

# The Union's prospector

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## ► music

# Troubadour Camp comes to GV

By Laura Brown

Submitted to Prospector

For the first time since 1981, prolific Grass Valley singer/songwriter Peter Wilson will share the stage with collaborators Moe Dixon and John Hilligoss in a concert debuting 36 songs sprung from an annual retreat in the mountains of Pennsylvania called Troubadour Camp.

Four years in the making, the trio will perform their original Troubadour Camp songs and stories at 8 p.m. Saturday during a concert presented by the Center for the Arts.

"I think what's unique about this concert, is these songs have never been put out by the people who wrote them," said Wilson.

It's a productive year for Wilson, who performed to a full house in January upon the release of his first CD in three decades, *Shoulder to the Wheel*.

Wilson is known locally by many in the community as a long-time supporter of the arts, as a concert promoter and publicist, radio host and regular fixture in the live restaurant, bar and festival music scene.

His friendship with Dixon and Hilligoss goes back to the late 1970s when the three played folk music together in the ski town of Wilmington, Vt. Since then, the musicians have played as duos and trios across the country. For a time during the early 1980s, Hilligoss spent a winter in Nevada City.

Wilson, Dixon and Hilligoss all have uniquely different music styles. Called "the greatest voice in country music," by Johnny Cash, cowboy poet Mountain John Hilligoss has a degree in music and is equally a stand-up comedian and country crooner.

"John's a real story teller. He's got a really amazing voice," Wilson said.



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Center for the Arts presents a concert of original music and stories from "Troubadour Camp" with Nevada County singer/songwriter Peter Wilson and longtime collaborators Mountain John Hilligoss and Moe Dixon.

Moe Dixon is a familiar name on the festival and concert club circuit with his fiery finger-style, ragtime guitar and high energy ukulele playing.

"It will be a dynamic show," Wilson said.

In 2007, the old friends spent a week in the mountains of Pennsylvania and began writing songs together. This gathering became an annual event they affectionately dubbed, "Troubadour Camp," generating 36 songs and numerous stories.

After the Saturday concert, the friends plan to spend a week in the studio recording the music.

"They write what's in their hearts and that's what makes their magic so powerful," said Hilligoss of his Troubadour Camp friends, Wilson and Dixon.

With time spent in the Los Angeles folk music scene of the 1970s and years working Nashville's music row, Hilligoss has traveled millions of miles performing songs and telling stories at festivals, night clubs and concert halls in every state, Canada and Europe.

His videos have appeared on the Nashville Network and TNN

and he has shared the stage with Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and Emmylou Harris. His poems received the "Editors Choice Award" from The National Library of Poetry.

Dixon divides his time between winter performances based around Copper Mountain, Colo. and the summer season in Hood River, Ore. He's also a professional skier and windsurfer. As a soloist Dixon is esteemed for his masterful guitar and ukulele playing, powerful vocals, and poetic songwriting. Performing more than 150 concerts each year, Dixon has shared the stage with Pete Seeger, John Denver, Little River Band and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band to name a few.

It's hard to put a finger on what makes their music work, except for one key element.

"There's something about our friendship. We just all really like each other a lot," Wilson said.

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## ► know & go

WHO: Center for the Arts presents  
WHAT: Peter Wilson, Moe Dixon, Mountain John Hilligoss – Troubadour Camp

WHEN: 8 p.m. Sat., April 21

WHERE: The Center for the Arts, 314 W Main St., Grass Valley

TICKETS: \$10 members, \$12 non-member. Tickets at: Center Box Office - (530) 274-8384 ext 14; BriarPatch Co-op - (530) 272-5333 Cherry Records - (530) 823-2147. Online: thecenterforthearts.org

INFO: thecenterforthearts.org; peterwilsonworld.com  
mountainjohn.com; moedixon.com