

# Jim Avett maps out success

BY JOSEPH CHAPMAN  
ASSISTANT DIVERSIONS EDITOR

I was late. On the way to interview Jim Avett over a plate of Lexington's famous vinegar-based barbecue, I had veered right when I should have veered left.

It was so plainly illustrated on the napkin set before me: The first thing Avett did when we finally sat down was pull out a pen and show us where I had gone astray.

He wasn't angry — "After all, who hadn't been lost before," he assured me — he just wanted to make sure I knew the right way to go. I was a newcomer to this town and especially this side of town, and Avett sympathized.

"I've been to Lexington a bunch of times and I have no clue as to how I ever got out of it," he said. "I just started driving one way and just kept on going until the sun set on my ass and I got out of town."

"But anyway, all right — go ahead."

I wanted to know if Avett had watched the Grammys, and wondered how spectacular it must have felt to see his sons, Scott and Seth Avett of the Avett Brothers, share the same stage as Bob Dylan.

But Mr. Avett was quick to quell any notion of a sudden prideful epiphany. For him, the Avett Brothers' performance at the Grammys was just reaffirming what he already knew.

"It does a daddy or a mama good when other people recognize or

**GO SEE PAPA AVETT**

**Time:** 9 p.m. Wednesday, March 2  
**Location:** Local 506  
506 W. Franklin St.  
**Info:** www.local506.com

validate what you saw in your children a long time ago," Avett said. "I was no more full of pride for our children on Grammy night than I have ever been."

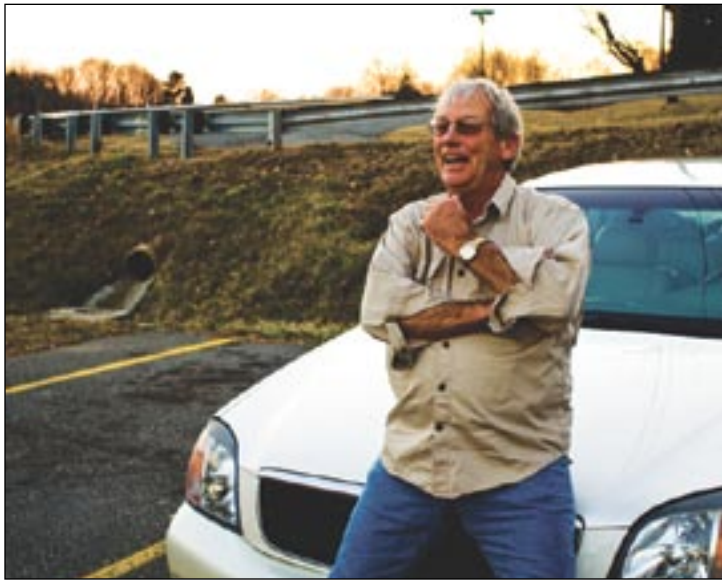
Yet in all his modesty, Avett couldn't stop some semblance of awe from beaming through.

"Whoever thought that I would be kin to anybody in the same room with Bob Dylan?"

Avett is a man who speaks in stories, ones that begin in bygone eras and end with swift anecdotes that plant you firmly in the present. Despite the fame that surrounds him, he maintains his normalcy.

If you forgo an attic of nearly 70 guitars, Avett is almost passable as "normal." Tuesday and Thursday nights are spent picking at a converted car repair shop with a "bunch of drunks and rednecks," a description Avett uses endearingly. And in his free time, he writes and records songs to keep him busy.

His music is probably what you would imagine the Avett Brothers' to sound like in forty year's time: calm and downtempo. Where his sons would scream, Jim croons softly over an accompanying fiddle or harmonizes with female backing vocals.



DTH/JOSEPH CHAPMAN

Jim Avett might not be as famous as his sons (yes, that Avett family), but for Jim, that's what he wants. He plays the Local 506 on Wednesday.

His 2010 release *Tribes* shows a musician in his maturity. The storytelling ability present on his album carries through to his conversation.

"I did a lot of growing up in the foothills of North Carolina, back up around a little place called Hudson, between Lenoir and Hickory," Avett said. "My daddy was a preacher. We moved around. We got a lot, a lot of hero worship out of my daddy. My uncles — those were my heroes."

And those heroes taught Avett what it meant for him to be a man.

"You have to have people show you the right way of doing things before you can do things right, right?" Avett said. "Surely, you can't do the right thing if you haven't been shown the right thing to do."

Avett's eagerness to scribble a map on a paper napkin made sense — where most would have accepted apologies and let the tardiness slide, he wanted to make sure that my mistake was one that I learned from.

Contact the Diversions editor at [diversions@dailytarheel.com](mailto:diversions@dailytarheel.com)

**DIVERECOMMENDS**

**Album from the Vaults:**

Ravi Shankar, *Three Ragas*: This 1956 record was released far before the Indian musician became known for influencing such greats as The Beatles and Crosby, Still, Nash & Young, but its understated, brilliant instrumentals will make you understand why the musician became so revered later in his career.

**Movie from the Vaults:**

"Dark Passage": Even though you don't see Humphrey Bogart's face until 30 minutes into this 1947 film noir, the movie is all about the Bogey. Staring as a man falsely imprisoned for the murder of his wife, Bogart wanders through the dusty streets of San Francisco searching for the real killer. He finds Lauren Bacall — and romance — instead.

**Events:**

**FRIDAY**

Phil Cook & His Feat

The Regulator | Head to this downtown Durham bookstore for acoustic tunes from the Megafaun troubadour. Expect some pared-down tunes perfect for welcoming spring. The event will feature beer from the Fullsteam Brewery. 8 p.m., Free

**SATURDAY**

Dexter Romweber & The New Romans

Local 506 | Dexter Romweber will stare you down and snarl like the ghost of rock 'n' roll past, and you'll love every minute of it. Somewhere between rockabilly and old-school punk, Dex is nothing short of a leg-

end, and his live set is no less epic. Blood Red River and Titanium Rex open. 10 p.m., \$7

Americans in France, Gross Ghost and Last Year's Men

The Cave | You'd be hard-pressed to find a three-band lineup as pitch-perfect as this one (which happens to be curated by Raleigh's The Love Language). There's something here for everyone — Americans in France bring the grit, broken down punk-pop, Gross Ghost croons like the '70s band that plays at the best movie proms and Last Year's Men thrash through impertinent, irreverent rock 'n' roll. Don't miss this free show. 9 p.m., Free for 21+

Birds of Avalon

Kings Barcade | Like many psychedelic rockers, Birds of Avalon's show isn't the kind where you sit and bob your head with a bunch of other contemplative indie music lovers. Bust out your ear plugs (and anything else you think might enhance some wild visuals and even wilder riffs). Lonnie Walker opens. 10 p.m., \$8

American Aquarium

Motorco | American Aquarium's B.J. Barham has the gruff gentility of Bruce Springsteen and the road-wearied songwriting chops of Willie Nelson. And as epic as the influences he evokes are, American Aquarium's show is just as grand, a lively mix of Americana and hooks that will get the crowd shouting along. 9 p.m., \$8



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