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## Dixie Music Center rocks local history with 25th Anniversary Bash



**Bob and Dotti Leichner of Old Town are the stars of stars again as they provide the world with a free musical event all day on Saturday (Oct. 8) in Old Town. The couple is famous for their own musical talent as well as being the best source as a place to purchase musical instruments, equipment and to attend music school. Here they are at the start of the amazing Dixie Music Center 25th Anniversary Bash. (Traditionally, there is also a music bash at Christmastime.)**

**Story, Photos and Video By Jeff M. Hardison © Oct. 9, 2016 @ 5:07 p.m.**

**OLD TOWN** -- Bob and Dotti Leichner of Old Town hosted another amazing musical journey Saturday (Oct. 8) as Dixie Music Center celebrated with its 25th Anniversary Bash.

Dixie Music Center made local history. Among the other musical history notes from yesterday's is that the celebration was on the threshold of what would have been John Lennon's 76th birthday (Oct. 9, 1940 - Dec. 8, 1980).

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**The Dixie County Historical Society not only brought baked goods to sell and help this non-profit group, but here are a few of its members helping to make local history on Saturday. Among the Dixie County Historical Society members promoting and helping to preserve Dixie County history are (from left) Secretary Dana Johnson (who is also the Dixie County Clerk of Court); Board Member Bethann Palmer; Vice President Betty Cannon; and President Sherry Ragsdale.**

As for Bob and Dotti Leichner , this couple brought in talent galore from near and far yesterday. The band of musicians from the Largo High School Class of 1970 (and one LHS Class of 1971) -- the Real Eyes Band – with whom Bob Leichner played, had members coming from San Francisco, Nashville, Mobile, St. Petersburg and Old Town.

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**Al & Patty and the East Coast Band**



**Dotti Leichner (in the colorful Dixie Music Center shirt) introduces Jamie King and the V Necks.**

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**Jamey King and the V Necks in the first few moments of that band's stellar performance. Jamey King and the V Necks are (from left) Daniel Nadler on electric guitar, Jamie King on acoustic guitar and singing, Taylor Wilson on drums and Gene Raulerson on bass guitar.**

While this band's reunion was a highlight of the day, there were many members of the LHS Class of 1970 showing up again at the annual bash -- including at least one from Memphis, Tenn., who also enjoyed getting together for fun again. Other audience members included many local dignitaries and officials, including Cross City Mayor Tank Lee and Fanning Springs City Council Member Jane Nogaki.

Dixie Music Center, an excellent retail outlet for musical instruments and equipment, and an outstanding school of music, heralded its silver anniversary with its traditional annual all-day live music festival.

There were prize drawings and a giant sale too. The family-friendly, free, fun event was open to the public -- as it always is -- and the people showed up to see and listen to the delightful music that let everyone transcend whatever may have been bringing their spirits down.

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**Some of the first people who are part of the Largo High School Class of 1970 accommodate a request for a quick photo opportunity as the day of wonderment begins to unfold in Old Town on Saturday. The morning light, when it hits some of their faces, makes a photographer want to say 'This really is a challenge, but that don't worry me none. In my eyes, you're being great models.' (Rod Stewart may have sang something else about the morning sun, and shadows, and age and all. Parking was a premium in the afternoon and so a second phase of coverage went by the wayside, but this was obviously an excellent event.**

Bands performing this year included Ole Skool, a rockin' blues-oriented trio from Old Town; Blind Syde, one of Bronson's favorite rock bands; Al & Patty and the East Coast Band, playing a mix of country standards; Jamey King and the V Necks, a new country band by the former lead singer of the band Steel Bridge; area favorites, Dotti South & the Slackers, who enjoyed their CD release party; and the Real Eyes Band, as mentioned, which is a group who last performed in their entirety more than 40 years ago. Former members of this band will be traveling from Nashville, Mobile, St. Petersburg and San Francisco for this long-awaited band reunion.

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**Seen here, (Ret.) USMC Lt. Col. Harvie Hampton, the Judge Advocate for the Tri-County Marine Corps League, agrees to provide a photo opportunity. Commandant Rosanna Powers was present to represent the league at this event as well. Hampton and Powers are among the many league members who have provided critical support for the Tri-County Toys for Tots efforts. Bryan Crisp, another Marine, has led those efforts the past couple of years. Vince Arcadi and Pat Arcadi are known as leaders early-on in this charitable program to help needy children have a bit more joy at Christmastime. There is a long list of former and active Marines and other non-Marines who annually help the Tri-County Toys for Tots efforts, including people like Frank Mathis, Melissa Smith, Craig Smith, Heather Woodall, Shirley Mathis, Shirley Harrell, Brody Lord, Melissa Beach and many, many others.**

Food concessions were provided by the Tri-County Marine Corps League Detachment 1018, with proceeds going to their Toys-For-Tots Christmas gift program for area

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children.

Soft drinks and snacks were offered by the Dixie County Historical Society, while the Dixie County C.O.P.s (Citizens On Patrol) had bottled water available.

One of the most anticipated facets of this annual bash is the drawing for prizes of instruments furnished by the dealer's major suppliers.

Items for this year's drawings include an Ibanez acoustic guitar pack, thanks to Hoshino rep Ben Powell; a Dean acoustic guitar, courtesy of Armadillo Enterprises; and a Peavey electric guitar, from Peavey rep John Briggs. Entry for the drawings is free, but there are conditions ~ including, the person must be present to win.

Dixie Music Center is located at 26626 SE U.S. Highway 19 in Old Town (across from the weigh station) and opened for business in October of 1991. The business is owned and operated by Bob and Dotti Leichner of Old Town. For more information, please call 352-542-3001.



**Margaret Knottingham (left) joins her daughter Debbie Destin during the bash. Destin represents ForVets Inc., which is working on the Camp Valor Project at Otter Springs Park and Campground. This is a park that is owned by Gilchrist County and leased for 99 years by ForVets Inc. as the group strives to create a place of serenity for veterans to heal from the wounds of war.**

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## Guitar Winner Donates To Haven Hospice



On Saturday (Oct. 8), Charlie Hayward of Largo (center) won the Dixie Music Center 25th Anniversary Bash's prize drawing for the Peavey Raptor Plus electric guitar, which had been donated by area Peavey representative, John Briggs of Gainesville. The retail value of this guitar is \$249.95. When called to the stage to collect her prize, Hayward asked if Bob and Dotti Leichner (Dotti is on the left and Bob is on the right) knew a good organization to whom the item could be donated. After a brief discussion the couple who own Dixie Music Center said that Haven Hospice would make a great candidate, particularly with the silent auction that will be a big part of their upcoming 'Fall at the Farm' annual fundraiser on Saturday (Oct. 22) at the historic Drummond Farm in the Rocky Hammock Preserve -- near Chiefland. Bob Leichner spoke with the folks at Haven Hospice on Tuesday morning (Oct. 11) and they are excited to receive such a nice donation (also, Dixie Music Center is donating a new Ibanez acoustic guitar that has been autographed by multi-award winning Mercury Records' artist -- Easton Corbin).

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*Photo Provided*