

# STREET SCENE

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## Real 'Sales' man

Guestimations set the pie-in-the-face number as around 19,000, give or take a few coconut cream or lemon. And who knows how many kids learned to eat veggies because of him. Then there the untold number of mothers made to tow the line for lunch all because of Soupy Sales. Find out more about the man on 5D.

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★ ★ 10

## Songmen: Glasnost continues

By Jill Hamilton  
special writer

The glasnost begun by Mikhail Gorbachev goes on. The Moscow Circus is coming to town and so is the latest musical glasnost entry, The Songmen.

Soviet singers Thomas and Tarmo, better known as The Songmen, have only been in the United States for five months, but already they are beginning to re-interpret the usual role of a performer.

Whereas most American rockers are aiming for a record deal and arena-sized gigs, The Songmen are interested in neither.

The Songmen are more at home in a small setting. In fact, they will make their Midwestern debut with a pair of performances 7:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 6-7, at the home of Kathy Korpi in West Bloomfield.

Much to the chagrin of their manager, The Songmen seem to feel that getting a record deal is low-priority and are taking their time making a demo.

And, as far as arena-sized gigs, well, that would distract from their original purpose — to teach and heal through their music. Thomas and Tarmo feel that this can best be achieved through small, intimate performances.

"Americans are only taught to have fun," said Tarmo in a telephone interview at the New York home of Muppets creator Jim Henson. "They also need to learn the essence of the music, to go into the back yard of a song."

"IN HOUSES, we play to smaller group so there is more concentration. They experience something more than pay me, then go home." For the Songmen, performing in America is a continuation of 20 years of performing together as troubadours.

"Being Songmen means singing is not a business, but a way of life," said Tarmo.

The Songmen say that, like nightingales, they sing because they must sing.

"If there are wars, if there are different political situations," Tarmo said, "the nightingale sings — a nightingale sings all of its life. If it ceases to sing, it ceases to exist."

"There are many songs that are physically healing people from disease. Every song has a magic, its own vibration. If you are part of it, this already is a blessing."

For many years, Thomas and Tarmo lived in Estonia under the oppression of a totalitarian regime, continuing to create their songs. They are extremely well-known in Estonia, Finland, Lithuania and Sweden.

The name, Songmen, was given to them by the newspapers and au-

diences of those countries. Songmen were the singing medicine men of the deep past. They are heroes in Scandinavian mythology.

In 1979, Tarmo married an Italian. That began a nightmare that would eventually lead Tarmo and Thomas defecting in October of last year.

IN 1979, marrying a foreigner was considered an ideological crime. It placed Tarmo on the KGB blacklist and led to many years in and out of jails and mental asylums.

The Songmen would perform together whenever Tarmo was released from jail. Their music began to be considered "dangerous" by the authorities. Although their songs are politically subtle to Americans, they were growing threat to the Soviets because they demonstrated a belief in God and freedom.

"In a country of darkness," Tarmo said, "even a firefly can be dangerous, because it makes people see that light exists."

When perestroika began, Thomas and his friends wrote to Gorbachev about Tarmo. Many officials were afraid of perestroika as the ramifications on their own lives, they said.

The reply came back from the Kremlin, "Resolve this immediately."

Tarmo was released in April of 1987, after eight years in and out of every possible jail and mental asylum. The nightmare ended, but there was always the possibility that he would be taken again.

The release of Tarmo made it possible for The Songmen to perform full time again. They sang all over Estonia — small concerts, large concerts, cathedrals, open fields.

FOR THE PAST few months, The Songmen have been on a unusual concert tour. Instead of taking the usual route of playing in small, beer-soaked clubs to indifferent strangers, Thomas and Tarmo have been playing at small gatherings in private homes across the country. For such newcomers, the list of homes they play at is impressive, including the home of Arlo Guthrie.

So far, Tarmo finds America a pretty agreeable place except for one thing.

"I like America very much," he said. "It is a very beautiful place. The only thing that has damaged Americans is niceness. I think the word 'niceness' connects with 'to lie'."

"Many people feel I am rude because I tell the truth and they do not want to hear the truth."

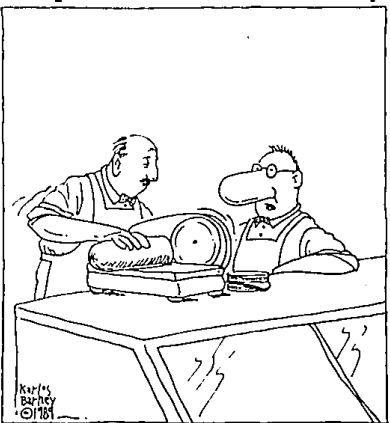
For information call 334-0808 or 335-0433.



Thomas and Tarmo, or The Songmen, are the latest bit of glasnost to invade the United States from the Soviet Union. And the musicians are beginning to reinterpret the usual role of a performer.

## Warp Factor

Karlos Barney



"Hey, how come I never get to run the baloney slicer?"

## When in need, call an 'angel'

By Carolyn DeMarco  
staff writer

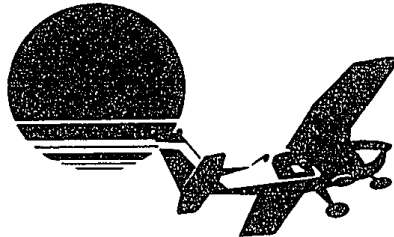
Wanted: licensed pilots to donate time, airplane, fuel, telephone and other incidentals to fly people in need of non-emergency medical help and to transport organs and rare blood types for transfer. No remuneration except for the sincere thanks of grateful passengers. Call 879-2146.

Think it's just pie in the sky, that only an angel would apply?

No and yes. The service does exist, and angels are part of it. It's Angel Flight, officially known as the American Medical Support Flight Team of Southeast Michigan.

But these angels live on earth. They include two dozen area private pilots with job titles as varied as microbiologist, pipefitter, certified public accountant and physician.

They volunteer their time to take cancer patients for out-of-state treatment, to deliver eyes from re-



cently dead bodies to give sight to blind people, to transport medical equipment and personnel, and for other missions of mercy. And they get no reward except for the feeling that they've helped.

"IT'S AMAZING how few people know of us," said Jim Quinn, Angel Flight's coordinator, "although we've approached a number of area hospitals, offering our help.

No one believes you get something for nothing."

Quinn, a Troy resident who works as a design engineer for General Motors, began the local chapter of Angel Flight three years ago. As a member of a flying club he was looking for a way to keep up his cross country trips. He contacted the national club and found there was no medical support flight team in Michigan.

He began his own unit by recruiting members of the flying club. The group is no frills, non-structured. Members pay \$35 per year and get together infrequently.

"PEOPLE JUST don't have time for meetings," Quinn said. Their only reason for being is to give their services to those who need them when called upon.

Organization members stand ready to help anyone in need at no cost to the individual or medical organization. Angel Flight is not an air ambulance for emergency runs, Quinn stressed. Passengers are those who for financial or comfort reasons are unable to fly on commercial flights. Passengers must be ambulatory and cannot be so ill that they need medical care while in the air.

Angel Flight does not supply medical care but does allow passengers to bring their own oxygen, usually a prohibition on commercial flights.

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