



Autoharper's Index

Here is another version of a Whither Zither I threw together in July of 2005. The idea for that column (and this one) was something of a take-off on **Harper's Magazine's The Harper's Index** (hence the name Autoharper's Index ha ha), though theirs is more timely, meaningful, and political. Mine is based on numbers like theirs, but mine is based on folk music, or at least music in general, and is fraught with much less meaning.

1. Year troubadours appeared in Germany, calling themselves minnesingers, "singers about love":
1180.
2. Year troubadours appeared in Woodstock NY, calling themselves hippies, at the apex of the "summer of love":
1969.
3. Year Thomas Edison patented the phonograph:
1878.
4. Year that the first ukulele was made, in Hawaii, by Portugese immigrants:
1879.
5. Number of years John Prine was a postman before beginning his music career:
5.
6. Number of strings a young Bill Monroe's brothers made him remove from his 8-string mandolin so it was quieter:
4.
7. Cost of shipping a 500 pound piano by Conestoga wagon from New York to Pittsburgh in 1820:
\$18.75.
8. Cost of shipping a 500 pound piano by truck from New York to Pittsburgh in 2010:
\$421.30.
9. Number of times Milwaukee is found in a song title in the BMI (Broadcast

Music Inc) database:
49.

10. Number of times Chicago is found in a song title in the BMI database:
661.
11. Number of times Sheboygan is found in a song title in the BMI database:
1.
12. Number of words in the world's longest song title (by Christine Lavin) according to Wiki Answers:
97.
13. Number of words in the world's shortest song title (actually a tie among a number of songs with one-character titles, like "X" by rapper Xzibit and "7" by Prince):
0.
14. Estimated number of songs written by Irving Berlin:
1500.
15. Number of songs written by Joseph Mohr, author of "Silent Night":
1.
16. Number of "musicians and composers" listed by the US Census Bureau in 1930:
165,182.
17. Number of "musicians and composers" listed by the US Census Bureau in 1990:
138,330.
18. Height of French singer and cultural icon Edith Piaf:
4'8".
19. Height of TV's "Hee Haw" banjo player and comic, Stringbean:
6'5".
20. Price of a Kona Deluxe acoustic guitar with tuner, gigbag, and book at www.walmart.com:
\$98.54.
21. Price of a one-foot whistle that sounds like a locomotive at www.themusichouse.com:
\$134.50
22. Duration in seconds of the longest held note recorded by a pop singer

(Barbra Streisand):
22

23. Length in feet of cassette tape needed to record a 22 second note:
3.44
24. Length in feet of the groove on one side of an average LP record:
1600.
25. Year the great blues artist Memphis Minnie took up the electric guitar:
1942.
26. Year the great folk artist Bob Dylan took up the electric guitar:
1965.
27. Number of words in "Hard Rain's a-Gonna Fall" by Bob Dylan (chorus counted once):
474.
28. Number of words in "Baby The Rain Must Fall" sung by Glenn Yarbrough (chorus counted once):
93.
29. Number of years Sybil Augustine has been Music Director for WORT Radio in Madison:
15.
30. Number of years volunteer Chris Powers has hosted the Mud Acres bluegrass show on WORT Radio:
30.
31. Number of years WORT 89.9 Community Radio has been on the air:
35.

Sources:

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www.tntrivia.com
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www.goccc.com
www.wort-fm.org

Congratulations Sybil, Chris, and WORT Radio!