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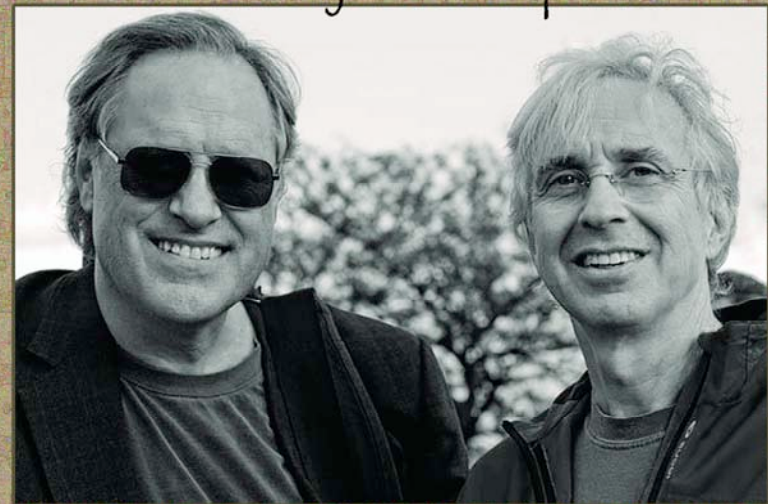


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BROADSIDES

A Miscellany of Musical Opinion



TOM CHAPIN & JOHN FORSTER

A broadside ballad is a people's song that tells a story, often topical. Over the centuries, broadsides have served many purposes, chronicling bravery and knavery, delivering smackdowns, crying out for justice and/or reason. The tradition stretches from 16th century minstrels through 20th Century folk masters like Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie and Tom Paxton. Any era's broadsides are a running commentary on its culture.

The songs in this collection, many of which were written for NPR's Morning Edition, are in that tradition. Think of them as op-eds with key signatures. Because of their origin, almost every song has a "news hook," a current story or controversy that inspired it and serves to launch the musical argument.

Some of the underlying hooks are obvious. **Not On The Test** glosses No Child Left Behind. **Zombie Bank** is part of the melt-down literature of '09. **Cold Christmas** is our reaction to ever balmy Decembers in the Hudson Valley. Others are more obscure. **When Bad Things Happen To Good Mice** was inspired by a Princeton genetics lab that created Doogie, a mouse who tested five times smarter than his peers. **The Cars** spins a cautionary metaphor from the GM bail-out. **The Good Book & The Big Bang** is part of the secret Humanist Hymnal we are creating in our spare time.

John Forster & Tom Chapin

Broadside

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

Everyday the news abounds
With scoundrels doing wrong
Which impels us to take action
That's really, really strong
Like expressing our displeasure
Through the lyric of a song.
Preferably a sing-a-long.

There's a name for what we're doing
And Broadside is the term.
A tough, melodic weapon
Packed with values we affirm.
Just load 'er up and let 'er rip
And watch the wicked squirm.
As everybody sings along.

*Broadside, broadside they cannot ignore us,
They may run but they can't hide.
We'll out 'em with the verse
Then rout 'em with the chorus
Of a broad, Broadside.*

We're ruled by corporation,
Conglomerate and bank.
Congress is in gridlock,
The Courts are in the tank.
If we get out of this alive,
It's us you'll have to thank
For asking you to sing-a-long.

It was Pete and it was Woody
Who pioneered it all,
They taught Tom and Phil

And Mary and Peter and Paul.
But the times they are a-changing,
And the writing on the wall
Says everybody sing along.
Chorus

Feel the power of the right notes
And the right votes combined.
Feel the power of the right song
To open up your heart and mind.

You may think a sing-a-long
Is just a silly game,
And believing it can change the world
Is really kind-a lame.
But "We Shall Overcome" finally overcame
'Cause everybody sang along.

*Broadside, broadside they cannot ignore us.
They may run but they can't hide.
We'll out 'em with the verse
And rout 'em with the chorus,
We'll wreck 'em with the verse
And deck 'em with the chorus,
We'll hurt 'em with the verse
And convert 'em with the chorus
Of a broad, Broadside.*

Total Security Solutions, Inc.

by John Forster
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It's hard to fight a war
You lack the soldiers for
And drafting them is sure to cause a stink.
So we're the ones to call
To staff your little brawl.
Total Security Solutions, Inc.

Our highly trained brigades
Have rockets and grenades,
We're battle-hardened vets who never blink.
Don't hire amateurs
To waterboard your prisoners,
Total Security Solutions, Inc.

War is too important to leave to the Reserves
Who wet their pants as they advance
Or vomit from the nerves.
We'll set you up with pros
Who understand their foes,
Who know first-hand how sociopaths think.
Just tell us who to kill
And where to send the bill.
From Total Security Solutions, Inc.

Sit down with our strategists,
They are there to help you find solutions.
To overcome all obstacles:
Geneva Conventions, U.S. Constitutions.

We'll help you play the game,
Discretion is our middle name.
Who signs our checks we'll never ever share.
Just put us on your books
As body guards and cooks,
Congress won't even know we're there.

Unless of course we screw up
And pull a Ruby Ridge,
Drop a bomb on someone's Mom
Or strafe an orphanage.
But when our "shock and awe"
Is inconsistent with the law
Let's let it go, dismiss it with a wink.
Remember war is hell, even for the personnel
Of Total Security Solutions, Inc.

We're not just foreign ops.
No, we also make terrific cops
To tazer thugs and drag 'em to the clink.
Make everyone feel good,
Let us patrol your neighborhood.
Total Security Solutions, Inc.

'Cause terrorists are everywhere,
They're not just in Iraq.
They're in Bayonne and San Antone
And someone's gotta cut 'em back.
Hey, while we're in the swing
Let's outsource everything,
The FBI, the CIA, the DOJ, the kitchen sink.
Then you can all relax,
Knowing that your income tax
Is going to pay the maniacs
Of Total Security Solutions, Inc.

Econo-Me-Oh-My

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

I couldn't find a job,
Though I was really looking.
But then things turned around,
The economy was cooking.
When the 'conomy is cooking
There are jobs in great supply.
Econo-me, econo-you, econo-me-oh-my.
(I think they call it "job creation.")

They hired me, they hired you
And all our friends as well,
As corporate profits hit the roof
And unemployment fell.
When unemployment's falling
The labor pool contracts.

Econo-me, econo-you, econo-that's-the-facts.
(I think Milton Friedman said that.)

I put in for a raise, I got it... jubilation.
And all my pals got raises, too,
But that's what's called inflation.
Inflation is the evil
That could cash in all our chips.
Econo-me, econo-you, econo-pocalypse.
(I think Ben Bernanke said that.)

So the Fed decides
That interest rates need tightening,
Which slows inflation down,
But the side effects are frightening.
'Cause when interest rates are rising,
Corporate profits stall
So they cut the rate, but - too late,
The market's in freefall.
Econo-wham, econo-bam,
They kinda fired us all.
(But they call it "resource re-allocation.")

So now I'm on the street,
Right back where I started,
Wonderin' how the economic gurus
Got outsmarted.
Now I'm no Ben Bernanke
But I can plainly see
That they're bailing out the Big Boys
But not you and me.
(Surprise, surprise, surprise.)

And when recovery finally comes
It won't be like before,
'Cause my old job will go to temps
Or dudes in Bangalore.
When the experts down in Washington
Start practicing their craft

It's kinda you, it's kinda me
Who kinda get the shaft.
(I think Isaac Hayes said that.)

This story has a moral: in an economic boom,
The bluebird of happiness
Is the harbinger of doom.
And when that bluebird finally lets it fly
It always lands right on the little guy,
And even Stephen Hawking
Don't have a reason why.
Econo-me, econo-you, econo-me-oh-my.
(I said that.)

When Bad Things Happen To Good Mice

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

First rule of a Lab Mouse, never volunteer.
When you see that Big Hand,
Try and disappear.
Hide behind the treadmill
And you might not have to go
And find yourself strung out on Sweet'n'Low.

*My Daddy was in the Control Group,
And Mama was too.
If you're not in the Control Group
They experiment on you.
Ask any mouse in any lab
And they'll give you the scoop,
You got to, got to stay in the Control Group!*

The Big Hand got my sister,
Grabbed her by the legs,
Scrubbed her down with Phisohex

And doctored up her eggs.
We knew her kids when they were born
Would be a total mess,
But that's the price of progress, I guess.
Time went by my sisters kids returned.
They took some tests
To see how fast they learned.
They raced the maze,
They aced the hardest part.
And then they ran it backwards.
Geez these kids were smart!

This Control Group's feeling dumb and dumber.
Einstein in a lab mouse, what a bummer.
We realized the Super Mouse
Would now become routine.
Our next litter had to have that gene.

So next time we saw the Big Hand
We bravely volunteered
To have our genes upgraded
And our kids re-engineered.
But it took us past the Smart Lab
Into a Land of Chrome
Where it strapped us down
And gave us a shot
That activated a mystery gene
Somewhere down there
On our thirteenth chromosome.

*My Daddy was in the Control Group
And Mama was too,
But the paradigm has shifted,
Now everything is new.
And any mouse who plays it safe
Is on a dead end page.
The mouse today is not afraid
To think outside the cage.
I saw a chance, I took a shot,*

*I was not afraid to fail.
And that is how I got my extra tail.*

Zombie Bank

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)


*I got my money in a zombie bank,
A zombie bank, a zombie bank.
I got my money in a zombie bank,
They're dead but they just don't know it.*

I check my balance and there's money there.
And yet Paul Krugman says
The cupboard's bare.
And all the tellers have a zombie stare
They're dead but they just don't know it!

My money's in a bank that doesn't lend,
That doesn't spend, it's all pretend.
They flunked the stress test,
They've reached the end,
They're dead but they just don't know it.

They're too big to fail, they're too big for jail.
They're sucking money
On a breathtaking scale.

Do the math, do the monster math,
*Zombie bank, zombie bank.
I got my money in a zombie bank,
Zombie bank, zombie bank.
They're dead but they just don't know it.*

See the video on 

The Cars

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
© 2010 Limousine Music Co. & The Last Music Co.
(ASCAP)

They love to travel. We build them roads.
We tear down landmarks
To put up their abodes.
And when they're thirsty,
We take them to their bars
'Cause nothing's too good for our cars.

We wash and wax them and treat 'em great,
A yearly checkup for every beat-up crate.
The health care they get, it sure beats ours.
'Cause nothing's too good for our cars.

*The cars have won. They call the shots
In dark garages they hatch their plots.
To make us pave ourselves,
Make us enslave ourselves.
The cars have won.
The cars have won. The cars have won.*

We've built them racetracks to exercise.
They jam up traffic just to socialize.
In ads and showrooms
We've made them into stars
'Cause nothing's too good for our cars.

And when there's combat, full speed ahead,
They join the wars we fight to keep them fed.
They're up in space now, there's two on Mars.
The future belongs to our cars.

*The cars have won. The cars have won.
They're taking over, we're on the run.
From Hummer to Focus,
They're starting to choke us.*

*This isn't fun. The cars have won.
We're on the run. The cars have won.*

Last year when they were rotting on the lot
We could have broken free but we did not.
Our final chance to rid ourselves of them
But we didn't have the balls to close GM.

We live by rules that they contrive
You're not a grownup 'til you can drive.
Who are we kidding? We do their bidding.
We are the serfs, they are the Tsars,
We serve the cars! We serve the cars!
The cars have won. The web is spun.
The game is done. The cars have won.

They killed the horse, they killed the trains,
And wounded airlines are all that remains.
The same Svengalis that killed the trolleys,
They want our scooters, want our bikes,
Lock up your pogo sticks and trikes.
There will be blood, it's just begun,
It will get worse before it's done.
The cars have won. The cars have won.
The cars have won. The cars have won.
As clouds of carbon blot out the sun.
And we just let it, why's no one get it?
The cars have won. The cars have won.

Not On The Test

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

Go on to sleep now, Third Grader of mine,
The test is tomorrow but you'll do just fine.
It's reading and math, forget all the rest.
You don't need to know
What is not on the test.

Each box that you mark
On each test that you take,
Remember your teachers,
Their jobs are at stake.
Your score is their score
But don't get all stressed,
They'd never teach anything not on the test.

The School Board is faced with
No Child Left Behind.
With rules but no funding
They're caught in a bind.
So Music and Art and the things you love best
Are not in your school
'Cause they're not on the test.

Sleep, sleep and as you progress
You'll learn there's a lot that is not on the test.

Debate is a skill that is useful to know
Unless you're in Congress or Talk Radio
Where shouting and spouting
And spewing are blessed,
'Cause rational discourse was not on the test.

Thinking's important, it's good to know how.
And someday you'll learn to
But someday's not now.
Go on to sleep now, you need your rest.
Don't think about thinking, it's not on the test.



For more info
and resources,
check out

www.notonthetest.com

One Billion Little Emperors

by John Forster
© 2010 Limousine Music Co. (ASCAP)

In circa 1970 our Chairman made the policy
Of just one child per family
On pain of sterilization.
Now several decades later we
Have unsurpassed prosperity.
Why? Because we're such a special,
Special, special nation.

Of one billion only children,
Each a golden treasure house of worth.
Each the most important
Human being on earth.

One billion little emperors,
Our parent's precious jewels.
One billion kids whose ball it is
So you've got to play by our rules.
You could call us self-confident,
Or tell the truth and say:
We'll hold our breath and bite someone
If we don't get our way.

We wanted Tibet, we got it.
We wanted Hong Kong, we got it.
And now we really, really want Taiwan.
One billion only children,
Never learned to compromise or share.
Yes we're spoiled rotten. Hey, guess what?
We don't care.

One billion little emperors
Took Deng Xiao Ping to heart.
He said 'it's glorious to grow rich'
We plan to do our part.

We're serious and competitive,
We've got the stuff we need,
A magical mix of Mao and Marx
And capitalistic greed.

We don't much care about human rights.
We don't much care about copyrights.
We don't much care about any rights
But our own.

One billion only children,
82% of whom are guys.
The girls all got adopted
And now live in Van Nuys.

And that's why we're so arrogant
And selfish and obtuse.
Our question to America is...
What's your excuse?

The Chief Executive Chain Gang

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

I did it. I admit it. I really cooked the books.
Thank God they didn't throw me in
With ordinary crooks.
I'm in a pen full of rich white men,
Paying for my crime
On the Chief Executive Chain Gang
Doin' time.

They don't need high security
For high-up chief execs,
They've got us chained together,
One Rolex to the next.
Instead of stamping license plates

Or raking gravel flat
They've got us shredding documents,
They know we're good at that.
In the only slam where they give a damn about
The stock market report,
The Chief Executive Chain Gang resort.

There's Enron cons and Worldcom cons,
We're all here on the ranch.
In D block Arthur Andersen
Has opened up a branch.
We're making great connections,
It isn't very hard
'Cause everyone who's anyone
Is right here in the yard.

In the only jail where a work detail
Is a great networking hub,
The Chief Executive Chain Gang country club.
(Playing through!)

Martha Stewart sent her crew
To brighten up the place,
They spackled and they painted
And hung curtains just in case.
(I love it! Ooh, chintz!)

In two years more I'll be offshore
On a beach in Grand Bahama,
Sitting on my nest egg with my fiduciary Mama.
And I'll tell her 'bout the hard time
That was soft as Ivory Snow,
'Bout the chef we all chipped in on
And the cases of Merlot.
About the Joliet where I paid my debt
At a great insider price,
The Chief Executive Chain Gang
Vacation paradise.

Digital Delinquents

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

One day I'm surfen' around,
Like being a normal teen
When I stumbled on the secret specs
For the Seawolf submarine.
So I post 'em on my website,
'Cause I'm like "That'd be so cool!"
But the Pentagon gets totally stressed
And suddenly, I'm under arrest.
They impound my laptop
And pull me out of school.

What is your problem, why so tense?
Calling us names like Digital Delinquents.
Digital Delinquents.

Hackety hackety hackety hack.
You're messing with our fun.
We only cracked your stupid code,
We didn't hurt no one.
So we're low on common sense
And thinking through to the consequence.
Hey, being a teen is its own defense,
Hackety hackety hack.

CNN gets so uptight just because
We crashed their site.
The Infobahn is a drag strip
Where you prove that you're a man,
Where you pull all kinds of stupid stunts
Just because you can.

It's not that we're starting a life of crime.
It's just too much hardware

And too much time.

Hackety hackety hackety hack.
It's a phase we're going through.
In a couple of years we'll have careers
And be making more than you.
And when your internet goes out of whack
And you're clueless how to put it back,
We broke it, we can fix it, Jack,
Hackety hackety hack. Hackety hackety hack.
Hackety hackety...

[Honey, dinner in twenty minutes,
Finish what you're doing.
Okay Mom.

Awesome. Just enough time to bring the
Free World to its knees!
Hackety hackety hack.

Calling All Dummies

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

It changed the life I led,
Turned around my head.
I haven't been the same
Since the day I read

Investing Online for Dummies. Which led to
Buying On Margin for Dummies. That led to
Home Equity Loans for Dummies.

And though I'm on a losing spree
It's gonna be all right, you'll see
'Cause I just picked up

Bankruptcy for Dummies.

I gave my daughter **Dating for Dummies.**
Then she bought
Planning Your Own Wedding for Dummies.

Then he bought

Anger Management for Dummies.

Has it been painful? Yes, of course.
At least they've got this great resource:

Handling Your Own Divorce for Dummies.

*Where everything you need to know
Is laid out neatly in a row
To give your life an easy overhaul.
When every illustrated tome cries
"Pick me up and take me home!"
It's the siren call of the Yellow Wall.
Calling all Dummies.*

I gave my wife **Trompe L'Oeil for Dummies.**

She bought me

Plastering Your Walls for Dummies. Then
Wood Rot and Termite Repair for Dummies.

And now I'm down to crumbling brick.

My back is out, my heart is sick.

So I bought

Selling Your House Quick for Dummies.

*I hadn't realized ancient Greek
Was just the thing I yearned to speak
Until I saw it on my Visa bill.
And every time I buy a book
They simply bait another hook
With the pointless thrill of a useless skill.
Calling all Dummies.*

Giving Up Smoking For Dummies.

Led me to **Self-Realization For Dummies.**

Led me to

Finding Inner Peace For Dummies.

But I'll never find my inner peace

Until the day that they release

Giving Up For Dummies For Dummies.

Cold Christmas

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

I used to love when Old Man Winter
Did his blustering storming thing.
Back in the days when Global Warming
Was just what happened every spring.

What I wouldn't give for a cold Christmas
Like those of not so long ago.
Temperatures were lower
And the old snow blower
Still had some snow to blow.

All I dream about is a cold Christmas,
The rhododendrons pointing down.
Busy shoppers freezin',
Carolers in season,
Sneezein' through "O Little Town."

Yes, the heating bills were ruinous,
Even with the fire ablaze.
Oil companies were screwin' us.
Those were the days!

White stuff all around on a cold Christmas,
A Gore-Tex eiderdown kind of cold Christmas.
I would give a fortune in gold
If Christmas once again were cold.

Eco Man

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

When I saw the movie I saw the light.
A voice inside said, "Al Gore's right!"

It's very inconvenient but it's true.
I vowed that I would change my ways
And carbon neutralize my days
And that's exactly what I'm trying to do.

I took the pledge on power tools
And stuff that runs on fossil fuels,
Though last week when I had to move a tree.
I hauled and dragged with all my might
And finally in the dead of night
I went and borrowed my sister's SUV.
*It's not easy being green,
Giving up The Big Machine,
My Harley and my chainsaw
And my Camper Caravan.
It kind-a makes me glum
When I hear a hybrid hum.
Lord, it's hard to be an Eco Man!*

Me and my eco-conscious spouse
Built a geothermal house
With solar panels crankin' out the amps.
Of course we're proud as we can be,
But dang, it's really hard to see
By the light of those spiral thingies
In our lamps.
*It's not easy being green,
I can't read a magazine
On the sofa or in bed at night
Or sitting on the can.
I just grope around the gloom
Of my moonlit living room.
Lord, it's hard to be an Eco Man.*

I used to enjoy a Bob's Big Boy
But I'm a carnivore no more because
I took a look at Michael Pollan's book
And found out just how big a
Big Boy's carbon footprint was!

*It's not easy being green,
Swearing off the haute cuisine
For a local leafy, all non-beefy dietary plan,
And sometimes I go off point
When I pass a burger joint.
Lord, it's hard to be an Eco Man!*

*It's not easy being green,
Tryin' to live so squeaky clean.
You feel foolish and alarmist, sure,
But on the other hand,
If the hoops we're jumpin' through
Cool the world a degree or two
Then, I'm glad to be an Eco Man. Yes I am.
I'm glad to be an Eco Man.*

The Good Book & The Big Bang

by John Forster & Tom Chapin
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(ASCAP)

*In the beginning was the word.
Then the word turned into data.
But the data and the scriptures disagreed.
So the battle lines were drawn
And the battle rages on
Between two very different kinds of creed.*

*Science gropes with isotopes
And spectroscopes by which it hopes
To explain The Big Bang to the people.
But it collapses in aspes
Which perhaps is why
You never see a laboratory with a steeple.
Religion deals with faith and myth
And both can help us grapple with
The things we fear and why we're here,
The age-old questions.*

*But for a DNA pattern or a rocket to Saturn
The Good Book has very few suggestions.*

*The Good Book & the Big Bang.
Different games by different rules,
Different names and different tools.
The Good Book & the Big Bang.
Don't belong in the same pot,
What one is the other's not
But though they seem like oil and water,
They could be Yin and Yang.
The Good Book & the Big Bang.*

*Could we combine our categories
And put chapels in our lab'ratories,
Or put lab'ratories in our chapels?
Could we insert a few equations
On liturgical occasions?
Could we learn by mixing
Oranges and apples?*

*The Good Book & the Big Bang.
Could we put 'em in a room
And not have 'em go kaboom?
The Good Book & the Big Bang.
It seems promising to me,
Yet throughout all history
It's been a case of oil and water,
An endless sturm und drang,
The Good Book & the Big Bang.*

*With Science on it's high horse
And religion on it's knees
They can't see eye to eye,
They miss the obvious.
But to me it's a no-brainer
'Cause I know there's one container
That is big enough to hold 'em both - us!*

*The Good Book & the Big Bang.
Pour the mystical and skeptical
Into the same receptacle.
The Good Book & the Big Bang.
The one place they can be combined
Is inside the human mind.
Because we need both oil and water,
We need the Yin and Yang.
The Good Book and the Big...*

*The Good Book & the Big Bang.
Pour the mystical and skeptical
Into the same receptacle.
The Good Book & the Big Bang.
The one place they can be combined
Is inside the human mind.
Because we need both ways of thinking,
We need the Yin and Yang.
It's Good and it's Big
And it's Big and it's Good.
The Good Book and the Big Bang.*



Produced by Tom Chapin & John Forster

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Background Vocals: **Jon Cobert, Michael Mark, John Fiore, Vicky Forster**
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Photos: **Tom Chapin, Steve Bretschneider**
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Thanks to **Neva Grant** at NPR, whose open door was the springboard for this collection.

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