Dear Sounding Board Readers,

My parents divorced when I was three. My mother remarried a few years later. My brother Douglas and sister George-ann were born, and I grew up with them. My mother divorced again, and we moved in with her parents in New Jersey. My grandfather, Dr. Simms, had a farm in Saylorsburg, PA, just north of Nazareth. We would go there every other weekend and much of the summer. My cousins would also show up and join the fun. You may have seen some of my cousin Robert Goetzl’s artwork. He helped us celebrate our 175th Anniversary and is currently involved in updating our factory tour displays.

Even though I didn’t grow up in Nazareth, I would visit in the summer and I became more fascinated with my family’s business. One summer in between high school and college, I asked my dad and grandfather if I could build a guitar. My grandfather suggested a 12-fret Dreadnought because he thought it had the most volume. I wanted a narrow neck and a solid headstock. It was a great experience for me. That guitar is on display in my room in the Martin museum.

A few years later, my brother Douglas asked me if he could borrow that guitar. He took it to his bedroom, closed the door, turned on the radio and low and behold, eventually taught himself to play. He became so accomplished as a guitar player that he enrolled in the Berkelee College of Music. After one year there, he left and moved back to Saylorsburg to pursue his passion of working outdoors building swimming pools. He continued to enjoy playing guitar.

One Christmas, I gave Douglas a nylon-string cutaway that I bought at a prototype sale we held at the company. He told me it was his favorite guitar. My brother passed away in January. I miss him dearly.

C. F. Martin
Senator Bob Casey Comes To Nazareth
Casey Joins Martin Guitar to Urge China to End Unfair Trade Practices

U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), Chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, joined C. F. Martin & Co. on February 23, 2011, urging China to end unfair trade practices that harm workers and businesses in the Lehigh Valley and around the country.

“Pennsylvania businesses are telling me that unfair trade practices by the Chinese have harmed their ability to compete and job losses substantiate those claims,” said Senator Casey. “The lack of protection on the part of the Chinese hurts C. F. Martin & Co. and countless other businesses and workers. China must address intellectual property rights infringements and currency undervaluation.”

“We are greatly honored to have an ongoing relationship with Senator Casey and we can’t express in words how much we appreciate his openness and willingness to assist us in rectifying our dilemma with respect to protecting our valued trademark in China,” said C.F. Martin IV, Chairman and CEO of C. F. Martin & Co. “This is not an easy issue and we hope that such a significant and caring voice will help to get positive action on this vital and frustrating issue.”

Since 2005, Martin Guitar has fought to register its mark with the Chinese government to protect its brand and to prevent Chinese individuals from selling counterfeit guitars.

Last month, Senator Casey sent a letter to President Obama detailing the hardships imposed on C. F. Martin & Co. by China’s unfair trade practices and urging him to press the issue with Chinese President Hu Jintao during his visit to Washington. In the letter, Senator Casey urged President Obama to focus his discussions with Hu around intellectual property rights (IPR) protections and currency valuation.

China’s inadequate intellectual property protections are well documented, the letter stated. Last April, the Office of the United States Trade Representative placed China on its Priority Watch List, citing China’s poor level of IPR protection and enforcement.

It is estimated that 2.4 million jobs have been lost in the U.S. since China joined the WTO in 2001, 95,700 of which were in Pennsylvania.

House!
Hugh Laurie, who plays the starring role on Fox Network’s TV series “House,” graced the cover of Guitar Aficionado magazine with his 1942 0-17 Martin guitar. While not acting, this multi-talented British actor’s passions include comedy, writing and of course music. He is releasing his debut album called "Let Them Talk," which celebrates the blues sound of New Orleans. Much more at: www.hughlaurie.co.uk.

On The Cover
Unofficial Martin Guitar Forum member, Suzy Capella, is an exceptional artist and photographer based in London. She is also a devotee of Martin's “OM” (Orchestra Model) guitars. She feels that the line and aesthetic of the Martin OM's are often overlooked. From her perspective, it is an aesthetic masterpiece – a true work of art. Suzy photographed UMGF Administrator Don Hurley’s OM-28 Marquis, and from it produced the unique artwork that graces our cover. She visited Nazareth this past August and had her photo taken with Chris Martin.
The Cagney Connection

Like so many, becoming the proud owner of a Martin Guitar takes you from someone who plays to a player. Before you've even played a note, your Martin says, “He's serious about this.” Like a theatre actor on a film set, you're instantly respected. Whether you deserve it or not remains to be seen.

In 1980, I landed a small part in Ragtime, my first film. Milos Forman, the director, wanted James Cagney to come out of retirement and play the Police Commissioner. At 81 years of age, Cagney didn't think he could do it. Milos begged him. For his own peace of mind, Cagney agreed to come down to NYC and do a screen test. Milos brought in half a dozen actors (including me) to do the scene. I'll never forget it. With a nurse by his side, Cagney came in on two canes. Milos helped him into a chair. Milos put the four page scene in front of him. Cagney looked as if he wanted to be somewhere else. Quietly, Milos said, “Action.” Nothing happened. Cagney couldn't find the words on the page. We tried again. And again. After several attempts, it became obvious to everyone and especially Cagney that he couldn't do it. Milos wouldn't give up. He cut the scene down to two pages. Still, Cagney struggled. One page. You could see how much Cagney wanted to do it, how the fire was still there, but old age was winning out. And then, finally, Cagney looked down at his script, looked back up, and became...well, James Cagney. I remember shooting a glance at the studio's black and white TV monitor and there he was: the actor, the star of every movie I'd ever seen him in. Several weeks later, I was pinching myself standing on the set of Ragtime, watching one of the all time greats rise to the occasion one last time.

In 2003, I was having a severe case of “Guitar Acquisition Syndrome” at Elderly Instruments in Lansing, MI. I was looking for a player, a workhorse, a great fingerpicking Martin. Luthier Joe Konkoly had done some work on my small collection of guitars over the years. After catching me staring glassy-eyed at their Martins, he came out of the Repair Shop, and said, “I want to show you something.” Taking me into the back of the shop, Joe handed me a very old Martin. “It’s a 1934 C-2 Archtop,” he said. “The top piece was broken, so I replaced it with a piece of red Adirondack spruce. Other than that, it’s as they made it.” The new top piece made it a bit of a hybrid, but it still had that vintage sound, a wide V-neck, a small body, and it fit my hands. It was mine.

Ever since, my ’34 C-2 Conversion and I have been constant companions. Several hundred gigs, it has also parked itself in my Broadway dressing room and kept me company on numerous movie sets. A few years ago, in a TV film called Sweet Nothing In My Ear, I had a scene where I played guitar. I called Dick Boak at Martin, introduced myself, and said, “I have this unique Martin and I’m going to use it in the film.” He said go ahead and that down the road he’d love to see it. “Next time you’re near Nazareth, stop by.” Months later, I pulled off Sycamore Street and, like so many before me, made the pilgrimage. The tour, the museum, the gift shop, the whole thing. I even met Stefan Grossman in the lobby. I worshiped his tablature books in the early ‘80s and to this day continue to study from his many instructional DVDs. I didn’t want to leave.

Over time, Dick decided that Joe Konkoly’s creation might make a nice Custom Artist Series guitar. We sat down and spec’d it out. As we were discussing the kind of wood, the neck, trying to replicate as well as create something unlike anything else in Martin's catalogue, Dick said, “I want to show you something.” He disappeared into his office and back came back with a black and white photograph. There, more than seventy years ago, on a Hollywood movie set, was James Cagney playing a Martin C-2 Archtop. I couldn't believe it. I looked at Dick. “Is that...?” He nodded. “Yes. That's your guitar.”

A friend of mine likes to say he doesn’t believe in coincidences. I don’t know what I believe but something tells me, somewhere, Jimmy Cagney is smiling.

Jeff Daniels, Los Angeles, CA, May 4, 2011
**NASA’s Scott Phillips**

Scott “Shuttleman” Phillips works at NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. He’s a Logistics Engineer for Lockheed Martin on the Space Shuttle’s external tank program. As an avid woodworker, Scott was inspired early in his career with the space program to create exotic wood models of many (if not all) of the shuttle flights. He is also a singer, songwriter and guitarist with a deep love for Martin guitars.

As the final shuttle mission approached, Scott contacted Martin to see if there might be some special pieces of Martin wood appropriate for his last model. Martin’s Dick Boak furnished Scott with some special cutoffs, including a piece of ebony from David Crosby’s one-of-a-kind 12-string with an ebony neck. This piece became the nose cone for the model above, that Scott very generously donated for display in the Martin Museum. It resides next to the McNally-Martin Space Guitar that was the first guitar to orbit the earth on a shuttle mission.

Scott also commissioned a unique HD-28 Martin guitar that bears a specially inlaid NASA-themed pickguard by inlay artist Tracy Cox. To top it off, astronaut John Glenn and Chris Martin signed the interior label for Scott’s guitar. Scott’s visited Martin recently to deliver his model and to pick up his guitar. It was an emotional and meaningful day for Scott and for everyone at Martin who met him.

Scott Phillips, above, with his special NASA-inspired Martin guitar. Below, during the installation of his shuttle model in the Martin Museum, Scott got to sample the Space Guitar that accompanied astronaut/mission specialist/guitarist Pierre Thuot aboard space shuttle Columbia that launched on March 4, 1994. Of course the mission was: “To Boldly Go Where No Guitar Has Gone Before!”
Lynne Taylor Donovan
This is not the first time we’ve covered the talents of Canadian country artist Lynne Taylor Donovan (right, with her Martin 12-string), nor will it be the last. Based out of the beautiful Okanagan Valley in British Columbia, Lynne continues to cultivate appreciative audiences all around this planet. She has played a major role in putting Canadian country music on the map in the United Kingdom and throughout Europe.

Lynne uses only Martin guitars and strings. On her website: www.lynnetaylordonovan.com, she is featured with her Martin J12-16GT. She also plays an OMCPA1 and a 00CXAE Navy. All of Lynne’s music is available at CD Baby, on iTunes, or at over 50 other download sites on 4 continents.

Glitter Rose
Southpaw and outlaw country rocker “Glitter Rose” from Fort Worth, Texas, performed at the Martin Booth at the Anaheim NAMM Show this past January. Glitter is a charismatic veteran songwriter, performer, and musician; starting professionally in the music business in 1998, she has performed over 2,500 shows and has over a decade of recording experience. She received extensive honors with her rock project, Hollywood High, from 2001-2005, including Best New Artist at the Los Angeles Music Awards. She’s shown above with her 000CXE Black Martin guitar. Find her on the web at: www.glitterrose.com.

Kirsten Sowers
Though only eleven years old, Kirsten Sowers from the greater Philadelphia area is emerging as a natural musical force and talent. Shown above with her Martin 000C-16RGTE Aura, Kirsten writes, plays and sings her own fresh brand of country and blues music. She’s been performing festivals and charitable events, mostly around the mid-Atlantic states and has received a great deal of media attention. Listen and watch her on her YouTube channel: specialKguitar.
Jennifer Nettles – Sugarland

Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush are “Sugarland,” an immensely popular acoustic country duo. Despite winning multiple Grammy, CMA and ACM awards – and selling more than eight million records – Sugarland is embracing a creative rebirth, a musical awakening that permeates their most recent adventurous fourth album, *The Incredible Machine*. It is a soaring album elevated by Jennifer’s flawless vocals, sky-high choruses, ringing guitars, and pulsing drums that recall the beating of the album’s titular engine, the human heart.

“We write songs for different reasons. There are some songs that we want to change your life and there are some that we just want to change your day,” Jennifer laughs. “We don’t take ourselves too seriously, and that’s what fans love. It’s just the two of us. In the story of who we are, this album is more us than we’ve ever been.”

Jennifer was captured above and below at a summer 2010 performance in Calgary, Alberta, Canada with her Martin D-18 Dreadnought, capoed at the sixth fret for plenty of chime.

Find the whole story at: sugarlandmusic.com.

Kate Campbell

Whether you’re a longtime fan or a first time listener, Kate Campbell’s songs resonate with a particular hopefulness and at the same time, they address key issues and injustices of the day. Her new release “Save The Day” enlists the talents of her many friends, including John Prine, Nanci Griffith and Mac McAnally. She tours nationally and is shown above with her Martin DC-16RE Premium. You can find all of her music at: www.katecampbell.com.

Carolina Rose

Gloria Harward, aka “Carolina Rose,” is shown during a performance at the annual Jerusalem Ridge Festival in Rosine, Kentucky. She plays and sings bluegrass, and two years ago, she got her first “real” guitar. Now she owns four Martins: a 1952 D-18, a 1974 D-28 (that was her brother Al Jones’ personal guitar), a 1973 D-18, and a more recent 2007 model. She naturally gravitates to the one her brother played the most. For Gloria, playing a Martin guitar provides the extra confidence that entertainers need on stage. www.carolinarose.com
Dan Frechetta

As a long time recording artist and lover of Martin guitars, Dan Frechetta has owned several inspiring models, but still wanted to find that elusive instrument that excelled for all of his different styles of music. In his travels, Dan found a used 2004 Martin D-35L lefty model for a great price, but it needed a bit of work. A friend fixed it up and replaced the saddle with bone and bone pins. It sounds and plays amazingly, and it’s now Dan’s main guitar. With five albums to his credit, Dan performs for small or large audiences wherever he can. He’s built a reputation as a fine tune-smith and performer. You can find all of Dan’s evocative songs at: www.danfrechette.com.

Chloe Collins

Ten year old Chloe Collins might possibly be the youngest singer/songwriter and Martin Guitar player. Chloe started singing when she was a toddler and has never stopped. A little over a year ago, Chloe’s dad taught her a few chords to a Miley Cyrus song that she loved and wanted to learn how to play on guitar. She took to the guitar like a natural, and in just a few weeks was singing and playing songs from her idols like Taylor Swift. When her parents realized she had a non-stop quest to learn more and to be able to just pick up a guitar and go, she got her own guitar: the LXM Little Martin. It was love at first sight! Soon after she started writing songs and is currently working on making her own record.

Eltjo Haselhoff

Solid Air Records has enlightened us to the acoustic guitar virtuosity of Laurence Juber, Kenny Sultan, Jim Earp, Ed Gerhard, Al Petteway and Alex di Grassi, to name just a few. Add Eltjo Haselhoff to that list. He’s an amazing fingerstyle guitarist. Eltjo has had no shortage of great hand built guitars, but recently, he decided to take the leap and ordered a Custom Shop Martin. When it arrived, he wasted no time unpacking the box as you can glean from the above photo.

After playing it for several hours, he sat down and typed out this message to Martin:

“Much to my surprise, the setup was perfect, despite my preference for a ‘hyposonically’ low action, which most luthiers just cannot even imagine. The Adirondack top in combination with the short scale neck is superb, the neck profile is just spot on, the lack of inlays, the vintage toner and the old-style tuners give it a special and classy look and the sound is miraculous! It’s hard to believe this guitar is still brand new. I can’t imagine what it will sound like when it matures. I'm going to play the living daylights out of it to make that happen soon!”

When he was a kid, Eltjo thought guitar making was some kind of magic. He couldn’t imagine how a mortal man could do it. When he grew up and got his degree in engineering, he thought it was just a matter of good engineering with an understanding of the physics. Later, when he learned to build guitars himself, he understood it’s both engineering and craftsmanship. Now, after getting his Martin, he’s finally come to understand that it is a kind of magic after all.

You’ll be hearing this Martin on future recordings, but for now, treat yourself to his many CDs available at Solid Air Records: www.acousticmusicresource.com, or at Eltjo’s personal site: www.eltjohaselhoff.com.
**R. W. Hampton**

R. W. Hampton took home the Western Heritage Award for Outstanding Original Western Composition in April of 2011 at the Oklahoma City presentation for his song “Shortgrass” that appears on his new CD “Austin to Boston.” R. W. always appears with his Martin guitars. He’s shown above with his D-42, custom inlaid with his RWH cattle brand. Find his music at: www.rwhampton.com.

**David Lindley & Jim Washburn**

Multi-instrumentalist and master of slide guitar, David Lindley (left), was touring the east coast and performed at The Sellersville Theater north of Philadelphia in the spring of 2011. His long-time friend, Jim Washburn, tagged along as his road manager, guitar tech and traveling companion. Together with Richard Johnston, Jim (upper right) co-authored the outstanding book “Martin Guitars: An Illustrated Celebration of America’s Premier Guitarmaker,” in which David Lindley is aptly featured. Lindley is perhaps best known for his many years as the featured guitarist with Jackson Browne, but he also led his own band El Rayo-X and has been a major proponent for world music.

Following an outstanding show, David and Jim drove up to Nazareth for a personal tour of the Martin factory and museum with Dick Boak. One of David’s favorite guitars of all time is his prized 000-21. He’s quoted in the Martin book as saying: "They'll have to pry that one from my cold, dead hands!" You can find more information about David and his prolific discography at: www.davidlindley.com.

**Jay Smar**

Full-time folk musician Jay Smar stands here with his two prize possessions: a 2006 Martin SPJC and his latest 2010 Custom Martin 000-28V with a 12-fret neck and a 1 7/8” nut. Jay performs mostly original and documented coal mining songs of Northeastern Pennsylvania where he resides, but he also enjoys finger-picking instrumentals. He says the only bad thing about his 000-28V is that he didn’t have enough money to buy two of them! You can check him out on YouTube or his website, www.jaysmar.com, performing “While My Guitar Gently Weeps” on his SPJC, and an original slide tune “Socket To Me” performed on his 000-28V.
Andrew Cole

When Canadian rock icon Tom Cochrane heard rough demos of Toronto-based singer-songwriter Andrew Cole's first efforts, he knew he had found "a voice other singers would die for," and set out to help the fledgling songwriter realize his potential. Recorded over the past two years, Cole's CD "Why We Wonder" offers an eleven-song set of material that is both fresh and familiar, channeling influences as diverse as Mark Knopfler, 90's alternative rock and contemporary British pop. His voice soars high, pure and clear above the tracks laid down by his all-star band. Although there are shades of David Gray and The Beatles haunting the edges, Cole's songs are entirely unique. Find more on the web at: www.andrewcolemusic.com.

Cheryl Mouta

For Calgary, Alberta, Canada native Cheryl Mouta, music was always in her roots and in her blood. Her grandfather had his own band and played several instruments, including the guitar. Music played a key role in her life; she grew up listening to it and sang her favorite songs. As she grew older she developed a deep affinity for the songs she had so many fond memories of. She played the sax throughout her school years; however, she felt more drawn towards the guitar. When she finally decided to purchase her first guitar, a Martin LXM, she took guitar lessons, enjoying every minute of it. She quickly found out that her interest had grown into a passionate affair. About a year later, she purchased an OMCPA1 to add to her small collection. Her natural talent allowed her to quickly adapt to the strings, and very soon found herself playing the music she had grown to love. She takes her queues from the different genres of music, such as folk, bluegrass, and even reggae. Now she doesn't just play the songs she has memories with, she makes memories by playing new songs. Find Cheryl's music on MySpace at: www.myspace.com/523296749.

Susie Glaze & The Hilonesome Band

When Susie Glaze and her Hilonesome Band were out on tour last February in the Bay area, she borrowed her brother Rick's Martin OMC-16E Maple for their gigs at the San Francisco Bluegrass & Old Time Festival. On February 14, when Rick was dropping everyone off at the airport, he handed Susie the guitar case and said "Happy Valentine's Day!" Susie and the entire band were stunned, got on the plane with it and flew home to LA. Susie says: "It was the greatest gift I've ever been given!" The band is now three Martins strong with two HD-28s and the fabulous new OMC-16E Maple. More at: www.susieglaze.com.
Marcus Eaton

An extraordinary guitarist, Martin lover, and a tremendous advocate for Fishman sound reinforcement products, Marcus Eaton performed product demos at the Anaheim NAMM Show this past January and visited the Martin booth with his friend and cohort David Crosby. He’s shown above with his Grand Performance GPCPA1 with the Fishman onboard F-1 Aura System. This past spring, he toured with Tim Reynolds of Dave Matthews fame, and his website (www.marcuseaton.com) is rich with great links and performance videos. Check it out!

Bobby Long

ATO records has introduced us to acoustic artists such as John Mayer, David Gray and Ray LaMontagne, so when they announce a new artist, we always take notice. British singer-songwriter-guitarist Bobby Long released his debut ATO album, “A Winter Tale” – a collection of original songs rooted in American folk, blues and country music. His bare bones sound, haunting vocals and intriguing guitar work caught the eye of actor and fellow musician Robert Pattinson, who would go on to sing “Let Me Sign” over a crucial dramatic scene in the blockbuster film Twilight. The inclusion of that song in the film’s soundtrack helped launch Bobby’s career. He’s often seen on stage with his Martin D-35. There’s more at: www.bobbylonginfo.com.

Tuna Wings

Two familiar faces – Hot Tuna’s Jorma Kaukonen and former Wings guitarist and fingerstyle virtuoso Laurence Juber – paired up in May for guitar workshops at Jorma’s fantastic Fur Peace Ranch in Pomeroy, Ohio. Jorma is holding his prized M-30 Custom Artist Series Signature Model and Laurence is sporting his OMC-LJ Pro with flamed maple back and sides. We would be hard pressed to find a more committed, versatile or talented pair of acoustic guitar players on the planet. If you ever want to immerse yourself in everything guitar, consider the Fur Peace Ranch – the center of the acoustic universe! Find it at www.furpeaceranch.com and follow Laurence Juber’s prolific musical journey at: www.laurencejuber.com.

High Flying Bird

Bruno Lopes from Portugal tours Europe as “High Flying Bird.” He’s shown above with his new 000-1 that now joins his three other Martins. You’ll find him on the web at: www.myspace.com/hfbird.
Travis Tritt

There are few musicians as accomplished and passionate about the acoustic guitar than Travis Tritt. Often, after performing for two and a half hours on stage, he’ll go right back into his dressing room or bus and play for another two hours, just for the sheer joy of it. And the next morning he wakes up with a guitar in his hands! All that practice shows in his mastery of the instrument. He visited Martin during his winter tour, and we visited him at his supercharged performance at Penn’s Peak atop the Appalachian Ridge in Jim Thorpe, PA. In addition to his 1941 D-28, his Custom DC-45 Deluxe, and his HDC-40 Signature model (in the above photo), Travis has been inspired by the Grand Jumbo J12-40E (below). We brought one out of our warehouse to show him and we couldn’t pry it out of his hands! If you haven’t seen Travis live in concert, you’re missing something very special.

Neil Diamond – Dreams
On the cover of his most recent CD release, you will find Neil Diamond’s prized small-bodied 12-fret Martin parlor guitar from the 1870’s. It’s so precious, he won’t travel with it! On this CD, Neil interprets classic songs from the likes of Johnny Cash, Leonard Cohen and Randy Newman. As always, his vocals deliver a particular emotion that is his unique signature, but each reincarnation of this artist presents surprising freshness.

Laurence Juber – Children of The Harvest
The ever prolific Laurence Juber offers his 19th solo acoustic release – Children Of The Harvest – the score to the recent NBC Dateline documentary. His arrangements always show great feeling and intricacy. Look for LJ’s upcoming score to the Blizzard Entertainment video game Diablo III, and his musical contributions to the new Ken Burns documentary, The Tenth Inning.

James Lee Stanley & Cliff Eberhardt – Wood and Doors
Two Martin D-28s grace the CD of this acoustic tribute to the songs of the Doors. Joined by original Doors members John Dinsmore and Robby Krieger, as well as Timothy B. Schmidt, Laurence Juber, Peter Tork and John Batdorf, this collaboration breathes fresh and unique life into twelve classic Doors tunes. It’s an impressive sequel to James’ previous “Wood and Stones” project.

Mark Dvorak – Time Ain’t Got Nothin’ On Me
Mark has been performing his original folk and country blues tunes on festival stages and in theaters throughout the country since 1981. He also continues to be an integral member of the faculty at Chicago’s famous Old Town School of Folk Music. Take particular notice of the tenth track on this, his latest CD, that features the song close to our hearts called “My D-18.”

Brett Dennen – Loverboy
Since his 2004 debut, Brett Dennen has ignored the naysayers and carved out his own unique musical niche. His ebullient sentiment and androgynous vocal style make it difficult to define or classify him, but he inspires a large and dedicated following. “Loverboy” is his fourth CD release. It features Brett’s new Custom Shop N-20, plus his growing collection of prized Martin acoustics. Find much more at: www.brettdennen.com.
Mark Ballas

Perhaps best known these days as a regular professional ballroom dancer on the ABC TV hit series “Dancing With The Stars,” Mark Ballas is also a lifelong lover of Martin guitars and a remarkable musical talent with understandably natural rhythm.

At a young age, he moved to London where he began his performing career. Mark began competing on “Dancing with the Stars” in the fall of 2007 and has been involved ever since. As a singer/songwriter/musician, he is a member of the “Ballas Hough Band,” where he composes the group’s music, plays lead guitar and sings lead vocals. In January of 2011, Mark visited Martin, toured the factory, and recorded a series of videos in the Martin Museum. The easiest way to access these videos is to Google or search YouTube for “Mark Ballas Martin Guitar.” You’ll find some engaging interviews and great music, and be sure to explore the Martin YouTube Channel.

Glorious Earth

Annie Haslam, lead singer for the groundbreaking English classical rock band Renaissance, extends her musical art as an oil painter. Like her songs, Annie’s paintings often stray from the traditional stretched canvas. This recent work entitled “Glorious Earth” demonstrates Annie’s conviction that color and sound are one in the same – her art is her visual form of singing.

Clairvoyant

Robbie Robertson’s new CD “Clairvoyant” is receiving exceptional reviews and we’ll join in too with our enthusiasm. It is a collaborative work with Eric Clapton, Tom Morello, Steve Winwood, Trent Reznor and Robert Randolph. Of course with this caliber of musicianship, the instrumentation is exceptional. The pleasing thing is that there is restraint. The songs are well written, musically clean and uncluttered, with sensible lyrics, perhaps reminiscent of Robbie’s work with The Band. Robbie’s now trademark vocals are great as well – you can hear every syllable clearly – unusual for music these days. One of the nicest inclusions on the CD is Robbie’s 1928 000-45 12-fret gut string Martin guitar (Serial #36707). Robbie and Eric both agree that this special instrument is perhaps one of the finest gut-string Martins ever made. Its presence lends a silky softness to the recording. We certainly recommend this as one CD that you should add to your collection!
The Kingston Trio Honored With Lifetime Achievement Award at the 53rd Annual Grammy Awards Ceremony

The Kingston Trio, the legendary vocal group that single-handedly ushered in the folk music boom of the late 50s and early 60s that gave rise to Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul and Mary and scores of other “folk,” received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (“The Grammys”).

The award was presented at the Special Awards Ceremony of the 53rd Grammy Awards held February 12, 2011 at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles. The other recipients of the highly prestigious award this year included Julie Andrews, The Juilliard String Quartet, Dolly Parton, The Ramones, George Beverly Shea, Bruce Lundvall, Wilma Cozart Fine, Al Bell and Roy Haynes.

The award is given "for performers who have made creative contributions of outstanding artistic significance to the recording field." In the case of The Kingston Trio, the award is highly appropriate and long overdue.

Their release of Tom Dooley in the fall of 1958 created a tidal wave of popularity for folk and acoustic music of all kinds – bluegrass, country, blues, protest, folk rock, acoustic jazz, calypso, Latino, Polynesian and Hawaiian – to name just a few. The Kingston Trio’s impact on the acoustic musical instrument industry – and Martin guitars in particular – was immeasurable. The Trio played Martins exclusively, and proudly displayed them on every Kingston Trio album cover. This created such enormous demand for Martin guitars that at one point the company was back-ordered for over three years, necessitating the move to a new factory with much greater production capacity.

From all of us at Martin, we say “Congratulations” to The Kingston Trio – and thank you! Your lasting impact on American life has proved that folk music is, indeed, made for you and me.
Dear Mr Martin,

Your recent advertisement on the back of SingOut Magazine features lyrics from the MTA Song, written by Jacqueline Steiner and my mother, Bess Lomax Hawes. The ad notes that it was recorded on a D-28 in 1959 – no doubt a reference to members of The Kingston Trio who popularized the song. I thought you might be interested to know that the song was composed and sung originally on a Martin guitar as well – my mother’s 00-21 Martin guitar (Serial Number 72097) which she bought after the war and which I still have today.

The youngest daughter of John A. Lomax, Bess sang with Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie as a member of the Almanac Singers and around the time of the MTA song, she was teaching guitar and folk songs to adults in Boston. She went on to teach thousands of adults in Los Angeles to play guitar during the 1950s, slinging her 00-21 Martin over her back while she tuned her students’ guitars, sometimes as many as fifty students at a time. She taught four nights a week – housewives, professionals, and young people – and on Saturdays, she taught school teachers who wanted to be able to play and sing American folk songs with their classes. Through her classes and performances, she was responsible for a significant part of the folk revival movement in Los Angeles up through the late 1950s.

Her subsequent professional accomplishments are more widely known: a professor in the Department of Anthropology at (now) California State University, Northridge, author of several books, Director of the Folk and Traditional Arts program at the National Endowment for the Arts for seventeen years, and in 1992, the recipient of a National Medal of the Arts from President Bill Clinton.

My sister and I have our own 00-21 Martins, bought in 1964, and have used them over the years to both teach and perform. It is a wonderful guitar and has brought us all much joy.

Best regards,

Naomi Hawes Bishop
Portland, Oregon
Martin The Guitar

Author Harry Musselwhite and illustrator Brian Barr are working on a children’s book to be titled “Martin The Guitar.” In a very playful way, it relays the story of C. F. Martin, Sr. – his trials and tribulations with the violin makers of Markneukirchen, his subsequent journey to the new world, and his great success developing the acoustic guitar in America.

Michael Nesmith

Michael Nesmith of the original Monkees is shown against the greenscreen at VR3D Studios with his Martin Grand Jumbo J12-40E 12-string. He remains musically inspired at his online Videoranch, the authorized and officially recognized site for all of his many works and projects. Videoranch3D is a 3D virtual world on the Internet where live musical performances occur in real time, attended by a virtual audience from all over the world. It is very cool! Check it out at: www.videoranch.com.

David Crosby

Graham Nash and David Crosby have been touring as a duo and their shows are magnificent! At the State Theatre close to Nazareth in Easton, PA, David fell in love with the GPC Amazon rosewood edition and inaugurated it on his song Déjà Vu. One more Martin to Croz’s fold!
We've all heard the horror stories – the alleged guitar "repair expert" who turns a simple adjustment or minor repair into a major catastrophe, devaluing or even destroying a priceless instrument. Or the do-it-yourself neck re-setter, scratch and dent remover, bridge replacer, and pick-up and strap button installer who has no clue what he or she is doing and is pleased to do the same for you. We at Martin have seen it all.

Fact is, botched repair attempts are one of the most common – and often the most difficult to correct – repair problems that come through the Martin Repair Department. With an instrument as finely crafted and beautifully finished as a Martin guitar, there is no substitute for professional guitar repair and adjustment when necessary. Think of it as protecting a very expensive investment.

That's why we have established a network of Martin Authorized Service Centers. We also have our own in-house Martin Repair Shop staffed by highly skilled craftsmen specially trained in repairing Martin instruments. There are many excellent repair people throughout the world, and we're proud that many of them are members of our authorized warranty service center network. We're picky (no pun intended) and our selection process is quite rigorous.

According to Carmen Cortez, who served for many years as Martin's Director of Customer Service, it all begins with references. "We want to know who you know in the industry, and who knows you," Carmen says. "Where have you apprenticed? What kinds of repairs have you done? What is the level of your repair skill and experience? It's important that the repair person knows his or her limits, so that we match the repair to the right craftsman.

"We also ask for photos of their workshop. We insist on a neat and orderly workplace because it reflects – and affects – the quality and efficiency of the work done there. You can tell a lot from a photo – the types of tools, power equipment and materials used for building and repair. We also want to see photos of the repairs they've done and the instruments they've built."

Martin is big on training, and network repair people are always welcome to train with our company. "I don't just preach 'The Martin Method,' says Carmen. "There's a lot of give and take here. We share repair tips and methods with our repair service people, and vice versa. We get a lot of feedback from some of the industry's best luthiers and repair people and they learn from us, too."

"What's most important is that we live up to the Martin standards of superior tone, workmanship and playability," Carmen emphasizes.

"As a Martin owner, you deserve the same high level of skill and experience in adjusting or repairing your guitar that went into building it. Never settle for anything less."

Bill Bush
Keeping Your Guitar Safe From Mother Nature
by Marshall Newman

It happens like clockwork in summer and again in winter: a parade of guitars with cracked tops, lifting bridges, loose braces, buzzing strings, sharp fret ends, curling pickguards and other assorted ills arriving at guitar shops across the country. The cause of these ills may be Mother Nature, primarily heat or humidity or a lack thereof, but the fault lies with owners who fail to recognize potential dangers and protect their instruments.

To appreciate the potential dangers, consider the elements that make quality guitars like those from C. F. Martin so vulnerable. The body is constructed with wood only 1/10th of an inch – or less – thick. The body, neck, bridge and braces are held together with glues that maintain adhesion at normal temperatures, but release with the application of high heat to facilitate neck resets and repairs. The finish on a guitar – whether glossy or flat – is often less than 1/100th of an inch thick, yet hard enough to protect the wood. Add steel strings with tension of between 150 and 200 pounds pulling on the bridge and the top, and it is clear these are instruments created to make music, but not to withstand extreme conditions.

Heat we all understand. Humidity – on the other hand – is somewhat mysterious. Humidity is the ambient moisture in the air and is measured as relative humidity, a percentage of the maximum humidity air can hold at a particular temperature. All other factors being equal, as temperature rises, relative humidity drops.

Wood is porous and thus humidity-sensitive; it seeks humidity equilibrium with the surrounding environment. Held firmly in place by glue joints at the sides, the top and – to a lesser extent – the back of an acoustic guitar will contract (“sink”) or expand (“belly”) as relative humidity falls or rises.

C. F. Martin guitars are built in a carefully controlled environment with temperature between 68° and 72°F, and relative humidity between 45 and 50%. Both of these ranges are considered ideal for premium guitars, both in building and in general use. While ideal is – well – ideal, most guitars can handle relative humidity between approximately 40 to 60% and temperature between approximately 35° to 95°F without much problem. However, leave a guitar in an environment that exceeds either of those ranges and damage becomes a real possibility.

At 40% relative humidity, players may begin to notice protruding fret ends, caused by contraction of the fingerboard. At 35% relative humidity, the top begins to sink, strings may start to buzz, and the soundboard begins to look and feel “rippled” like corduroy. At 30% humidity and below, top sinking becomes pronounced and soundboard cracks become likely; fretboard and bridge cracks also are possible.

Excessive relative humidity causes different problems. Relative humidity over 60% may cause the top to belly, resulting in very high action. Over time, it also can loosen the bridge and top braces, tarnish frets and strings, corrode tuning machines and cause mold to grow.

Excessive heat can be equally destructive. A loose bridge or loose brace can occur when the glue holding them literally melts; sometimes even the neck joint pulls loose. The pickguard can curl as the glue melts and the plastic shrinks. Excessive heat often is accompanied by low relative humidity, resulting in damage from both.

Structurally, guitars handle excessive cold fairly well. However, guitar finishes – especially a nitrocellulose lacquer finish – can be damaged by rapid temperature change from sub-freezing to room temperature or (more rarely) vice versa. The finish gets fine cracks called “checks,” in much the same way that a chilled glass will crack if hot water is poured into it.

Why are summers and winters so perilous for guitars? Because they are when guitars encounter the greatest extremes and most precipitous changes in heat and relative humidity. In late spring and early summer, guitars frequently get left in car trunks, where sunshine can quickly bring the temperature up to 140°F and relative humidity drops precipitously, more than enough to crack tops and melt glue. In late autumn and early winter, the house furnace kicks on, relative humidity drops precipitously, and guitars hanging on walls and sitting on stands can get very dry in a hurry.

Some locations in the United States also are perilous. The Southwest, Great Basin and Great Plains regions are extraordinarily dry much of the year. The Gulf Coast, Southeast and Great Lakes are very humid from spring through autumn. The Northeast is quite humid in summer and the Northwest similarly so from autumn through spring. Surprisingly, Alaska is unusually humid throughout the year.

For all of Mother Nature’s potential to wreak havoc on guitars, protecting them from harm is relatively easy. Begin by knowing the temperature/humidity in your home. The local newspaper usually publishes local conditions and the National Weather Service offers them online, but to accurately know the relative humidity and temperature in the room where guitars are kept, buy a hydrometer-
thermometer, calibrate it for accuracy, and track the numbers.

Keep guitars in their cases when not playing them. Hard cases provide protection from more than hard knocks – they provide a seal against the room environment and a smaller area in which to control relative humidity. In-case humidifiers can maintain cased guitars at ideal relative humidity, but should be closely monitored to make sure they don’t go dry, don’t leak and don’t leave rubber or plastic residue on the wood. Also, avoid storing them in locations prone to extremes and/or rapid changes in temperature and relative humidity, such as adjacent to heater vents (forced air heating is the worst), along outside walls, in hot attics, in prolonged direct sunlight near a window, and in garages or basements.

Traveling by car with a guitar in the trunk may be unavoidable, but can potentially be disastrous for the guitar, especially on hot days. Heat risks can be moderated somewhat by putting the case in an insulated case cover or by wrapping the case in a blanket. That said, never, NEVER leave a guitar in the trunk after arrival; heat builds up quickly in a parked car. Also, if a guitar has been transported in a car trunk in below-freezing weather, bring it into the house and wait a few hours while it warms before opening the case, so to avoid causing finish crazing.

Last, but not least, be vigilant for signs of trouble. If a guitar’s fret ends begin to protrude, if its action begins to feel high or strings begin to buzz, if the top begins to get a rippled look and feel, if a crack begins to form, don’t hesitate – get your guitar to the repair shop immediately. All it may need is rehydration and/or minor adjustment, but taking action early can prevent major damage later and enable you to deal with the cause.

Be good to your Martin guitar and it will be good to you.

**Suite Judy Blue Eyes**

This beautiful 1930 00-40H (Serial #45266) belonged to Stephen Stills. In fact, he used it to write and record his legendary CSN song Suite Judy Blue Eyes that appeared on their first album release. The song’s tuning is a bit unusual – all E strings except for one B – EEEBE. The “Suite,” composed in four parts, was written about Stephen’s relationship with Judy Collins, and he eventually presented it to her after their breakup as a special memento. All things age, and so has this guitar – most likely the result of very dry humidity and forced hot air heat in the cold New York City winters. But the cracks are all reglued now and the guitar sounds as clean and clear (if not more so) than the day it left Nazareth. Judy has agreed to loan the very special piece of musical history to the Martin Museum for display.
Dale Eckhart scalloping D-18 Authentic tone bars. All of the Authentic bracing is applied with hot glue and sculpted by hand.

Dennis Fischl scalloping X-braces in 1979. He was a master at brace carving and always gave a great show for factory tours. Below, Dennis applying hide glue under hot lights to keep the components warm.

Above: An antique engraving of Madame DeGoni with the earliest X-braced guitar, made by Martin in 1843. Below: An antique brass glue pot. The three feet could be set into the coals to keep the glue warm.
There is much to love about C. F. Martin guitars. Their superb craftsmanship. Their handsome tonewoods. Their beautiful lines. Their elegant appointments. But for those who love Martin guitars, there is no element more important than their signature tone, and that begins with one of C. F. Martin’s greatest innovations, the X-braced top.

The X-braced top – with two long braces crossing just below the soundhole - defines the sound of the steel string guitar and Martin has more experience with X-bracing than anyone. But Martin tradition has never gotten in the way of Martin innovation; in recent years, the company has introduced new versions of X-bracing designed to deliver great tone even as they take advantage of new materials and new technologies.

While the question of whether C. F. Martin originated X-bracing has long been debated, the recent discovery of possibly the earliest recorded X-braced guitar, one bearing a C. F. Martin & Schatz (Henry Schatz, C. F. Martin’s friend and business associate) label, may finally put the discussion to rest. The label inscription, “Made for Madam De Goni,” almost certainly penned by John Coupa, C. F. Martin’s New York distributor, refers to Delores De Goni, a virtuoso Spanish guitar player who emigrated from England to the United States in 1840. Published evidence dates the guitar to July of 1843 and establishes that C. F. Martin used X-bracing earlier than his competitors. Acquired by Martin Guitar, this historically important instrument now resides in the Martin Museum.

Like all guitars prior to 1900, the early X-braced Martins were built for and strung with gut strings. The advent of steel strings at the turn of the 20th century finally gave acoustic guitarists the volume they were seeking and Martin’s X-braced guitars – with two scalloped transverse braces and several scalloped tone bars – proved a perfect match, able to handle the increased string tension and still produce great tone. Beginning in 1922, Martin began building guitars with slightly heavier bracing to handle steel strings. The transition was not problem-free, however. To reinforce Martin guitars against the heavy gauge, high tension steel strings of the era, the company – in a process that took 25 years - increased the width of top braces from ¼ to 5/16-inch (except on its smallest guitars), moved the X-braces back towards the bridge, and eventually transitioned from scalloped braces to straight braces.

Fortunately, the introduction of lighter gauge, more top-friendly strings in the late 1950s enabled Martin to again build models with the X-bracing elements that made Martin steel string guitars produced in the 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s so responsive and so coveted: ¼-inch bracing on the D-35 in 1965 (now available on non-Dreadnought Authentic, Marquis, Golden Era and Vintage Series), scalloped bracing on the HD-28 in 1976 (now available on Authentic, Marquis, Golden Era, Vintage Series and some Standard Series models) and forward-shifted bracing on the Custom 15 in 1980 (now available on Authentic, Marquis, Golden Era and Vintage Series).

While maintaining tradition with guitars the equal of those from its fabled past, Martin has recently introduced new X-bracing patterns with the present and future in mind. In 1993, Martin introduced the D-1, its first guitar to feature a mortise-and-tenon neck joint and laminated sides. To take advantage of the strength and rigidity of both new elements, Martin introduced “A-Frame” X bracing, with two braces above the soundhole that tie the top directly to the neck block, and tapered X braces and a single tapered transverse brace for full, balanced tone. Though 1 Series specifications – including the top bracing – have changed in recent years, “A-Frame” X-bracing continues to be used on Martin X and 15 Series guitars.

In 1996, Martin introduced the updated 16 Series and with it a second new top bracing pattern, the “Hybrid X.” Combining traditional scalloped X and transverse braces with A braces that tie the top to the mortise-and-tenon neck block, the “Hybrid X” gives the 16 Series and Performing Artist Series impressive versatility and unique compatibility with a wide range of pickup options. A tapered-brace variation called the “Modified Hybrid X” is used in Martin’s current 1 Series.

The various X-bracing options offered by Martin means there’s a guitar suited to every player’s musical taste, playing situation and budget. Best of all, each and every Martin guitar has that classic, one-of-a-kind Martin tone.
Blackbird singing in the dead of night

take these sunken eyes and learn to see

all your life, you were only waiting for this moment to be free
“Perfect Harmony” – The Beatles In India – 1968

Photograph Paul Saltzman. All Rights Reserved.

It was a late afternoon in February, 1968, at the ashram in Rishikesh, India, when Paul Saltzman took this photograph through a low chain-link fence protecting the flowers from the ashram’s goats. John and Paul were playing their matched pair of Martin D-28 Dreadnoughts, playfully rolling through fragments of songs, some recognizable and some not. Then Paul started singing “Ob-la-di, Ob-la-da, Braaaa, La-La how the life goes on.” John joined in and for fifteen minutes they just sang the refrain over and over, working with it, changing tempo, volume, feeling. Halfway through, they took a moment’s pause and Paul looked up and said, “That’s all there is, so far. We don’t have any of the words, yet!”

They would have words, though! After their stay at Rishikesh was over, they had written forty-two new songs that would find their way onto the double White Album, Let It Be, and Abbey Road.

Here Comes The Son!

With respect to Carrying That Weight, his father is perhaps a tough act to follow, but follow he will, in his own tracks. James McCartney, son of Paul and Linda McCartney, bears an uncanny resemblance to Paul, plus he shares good taste in guitars. He’s shown here with his right-handed D-28 at the Tibet House Benefit Concert at Carnegie Hall on March 3, 2011.
Gadz Ukes!

Six New Nazareth-made Additions To

Both historically and tonally, C. F. Martin’s original ukulele designs have come to define these small and immensely popular Portuguese/Hawaiian inspired instruments. Initiated by Martin as early as 1907 and in full production as of 1915, the company offered four basic sizes: the smaller Soprano ukes, the slightly larger Concert models, the medium sized Tenor, and the larger Baritone. Martin is proud to fortify the existing line of Soprano ukeleles and reintroduce the Concert and Tenor sizes with these six exciting new models. Several appointment levels have been offered over the years. Like the guitar line, the simpler styles had lower numbers and the higher numbers were gradually more ornate. The well developed historical styles were 0, 1, 2, 3 and the fancy style 5. All six of the new models above are constructed in Nazareth, PA and offered with Style 2 appointments that feature solid wood construction, single ring B/W/B/W/B inlaid rosette, Indian rosewood fingerboard and bridge, black Tusq® nut and compensated saddle, grained ivoroid top and back bindings with B/W top inlay, applied dovetail neck joints, geared tuners with black oval buttons (on the Concert and Tenor models), an old style small Uke Gig Bag.
Martin’s Lineup of Great Ukuleles

Martin decal, satin lacquer finish, and fully compensated scale lengths to achieve near flawless intonation. The 2 Soprano, 2 Concert and 2 Tenor ukuleles (left page) are offered with all solid genuine mahogany top, back, sides and neck, while the 2K Soprano, 2K Concert, and 2K Tenor models (this page) are offered with beautifully flamed Hawaiian koa top, back and sides with a genuine mahogany neck. All of these new Martin ukuleles come with a deluxe slate gray padded gig bag with an embroidered accessory pouch. Style 2 Martin ukuleles first appeared in Martin literature in 1917. Koa models were suspended in 1933, while the mahogany models were on the Martin price list until 1965. The ukulele catalogs throughout the 1920s boasted that “in the construction of Martin ukuleles, the principles on which Martin guitars have been made for ninety-four years are applied. Natural air-drying, careful gauging, correct bracing, keeping the instrument as light in weight as durability will permit, make the tone that is responsible for their widespread use, which reaches the home of the ukulele – Hawaii.” A bold statement – true then and true today!
We’ve taken two of our most popular and enduring Dreadnoughts, the HD-28 and D-35, and made them even more special than before. Here, we’ve crafted the bodies of the new HD-28MP and D-35MP out of premium Madagascar rosewood. Prized for its beauty and resonance, it is uncannily similar in look and tone to esteemed Brazilian rosewood. It produces bright, distinct highs, strong midrange and deep, rich lows. Grown on the island country of Madagascar, off the eastern coast of Africa, it is becoming increasingly rare and limited in availability. The tops of both guitars are Sitka spruce and the bodies are bound in vintage-style grained ivoroid replacing the standard Boltaron. We’ve also replaced the standard necks on these guitars with Martin’s new slim, fast action Performing Artist neck that measures 1 3/4” wide at the nut, tapering to 2 1/8” at the 12th fret. This allows more comfortable spacing in the first few frets and faster action up the fingerboard. The string spacing at the bridge has also been increased to 2 3/16” for more player hand comfort resting on the bridge (fingerpickers take notice!). The original X-bracing patterns, scalloped for the HD-28MP and solid 1/4” for the D-35MP, remain the same as do the 2-piece and 3-piece backs, respectively. Each guitar is delivered in our deluxe 5-ply, hardshell, cabernet plush case.

DC-15ME and 000-15SM

The Martin 15 Series comes with some important new specifications, and two extraordinary new models – the DC-15ME and 000-15SM. Historically, the 15 Series has been synonymous with solid genuine mahogany construction, including top tonewoods. In recent years, other excellent tonewoods similar to or related to mahogany have been used as well. These two new models, and all 15 Series guitars, are now constructed of solid genuine mahogany. They also feature bone nut and saddle, diamond & square “short pattern” fingerboard inlays, and an upgraded finish. The DC-15ME is a 14-fret Dreadnought, with a cutaway for easy access to the upper neck positions. It’s one of the first Martin models to feature the new Shadow NanoMag™ Pickup, especially suited to acoustic guitar. The magnetic pickup is mounted nearly invisibly onto the end of the fingerboard with a self-adhesive tape. The volume and tone controls are mounted under the edge of the soundhole, also virtually invisible and totally non-invasive. The 000-15SM is a 12-fret model, with a slotted headstock and old-style small decal. Like the DC-15ME, it has a solid mahogany body, rosewood fingerboard, and an alternating black/white inlaid wood fiber rosette special to 15SM models. Two great sounding new Martin 15’s. Welcome back to the age of genuine solid mahogany.
Use Your Imagination!

The guitar on the right can be anything you desire. It can be a Dreadnought, an OM, a 000, an OM, a 00, or an 0. It can be Madagascar, Cambodian, East Indian or Amazon rosewood, quilted mahogany, flamed Hawaiian koa or tiger maple. For a soundboard, how about Adirondack, Italian alpine, Carpathian, Engelmann, Sitka or bearclaw spruce? It can have a wide V-shape or a slim round neck contour. How about a cutaway for extra access? Sunburst, black, toned or natural? 12-frets to the body or the regular 14? Slotted headstock or solid? Ivoroid or tortoise color, plain or fancy! Herringbone or abalone? Maybe an alternate torch or Tree of Life? Maybe your own inlay design? Why, it can even be your Special Edition Signature Model limited to just one. How rare is that!

All it takes is a visit to your local authorized Martin dealer, or if you have questions about options, you can call us at The Martin Custom Shop. If you wish, you can create and cost out a virtual Martin online at our website.

Our Custom Shop work is the very best we do. We’re proud of it and if you go for it, you will be too!

OM-42 Tasmanian Blackwood
NAMM Show Special

We should have called OM-42 Tasmanian Blackwood NAMM Show Special the “Show Stopper!” This magnificent 14-fret, long-scale (25.4”), Orchestra Model exemplifies the very best that Martin has to offer the discriminating collector and player. For starters, back and sides are crafted of rare flamed Tasmanian blackwood from Eastern Australia. Visually, it’s similar to premium figured Hawaiian koa. Tonally, it shares the brightness of koa but with the rich overtones of rosewood, giving it a unique and very balanced voice. With its solid Adirondack spruce top and 1/4" scalloped "Golden Era" braces, it’s also got a big voice, with plenty of volume when you need it. Finger-picking or rhythm, this is your guitar. In the 42-style, the top, rosette and fingerboard extension are inlaid with colorful Paua pearl. Martin’s early (and rarer) “alternate” pearl torch design is inlaid into a polished ebony headplate. The ebony fingerboard is likewise inlaid with “Golden Era” snowflakes. A vintage 1930s ebony "belly" bridge features long bone saddle, bone bridge pins (and end pin) with pearl dots. European flame maple top binding, heelcap and endpiece. Gold engraved Gotoh tuners. Modified V neck, of course. Only 15 of these beautiful instruments will be offered, each personally signed by C. F. Martin IV and numbered in sequence.

Exquisite. Resonant. And oh-so-limited.
The OMM John Renbourn Custom Artist Edition
A Unique & Quintessential Orchestra Model Honors A Fingerstyle Legend

John Renbourn’s musical influences range from folk, blues and jazz to early music and classical, and all – separately and in combination – have found a place in the rich musical landscape he has created during his long career. One of the world’s most brilliant fingerstyle guitarists, Renbourn has dazzled, confounded and inspired, whether solo, paired with Bert Jansch or Stefan Grossman or as a member of Pentangle, and he continues to create music of uncommon beauty and depth.

Over the years, John Renbourn’s acoustic guitar preference has evolved; beginning with a round-hole archtop, he moved to round and square-shouldered Dreadnoughts (including a rare Martin D-62 bought in the late 1980s), and eventually settled on orchestra models from both American and European builders. So joining forces with C. F. Martin & Co. – which originated the orchestra model in 1929 – to create the Martin OMM John Renbourn Custom Artist Edition is the natural culmination of a lifelong quest.

“I am over the moon about this guitar,” Renbourn commented. “The goal is to combine the best of American and European lutherie: a guitar that has design features that recall the European influence on early Martins, but with all the innovative qualities that Martin has developed since. My own priority is simple – I am after the very best tonal quality and balance.” On both objectives, the Martin OMM John Renbourn Custom Artist Edition succeeds spectacularly.

This beauty begins with a classic Martin design and exceptional solid premium tonewoods. Martin’s OM design, with its 15” body and long (25.4”) scale, is the ultimate fingerstyle guitar, revered for its balance and projection. The back and sides are rare Madagascar rosewood, similar in appearance and sound to the now-endangered Brazilian rosewood. The top is Italian alpine spruce, prized for its clarity and dynamic range, and features 1/4” scalloped bracing for exceptional responsiveness. The neck is carved from genuine mahogany.

While the neck’s 1 3/4” width at the nut – with a low profile shape for playing comfort – is an original Martin OM design element, the diamond volute and slotted headstock with square slots are reminiscent of guitars from the late 19th and early 20th century. The tuners are likewise vintage inspired: Golden Age™ nickel tuners with ivoroid buttons and engraved plates.

In contrast, the ebony headplate and fingerboard showcase Martin inlay artistry at its best. The polished headstock features a richly detailed unicorn inlay in abalone pearl, gold and white mother of pearl, and Micarta. The fingerboard provides the “canvas” for unique mother of pearl pentangle (five-pointed star) position markers at the third, fifth (2), seventh, ninth, twelfth (2), fifteenth and seventeen frets. “Years ago I made a record called The Lady and the Unicorn and the image has stuck,” Renbourn explained. “The pentangles pay tribute to my time in the group Pentangle.”

Even though the album and the group are milestones, they represent only a portion of John Renbourn’s impressive career. A native of London, Renbourn studied classical guitar in his early teens, but soon broadened his horizons to include folk, skiffle, and rhythm & blues. He acquired a steel string guitar and joined his first band – on a borrowed electric guitar - while a student at Kingston College of Art.

After art school, he met Dorris Henderson, a blues and gospel singer from Los Angeles, and served as her accompanist for two albums. Soon after, he recorded an eponymous solo album of original tunes and traditional blues. He also met and roomed with Bert Jansch during this period, and the two recorded Bert and John, their groundbreaking album of fingerstyle duets.

Renbourn and Jansch joined forces with friends and jamming buddies Jacqui McShee, Danny Thompson and Terry Cox to create Pentangle, taking the name from the emblem on the shield in the 14th century narrative poem “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.” The original group met with immediate success, recording six folk, jazz, blues and early music-infused albums between 1969 and 1972, and touring major venues in Europe and the United States. During this period, Renbourn also released five albums under his own name, including “Sir John Alot” and “The Lady and the Unicorn.” Renbourn would leave Pentangle in 1972, but the original members came back together briefly in 2008 to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and do a concert tour of the United Kingdom.

Renbourn continued to record solo albums that blended traditional Celtic and other influences in the 1970s and 1980s. He also began an occasional collaboration – both in performance and in the recording studio - with American guitarist Stefan Grossman and put together the similarly occasional John Renbourn Group to create Renaissance music accented with folk, jazz and Indian elements.
He headed back to university in the early 1980s, where he earned a degree in composition and orchestration, but took time off to play the occasional concert, including a memorable pairing with Doc Watson at Carnegie Hall. He began writing music for instrumental groups and voice and in 1987 put together John Renbourn’s Ship of Fools, which played one concert and recorded one album. In 1993 he also released Wheel of Fortune, a Grammy-nominated one-off collaboration with Robin Williamson from the Incredible String Band – a combination Renbourn dubbed the Impenetrable Stringtangle.

Beginning in 1998 with Traveller’s Prayer, Renbourn returned to recording and live performance, his playing as impressive as ever. A show with former Pentangle partner Jacqui McShee was filmed and released as a DVD in 2004, John Renbourn and Jacqui McShee in Concert. In 2010, he returned to the stage with Robin Williamson for a series of concerts and completed a new solo studio recording, tentatively titled Palermo Snow. A recording of original Renbourn compositions by Italian classical guitarist Marco Rossetti is also pending. In addition, he started a summer guitar workshop in the South of France, which has become an annual event.

Additional vintage-inspired features complete the Martin OMM John Renbourn Custom Artist Edition. The ebony pyramid bridge is fitted with plain ebony bridge pins; the endpin likewise is plain ebony. Fine herringbone purfling and delicate black/white line purfling encircle the top and back, respectively, each protected by grained ivoroid binding. The endpiece is also grained ivoroid, framed by fine black/white inlay. The nut and compensated saddle are crafted from genuine bone. True to fingerstyle – and early Martin – tradition, the guitar comes without a pickguard.

Aging toner on the top adds to the vintage-style patina. The body showcases Martin’s flawless polished gloss lacquer finish, while the neck receives a satin finish. Guitars may be ordered with a sunburst top and factory-installed electronics at additional cost; left-handed instruments can be ordered with no additional charge.

Delivered in a Geib™-style hardshell case, each Martin OMM John Renbourn Custom Artist Edition guitar bears an interior label personally signed by John Renbourn and numbered in sequence. Authorized C. F. Martin & Co. dealers are accepting orders for the OMM John Renbourn Custom Artist Edition now and a list of participating dealers will be posted on the Martin website, www.martinguitar.com.

Prior to the creation of his OMM Custom Artist Edition, John Renbourn fell in love with the rare Martin D-62 Dreadnought pictured above. Introduced in 1987, the D-62 model featured flamed maple back and sides with a Sitka spruce top and forward shifted scalloped bracing. As powerful as it was, the model was short-lived.
Hazel Dickens
Folksinger and long-time Martin guitar player Hazel Dickens blended country and bluegrass genres to spread the word about the plight of non-unionized mineworkers and feminism. Influenced by Uncle Dave Macon, the Monroe Brothers, and the Carter Family, she joined forces with Mike Seeger in Washington, DC, where she was active with several bands including the Greenbriar Boys. The duo performed throughout the country, recording two albums after which Hazel embarked on her long solo career. She also did extensive research on early feminist songs at the Library of Congress. She passed away on April 22, 2011 at the age of 75.

Phoebe Snow
The music world lost singer, songwriter and guitarist Phoebe Snow in May of 2011. She was 58. Her 1974 Top 5 single “Poetry Man” was a defining hit of the 1970s and she was certainly one of the most talented personalities of the era.

Not long after achieving commercial success, her daughter, Valerie Rose, was born with severe brain damage, and Snow put her career on extended hold to care for her. She recorded on Paul Simon’s song “Gone at Last” and toured with him. She was also recruited by Steely Dan’s Donald Fagen to participate in the New York Rock and Soul Revue, which resulted in a rollicking live album in 1991. In 1994, she performed at the Woodstock 25th Anniversary Festival.

Born Phoebe Ann Laub in 1952, she changed her name after seeing “Phoebe Snow” emblazoned on the side of train cars that passed through her New Jersey hometown. After her 1976 “Second Childhood” gold record, her subsequent albums saw less popularity, through she lent her unique voice to commercial jingles and radio spots from time to time. In 2003, she released the CD “Natural Wonder,” her first album of new, original material in 14 years, with more than 16 albums to her credit.

Photo: www.sherrybarnettphotography.com

George Savercool
George Savercool was a very familiar face at Martin for the past 34 years. Sadly, he passed away this past April at the age of 61. George was instrumental at the markout and inspection area. Chances are, if you own a D-18, George processed and selected your special tonewoods. He was also very involved with the Nazareth Fire Department. His wife Charlene works in sales and his sister-in-law Wendy Reese manages inventory at Martin. George will be greatly missed.

Photo: www.sherrybarnettphotography.com
The 000CDG Douglas Greth Commemorative Edition

A Special Guitar for A Very Special Friend

To the many people who knew and worked with Doug Greth at Martin, his untimely passing at age 48 in January of this year was a deep loss. As his brother Chris Martin so wisely ascertained, there is perhaps no more appropriate or loving way to remember Doug than by building a special Martin guitar in his name and memory.

Doug was an amateur, yet very enthusiastic, acoustic guitar player and proud of his well-used Martin cutaway guitar. Like Doug himself, his guitar was understated and one-of-a-kind, picked from a group of various R & D guitars that had been built as test models. In fact, Doug’s guitar preceded and influenced Merle Haggard’s choice of a 000 12-fret cutaway for his “Blue Yodel #13” signature model.

The Doug Greth 000CDG model is a 12-fret, 000 sized, nylon string cutaway guitar, with a wide neck, slotted headstock (with small C. F. Martin & Co. scroll logo) and classical-style bridge. In keeping with Doug’s free spirit and love of nature (he was an avid animal lover, having numerous pets over the years), the 000CDG utilizes Certified European Spruce top; Certified Mahogany sides, back, front and end blocks; Certified Cedar ribbons; and low profile neck. Onboard Fishman F-1 Analog electronics are included as well. The guitar is finished in highly polished lacquer and comes in a molded hardshell case.

Only 48 of these beautiful guitars will be built, one for each year of Doug’s short life. He would have loved this guitar. We hope you will, too.

Fly high, Doug.

In Memory of
Douglas S. Greth
1962-2011
Martin guitars (and ukuleles) show up everywhere you can imagine, from the Louisiana Hayride, into the hands of the King of Bluegrass – Jimmy Martin, to the intensity of record producer, guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Daniel Lanois, and ultimately “Over The Rainbow” with the ukulele’s most popular voice ever – Israel Kamakawiwo’ole, more simply known as “IZ.”
Throughout her long career, Judy Collins has certainly evolved – but one thing that has remained consistent is her steadfast use of Martin guitars: (upper right) Judy’s early performance on the TV show “Hootenanny,” (upper left and lower right) at the Central Park Music Festival in NYC, August 14, 1970, and (lower right) Judy with her D12-35 circa 1980.
Lynn Goldsmith

The exceptional images of rock photographer Lynn Goldsmith grace this two-page spread. It’s no wonder she’s captured a host of iconic performers with Martin guitars!

It’s not just about clicking the shutter in the right place at the right time with the right camera and the perfect lens – it’s about capturing the essence and expression of the performer.

As one of the most published music photographers, Lynn has recently completed an exhibition of her photographs at New York City’s Morrison Hotel Gallery.

Lynn’s rock and roll portraits can be seen and acquired at: RockAndRollPhotoGallery.com, or visit her personal website at: www.lynngoldsmith.com.
Chris Cornell
HD-28V – 2011

Juliana Hatfield
HD-28V – 2011

Jackson Browne
D-35 1991
DaVinci Unplugged
Serial #1,500,000

In our previous Sounding Board issue (Volume #30), you were treated to a pre-completion sneak peek at Martin’s DaVinci Unplugged guitar, featuring the talent of master inlay artist Harvey Leach, the unparalleled scrimshaw engraving of Bob Hergert, and the exquisite tuning button metal relief work of Tira Mitchell. The guitar was finished in time for display at the Anaheim NAMM Show, after which these archival photographs were taken. The 1.5 Millionth guitar now proudly resides in the Martin Museum.
Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee invited Martin’s Dick Boak to join him for a blues jam at the press conference that preceded the opening of the 2011 Anaheim Winter NAMM Show in Anaheim, California. Governor Huckabee has been a tremendous proponent and spokesman for music education in public schools, and a great advocate for NAMM. He is quite a good bass player as well and he clearly gets a lot of joy from playing music.

Dick Boak has been serving on the NAMM Board of Directors for the past three years. He had the distinct honor of playing the 1.5 millionth guitar, though very lightly of course to avoid any pick scratches on this priceless work of musical art. By the way, it does sound fantastic!
Hans Theessink

Like others of his generation, a love of the blues took hold of Dutch singer/songwriter/guitarist Hans Theessink (pronounced Tay-sink) and it has not let go since. In a musical career that spans nearly forty years, Hans has entertained audiences around the globe. The prestigious Blues Revue magazine called him “an international blues treasure.”

Hans released his first record in 1970 and now has twenty albums to his credit, plus a songbook, a blues-guitar instruction video and a DVD. With more than 200 concert dates annually, he has become one of the most sought-after artists of the international blues scene. He has exceptional taste in acoustic guitars as well and is rarely seen without his Martin CEO4R.

Youth Mission in Qingdao, China

The C. F. Martin Charitable Foundation donated two travel guitars for a July 2010 youth mission trip to Qingdao, China. The team from First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem, PA was led by Jack Brace. They met with twenty-five Chinese youth leaders for two weeks. The guitars helped establish a musical connection right away, which helped make the trip a success. At the trip’s conclusion, the guitars were given to the hosting student leaders.

Australia’s Most Important Voice

Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu is an indigenous Australian who was born blind. He speaks very little English, but his beautiful voice echoes the songs of his native Gumatj country. He and other family members were in a band called Yothu Yindi, Australia’s most successful indigenous band. “Gurrumul,” as he is known, is now a solo artist and has made a tremendous impact in such a short time. Blessed with an angelic voice but terribly shy, his breakthrough albums are widely acclaimed.

Much like Elizabeth Cotten did, he plays his Martin DM guitar strung right-handed, but as a left-handed player. Recently, he has earned the attention of the mainstream music scene, both in his home country and around the world. During his European tour, he performed in concert with Sting, and made the cover of Rolling Stone. You will find more at: www.gurrumul.com.
Finn Olafsson

Danish guitarist Finn Olafsson has been playing Martin guitars since his debut as a recording artist in 1970. He developed his unique fingerstyle technique with “steel claws” on Martin guitars in the 70s and in 1980 he recorded the first 100% instrumental acoustic guitar album ever in Denmark with Martin guitars only. Finn Olafsson played a D-45 on most of the tracks and a D-28 on the rest. The album was entitled “Acoustic Guitar,” and it is still being acknowledged as the quintessential acoustic guitar album in Denmark. Many guitarists have been studying and playing Finn’s guitar music since then and a lot of players have been inspired to follow suit and purchase Martin guitars.

Finn has recorded approximately sixty albums/five-hundred tracks with his Martin Dreadnoughts and he has performed at least a thousand concerts with his 1979 D-45.

During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, only Martin Dreadnought models were readily available for purchase in Denmark. The 1970’s Dreadnought, which was the most common, was not the most obvious or optimum choice for a fingerstyle artist, but it was the model you could actually obtain. As a result, Finn collaborated with Danish luthier Ole Kehlet in 2004 to develop a new guitar model that was created for Finn’s particular fingerpicking style: The Ole Kehlet Grand Folk Finn Olafsson Signature Model. It’s a very nice guitar!

But old love never dies. In 2008, Finn Olafsson visited The Fellowship of Acoustics (TFOA) in Holland to buy two special Martin guitars: a 12-fret 00-28 Martin crafted with Adirondack spruce and Madagascar rosewood, and a pre-CITES Brazilian rosewood D-45 Deluxe.

“I have always dreamed of owning a Brazilian D-45, and I’ve always been very curious about the 12-fret 00s. They are hardly ever available in Denmark, or in Europe for that matter.” The two Martins inspired Finn a great deal and during the last couple of years he has acquired several other rare and unique Martins.

“I’m very impressed by the Martin guitars made during the past twenty years. They are extremely inspirational to work with. The 00s and OMs especially, with their wider necks and wide string spacing, suit my particular playing style extremely well,” Finn explains.

As of today, Finn Olafsson has an arsenal of some twenty Martin guitars. They are simply the tools of his trade!

Seth Lakeman

England’s Seth Lakeman has become one of the UK’s most unique and vibrant talents with his lively tenor guitar and vocal performances. The recent successes of acts such as Mumford & Sons, Noah & The Whale, and Laura Marling have happened in the wake of Seth’s breakthrough, and while he’s far too modest to take any credit, there’s little doubt that he has been instrumental in helping acoustic folk music, in all its rich and deep diversity, enjoy a renewed popularity and a fresh commercial appeal.

“Wooden instruments are now cool,” he says. He should know. He’s a multi-instrumentalist, particularly adept on an assortment of guitars and fiddles.

In fact, a UK edition of Custom 5-15T Martin 12-fret tenor guitars was created in his name by Martin’s UK distributor Westside for sale to tenor guitar enthusiasts and Seth’s fans. He tunes his tenor open to GDGD, yielding a powerful open tonality. His most recent CDs are pictured below, but you’ll find much more at: www.sethlakeman.co.uk.
Guitar Dog
Renowned musician and embellishment artist Nancy Josephson created this unique sculpture using an assortment of molded resin taxidermy components, sequins, beads, artificial flowers, guitar picks, and salvaged Martin guitar parts. Can you find the neck and body of the well-disguised Martin Dreadnought? The guitar was the starting point and centerpiece of this unusual piece of decorative art.

Dick Brown
Dick Brown has been an avid musician since childhood. After learning ukulele and guitar, he and his friends formed a Kingston Trio folk band, eventually auditioning for a larger group of 18 talented individuals called The Young Americans. They toured with then popular Johnny Mathis and also appeared on the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson in 1965. Dick has continued to perform with his one-man half hour comedy routine. As Senior Art Director for Thomas ARTS advertising in Farmington, Utah, Dick was voted “Ad Professional of the Year” by the American Advertising Federation - Utah Chapter. He is an expert at ornamental penmanship and lettering and in 2002 he was selected to be calligrapher for the Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. He has always been a big Martin fan and has developed a great respect for the company and the craftspeople who make Martin guitars. He generously created the incredible illustration below as a gift to the company.
Melody of Wood, Glass & Steel

The guitar is an amazingly beautiful object considered as a whole; or even as its separate parts. The materials are rich; the shapes are simple and elegant. The guitar also carries with it imagery and associations unique to the person who views it. A damaged guitar which has been cut up and is about to be discarded still carries with it much beauty and a certain air of unfulfilled possibilities. As an artist and sculptor, Barbara Kozero of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, feels drawn to the materials and the idea of reconfiguring the forms to explore the varied yet elusive nature of the guitar.

Mosaics are made primarily from handcrafted ceramic tiles and found objects. The guitar parts are pieces from a damaged Martin guitar and the remaining elements are handcrafted ceramic tiles formed around the wooden guitar pieces after the design has been established. After the ceramic tiles go through several kiln firings, they are attached to a board with mastic and accented with a dark grout to fill the spaces between the tiles.

Marcy’s “Ethel Martin”

Grammy Award winning multi-instrumentalist and Martin signature artist Marcy Marxer bought “Ethel Martin” – an old D-28 – in the late 70s. When it came into the shop it was in pieces and looked like it may have been left outdoors or in an old barn for a while. The sides were riddled with cracks. After some careful repair, Ethel traveled out on the road with Marcy for about 25 years playing folk festivals and clubs. The finish is completely worn off the back of the neck from the many years of playing.

Late one night in a campground some friends decided to decorate Ethel. They didn’t know the guitar was an old treasure. Marcy wasn’t happy about it at first but eventually the look grew dear to her.

A couple of years after that Ethel was stolen. Marcy was broken hearted, but Ethel was very easy to identify and was returned a few months later. Ethel came back home with a couple of new carvings. She wears them with the pride of an adventurous traveler.

Ethel Martin was given her name in honor of the late great Ethel Merman. The two have many similarities. They are both large of stature, loud of voice, and both attended the School of Hard Knocks in the Poconos.

Ethel Martin has always enjoyed dressing up and going to costume parties. The above picture was taken at 5:30 pm as Ethel was heading out to her local hotel for happy hour and the early bird special dinner. Photographic equipment: an iPhone with the app Phototropedelic. Total cost: $1.99, and Marcy’s dignity!
Dr. Michael Harrison, PhD, recently completed the Wilderness Medicine Institute/National Outdoor Leadership School’s “Medicine in the Wild” course. As part of this course, he trekked through the Gila National Forest in New Mexico for nineteen days and he carried everything he needed, including his Martin Backpacker® guitar. He traveled in elevations from 5,500 to 11,000 feet and in temperatures ranging from 25º F to 95º F. Michael slept outside without a tent and so did his guitar! Both he and his Backpacker survived the incredible experience quite nicely.
The Global Mobile Family

Julie and Martin Glauer met ten years ago while backpacking in Australia. Julie grew up in Great Britain and Martin hails from Heidelberg, Germany, but they both share a common love of world travel, diverse culture and natural landscapes. Eventually they decided to share these world treasures with their four boys. Their vision was to create an enjoyable and child-friendly travel experience, so together they embarked on what they came to call their “Global Mobile Family Bike Tour.”

The world map below traces the path of their incredible journey. It is less about putting on a lot of miles and more about memorable experiences. They are extremely passionate about their project and feel that it is a viable and authentic way to demonstrate the versatility of the Martin Backpacker. Martin (pictured above) has played it spontaneously at campfires whenever the boys feel that they need a bit of entertainment.

They are using bikes and double children’s trailers as their primary transportation because the bikes and trailers can be taken on buses, trains, boats and planes. Also, travelling by bicycle is a direct and intense way to experience the people, the culture, the landscape and the climate. To maintain some efficiency, they are focusing on two or three countries on each continent. Their trip commenced on January 6, 2011 and they expect to finish after fourteen months in the summer of 2012. Keep your eyes open when you’re driving. You might just see them pedaling on the road!

Michael Stanley

Michael Stanley and his LXM Little Martin guitar have been to some interesting places. He is seen above at Wadi Rum, a desert location in southern Jordan. The Wadi Rum area was made famous in the movie Lawrence of Arabia and it served Michael well as an improv concert setting.

Hudson Valley Bluegrass Association

The HVBA of Poughkeepsie, New York held a very successful raffle for an LX Little Martin to help defray expenses for a special concert that they presented featuring the legendary Tony Rice. The winner of the raffle was a proud and deserving Corey Madison (above with her dad). A major bonus was seeing Tony Rice and his band in action. He played his famous 1935 D-28 Martin guitar (Serial #58597) with the enlarged soundhole (formerly owned by Clarence White). Read more at: http://hvbluegrass.org.
The Extended Martin Family

Most all of the employees from Martin’s various Nazareth facilities donned their T-shirts, and hoisted their Martin guitars for this photo in the lower level raw wood processing area at the Sycamore Street factory. Chris and Diane Martin with their daughter Claire are in the front row. It’s our extended Martin family photo! (Photo by John Sterling Ruth)

New SP Lifespan® Coming This Fall

Look for our new gauges in the SP Lifespan® family of acoustic strings: Extra Light gauge in phosphor bronze and 80/20 bronze, 12-string Extra Light in phosphor bronze, and Baritone in phosphor bronze. These new gauges supplement the existing light and medium gauges previously introduced.

SP Lifespan™ sets are treated with Cleartone® technology to deliver long life without compromise. The Cleartone® technology treats both the core and the wrap, protecting the strings from corrosion and build up of dirt and grime. Other coatings close up the windings and add significant mass to the string. Cleartone® technology leaves the windings open so the strings can vibrate with natural power and bright attack.

“I am very pleased with my new Martin SP Lifespan Strings that I picked up on my recent visit to Nazareth. I’m pretty hard on strings, but with Lifespan I’m now able to get double the amount of performance time out of my strings.”

Travis Tritt
Singer/Songwriter/Guitarist

“Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.”