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RUBBER SIDE DOWN

You gotta love a guy who invites a girl to ride on the back of his '91 H-D Springer for a date – from Dallas to Austin and back – with no sissy bar! It was her first ride ever on a motorcycle and now she is his wife of eight years! According to **Mark Pollock**, guitar whisperer and owner of **TransPecos Guitars** in Alpine, “not only did she say yes, but she never complained, not even once. How could I not marry a girl like that?” We agree **Mary** is a ‘keeper’!

Not only is Mark Mary’s groom and the owner of TransPecos Guitars, but he is also the co-founder of the **World’s Oldest and Largest Guitar Festival**, commonly known as the **Dallas Guitar Show**. The Guitar Show is held annually in Dallas every April at Dallas Market Hall. This year’s Show will take place April 20, 21 and 22.

From its humble beginnings in 1978, as put together by Dallas guitar shop owner **Charley Wirz**, Pollock and his co-founder, **Jimmy Wallace**, have put together an International Guitar Festival that continues to grow by leaps and bounds. This year’s show expects to draw more than 30,000 visitors to Dallas Market Hall. The Hall is the largest private exhibition hall in the USA and has been home to the Dallas International Guitar Festival since 2004, which, incidentally, was one year ahead of schedule, according to Pollock.

Pollock first had dreams of the Dallas Guitar Show being in Dallas Market Hall as early as 1986, but he was told that events held at the Hall book years in advance and that short of someone dying, he would be lucky to get in within 20 years. So instead it took 19 years!

Pollock does consider himself lucky. Now his event is one of those that is booked many years in advance – presently through the year 2013 with another year being booked after this year. He also books hotel space for the event five years in advance.

This years

Guitar Show will feature



Mark Pollock, guitarist, Harley-rider, co-founder of the Dallas Guitar Show and owner of TransPecos Guitars in Alpine.

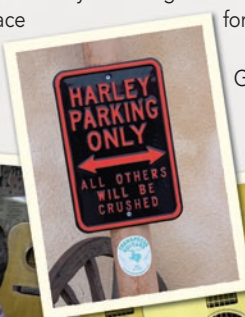


over 600 vendors offering everything imaginable in the world of guitars. Attendees will even have the option to purchase new and vintage guitars in all price ranges. In fact, “benchmark prices for the industry are set each year at this event. It is not uncommon to see buyers arrive with briefcases full of money looking for that special purchase,” according to Pollock.

Of the 600 or so booths, about one-third will actually sign-up during the Show to attend next year. And the Show usually sells out its booth space in mid-March for the next year.

This year’s Show, which happens to be the 30th Anniversary, will feature the “Holy Grail Guitar Exhibition”, which will include the famous “Blackie” guitar played previously by **Eric Clapton**. The custom Fender Stratocaster was purchased at a Christie’s auction in 2004 for \$959,000! Along with “Blackie” will be notable guitars played by **Jimi Hendrix**, **Carlos Santana** and some of **Leo Fender’s** original designs.

According to Pollock, “this could be perhaps the greatest collection of guitars assembled in one place”. So great, in fact, we are told the *Smithsonian* photographer, **Matthew Worden**, will photograph and document the collection. His photographs will actually be used to





Good Times contributing writer, Ron Reeger, showin' off his guitar skills. He taken, ladies...

to worry, also included at the Show are performances and clinics by some of the Great-est-To-Ever-Play-Guitar.

There will be no less than five live music stages that will feature the likes of **George Lynch, Eric Johnson, Dan Toler, Joe Bonamassa, Reed Paul Smith, Phil Keaggy, Rick Derringer (Johnny Winter, Steely Dan), Johnny A, and Jars of Clay.** Even Pollock's partner in the event, Jimmy Wallace and his band, **The Strato Blasters**, will play at the event. Wallace and his band have what must be the sweetest job at the whole Show. They serve as the 'house band' for all performers needing back-up. Needless to say, they have played with many Guitar-Greats over the years.

Pollock, who doesn't play at all during the Show because he's running the whole deal, also has quite an impressive rolodex of Guitar-Greats that he has played with over the years. A self-proclaimed blues guitarist, Pollock has played with **Muddy Waters, James Cotton and Freddy King's** band, which opened for **Eric Clapton** on his 'Layla' tour in 1975. He currently (rather occasionally, according to Pollock), plays with a band in Dallas made up of "four lawyers... and a guitarist that needs four lawyers", a.k.a. **Blue Collar Crime.**

His former bass player with the band 'Cold Blue Steel', which, incidentally, was the name of his '91 Springer, is **Tony Dukes** from Paint Rock, TX. Pollock and Dukes used to travel to a lot of shows on their Harleys and even made one trip to Memphis to perform for the Memphis Blues Society. While there, they were put up in the famous Peabody Hotel.

Pollock related a story when he and Dukes would ride their Harleys around the barricade setup by the valet parking attendants. "No way were we going

create a coffee table book to memorialize the *Holy Grail Guitar Exhibit*. And the Smithsonian is even considering sending a film crew to create a documentary about the collection!

But just what exactly is the point of having a lot of guitars around to buy, sell and trade if you can't hear someone play them? Not



Co-author of Rubber Side Down, Lisa Grissom, demonstrates how NOT to play a kazoo. Hum, Lisa, don't blow!

to let them valet park our bikes, so we figured why stop", Pollock told us. Apparently, their brash behavior scared the valet attendants (*what a bunch of sissy's*) who finally had the hotel manager speak to Pollock and Dukes. The manager asked them to stop at the barricade to let the attendants raise it prior to their proceeding, stating they would not have to pay for parking. Pollock and Dukes agreed, but apparently, they forgot the next time they arrived at the gate...and all the other times after that!

Pollock said he figured they were ok, since during their visit, they made friends with one of Memphis' Assistant District Attorneys (*who will remain nameless for now*). He told of a story when they were chauffeured around Memphis in the ADA's Mercedes while sitting in the trunk – with the trunk open – drinking beer.

Important Disclaimer: No ducks were harmed during their stay at the Peabody Hotel.

Clearly there is no shortage of good times when Pollock is around. Even the people he has working for him are loads of fun. Knowing we were gonna write this article, we stopped in TransPecos to take some pics and had a barrel of laughs. **Justin**, who was holding down the fort, gave Lisa kazoo lessons compliments of the house. Of course, Lisa had a few laughs for us up her sleeve too – "I had no idea that to play a kazoo, you have to hum, not blow", she informed us. Can you imagine the riot of laughter than ensued after a comment like that?!

We have decided anything that Pollock and his crew have their name on must be FUN, so you can expect to hear more from us on Pollock in June. He has invited us to the Dallas Guitar Show, so in accordance with Rubber Side Down style, we are gonna make a road trip out of it and we'll be back to tell you about the good times we had in the June issue.

It just so happens that around the same time as the Guitar Show, the **EasyRiders V-Twin Bike Show Tour** will be in Dallas on April 21st and **Rick Fairless of Stokers' Dallas** fame will be hosting bike stuff to coincide with the bike show. Whoa! Are we gonna have FUN!

You can check out info about TransPecos Guitars and Mark Pollock, guitar-whisperer-blues-guitarist-way-FUN-dude, at www.transpecosguitars.com and info about the Dallas Guitar Show at www.guitarshow.com. Also info about the V-Twin Bike Show at www.easyriders.com and whatever Fairless may be up to at www.stokers.com.

But don't spend too much time at the computer. Instead, experience it all for yourself. Come ride with us! Email us at rsd@piglet-paper.com. And if not with us, we assume you will be riding somewhere, so wherever you are, whenever you ride, keep your Rubber Side Down.

~Ronn & Lisa

