after my dad got home from work. Every weekend my dad would spend hours sitting in front of the record player figuring out rural blues tunes by Robert Johnson and Mississippi John Hurt. Then for a couple of years he was really big on Manitas De Plata and flamenco guitar. I still have his old records with all the notes and diagrams he drew out for himself.” By his early twenties, Smith had moved to New York City, where he went on to spend the next fifteen years and his most formative years in music.

Though originally self-taught on the guitar, by the time he was a teenager Smith had realized the advantages to taking lessons. He began studying with numerous teachers including guitarist Bill Connors who had been playing with Chic Corea, and, for a time, studied Classical piano in Wellfleet with Dowell Multer who first introduced him to the rigors of harmony, melody, and chordal voicings.

Beginning in 1992 Whit studied for two years in New York City with veteran New York guitarist Richard Lieberston focusing on American guitar styles from traditional jazz forms to Western and pre-1970s country.

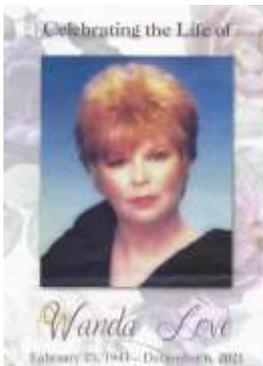
He would apply these lessons as quickly as he learned them at his weekly shows in New York City. In 1994 Smith started The Western Caravan, a thirteen-piece



Western Swing orchestra, which continues to play to this day, everything from hoedowns to country to

*Continued on page 11*

**Saying Farewell to Wanda Love**



It was a beautiful tribute to Wanda for those of us able to attend her funeral and Celebration of Life



*Editor's Letter Continued from page 2*

of time. We sure appreciate everyone who stayed to the end. Jim Baughman was on lead guitar and vocals; Ralph Chase was on keyboard and vocals; Steve Clark on bass and vocals; Bill Cornett



on drums and vocals; Ronnie Elkan on fiddle; Steve French on pedal steel and vocals; Jesse Personeni on pedal steel; Lenny Serdahl Sr. on lead guitar and vocals; Rob Shotwell on guitar and vocals. We were joined by Arron Smith on drums; coming up to sing

was Janice Allen, Mae McCoy, Nancy Long, Linda Baughman, Rhonda Rogers and President Rex Barnes. With



that line up it is easy to run out of time.

The jam room was hopping. Make sure that Tony Arana knows you are there and that you would like to sing or play. Also, if there is a band you want to tell us about, just let us know. We are so fortunate that all of our bands that come in to play are volunteer bands. It is a great tradition and an honor to play at WSS. See Ya Soon, Ronnie

**PICTURES NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE TO DOWNLOAD AND PRINT**

Pictures are now available on our website: <http://westernswingsociety.net/>. OR on [Google Photos](#)

**Tips:**

- From PDF newsletter, click on link below these instructions to enter that photo album.
- Use the three dots     at top right to download entire album or a selected photo
- To see all albums, click top left on [Google Photos](#)
- Once back at the home page, click on Albums  in the left column
- To find all photos of a particular person, click  then click [→ See all people](#) at the bottom of the dropdown list. Scroll and click on a person. You will see all photos of that person. Then you can download and print what you like.



**PHOTO LINKS**

**Monthly Dance Photos**

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/Vuye9uxRUSudGohJ7>

**RIP JOE WILD**



For those of us who knew Joe Wild, he passed away Feburary 5. There will be a Celebration of Life on March 5, 2022 from 3pm to 7pm at the American Legion Post 447. This is a celebration of life for Joe, his love of music, family and friends. This is a potluck and jam session. We'd love to have you here to share his memory and legacy with us all.

**FOOD AVAILABLE**

A hot meal, reasonably priced, provided by our American Legion Post #9! Thank you for your service!

**All credit card transactions will have a \$.50 surcharge added.**





# HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS

## THE TIMING

**January 1—May 31st:** Submissions of nominees for consideration accepted from a member in good standing

**June:** Hall of Fame Selection Committee reviews and chooses 12 nominees to be inducted in the Hall of Fame. Nominations must adhere to the rules and be complete in order to be considered. Any submissions not chosen roll forward to the next year for consideration

**July:** Board signs off on the chosen inductees. Inductees are notified and told about our Hall of Fame Event details

**August:** List of inductees first appear in the newsletter

**September:** Photos of inductees appear in newsletter. List of HOF bands in newsletter

**October:** The three day celebration, culminating in the Induction Ceremony on Sunday

## HOW TO AND THE RULES

Let's have another inspiring set of inductees for the Western Swing Society Hall of Fame event, the 1st Friday—Sunday in October. ***The closing date for submission of nominations is May 31st. Start NOW. Time FLIES!***

Any member in good standing may make 2 nominations, by either postal or email.

An 8 x 10 hard copy photo or a digital jpeg (at least res. 300 dpi) is required at the time of nomination.

The nomination should contain sufficient biographical information to enable the committee to evaluate the nominee's qualifications.

Nominations must include the name (as they wish it to appear in our Hall of Fame registry), address, phone numbers and email addresses (if available) for the nominee **and** the person submitting them. If the nominee is deceased, please include the name of a person who may be able to accept the award.

Mail to: Western Swing Nominations Committee,  
P. O. Box 2474, Carmichael, CA 95609

## It's Easy!

Nominate a musician or exceptional **volunteer for this year's Hall of Fame**

Time is running out. May 31st is the last date to submit your nominations for our Hall of Fame celebration!

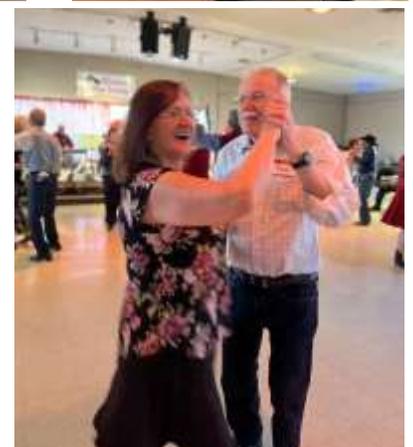
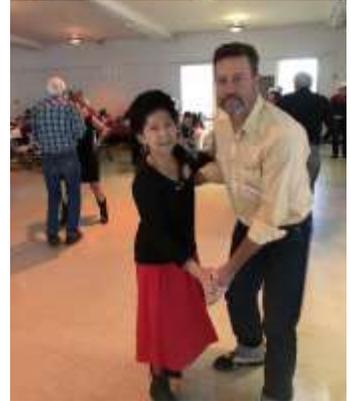
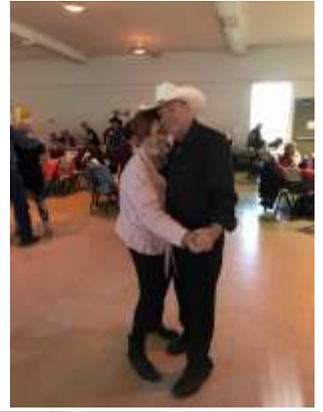
Being inducted into the Hall of Fame is a BIG HONOR, so submit a nomination and make someone's day!

1. The name, address, phone and email of member submitting the nomination
2. The name, address, phone and email of the nominee
3. The nominee's name as the nominee wants it shown in the bio and on the Hall of Fame registry
4. Biographical information about the nominee, with emphasis on involvement with Western Swing Music.
  - Birthplace and date.
  - Age at which participation in music began? How? Singing? Playing an instrument?
  - Early inspirations and influences?
  - Time and place of first professional performance.
  - Name of well-known bands and/or performers with which nominee has played.
  - Names of well-known locations where nominee has performed.
  - List of any awards or formal recognitions received by the nominee related to his or her music career.
  - Nominee's personal reasons for involvement in and support of Western Swing Music.

See the instructions in the previous column and email or mail your completed nomination information so that it is received by WSS no later than May 31st.

**DON'T FORGET** to include *your* phone, email and the *nominee's* phone, email and mailing address so that we can contact you.

TIME TO SWING



*Thank you to Mary Harris, Mae McCoy, and anyone else who helped me get some pictures for our newsletter.*

**TIME TO DANCE**

**Make sure to see the instructions on how to access them online, page 5**



*Thank you to Mary Harris, Mae McCoy, and anyone else who helped me get some pictures for our newsletter.*

BRAND NEW AT THE WESTERN SWING SOCIETY



**Order Now:**  
We are going to place an order for jackets in all sizes. We need a certain amount of orders to make it happen. Please let us know if you are interested!



COME ON OUT TO CELEBRATE BOBBY'S LIFE

Join us for a  
**CELEBRATION OF LIFE**

**LOVE OF FAMILY  
SHARING MEMORIES  
JAM SESSION**

**ROBERT "BOBBY" EDWARD GIASSON**  
JULY 17, 1935 - JANUARY 27, 2022

**2:00-5:00PM MARCH 26, 2022**

WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS HE LIVES ON IN OUR HEARTS

**Sacramento Western Swing Society Hall**  
2749 Sunrise Blvd, Rancho Cordova, CA 95742

Thank You



**THANKS FOR ALL THE MUSIC!**



**THANKS FOR ALL THE MUSIC, HOUSE BAND!**



**THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS**



**THOSE PICTURED AND NOT**

*Thank you to Mary Harris, Mae McCoy and anyone else who helped me get some pictures for our newsletter.*

JUST A GREAT TIME TO DO SOME VISITING



Raffle Winners



*Thank you to Mary Harris, Mae McCoy and anyone else who helped me get some pictures for our newsletter.*

*Bobby Giasson continued from page 3*



gigs and won the 1<sup>st</sup> prize, being a guest on our weekly radio show and then became our female vocalist for the group.

At the age of 19 I enlisted in the Navy and served 4 years. I was married in 1957 and discharged from the Navy in 1958.

1958 I played lead guitar for Skeeter Bonan RCA Wheeling Jamboree Road Show. We began daily 1 hour TV Channel 8 shows in Maine with Skeeter. Some of our bookings took us to Canada, many to New England, Connecticut, New Hampshire, etc.

I did personal appearances with Wilma Lee, Stony Cooper and Don Gibson.

Early 1961 I played lead for a rock-a-billy band, Curtis Johnson (Event Records).

In 1965 I joined up with Dick Curless, who had won the Arthur Godfrey Talent Contest. We eventually cut "Tombstone Every Mile" which was picked up by Capitol Records. Dick went on to the Buck Owens Show. The band stayed on the east coast.



I got back to the great Elton Britt and in 1970 went on to record some albums with a great guitarist Sonny Cardilli and bassist Dick Cash. Name of the albums were "16 Strings" and "Try It You'll Like It" (1972).

1973 we moved to the west coast and settled in Sacramento. Guess maybe I picked with everyone, just about. Later I had the good fortune to meet Jay Riley and play in a group called "The Golden West Cowboys" which was mostly Western Swing people. Wes Allen and Sonny Leonard were also in this group. Currently I'm playing lead for "Lone Star" country band. *This Bio is from our archives 1991*

*Bobby was a great friend to all of us at Western Swing and always was so generous with his time and talent. He was a star anytime you got to be around him. A Celebration of Life will be announced soon by his family.*

Ronnie Elkan

*Whit Smith continued from page 3*

jazzy arrangements with triple fiddles and steel guitar. It was during this time that Smith met violinist Elana James, through an ad in the music section of the Village Voice, and ultimately began the band Hot Club of Cowtown with James, which has been his passion and chief focus since the group released its first recordings in 1998.



**Olen Dillingham in Fresno**



Sounds like I missed a fabulous dance. I have been told that Dave Stuckey put on a great

show with our Olen Dillingham in the band. Here are some Facebook comments:

Olen: "I had a blast playing authentic western swing with Dave Stuckey and the Hoot Owls at the Mardi Gras Dance festival in Fresno. It was a thrill to play with this great band."

Dave: Stuckey: Boy, nobody's luckier than me! The fine folks at the Fresno Sounds of Mardi Gras festival not only let me do the Hot House Gang again - they let me play a passel of sets as The Hoot Owls... and boy, oh boy look who all showed up: Rusty Blake, Olen Dillingham and Chris Wilkinson ! I'm still on Cloud Nine...or Ten!



**2022 UPCOMING BANDS**

March 6	Lincoln Highway
April 3	Bob Woods with Bob Wills Tribute
May 1	Mae McCoy and her Neon Stars
June 5	TBA
July 3	TBA
August 7	Footlights
December 4	Linda Baughman and Friends

**OTHER WESTERN SWING MUSIC ORGANIZATIONS/MUSIC HAPPENINGS**

**Buck Ford & Pure Country Band:** Check Website for schedule, <https://buckford.com/events/>

**Carolyn Sills Combo:** <https://www.carolynsills.com/>

**Cowtown Society of Western Music,** Contact: Joe Baker, Membership Director, 940-452-6300, 4361 F.M. 1195, Mineral Springs, TX 76067

**Gary Blodgett,** Every Wednesday night at the Valencia Club on the indoor stage from 7:30-10:30. <https://www.facebook.com/gary.blodgett.142>

**Grace Clark and Swingitude:** [www.graceaclarkmusic.com](http://www.graceaclarkmusic.com). 925-443-5217

**Greater Arizona Country/Western Swing Association and Hall of Fame, Inc.** PO Box 953, Dewey, AZ 86326. Contact Jim Gamble at 928-458-0714.

**Hot Club of Cowtown:** <https://hotclubofcowtown.com/>

**Lincoln Highway Band:** Every Tuesday, 1:15-3:45pm. Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbons Dr, Carmichael. \$6 cover at the door. <https://www.facebook.com/lincolnhighwaybandca/>

**Northwest Western Swing Music Society,** Contact: Jeannie Yearian, President, 425-432-7888, or cell 206-271-2295, Lynnwood Eagles, 19223 Hwy. 99, Lynnwood, WA. **Meets 2nd Sunday** [www.nwwsms.com](http://www.nwwsms.com)

**Sactown Playboys @** <https://www.facebook.com/sactownpbs/>

**Slade Rivers Band:** <https://sladeriversband.com/events/>

**Western Swing Music Society of the Southwest,** PO Box 644, Shattuck, OK 73858. **Meets quarterly.** Go to website at: [www.wsmss.com](http://www.wsmss.com).



**Board Meeting Invitation**

You can attend the Society's monthly Board meetings; first Sunday of each month starting at 10:30 a.m. in the Machinist Hall in Rancho Cordova.

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Any Changes?** Keep us up to date on any changes in your membership information, especially email addresses. We can't get your newsletter to you unless we have your current information.

You can mail changes in your information to the Society at P.O. Box 2474, Carmichael, CA 95609; or email it to

[membership@westernswingsociety.net](mailto:membership@westernswingsociety.net)  
Thanks! Keep on Western Swingin'

**MONTHLY MUSIC SESSIONS**

The Western Swing Society holds a music and dance session on the first Sunday of each month, featuring guest bands and artists and jam sets.

1:00 pm to 5:00 pm at The Machinists Hall  
2749 Sunrise Blvd., Rancho Cordova, CA\*

Donation: \$7 for Members; \$10 for Non-Members  
For information, browse to [www.westernswingsociety.net](http://www.westernswingsociety.net)

\*The address is Sunrise, but the driveway is on Citrus.



**Driving Instructions to MACHINISTS HALL:** From Hwy 50, take the Sunrise Blvd. South exit and cross two lights (Folsom Blvd. and Trade Center Drive). After crossing Trade Center, be in the left lane and take the next left turn which is Citrus Road. You will see an Enterprise Car Rental lot in front of you. Turn right into the driveway just past Enterprise. You'll see our sign, and you are there. Park, come in and join the fun.