



NOISE IN THE LIBRARY:



Gary Reid plays Carter Stanley at a previous performance. He's performed about 30 times across multiple states.

Photo submitted by Gary Reid

One-man show about bluegrass icon Carter Stanley comes to Live Oak

By Carl McKinney

carl.mckinney@gaffnews.com

Instead of its usual silence, the Suwannee River Regional Library will be filled with noise next week.

Virginia-based musician Gary Reid is bringing a free one-man play about bluegrass artist Carter Stanley to the Suwannee River Regional Library, 1848 S. Ohio Ave., 6 p.m. on March 17.

"It's a mixture of music and storytelling," Reid said.

Carter Stanley, one half of the Stanley Brothers duo, helped to define the bluegrass genre, he added.

A lot of people think of bluegrass as a style that was passed down through the generations, but that's not true, Reid said.

"It's actually a new style of music that was started in the mid-1940s," he said. "Carter's family was key in starting that genre and defining that style."

Reid wrote and stars in the play, having done about 30 performances

in Arizona, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

Along with his brother Ralph, Carter Stanley traveled for 20 years, wrote 150 songs and made over 300 recordings, Reid wrote. He performed in 42 states and seven foreign countries.

The play will touch on his influences, his career, his struggle with alcoholism and other challenges he faced, Reid said.

One-Man

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"He wrote the songs, he played the music and he self-destructed," states a media release about the performance.

Stanley's career started in 1946 and ended with his death in 1966 at the age of 41.

From around 1959 to 1966, the Stanley Brothers were headquartered in Live Oak, Reid said, and appeared on the local Suwannee River Jamboree music program.

"There is a very real connection between Carter's family and Live Oak," he added. "It was a big part of his career."

The play is a microcosm of the birth of bluegrass

and offers the audience a chance to see its evolution, Reid said.

Growing up listening to rock and roll, Reid said he found some bluegrass albums in 1973.

"When the needle hit the grooves of that album, it just really spoke to me," he said.

He has been playing that style of music for 40 years, according to the media release about the play.

Reid has won four awards from the International Bluegrass Music Association, the release states. He has had two books published about the Stanley Brothers and the bluegrass genre.

"It's been an all-encompassing part of my life for the last 40 years," he said.

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