



Americana Folk Concert Series Features Dan Weber March 27

In a few short years since his debut to a standing ovation at the Sisters Folk Festival, former National Park Ranger Dan Weber has become a sought after national touring artist for his upbeat and engaging performances, insightful songs, and hilarious off-the-cuff stories.

Bill Cohen interviewed Dan Weber for this issue of the newsletter.

Bill Cohen: Let me get this straight. You were a park ranger, and only after you turned 40 did you start to perform music? How and why did this miracle mid-life change happen?

Dan Weber: I was actually a National Park Service Ranger for a fairly short period of time, when I much younger, in the mid 1990's. I was an "Interpretive" ranger in Canyonlands National Park, in a remote region of the park known as "The Maze." Sometimes I did multi-day backpacking patrols and others I stayed in a "shepherder" type trailer off the grid

where I led walking tours into Horseshoe Canyon. It has some of the most spectacular rock art paintings in North America, including the famous "Great Gallery," which has hundreds of painted figures on the canyon walls, most about 10' tall with no arms or legs, and sometimes large antennae as well. It's really otherworldly!

About that time I got my very first guitar but didn't really learn how to play it (or have anyone to teach me), since I was stationed 46 miles from the nearest paved road and about 168 miles from the nearest "real" town (Moab, UT). I eventually learned how to play it and got the songwriting itch in my late 30's. And when I turned 40 I made a promise to myself to get up the courage to play an open mic. I played a few and made some good friends and felt encouraged to keep writing.

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Saturday, March 27,
7:00 pm Virtual Event
Access at:
www.facebook.com/280420671020/live/**

Dan Weber on Americana Stage March 28

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Then I entered a few local song contests which led to some bigger national ones (like Kerrville, Woody Guthrie, etc.) and one thing led to another. Suffice to say when I started writing songs I never once gave it a thought that I'd be touring, making CDs, etc. It's been an interesting turn of events in my life to say the least.

Bill Cohen: In 2019 you won the national Woody Guthrie song-writing contest with a tune about gun violence. Tell us about that song.

Dan Weber: The song is called "Ever Since Columbine." I wrote it one afternoon while overhearing a CNN report about two shootings in Wichita, KS and Kalamazoo, MI. Most people probably forgot about those two, which speaks to how we're inured to hearing about them. Since then there's been so many better-known other shootings—Orlando, Dallas, Las Vegas, Parkland, El Paso, Dayton, etc. The list just goes on and on. The shooting in Dayton hit me particularly hard, since I went to college there (I'm a UD graduate, class of '89), and spent a lot of fun nights in the Oregon district where that shooting happened.

The song was born out of the frustration I have that every time we hear of one of these tragedies there's a litany of outrage and condemnations, along with the usual promises of change, and yet there's been very little meaningful action or legislation that has stopped or slowed the shootings from happening. For emphasis, a friend of mine from Texas messaged me out of the blue one day and said "Are you Ok???" To which I replied, "I'm just working in the yard, why?"

Apparently there was an active shooting unfolding a mile or so from my house. There seems to be no end in sight and the song speaks to that frustration, and the hope that maybe by raising the issue in my small way, it will help move the needle some. To that end, "Ever Since Columbine" will be on the next CD that I'm recording with a release date of Spring 2021.

Bill Cohen: You've even written songs about Woody Guthrie himself, and your original songs have been compared to the ones that John Prine created early in his career. Tell us about the influence of those two musicians on your songwriting and singing, and tell us about any other musician heroes you hold dear.

Dan Weber: I think the influence of both Woody Guthrie and John Prine on my songwriting is mostly due to the straightforwardness of their writing styles. Both have that wonderful "turn of phrase," but they generally get to the point, be it saying something serious, funny, or ironic, etc. I love the poetic songwriting of someone like Dylan but for whatever reason as I've gotten older I've gravitated more toward songwriters who say something beautifully but not so much as to obscure the meaning. Or as Woody was supposedly quoted as saying: "Any fool can make something complicated. It takes a genius to make it simple." Other songwriting heroes? I generally love the storytellers: Gordon Lightfoot, Guy Clark, Tom Russell, Greg Brown, and Bill Morrissey. Bill is as responsible for me being a songwriter as much as anyone. I didn't really know his music but I won a radio contest to go see him in Seattle in 1990 on the Standing Eight tour and was completely knocked out by how great he was.



Dan Weber: Folksinger

I was still a few years away from even getting my first guitar but he was the first solo troubadour/raconteur type that I saw live that made me think, "I want to do this someday."

Bill Cohen: You are a three-time finalist at the prestigious Kerrville Folk Festival that celebrates songwriting. What broad range of topics have your songs dealt with? Where do you get the inspiration for your original songs?

Dan Weber: I feel like I write about anything and everything but that my writing is informed by my life experiences. There's definitely been a lot of inspiration from the landscapes I've lived and traveled in—the canyons, mountains, rivers, etc. And I spend a lot of time on the road, so I meet some pretty interesting characters. But mostly I'm attracted to good stories and themes that have some universal truth to them, like my songs "I Ain't Done Ramblin' Yet" or "I Deal with Crazy All Day." And I especially love songs that you naturally just want to sing along with.

As far as my process goes, I generally write in the early morning, like 6 – 9:00 am, before I read the paper, check emails, Facebook, etc. and pick up one of my guitars and just play around until some chord or progression resonates with me. And I start writing with that until something sticks. And then I wonder "What's THAT about?" and go where the story or the muse takes me. I like to write when my brain is still as close to the dream state as possible, where it's free to wander (and is less critical in an editorial way) before all the events of the day have intruded into my mind.

I also keep a pretty active running list of things that I hear or things that hit me

as interesting. So if I overhear something that strikes me, I'll write it down in my phone or a notebook and go back to that on occasion. In some ways I really believe that listening is the most important quality for a songwriter to have.

Bill Cohen: Is music now your full-time career? How much touring do you do every year? What's your most memorable performing experience?

Dan Weber: Music is my full-time career. It's now been 12 years since my first open mic and despite knowing exactly how I got here it still kind of amazes me that it's happened at all. I don't feel like I chose this path as much as it chose me. It's been one of, if not the most, amazing chapters in my life. I feel very grateful to be able to write songs, make records, tour, and meet so many wonderful people along the way. My life is so much richer for it. I play about 75 shows a year. Summer is mostly fairs and festivals and in the Winter I try to stay closer to home in the Pacific NW or head south where it's less likely to snow. For the most part I play a mix of folk series, festivals and house concerts.

I've had so many memorable performing experiences it's hard to single out just one, but probably the best moments were when I was starting out and still very unsure of myself and was lucky enough to play the Sisters Folk Festival (in Oregon), or Kerrville or the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival where I was well received and had this feeling of "Oh I really CAN do this!" Those experiences were very validating in terms of inspiring and encouraging me to keep writing, keep playing, and keep pushing myself. I'm very grateful to have had those opportunities.

The Central Ohio Folk Festival

The virtual Central Ohio Folk Festival is scheduled for Saturday, May 22 2021 from 11:00 am to 9:30 pm. Larry Campbell and Theresa Williams are the headliners. Other festival events include eight interactive music workshops and interactive children's programming and crafts.

Tickets are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for households via Eventbrite for the entire event, including the Saturday evening headliner concert and are available now. Look for info on our website. If COVID permits, we also plan to hold a SMALL, pared-down, in-person festival event (7 daytime performers only, with no other activities) on Saturday, May 1 at Highbanks Metro Park. All seating outdoors. (See p.6)

Looking for COFF Sponsors

Interested in becoming a 2021 COFF sponsor?

Sponsorships are open to individuals and corporations.

Go here for information:

https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/download/sponsorinfosheet_coff2021.pdf

A big THANK YOU to recent sponsor Weiland's Market.

Member Profile: Mary Finney



Mary Finney and daughters with cigar box guitars

Editor's Note: When the Coronavirus pandemic struck with full force last year, and everyone had to self-isolate in their own homes, Mary Finney stepped in and took a leadership role to keep the music going. As a faculty member at Ohio University she had worked extensively with the Zoom software, coordinating remote teleconferences for members of the academic community. Together with Dan Clarke and Jan Van Auken she set up daily jam sessions for anyone in the folk music community who wanted to participate. The jam sessions later evolved to include weekly nursing home concerts. These sessions have enabled CFMS members to keep their musical skills sharp and even to develop new skills. What follows is her profile in her own words.

Early Years

I was born and raised in Willmar, Minnesota – in a county they said was more Scandinavian than anyplace outside of Scandinavia. I loved the bright days of snow and big blue sunny skies. The cold winters allowed me to go outside to the ice skating rink across the street from my house and skate every day from Thanksgiving to Easter. In the summertime I joined everyone else in the state at the more than 14,000 lakes, which were the home of Minnesota's state bird– the mosquito. I still go back often to visit my extended large family. I graduated from a Swedish college called Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota.

Later Years: Many Different Homes

I moved to Kansas for a Masters in Theatre. I started teaching in universities there in 1968 and have been working in colleges and universities for 48 years. I lived in India from 1969 to 1972. My first daughter was born in Mysore City in southern India. That place and its people still have a deep influence on my life. I lived in Pullman,

Washington, for 10 years before moving to Ohio – first to Wooster and then Cleveland, where I went back to school for a Ph.D. Program at Case Western Reserve University. My field of study was Organizational Behavior. I moved to the Washington D.C. area after I finished my work at Case Western. I later moved to Boulder, Colorado, and then back to Minnesota to tend my brother, who was terminally ill. Then I moved to Athens, Ohio, and taught at Ohio University from 2005 to 2017. In the Fall of 2017 I moved to Worthington to be near my youngest daughter, her husband and two of my four grandchildren – two small girls.

Musical Experiences

I have loved music all my life – starting with parents who loved to sing on short car trips with a car full of kids. I sang in church choirs from age 5 to 18 and also in my high school choir. When I moved to Ohio I joined a wonderful gospel choir at the College of Wooster in 1984. I also sang in a feminist choir in Athens, Oh.

In the years before I moved here my daughter and I loved to listen to the Worthington Square Jammers at the farmers market in Worthington. That was always the best part of going to the market. I never played an instrument. Never thought that I could. Then to my surprise, a strong desire suddenly came over me to learn to play the guitar. For nearly a year I visited many guitar shops and I finally bought my first guitar in mid-summer of 2018. It was a Larrivee Custom model. I later got myself a Martin Cowboy Special. I went straightaway to the Farmer's Market in Worthington with the Larrivee– to sit with the jammers. I felt welcomed right away. The Worthington Square jammers are a great group of amazing, generous and friendly folks and they always welcome new people. To join the daily Zoom jam sessions, which will continue until the pandemic is over, please see the information on page 7 of this newsletter.



Mary and daughters Shanti, Mariah and Misha

The 2021 Bob Kirby Scholarship for Folk Music

Traditional folk music represents a significant part of the American heritage. It is our goal to perpetuate interest in this music. The recipient of this award will have an opportunity to learn about the folk music tradition, make music of his or her own, and have fun with people who like to do the same.

PURPOSE:

To assist young musicians from the central Ohio area by offering opportunities they may otherwise not experience

To enhance musical skills

To pursue a greater knowledge of, and appreciation for, folk music

To offer performance opportunities

APPLICATION PROCESS

Requirements for applying:

Open to Students in grades 3-12

Submit a letter explaining your interest in music, your musical goals, what musical instrument you are interested in playing (or play) and if you sing.

An interview will be held with the top 5 applicants.

BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE SCHOLARSHIP:

Access to all activities of The Central Ohio Folk Festival held May 22nd on line.

A brief performance at The Central Ohio Folk Festival 2022 (not required)

\$500.00 award to be used toward the purchase of an instrument or private lessons with a teacher of your choice

The CFMS monthly newsletter "A Different Strummer" will be sent monthly to the winner.

Disclaimer: This award and the criteria are subject to change at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee. For additional information contact us by email lindamcdonald@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org

Application Form

Please complete the application form and write a brief description of your musical interest.

Interviews of the top 5 applicants will be made before April.

The winner will be notified by APRIL 6, 2021.

NAME OF STUDENT _____

GRADE IN SCHOOL _____ AGE _____

School _____

MUSIC TEACHER _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/ GUARDIAN _____ (Required)

Application Deadline March 20, 2021.

**Mail to:
The Columbus Folk Music Society
c/o Linda McDonald
444 Oakland Park Avenue
Columbus, OH 43214**

The 2021 Central Ohio Folk Festival

2021 Central Ohio Folk Festival – A Fun Interactive Virtual Celebration You can Enjoy from The Comfort of Your Own Living Room !

As the old saying goes, “The Show Must Go On.” And so, virus or no virus, the festival, complete with daytime performances, workshops, children’s programming and a Headliner, will happen this year — online.

Saturday, May 22 from 11 am to 9:30 pm, the 24th annual festival, produced by the Columbus Folk Music Society and co-sponsored by WCBE 90.5 radio, will be a celebration of everything “folk.” It will be unique, engaging, and interactive, with something for everyone!

The festival will be **HEADLINED Saturday evening by Larry Campbell and Teresa Williams**, an Americana duo that creates riveting, honest-emotion music.

On the **virtual broadcast stage**, 7 great bands will perform, representing a wide range of roots music genres: folk, bluegrass, old-time, Americana, jazz, French classic, and swing. Expect first-rate performances from:

*** **The Shazzbots** (family/kids music). They’ve created 3 full-length albums, a triple Emmy-winning TV show, and thousands of wholesome, entertaining, and educational concerts.

*** **RJ Cowdery** (singer/songwriter). Fans say it’s uncanny how RJ’s original sensitive songs seem to take a peek directly into their own lives. Her song writing has won the Kerrville New Folk Contest, the Mountain Stage New Song Contest, the Falcon Ridge Emerging Artist Contest, and others.

*** **The Wayfarers** (old-time mountain music). With thumping washtub bass, driving guitars, sawing fiddles, and rich vocal harmonies, the Wayfarers serve up a steaming plate of nostalgic Americana. They’ve shared the stage with big names in bluegrass and country music – Ralph Stanley, Ricky Skaggs, Marty Stuart, and others.

*** **The Relentless Mules** (bluegrass). This high-energy Columbus-based band has spent the last decade pounding out such infectious tunes that fans can’t help but tap their feet, and, in some cases, get up and dance. Outstanding

instrumentalists with tight vocal harmonies that can’t be beat.

*** **Daniel Dye & The Miller Road Band** (Americana). Daniel leads a band of classically trained siblings and cousins who add viola, cello, melodica, mandolin, and vocal harmonies that are heart-warming and soulful.

*** **Whinestopper** (folk, Americana, & swing). With a blend of guitars, bass, accordion, and 4-part vocal harmonies, this Columbus band’s music spans the decades and is guaranteed to please.

*** **Starlit Ways aka Chris and Rose** (folk, jazz & pop). This acoustic duo features Rose from West Africa and Chris from Columbus, so their concerts have an international flair. They perform an eclectic range of music from originals to jazz-age classics (some in French) to modern tunes.

Multiple interactive music workshops will also be staged, giving young and old alike the chance to learn to play or sharpen their skills on folk instruments. Among the instruments covered: ukulele, guitar, fiddle, banjo, dulcimer and more.

Featured in a **Kids’ Zoom Room** will be **special interactive concerts** for children, led by veteran musicians Joanie Calem, Barry Weaver, and Roger Parish. In between those performances will be **arts and crafts sessions**.

The website broadcasting the festival will be available via **ticket access only**. On Eventbrite, you will need to pre-purchase a **\$15 individual** ticket or a **\$25 ticket that will cover the whole family**. With a family ticket, you can log into the festival with as many devices as your household has, so, for example, children can experience the children’s activities on one device, while adults can participate in a workshop or watch the Main Stage on another device. Each ticket gives access to ALL festival events on that day, including the evening Headliner concert. The ticket also allows you access to rewatch any part of the festival for 5 weeks after the event has concluded.

Tickets available at: <https://coffest.eventbrite.com>
For more info, visit: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/festival.html>

Save the Date

Concerts

Saturday, March 13, 7:00 pm The Delpin Sisters Concert. Fundraiser for the 2021 Folk Festival.

Saturday, March 27, 7:00 pm Dan Weber in Americana Folk Concert Series.

Virtual event access at:

www.facebook.com/280420671020/live/

Saturday, May 22: Central Ohio Virtual Folk Festival, 11:00 am to 9:30 pm. Larry Campbell and Theresa Williams are the featured act. On the virtual broadcast stage, 7 great bands will perform, representing a wide range of roots music genres. Tickets are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for households via Eventbrite for the entire event.

Tickets available at: <https://coffest.eventbrite.com>

For more info and tickets, visit: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/festival.html>

Jam Sessions

Daily Zoom Jam Sessions

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 10:00 am to noon; Wednesday, Friday, Sunday: 2:00 to 4:00 pm. To see the current link to these sessions, send an e-mail request to Jane

VanAuken vanaukj@gmail.com

Welcome Our New and Returning Members

Terry Keller

Tom Nagel

Robin and Bob Studzinski

Delpin Sisters Fundraiser Concert March 13

“Raised on Puerto Rican salsa and merengue,” Crystal and Erika Delpin are mixing that Hispanic culture with their college classical music training to create a unique musical genre they call “indie folk and chamber pop.”

The Delpins blend their sweet voices with an array of instruments – guitar, cello, violin, ukulele, and more.

Still in their early 20’s, the charming and energetic duo will share their musical passion in a virtual concert, sponsored by the Columbus Folk Music Society on Saturday, March 13 at 7 pm, Eastern Time. During the show, you’ll be told how you can donate money to show your appreciation of this music. Proceeds will go to help produce the May 22 Central Ohio Folk Festival. The suggested contribution is \$10.

There are 3 ways that CFMS members can watch, and one of them is special.

The general public can go to the facebook page of the society at:

<https://www.facebook.com/280420671020/live/>

Or go to the You Tube page – <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9FDnj0F9X39uRFrv1dyR8Q>

A 3rd way to experience the concert is reserved for CFMS members, and it includes a special perk – joining in an after-concert discussion with the Delpin sisters. To link to the concert that way, go to this Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89381921710?>



The Columbus Folk Music Society

P.O. Box 20735
Columbus, OH 43220



We're on the web!

www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org

**Next issue:
April 2021**



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BECOME A MEMBER OF THE COLUMBUS FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

Date: _____ New Renew Preferred Newsletter Format: Digital Hard Copy
 Name(s)/ Band Name (if applic): _____
 Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone: _____ (Cell): _____ If Band, website: _____
 E-mail Address(es) (if a household / band membership): _____, _____, _____, _____

Membership renewals are due annually on September 30th. Check one of the membership levels listed below.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Band Membership \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Friend \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$500 |

For credit card transactions, visit CFMS website at: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/member-application.html>

Membership amounts may be tax-deductible. My place of work matches donations:

Like to volunteer? Please click all that apply. We are an all-volunteer driven organization!

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> May festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking / Baking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CFMS events | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing/Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal | <input type="checkbox"/> Desktop Publishing | Please send completed membership form with payment to: Columbus Folk Music Society, P.O. Box 20735, Columbus, OH 43220 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> General Help | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Tasks | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Musician | <input type="checkbox"/> Music Instruction | |

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