

Gary McCoog-Back Mountain's balladeer

Local balladeer, waging a campaign for the revival of folk music, is Gary McCoog, vocalist and guitar player, of Dallas.

McCoog, who is becoming increasingly popular throughout the area among young and older people alike, has entertained since he was about five years of age when his father started him at the piano.

Born in Camden, N.J., McCoog is the son of Mrs. Marie McCoog and the late James A. McCoog. The McCoogs with their eight children moved to the Back Mountain area about 1955.

Gary was raised in the Back Mountain and attended Dallas High School but finally received his diploma through the G.E.D. program, attending classes in Wilkes-Barre in order to receive it.

"My dad loved music," said Gary. "And his lifetime dream was to have his entire family on stage at the same time as vocalists or instrumentalists."

"He never achieved that dream but he did instill in all of us a love for music. We sang together as a family and had musical programs every holiday or family reunions. In fact, we still do."

"When I was five years of age he taught me to play 'Chopsticks' on the piano. My first guitar was a Christmas gift from my father."

"He played the guitar and he knew how much I wanted one."

McCoog started singing ballads and playing the guitar as an amateur in talent shows and before community groups when he was a teenager. He performed in the Dallas Kiwanis Club's talent shows and in "Show Biz" contests geared more toward girls preparing for pageants such as Miss Pennsylvania or Miss

America. He entered the "Superstar Contest" in Charleston, S.C., where he placed sixth and received a life-sized trophy for his singing and playing the guitar.

McCoog sings a little of everything but is classified as a "balladeer."

"I love to sing for children," said McCoog. "They are enthusiastic about the songs."

After McCoog returned from South Carolina, he started playing professionally in local lounges and other business places.

McCoog writes a lot of his own music and his brother, Dan, who lives in Tucson, Ariz., writes the lyrics. Unlike most teams, Dan usually writes the words first and sends them to Gary, who then writes the music.

"Folk music is a part of America," said McCoog. "And I am one of the few trying to revive its popularity. It is part of every American's heritage."

"I prefer to sing simple ballads to which people can relate."

McCoog started finger-picking when he was working at Shawnee-on-the-Delaware. He and his dad worked together at that time and sang together.

McCoog does entertaining for children in groups such as the Back Mountain Cultural Center and similar organizations. It was from his own family's reunions that he got his start in singing ballads for children. He hopes sometime in the future to perform professionally for children.

McCoog is quite well-known in the Back Mountain and was master of ceremonies for the Mike Daley benefit held during this past summer. Having been severely burned himself at one time, McCoog had empathy for Daley and the pain he was suffering.

With the exclusion of his performances in local business places, his most recent community appearance was for the Back Mountain Cultural Center's Antique and Toy

Show. Two of McCoog's favorite ballads are "City of New Orleans" and "Garbage", an ecology song introduced by Pete Seeger.

McCoog's wife, the former Karen McConologue, also plays the guitar but for her own enjoyment not professionally. When he writes songs, their seven-year-old daughter, Heather, sings them along

with McCoog. Employed at Back Mountain Lumber and Hardware during the day, McCoog usually plays one or two nights weekly but in the near future plans to play more often.

McCoog's ambition is to play more engagements outside of the local area but the field is highly competitive and it takes a lot of determination and patience.

McCoog loves life for

living but especially loves children.

He also is an enthusiastic sports fan particularly the Phillies and the Eagles.

"I have followed the Phillies for the past eight years and when they won the World Series, I was just as ecstatically happy as they were," said McCoog.

In addition to the Phillies and Eagles, McCoog says there is

nothing like the Nittany Lions.

"My father's avocation was music," said McCoog, "and my brothers and sisters are all musically adept. We sang in church, at home and at parties. All of us are vocalists and my brother, John, plays the guitar. Dan plays the harmonica."

"My mother is attending college pursuing a degree with a major in art

education for the handicapped. She has excellent artistic talent."

McCoog is a member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 140. He also is a member of the Shavertown Fire Company. He likes to play darts and is a member of a local dart league.

Among musical recognition McCoog received was honorable mention for his song "Shelter At Your Door"

from the American Songwriters Festival. He was selected from more than 700,000 writers who entered their songs on cassettes.

He has entered again this year and hopes to go over the top with one of the four he has entered. His favorite entry is "Tucson Goodbye", natural since his brother lives in Tucson.

McCoog is always willing to perform before area community groups. He presently appears at a local lounge nearly every weekend.

McCoog's love for children becomes very evident when he talks about singing before children's groups and also when he talks about his daughter, Heather's musical talent.

"I hope that sometime in the future, Heather will follow in my footsteps as a 'balladeer'." She certainly has the talent."

For ballad lovers, who haven't had the opportunity to do so, take advantage of the next opportunity to hear Back Mountain's own folk singer and balladeer, Gary McCoog.



Gary McCoog

Cub pack 155 holds Halloween party

On Friday, Oct. 17, Cub Scout Troop 155 held their annual Halloween party. Prizes were awarded to Aaron Tillman, prettiest; Ben Cosgrove, scariest; Jason Popeck, most original; Michael Mathers, best all around costume; and John Baller, funniest. Judges were Chief Sabol and Patrolmen Lou Rozelle.

The entertainment was a Halloween skit involving "Dracula", "Egor", and "John Johnson", presented by Dave and Bev Neiman, Maureen Smith, and Lee Weaver. Cider and doughnuts were the refreshments for all attending.

Also presented at the meeting were the volunteers working with the scouts this year. The new cubmaster is Dave Wertz, with assistant cubmaster, Lee Weaver. The new Webelos leader is Lee Williams with assistants Walt Bennet, Dave Morris, and Lee Weaver.

Den mothers are Jar Weaver, Glenda Bankes, Lil Wertz, Pat Lupinski, Rita Masley, Jean Sniecos, Chris Mathers, and Betty Mathers.

The Religious awards coordinator is Joan Roginski. The liaison is Nancy MacDonald, committee chairman is Bob Kelley.

Independent study explored

Written reports, oral reports, original stories, bulletin board displays, book exhibits are all topics familiar to Eleanor Buda's students at the Dallas Junior High School. However, unlike the traditional academic approach, these projects are included in an optional Independent Study Contract available to several of Mrs. Buda's classes.

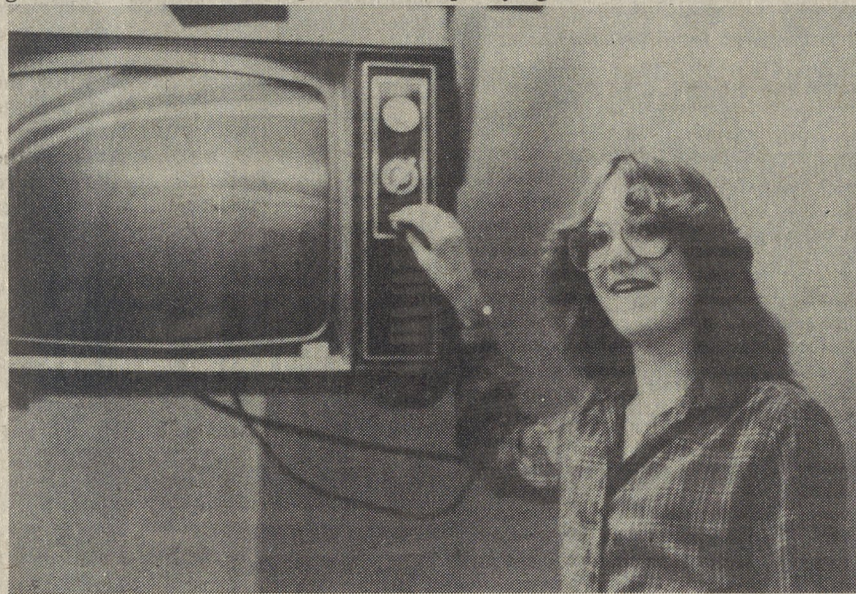
As a supplement to regular classroom ac-

tivities in developmental reading, Mrs. Buda's students work at projects of their choice throughout the school. The activities reinforce reading skills developed in the classroom, and illustrate the practical application of such skills in an interdisciplinary scope.

Students choosing to participate in the learning adventure select a project and submit a contract describing the finished product and specifying a

completion date. The range of acceptable projects is limited only by the students' ambition and imagination.

Mrs. Buda sees the program as a creative extension and sound supplementation of the language arts programs at the school. Independent study contracts stimulate the self-directed student in the pursuit of excellence within the action curriculum of the junior high.



INDEPENDENT STUDY--Nancy Washicosky, one of Mrs. Buda's students, adjusts the TV receiver in the junior high class of independent study at Dallas.

Rose wins Dallas Century III competition

Bob Rose has won the Century III Leaders Scholarship competition at Dallas Senior High School, according to Edgar Hughes, principal. The 17-year-old senior is now eligible to compete with other high school seniors throughout Penn-

sylvania for two \$1,500 scholarships, two \$500 scholarships, and also for a \$10,000 national scholarship that will be awarded in a conference of state winners in historic Colonial Williamsburg, Va. Rose triumphed in the

local phase of the Century III Leaders program, a scholarship competition which emphasizes the future concerns of America. Students were judged on the basis of their leadership abilities, community involvement and score on a current events examination. To compete at the state level, Rose must now write a brief projection outlining what he thinks is one of America's future challenges and how it should be met.

Runners-up in the competition at Dallas Senior High School are Ingrid Fries and Andrew Krivak.

Rose, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rose, Shrine Acres, Dallas, now competes with other high school winners from around the state for four scholarships and an opportunity for the \$10,000 top national scholarship. The two Pennsylvania

winners will receive an all-expense-paid trip to the fifth annual Century III National Leadership Seminar in Williamsburg, March 13-16, 1981, to participate in seminars on current issues. In previous years, speakers at these seminars were such notables as news commentators Harry Reasoner and Howard K. Smith, architect-futurist Buckminster Fuller, and the Librarian of Congress, Daniel Boorstin.

The program is administered by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and funded by the Shell Oil Company.

Bob is president of the senior class, a member of the Dallas Community Council, Citizens Advisory Board, and has just been named to Who's Who. As an athlete, Bob is involved with the volleyball team.

Dallas students tour

Students of the Dallas Intermediate School recently took a field trip to College Misericordia. Students of Team A of the sixth grade class toured the facilities of the science and mathematics departments of the college.

The students had the opportunity to see the chemistry and biology laboratories. They were able to learn scientific procedures and examine equipment and models. The children were also able to use the new computer in the computer

center at the college. They used both the video and printing terminals.

Responsible for the field trip to Misericordia were Dallas Intermediate school members John Doerfler, Mrs. Jean Myers, and Mrs. Virginia Jenkins. College Misericordia tour guides included Olney Craft, assistant professor of geology and ecology; Carl Konecke, assistant professor of biology; and Mrs. Estelle Steiner, computer programming expert.

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SEASON IS HERE--Members of the Pennsylvania Game Commission at the office in Dallas released hundreds of ringnecks last week in time for hunting season. Getting ready to release the birds are kneeling, left to right, Ed Gdosky, John Yenzow, Tony Austin; standing, Matt Remely, Clair Souter, Cliff Kishbaugh and Glenn Spencer. (Photo by Mark Moran)

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