

Kevin McMullin

It's hard to say, exactly, what Kevin McMullin does. Musician? Singer? Song Writer?

In music school he studied tuba with Arnold Jacobs, widely considered to be one of the finest music teachers in the world.

These days you're more likely to see Kevin singing an Appalachian ballad accompanied by an autoharp. Or crooning a jazzy original over his Taylor guitar. Often enough, it's his fiddle that's sparking on stage, playing the Beaumont Rag or a Celtic tune by O'Carolyn. He demonstrates more than a knack for other instruments as well, including the piano and a Chinese instrument called the erhu.

He's the co-founder and fiddle player for Duck for the Oyster, a traditional dance band that has gained a loyal and growing following since its inception in 1989. He often joins jazzmeister, Randy Sabien on stage. The two have captivated audiences throughout Wisconsin, and released a recording (Cap a Cup of Dreams) together. Says Sabien of McMullin: "(He's) a great fiddle player, a helluva song writer and he owes me \$40.00."

As the man says, he's a helluva song writer. The Wisconsin State Drinking Song, Sarona, and Cold Wind have become cult favorites throughout the upper Midwest. Pass It On magazine called "His thoughtful words... empowering..." His song, Just Send Cash, helped bring a bill to protect Wisconsin from out of state trash to a hearing in the legislature. The song, Gravelly Ground, was featured in the movie, Grace. A very low budget film, but the song is de rigeur among the movie's fans.

In addition to performing with Sabien, Kevin has appeared professionally with a slew of artists including Peter Ostroushko, Ken Kolodner, Laura Risk, and The Buffalo Gals. He has toured in Europe and Canada, performed at the Big Top Chautauqua, The Madison Civic Center, dozens of festivals, and the Loyal Public Library. (He loves small towns). And by the way, he tells stories. Boy, does he tell stories.

Nanci Olesen, host of the nationally syndicated radio show, MOMbo put it this way:
"Kevin's stories are fresh and exciting! He charms the audience... (and is)... always a delight to listen to."
Wisconsin story teller, Stuart Stotts put it more simply, "Kevin's story telling is fantastic."
McMullin has brought his story telling and musical abilities to an incredibly wide ranged audience. He's wildly popular in schools and libraries. Old timers appreciate his sense of tradition and history. Nearly everyone loves his sense of fun and just plain nuttiness.

One thing is for sure. When he gets on stage, he performs.

His performances are an extraordinary combination of music and narrative, humor and drama, using traditional and original material that leave listeners profoundly satisfied. The stories and music that he has collected from around the world resonate with audiences of every generation and background. His original material can be funny and poignant at the same time. He draws you in. Whether you're listening to him burn up a fiddle tune or relate the story of his Aunt Marge and Uncle Bill caught in a traffic jam, you find yourself losing track of where you are and who you're with.

As Terry Visger, one of the Organizers of the LaCrosse Story Telling Festival, put it:
"He is a wonderful storyteller and a great musician and he blends the two beautifully."

Did we mention that he's a playwright?

That he's released more than half a dozen CD's?

That he's designed educational programs for museums and schools?

That he's co-founder of both the Joining the Circle Dance Camp and the Northern Heritage Fiddle Contest?

That it's really Randy that owes him \$40? Well, you have to stop some time.