



RiverVibes Concerts at the Cooperage is back... after our indefinite pause...

a musical journey...

Since a child growing up in Queens, with a sister who was into the music scene, I have always had a passion for music. At my high school graduation, I received an award for my love and commitment to music – I had no idea there was such an award!

My love for music has remained with me. I played guitar and piano in my younger years, but found I wanted to leave the playing to those who excelled and found that my passion was on the listening end. I have always had a large circle of talented musician friends playing many genres of music, would often go hear them, and always had music in my life.

While I have always been open to many genres, folk and folk crossovers has always been a lifeline for me. While friends growing up listened to top 40, I was more into Joni Mitchell, Donovan, Dylan, Carole King. And bands... Bowie, Renaissance, Yes, The Band, Little Feat.

I was introduced to NERFA (Northeast Regional Folk Alliance Conference) in 2006 by an ex, and as I could hear so many incredible artists under one roof over the course of a few days, I was hooked.

At the 2008 NERFA, WJFF *Folk Plus* host Angela Page suggested that I host a 'House Concert' in Narrowsburg, it gave me food for thought. I didn't have the room, but the concept of a concert series was born, as was the name RiverFolk Concerts (**now RiverVibes**). Being a caterer and an organized person, this was something I thought I could do, and over the weekend at NERFA, RiverFolk Concerts took life. But, I still didn't have a venue.

I was on the line for coffee on the last day of the conference, behind a woman I didn't know at the time, Susan DeVita. Strangely enough, here at NERFA, she knew who I was. She was then part of a musical trio Lucky Seven, and had a second home outside of Narrowsburg! She knew me because of my catering business, Jill's Kitchen. Susan suggested I reach out to Mike at The Calkins Creek Winery, which I did the following day and they agreed it was a great fit. I leaped at the chance, and RiverFolk Concerts moved forward.

With help from my ex who had the sound equipment and got the stage set up, and from Rent-Event in Honesdale who helped with chairs, and my staff from Jill's Kitchen who did food, RiverFolk Concerts was now happening!

Our first show featured Joe Crookston in January of 2009. Crookston, who lives in Ithaca, NY, spends a good deal of time touring in the U.S., Canada and Ireland, and has been a perennial favorite ever since. His style of storytelling exemplifies RiverFolk,

because of his music, but also because he is a “songwriter, painter, fiddler, eco-village member and believer in all things possible” with an emphasis on diversity. After three more shows at the winery, they sadly closed.

For a couple of years after the winery closed, we tried different locations for the series and am grateful to every one of them for opening their spaces to us.

In 2012, The Cooperage Project reached out to me to see if I would be interested in bringing my series to the new performance space they were designing. This labor of love would now be hosted in this beautiful community space with great sound and lighting. The folks who run the venue, with the help of amazing volunteers, are fantastic. I’m very thankful for them all and could not do it without their assistance. Founded on the premise that “strong communities are built upon strong relationships” it seemed like a perfect fit for my labor of love, RiverFolk Concerts.

I have been so happy to be a part of The Cooperage mission: “to offer a range of instructive and entertaining activities that will engage, challenge and enlighten through a variety of programs, seeking to inspire people of all ages to embrace diversity and celebrate shared experience in order to create a deeper sense of community.”

Our first concert at The Cooperage Project was in July of 2012 with artists Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman and I have been presenting shows at The Cooperage ever since with the help of my terrific volunteers, with a break the last few years starting with Covid... but we’re back!

And then... new branding! RiverFolk has been forever evolving, and while the name suggests folk music, it was meant to be a homonym – “folks” who live in the river valley region even more than “folk music”. And RiverFolk has changed. So has folk music, overlapping many genres. I have been presenting multiple genres – blues, bluegrass, pop, musical comedy and The Slambovian Circus of Dreams (who cross many genres!) So... a new branding.

And now, the more inclusive name, **RiverVibes Concerts at The Cooperage** and the new logo I spent a lot of time designing!

I am excited to be back at The Cooperage Project! RiverVibes will feature a wide variety of entertainment. Come and see for yourself! This is my labor of love - for the love of good music and sharing with the community. RiverVibes will continue to grow and thrive as long as I’m around. It’s my baby!

Jill Padua

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