



Fall 2013 Southwest Colorado Public Lands Lands People



News for employees, retirees & partners



Bernie and Mark Stiles

Forest Supervisor to Retire

DURANGO - Mark Stiles, San Juan NF Supervisor since 2003, will retire in December. He started on the San Juan in 2002 as Acting Forest Supervisor five weeks prior to the start of the Missionary Ridge Fire. The position became permanent the following year, and Mark assumed responsibility as BLM Center Manager under Service First.

Over his 32-year federal career, Mark held several BLM positions. In the early 1990s he was BLM Regulations Analyst and detailed into the Secretary of Interior's Office as Congressional Liaison Specialist.

Other BLM positions included South Dakota Area Manager, Land Use Specialist in North Dakota and Southwest Utah Regional Economist.

Long-term Management Plan Released

DURANGO - The San Juan NF and BLM Tres Rios Field Office released their joint Land and Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement this fall.

The plan addresses long-term management of 2.4 million acres of public lands in Southwest Colorado, and an additional 700,000 acres of federal minerals.

Public, tribal and local government involvement has been ongoing since 2004.

The plan is available online at: www.fs.usda.gov/sanjuan under "Related Links." CDs are also available at the San Juan Public Lands Center.



San Juan NF Planner Mark Lambert and Plan Revision Team Leader Shannon Manfredi examine the three volumes.

Mark was BLM ColoradoWestern Slope Center Manager, where he oversaw three interagency fire organizations and was instrumental in establishing the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. He also held the position of BLM Montrose District Manager and was involved in establishment of Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (NCA), Black Canyon National Park, McInnis Canyons NCA and Grand Staircase National Monument.

Mark's interagency accomplishments include teaching at the BLM National Training Center and USFS Carhart National Wilderness Training Center. Mark also led the BLM's Utah "77" Review and helped the USFS protect Emerald Lake in the Weminuche Wilderness from development.

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SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER

< STILES CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE >

During his tenure on the San Juan, Mark is most proud of overseeing collaborative efforts regarding river protection, plan revision and Service First. "It's been an exercise in learning how to lead without being in front, realizing that we're surrounded by leaders if we give them the opportunity," he says.

Mark's San Juan career highlights include repatriation of human remains and associated funerary objects, consultation with the 26 American Indian tribes that claim affiliation with public lands in southwestern Colorado, and the establishment of Chimney Rock National Monument.

"I'm really proud of our efforts to incorporate science into land management with partners, such as the Mountain Studies Institute, and general public engagement with our many other partners, including the San Juan Mountains Association," he says.

Another passion has been managing fire in a manner that protects public lands, private property and firefighters. Over the years, Mark was closely involved in several innovative firefighting efforts, including the Little Sand, Vallecito and West Fork fires. He says handling the death of firefighter Alan Wyatt during the Missionary Ridge Fire was his most difficult fire assignment.

Mark holds a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology and Master's degree in Economics from Colorado State University. He and wife, Bernie, a preschool director at Riverview Elementary, have two children; Kelly, 26, a high school English teacher in Aurora and Kimberly, 22, who lives in Salt Lake City.

Events to Honor Stiles

The San Juan Mountains Association will host a Reception/Open House to honor Mark on Monday, Nov. 18th from 2–6 pm in the PLC Sonoran Rooms. External partners, retirees & employees are invited. Finger food, coffee & punch will be served. RSVP not required.

The Durango Federal Employees Association will honor Mark at a Holiday Pot Luck on Thursday, Dec. 12th from 11:30am–2pm in the PLC Sonoran Rooms. FS and BLM employees are invited to bring a food dish and story about Mark to share. Turkey & ham will be served. RSVP not required.

Mark and Bernie will become grandparents in March. Retirement plans include skiing, fishing, hunting, planning to through-hike the Colorado Trail, and being a grandfather.
- Ann Bond

Kincaids Depart

DURANGO - Justin Kincaid, BLM Tres Rios FO Hazard Fuels Specialist for the past three years, has left for Salt Lake City, Utah, to be BLM District Fire Management Officer for the Fillmore and Salt Lake Field Office units.

Justin first worked on the San Juan NF in 1993 as a seasonal trail crew leader and returned in 2010 as USFS/BLM Hazardous Fuels Specialist. Prior to that, he was Fire Management Specialist for the BLM Kremmling Field Office.

His federal career began in 1991 working trails and fire for the GMUG NF Ouray RD. Justin also worked on the Fuels and Engine Crew for the Arapaho/Roosevelt NFs, with the Alpine Hotshots at Rocky Mountain National Park, and as Initial Attack Captain for the White River NF. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Forest Management from Colorado State University.

Justin and wife, Tina, have a son, Rhys Samuel, 1, and a daughter, Hayden, 2.

"I'll miss working with the folks here," Justin says. "However, you never know, maybe I'll be back."

- Ann Bond



San Juan Public Lands Center, Durango

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER



Sean is New in Dispatch

DURANGO - Sean Henning is now working in the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center working as Initial Attack Dispatcher. Previously he was Prescott Hotshots Lead Crew Member, Prescott NF in Arizona.

Sean started his federal career in 2007 with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a member of a Prescribed Fire Module in Pleasanton, Kansas. In 2009, he joined the Prescott Hotshots, and the following year, the Prescott Helitack Crew. In 2011, he returned to the Prescott Hotshots as Lead Crew Member.

Sean is a graduate of the Wildfire Apprentice Academy and holds a Geography Degree from the University of Kansas in Lawrence. He enjoys mountain bicycling, fly fishing and motorcycle riding.

"I look forward to building good working relationships with the vast scope of resources utilizing the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center and to further develop myself professionally as I transition from fire operations into dispatch." - Ann Bond

SJMA Celebrates 25th Anniversary

DURANGO - Familiar faces from the past and present helped commemorate the San Juan Mountains Association's 25th Anniversary Celebration at the Durango Arts Center.

Region 2 Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Program Lead Ralph Swain, one of our original movers and shakers, was on hand as a guest speaker. BLM and USFS retirees and current agency staffers joined SJMA staff, board members and volunteers.

The credit for this achievement in long-term cooperation and stewardship of public lands is widely shared. We attribute our success in great part to those who have served SJMA in one role or another, including agency personnel, our members and volunteers.

With your continued support we will move forward with necessary adjustments to serve the ever-changing needs of our partners and supporters. We face the future with optimism and resolve. Without your steadfast support, we would not be the organization we are today. All of us at SJMA are enormously grateful to those dedicated USFS and BLM staffers who have supported our work and have helped us reach the silver mark.

- Susan Bryson, SJMA Executive Director

SJMA Volunteer Coordinator Kathe Hayes and Program Assistant MK Thompson



(From left) USFS Regional Wilderness Manager Ralph Swain, former SJNF Columbine Wilderness Coordinator Nancy Berry, Columbine legend Biff Stransky and Keith Rousch, former SJMA Board Director and Lifetime Member.

Below: San Juan NF Renewable Resources Staff Officer Mike Johnson and founding SJMA Board Director BJ Boucher



SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER



Laurie Swisher and a 150' tall blue spruce on Jones Creek measured as the tallest blue spruce in Colorado.

San Juan Joins Old-Growth Network

DURANGO - More than 1,000 acres of mixed-conifer and ponderosa-pine forests in the Hermosa Roadless Area were selected this summer to represent La Plata County in the Old-Growth Forest Network. The network works to designate one forest in every county where people can, "experience their natural heritage and nurture a deeper relationship with the natural world," according to Joan Maloof, Founder and Executive Director.

"When I searched our old-growth database, I found this area met their criteria," said Laurie Swisher, San Juan NF Forester, who was asked to help identify an old-growth stand for consideration.

The Hermosa Roadless Area encompasses nearly 142,000 acres bisected by Hermosa Creek. The western half is being considered by Congress for Wilderness designation; the eastern half would be retained for multiple-use recreation. Extractive activities will be limited under future management scenarios.

"The Hermosa has old-growth forests throughout, but these particular stands are along the Hermosa Creek Trail within easy hiking distance from the lower trailhead," Laurie says. At a June dedication ceremony, Laurie hosted a field trip to the site and explained what characteristics make a stand qualify as old growth. - Ann Bond



The new road replaces the narrow one across the dam, which could not accommodate large dump, propane and fire trucks.

New Vallecito Road Open this Fall

BAYFIELD - A new version of Forest Service Road #603 is ready to replace the narrow road across the top of Vallecito Dam. The new paved road crosses Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) land south of the dam and is accessed from County Road 501 via a new bridge spanning the spillway below the dam.

San Juan NF Civil Engineer Allen McCaw says the USFS Regional Office helped acquire funding for the project, which accesses four USFS campgrounds, several residences and the Vallecito nordic ski trails on the east side of the reservoir.

The BOR owns the reservoir and dam; the USFS holds the road easement for public access. Partners include the Pine River Irrigation District and Upper Pine Fire Protection District. - Ann Bond

New Arrival



BAYFIELD - USFS Rocky Mountain Regional Forester Dan Jiron (left) enjoys lunch with Columbine RD employees during his visit to the San Juan NF this summer.



Clay and Brenna Kampf welcomed Brook Jean Kampf into the family September 20, weighing in at 6 lbs., 10 oz. Brother Reed is 2 and a half years old.

COLUMBINE RANGER DISTRICT

Can't See the Forest for the <Dead> Trees

DURANGO - The Columbine RD is considering the feasibility of a timber-thinning project in the Cascade Creek drainage to address a high concentration of trees damaged by insects and disease, which could increase fire danger to recreation residences in the area.

An initial field trip was held this fall to share information with local landowners and gather their feedback, and participants strongly supported such a project.

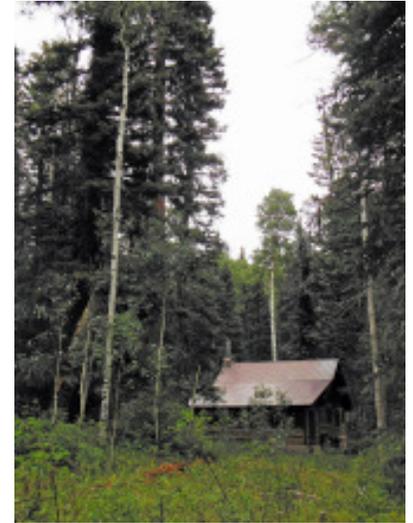
Forests in the drainage consist of cool-moist, mixed-conifer stands transitioning to spruce-fir. Dominant tree species are blue spruce, with Engelmann spruce more prevalent on the northern portion.

Small patches of aspen are dispersed throughout the area. Many trees are relatively old, with a large component of dying or dead trees. A dense component of young spruce-fir is established in the understory.

Challenges for the project will include the unmaintained road system, bridge weight limits, protection for the Cascade flume, slash removal and lynx habitat.



Columbine District Ranger Matt Janowiak points out unhealthy forest conditions to Cascade residents on a field trip this fall.



The Cascade recreation residences are surrounded by dense conifer forests, which are experiencing high mortality from disease and insects.

The district is also looking at the Cascade thinning project as a starting point for potential future timber projects in the spruce-fir forests north of

Durango to address the anticipated spread of spruce beetle attacks and to mitigate the potential for high intensity wildfires.

- Craig Sullivan

Farmer Cabin Dedicated



The Columbine RD, Four Corners Backcountry Horsemen and San Juan Mountains Association celebrated this fall their partnership to renovate the historical Farmers Cabin the Cascade Creek drainage for use as an outdoor learning center.



Columbine Ranger District,
Bayfield

PAGOSA RANGER DISTRICT



Wendy Heads South

DURANGO - Wendy Sutton, Pagosa RD Archaeologist for the past five years, leaves this fall to take the position of Lead Archaeologist on the Gila NF in New Mexico. Wendy began working in archaeology as a volunteer in 1981. She also ran her own archaeological contracting firm in Wyoming and worked as a college instructor.

In 2005, she worked as an archaeologist on the Bighorn NF, moving to the BLM Buffalo Field Office in 2007. Wendy arrived on the Pagosa RD in 2008 and was instrumental in the San Juan's partnership with the Chimney Rock Interpretive Association and the designation of Chimney Rock National Monument.

Wendy holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of California in Mesopotamian Art Archaeology and Anthropology, and a Master's and PhD from Columbia University in Anthropology and Archaeology.

Wendy enjoys canoeing and photography. She and her son, Owen, 14, will move to Silver City in late November.

"It has been a privilege working with everyone on the San Juan," Wendy says. "My colleagues in Pagosa are an amazing group of people, and I will miss them."

- Ann Bond



Ivan is New Hydrologist

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Ivan Geroy is the new Pagosa RD Hydrologist. He'll also work on forest-wide groundwater and water-rights issues, and serve as the San Juan NF Burned Area Emergency Response Coordinator.

Since 2009 Ivan worked under the Student Career Experience Program student and as a hydrologist in the PLC. He began his federal government career in 2002 on a US Navy submarine based out of Poulsbo, Washington. In 2008, he moved to Montana as a seasonal Hydrologic Technician for the Natural Resources Conservation Service Snow Survey in Bozeman.

Ivan holds a Bachelor's degree in Fisheries and Wildlife from Oregon State University and a Master's degree in Civil Engineering from Boise State University. He enjoys hunting, skiing, mountain biking and rafting.

"I'm excited to take my next career step here on the San Juan with all of the folks I've gotten to know over the past several years, and look forward to continuing to build relationships," he says.

- Ann Bond



Tyler is New In Wilderness & Trails

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Tyler Albers is now Wilderness and Trails Forestry Technician for the Pagosa RD handling trail construction, maintenance and design, and travel management implementation on the district.

Tyler comes to the San Juan NF from Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he was Landscape Architect on the Cibola NF since 2009. He began his federal career in 2003 on the Cibola as a Hydrology Aide and went on to work there as Hydrology Technician, Recreation Technician and Landscape Architect Intern.

Tyler holds a Bachelor's degree in Geography and Master's degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of New Mexico. He enjoys skiing, mountain biking, fishing and spending time with family. He and wife, Kristen, who is from Pagosa Springs, have two dogs, Toby and Nilla.

"I absolutely love Pagosa Springs and I cannot wait to accomplish trail-related assignments," Tyler says.

- Ann Bond

PAGOSA RANGER DISTRICT



Brandon's New at the Front Desk

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Brandon Caley is the new Pagosa RD Visitor Services Information Assistant. His duties range from answering questions at the front desk and issuing hunting, firewood and Christmas tree permits to collection officer duties, managing the bookstore and helping with interpretive and conservation education.

Brandon comes from Alaska's Tongass NF Ketchikan-Misty Fiords RD, where he worked as a permanent seasonal at the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center for four seasons.

He started his federal career in 2006 on the Chugach NF under the Student Temporary Employment Program at the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center. Since then he's worked in visitor services for the Alaska Marine Highway Interpretive Program and Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center in Juneau.

"I've worked at all three Forest Service visitor centers in the Alaska Region and have conducted interpretive services on every mode of transportation you

can think of - trains, ferries, trails and ships," he says.

Brandon holds a Bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Management with an emphasis in environmental education, interpretation and recreation from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. He enjoys summer and winter recreation, exploring new places and new adventures.

"I'm coming from the largest National Forest in the system to a much smaller one," Brandon says. "I look forward to more job development, training and learning what a smaller National Forest is all about and what it offers." - *Ann Bond*



Fred Named Assistant FMO

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Fred Ellis, previously Pagosa Fuels Technician, is now Assistant Fire Management Officer for the Pagosa RD Fuels Program. His duties include prescribed fire planning and implementation, wildfire suppression, monitoring and mechanical fuels contracting.

Fred started his federal career in 1998 as a seasonal firefighter on the Williams RD of the Kaibab NF. He came to Durango in 2002 to work on the San Juan's Fire Ecology Crew.

In 2007, Fred moved into Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch, supervising engine and initial attack modules for all three districts. In 2008 he moved to the Pagosa RD as Fuels Technician, administering mechanical fuels contracts, prescribed fire and fire suppression.

During his FS career, Fred has worked on engine, helitack and Type 2 initial attack crews, as well as fire-use modules. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Northern Arizona University and Fort Lewis College continuing education credits in Wildland Fire Management.

He and wife, Pauline, San Juan NF Travel Management and Partnership Coordinator, have a daughter, Brooke, in her junior year at Durango High School. Fred helps coach Brooke's club soccer team.

"I look forward to completing existing fuels projects, many of which began with layout for mechanical fuels reduction projects and are now prescribed fire units," Fred says. "I will also be planning new prescribed fire projects to improve the health of forests on the Pagosa District."

- *Ann Bond*



Pagosa Ranger District, Pagosa Springs

DOLORES PUBLIC LANDS OFFICE



Penny Departs

DOLORES - Penny Wu, Dolores RD Recreation Program Lead, is now District Ranger for the Arapaho Roosevelt NF Clear Creek RD in Idaho Springs. Penny's USFS career began in 1989 in developed recreation and trails on the Green Mountain NF in Vermont. In 1999, she moved to the San Juan NF Dolores Office to manage recreation on both USFS and BLM lands under Service First.

During her DPLO tenure, Penny managed recreation at McPhee Reservoir, helped develop the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument management plan, and oversaw a transportation system of some 450 miles of trail and 2,000 miles of roads. Over the last several years, she was also involved in travel management.

Penny and her husband, Kyle Lester, who works for the Colorado Department of Transportation, have three children; Will, 10; Lucy, 6; and Jake, 5. - Ann Bond



Tom Moves into USFS Recreation

DOLORES - Tom Rice, former Assistant Field Manager for the BLM Tres Rios Field Office has moved over to the USFS as Dolores RD Recreation Program Manager.

Tom started his federal career in 2007 as Director of the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe Environmental Department and also worked as a BLM Natural Resource Specialist in Oil and Gas for the combined San Juan Public Lands Center.

"Tom has a variety of experience with tribal and other government agencies, close ties with the community and program management experience that will keep our recreation program going without missing a beat," says Derek Padilla, Dolores District Ranger.

A graduate of Fort Lewis College, Tom has lived in the Four Corners since 1986. He and wife, Kelly McAndrews, an archaeologist, have two children; Blair, 14, and Willa, 7. "I look forward to my continued work with the top-notch staff of the Dolores Public Lands Office, as well as the challenges that are part of this position," Tom says.

- Ann Bond



Rene Joins USFS from AHC

DOLORES - Rene Farias, Administrative Support for the Anasazi Heritage Center for the past six years, is now Support Services Specialist for the USFS Dolores RD.

Rene began her federal career in 1982 as a dispatcher for Glacier NP. After four years she moved into law enforcement for Grand Teton NP for four seasons, followed by law enforcement positions in Death Valley, Bandelier and Grand Canyon.

In 1997, she moved to Yellowstone to work in Administration for Aquatic Resource Management for five years.

Rene and husband, Jessie, moved to Mesa Verde NP in 2003, where she was a stay-at-home mom until hired by AHC

in 2007. Rene and Jessie have two boys, Cody and Neil, and their extended family includes a dog, cat and horse. She lists her hobbies as family and pets.

"I am looking forward to working for the Forest Service," she says. "I think the mission aligns with the National Park Service, where I grew up. A new challenge is always good at my age." - Toni Kelly



Dolores Public Lands Office, Dolores

DOLORES PUBLIC LANDS OFFICE



Damon is New in BLM Range

DOLORES - Damon Corley is the new Rangeland Management Specialist for the BLM Tres Rios Field Office handling grazing administration on BLM lands, including Canyon of the Ancients National Monument. He'll also be overseeing the Spring Creek Wild Horse Management Area.

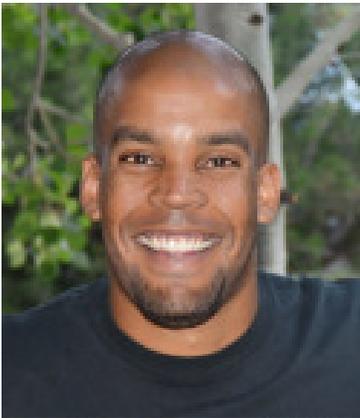
Damon comes from the BLM Winnemucca Field Office in Nevada, where he has been the Rangeland Management Specialist since 2011. He began his federal career in 1994 as a BLM Range Technician in Ridgecrest, California. In 1996 he moved to Prineville, Oregon as BLM Range Technician.

In 1998 he moved to Central Florida as Rangeland Conservationist for the Avon Park Bombing Range. Damon moved west again in 1999 to Kingman, Arizona as BLM Range Technician and the following year to San Diego, California, as Natural Resources Specialist for Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in San Diego. In San Diego, he worked

with endangered fairy shrimp vernal pool restoration.

Damon holds an Associate's degree in Park Administration from Cal Poly Pomona and a Bachelor's degree in Rangeland Resource Science from Humboldt State.

"I am very enthused to work in such a diverse landscape and glad to see native bunch grasses in such abundance," Damon said. "The people here are notably nice and friendly." *- Ann Bond*



Bear is Back

DOLORES - Matthew Traynham is back on the San Juan NF as Engine Captain for Type 6 and Type 4 Fire Engines on the Dolores RD.

Matt was most recently Engine Captain on the Los Padres NF Santa Barbara RD in Santa Barbara, California. He started his federal career in 2002 on a Hotshot Crew for the Midwin National Tall Grass Prairie in Wilmington, Illinois. In 2007 he joined the San Juan Hotshots and the following year he moved over to the Columbine RD as an Engine Captain. In 2009, he left us for the Los Padres.

Matt and wife, Audrey, are looking forward to four seasons of weather again and being closer to family and friends.

"I feel privileged to be back on the San Juan and look forward to dynamic new challenges and the opportunity to work with and meet new people," Matt says.

- Ann Bond



Mike Heads to Oregon

DURANGO - One of the San Juan NF's Mike Johnsons has left; the one who was the Dolores RD Rangeland Management Specialist for the past three years. Young Mike has taken the position of Natural Resource Team Leader for the Deschutes NF Crescent RD in Oregon.

Mike started his federal career in 1987 in the US Army. In 2007, he landed a seasonal BLM position and went onto serve as Fisheries Bio-technician for the BLM Owyhee Field Office in Idaho for three years before coming to the San Juan.

Mike holds a degree in Rangeland Ecology from Oregon State University. He enjoys rifle and bow hunting.

"I hope I had a positive impact where I could," he says.

- Ann Bond

DOLORES PUBLIC LANDS OFFICE



(FROM LEFT) Tom Kochanski on ukelele, Joni Vanderbilt on mandolin, Chris Bouton on standup bass, Laurie Swisher on guitar and Sally Zwisler on banjo perform with the San Juan String Band for students in Silverton this spring.

String Band Spreads Musical Message

DOLORES - Most of us associate Chris Bouton with swinging a Pulaski clearing trails on the Dolores District rather than a swinging bass line in a bluegrass band. Chris is now filling in with the San Juan String band since long-term member Melissa Zwisler-Largent stepped down after seven years of volunteering in more than 50 performances providing conservation-education messages to children and adults.

This year, the string band worked with the Durango Bluegrass Meltdown schools program to promote music by weaving science and natural history, public land stewardship and conservation into interactive concerts. The combined effort allowed the band to take advantage of grant funding to offer free presentations at local surrounding area schools.

The String Band has provided conservation education presentations to youth and adults in Durango, Bayfield, Ignacio, Dolores, Cortez, Mancos, Silverton, Pagosa Springs and Dove Creek. In addition, the band has participated in Kids4Trees events, the Mancos State Park Interpretive Program, Durango Bluegrass Meltdown events, the Pagosa RD's Williams Creek Reservoir Interpretive Program, Fire on the Mountain music festival, Festival of Trees, and the Four Corner's Folk Festival and Pagosa Folk 'N Bluegrass Festival kids' tents.

Tom Kochanski sat in with the band as a special guest performer last spring, adding a new flair with his ukulele, while Smokey Bear (aka Ryan Joyner) commonly upstages the band by cutting the rug to *Teddy Bears Picnic*, *Ole Slewfoot* and other favorites.

-Joni Vanderbilt

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