

October 2010
Newsletter

37th Annual
Alaska Folk Festival
April 11-17, 2011

Warren Argo
Nov 4, 1942 - Sep 27, 2010



The Alaska Folk Festival community, in fact the entire American folk music and dance community, suffered an enormous loss recently with the untimely death of Warren Argo, September 27. For the past 15 years Warren was chief sound engineer for the festival but his contributions to AFF and his participation extended far beyond running the concert sound board. He influenced more of the festival the past 2 decades than any other single person associated with it. Over the years he trained stage crews, sound crews, performed in concert and in dance bands, led banjo, caller, sound, and dance workshops, called dances, jammed with scores of musicians, and along with his partner Thelma Leuba, presided at after-hours gatherings during the week with refreshments, music, jokes, tall tales, and discussions of topics ranging from vintage instruments and wine to life's persistent questions.

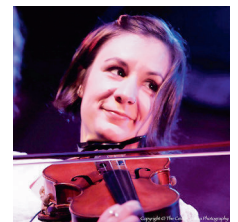
Warren's enthusiasm for our festival and the people at it was unflagging. He often said AFF was one of his favorite festivals because it was all volunteer run, the audiences were so welcoming and the performers so genuine. He loved equally helping people learn (whether it be how to

Festival Dates: April 11-17, 2011

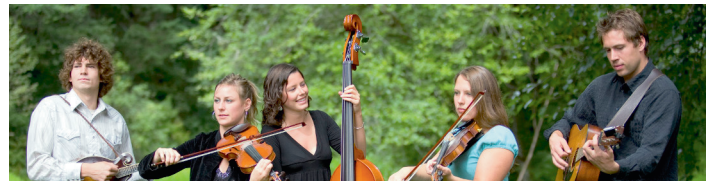
Please note that some of our recent materials incorrectly displayed the 2011 festival's dates. If you book your travel or lodging a year ahead, please review your reservations for the correct dates.

2 Concerts - Nov 14 & 27
Nov 14 - Lissa Schneckenburger

Time: 7:30pm
Place: Resurrection Lutheran Church
Tickets: \$10 at the door



New England fiddler and folk singer, Lissa Schneckenburger, will be accompanied by Boston guitarist, Bethany Waickman to entertain you with both traditional dance tunes and old ballads, as well as some original and contemporary music, as performed by a world class violinist with a lovely voice. See www.lissafiddle.com



Nov 27 - Bearfoot Finale Concert


Time: 7:30pm
Place: JDHS Auditorium
Tickets: \$20 adult, \$15 student/senior, \$12 under 12
available from Hearthside and Rainy Retreat bookstores

Come see Alaska's own Bearfoot with original members, Jason Norris, Angela Oudean, Kate Hamre, Mike Mickelson, and Annalisa Tornfelt for one night only on their Alaska finale tour. These folks have been entertaining and teaching people of all ages in and out of Alaska for years. Come hear them in their original lineup playing hot traditional bluegrass tunes as well as the sweet sounds of their many original songs.

Alaska Folk Festival Membership Form

37th Annual Alaska Folk Festival: April 11-17, 2011

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State/Zip: _____

Amount: \$ _____	Visa or Mastercard ONLY	
Exp. Date: _____	(3 digit security code): _____	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature: _____		

Amount \$ _____	
___ Member	(\$15 - \$29)
___ Sustaining Member	(\$30 - \$49)
___ Friend	(\$50 - \$99)
___ Patron	(\$100 - \$249)
___ Benefactor	(\$250 and above)
<input type="checkbox"/> Please do not list my name in the program.	

All members receive the Festival newsletters. Benefactors, Patrons, Friends, and Sustaining Members will be listed in the Festival program (deadline: March 15, 2011). Please mail to: Alaska Folk Festival, PO Box 21748, Juneau, Alaska 99802. Thank You!

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Warren, continued from page 1

position microphones or play an instrument) and helping accomplished performers or dancers show their best stuff. Many of his predecessors at sound engineer quickly tired of the grueling AFF schedule of 15-16 acts 7 nights straight with more on weekend afternoons. Warren loved it and the challenge of getting the sound just right for a completely different type of music and band every 15 minutes. His omnipresent warmth, good humor, enthusiasm, encouragement, and respect extended not just to participants and volunteers but also to the festival audience. He believed the audience deserved to hear each act at its best. In the pursuit of perfect sound at AFF he was never completely satisfied but he had no equal.

Warren Argo initially came to the festival as our first guest dance caller for AFF 18 in 1992 when we started a separate dance venue in the old Armory, now the JACC. Greg McLaughlin suggested him for that role because Warren had been a key person in the growth and success of the dance and folk music scene on the west coast for many years - a pioneer of the Sweets Mill music camp in the Bay Area, a founder of the Festival of American Fiddle Tunes in Port Townsend, WA, and the Seattle Folklife Festival, and president of the Seattle Folklore Society. He served on the boards of these festivals, and managed some of them as well. More importantly, he participated in each without fail every year.

His first AFF appearance was auspicious and

near legendary. Many of you were in the dance hall that night when, with Warren calling and hundreds of dancers in motion, the speakers of the poorly assembled sound equipment shorted out and began smoking, on fire. Warren, mic-less, calmed the crowd by calling the dance in his booming, reassuring voice to the end of the cycle. Then, in about 15 minutes he reconfigured the sound equipment so the dance could safely continue. A few years later AFF hired him as our chief sound engineer.

Just as at every other music and dance scene he was associated with, Warren gave AFF a massive dose of his positive energy and helped cement our friendly, encouraging, open atmosphere. Thelma said that Warren was "committed to increasing the general grooviness of the universe." Those who knew him know that he meant that in a profound not trivial sense. He showed the way that folk music and dance and the fun, love, and sense of community they foster can increase grooviness. We were blessed with his company for 16 of our 36 years and the festival won't be the same without his enormous and beloved presence. But in his spirit and memory we can keep increasing the grooviness of AFF and bring a part of the universe along with us. -- Tom Paul

To learn more about this amazing and excellent fellow, go to the folk festival website and click on Warren. This links to the Facebook memorial page for Warren Argo that has over 1,000 entries.

AFF Contact & Info Sources

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Email: Info@AlaskaFolkFestival.org
Address: PO Box 21748, Juneau AK 99802
Web Site: AkFolkFest.org
also on Facebook

Warren Argo Memorial Fund

The Alaska Folk Festival wishes to let Warren's friends know that they may contribute to a fund in his name to help his sweetie, Thelma Leuba. Go to the web site: www.warrenargo.com for more information. Thank you for caring!