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Saturday morning concerts are on the menu at Si Si Caffe

By Vera Kochan



"Friends of Old Puppy" band members, from left: Steven Strauss, Kenji Nakadegawa and Greg Pratt entertain at Si Si Caffe Photo Vera Kochan

play together, as they have other gigs during the week. Steven Strauss, FOP's founder stated, "I'm the last guy standing from 2004," referring to the latest band-member incarnation. He plays the ukulele and sings. While the member dress code appears to be Hawaiian shirts and leis, Strauss added a Santa hat to his ensemble, because it matched the red and white colors of his lei.

Other band members are co-founder Cynthia Wilson on drums, Kenji Nakadegawa plays a cello that's been converted to an upright bass, Ken Huie who rotates sets with Nakadegawa, and Greg Pratt on a Fender Telecaster electric guitar.

The audience often comprises of seniors, cyclists on a coffee break, young teens, kids with their parents, and dogs on leashes (partaking of Si Si's free water -- not coffee). During a recent concert, one audience member happily knitted while enjoying standards from the 1920s to 1950s. Strauss calls their musical style "exotica."

Cyclist Duncan Haffner is a regular to the concerts. "I can walk here from where I live," he stated before remarking how amazed he is that Strauss' large hands can deftly play a small ukulele.

Si Si Caffe has been approached by other musicians and singers wanting to entertain the public on Sundays and possibly weekdays thanks to word of mouth. For more information call (925) 377-1908.

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