

Back Home Again: A John Denver Holiday Concert Actor Bios

Gail Bliss

Vocalist

An Oregon native, Gail Bliss is happy to debut at Seattle Rep. Area theatre-goers may recall Ms. Bliss as Jeanine Jasper in Village Theatre's *Play It By Heart*. Having performed at the Grand Ole Opry, her CD, *For the Good Times*, pays tribute to her heroes of classic country music. Other recordings include *Where Love Lives* and *Gail Bliss & Patsy Cline*. Her songwriting has earned her national acclaim (CCMA Top Songwriter 2003) and a spot on international music charts. Following her Broadway debut in the Johnny Cash musical *Ring of Fire* (director Richard Maltby, Jr.), she returns as featured entertainer in Myrtle Beach's variety show, *ONE*, and also stars in and directs *A Closer Walk With Patsy Cline* nationwide. Other theatrical credits include *Menopause The Musical* and *Pump Boys & Dinettes*.

Denny Brooks

Musician

Denny Brooks, a native of southern California, began singing at a very early age. As a teen, he worked folk clubs. He learned his craft as an entertainer at Disneyland over several years and later became the opening act for The Carpenters, Neil Diamond, Neil Sedaka, Steve Martin, and many more. Mr. Brooks met John Denver in 1963 and went on to record and tour with him for ten years, from 1976 -1986. He lives in Los Angeles and continues his career as a voice actor in radio, television, and film.

Nova Devonie

Musician

Nova Devonie is a busy Seattle musician. She can be seen and heard at music venues all around town in several bands, most notably "Miles and Karina," "Tom Bennett and the Rolling Blackouts," and "Jo Miller and her Burly Roughnecks." Ms. Devonie toured nationally for several years as accordionist and backup singer in the swingabilly cowgirl group "Ranch Romance." Since then, she divides her time between performing, composing, and teaching mostly in the Pacific Northwest.

David P. Jackson

Musician

David P. Jackson began his career as a comedian and bassist on the original "Andy Williams Show," after growing up with a musical mother who shared the accordion, the piano, and a sense of humor with her son. He wrote with Hoyt Axton and recorded with John Denver, Jackson Browne, Gene Clark and Doug Dillard, T-Bone Burnett, Delbert McClinton and Jimmy Buffet, and he joined John David Souther and Glenn Frey in Bo Diddley's band. David toured with Sonny & Cher, Glen Campbell and Roger Miller before founding and performing in the Naughty Sweeties and later joining the swing music trio Mood Indigo. Currently, he is working with world-renowned bebop guitarist Bruce Forman in his band Cow Bop.

David Miles Keenan

Musician

David Miles Keenan has been playing music since he was 8 years old and performing since the age of 12. He is a multi-instrumentalist playing most of the string family with ease. He was a member of cowgirl super group "Ranch Romance," has appeared twice on Garrison Keilor's *A Prairie Home Companion*, and has shared the stage with Bill Monroe, Bela Fleck, Tim O'Brien and many others. Currently, he performs with several Seattle groups including Jo Miller & Her Burly Roughnecks, The Rolling Blackouts, The Buckaroosters, and Miles & Karina, and the Northwest Film Forum has commissioned him to write a score for the 1926 animated film *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* to be performed live in January 2008.

Dan Wheetman

Musical Director/Co-Author/Musician

Dan Wheetman recently received an Ovation Award in Los Angeles for Musical Director in *Back Home Again*. He also received a Drama-Logue Award for Musical Direction for *Lost Highway: Hank Williams* at Mark Taper Forum and a Los Angeles Critics Award for *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues* at the Geffen Playhouse. He is a co-author of *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues*, which was nominated for four Tony Awards including Best Book. He wrote his plays *Appalachian Strings* and *Fire on the Mountain* with director Randal Myler. The following theaters performed *Appalachian Strings*: Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Denver Center Theatre Company, Meadow Brook Theatre, and Virginia Stage Company. *Fire on the Mountain* has been performed at the sold-out houses at San Diego Rep, the Barter Theatre Company in Virginia, The Denver Center Theatre, and recently at Seattle Rep. He was the composer and musical director for the stage version of John Irving's *Cider House Rules* at the Mark Taper Forum in L.A. and the Atlantic Theater Company in New York. He toured and recorded with John Denver, wrote a Christmas song for Kermit the Frog, made a 78rpm record with R. Crumb and the Good Tone Banjo Boys, played a fiddle duet with Itzack Perlman, and worked as the opening act for Steve Martin. He plays in the band Marley's Ghost. Their new CD, "Spooked", on Sage Arts was produced by Van Dyke Parks and the cover art was done by master cartoonist R. Crumb.