

SOUTHBURY MAKERS SPOTLIGHT



Out of the Barn Band

By Kelly Keenan, SEDC Arts & Culture Subcommittee
Photos courtesy of the artist

This month, we chatted with John Demeyer of Out of the Barn Band. Be sure to catch one of their upcoming performances, including Make Music Day on June 21st in Southbury, the Pavilion at Heritage Village on July 11th, and the Bethlehem CT concert series at the Bellamy-Farriday House on August 22nd.

Q: How long have you been in Southbury? What brought you here / keeps you here?

A: The band is made up of seven people, two live in Southbury. I've been here 30 years, bass player Sharon Elias has been here 25 years. I moved here after we started our business, now retired but staying because my kids and grandkids live in Southbury and Middlebury.

Q: Who is in your band, how long have you been together, and how did you meet?

A: Our band consists of myself (John Demeyer) and Sharon Elias of Southbury, Larry Washington and Mary Crimi of Newtown, Alan Holmes of Brookfield, Michelle Bouchard of Middlebury and Nick DeLuise of Shelton. We met while we were all playing as part of a "community gathering" as a time-killer before the main act would perform at The Blues Café concert series at the Lakeview VFW hall. We evolved into the 'house band' and would perform as the warm-up group. Due to Covid issues and a change in format at the Blues Café we stopped doing that but kept playing together and formed Out of the Barn. We practice at my house in what is referred to as the barn so when we play anywhere else, we are literally "Out of the Barn", hence the name.

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Q: Tell us about the type of music you play.

A: We play songs from a wide range but with our instrument line up (guitar, banjo, upright bass, fiddle and drums) a country-bluegrass feeling comes through. Our set list comes from a group decision but it starts with somebody saying “let’s try this.”

Q: I know you have performed at community events. What other ways do you share your music ?

A: I played in a classic rock band locally for 25 years along with church choirs and youth mission trips as a song leader. I’m currently giving guitar lessons to my two grandsons, ages 9 and 11. As a band, we are scheduled to play at open mic nights and private events.

Q: What is your favorite aspect of performing? Least favorite?

A: The best part is looking out at the audience and seeing people smiling and singing along. The worst part is moving and setting up equipment, there never seems to be enough time!

Q: Is there a particularly memorable moment or performance that sticks with you?

A: The first time we played out as “Out of the Barn” the audience reception was really great and I remember thinking “this works!”

Q: Do you have any advice for emerging creatives who are trying to find their voice / style / genre?

A: Just go for it and give it a try, most people are pretty forgiving!



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