

Dave Para and Erika Gerety

<https://bartonpara.com/bp/index.php/davepara/>

Since 2019, Dave Para and Erika Gerety have found a loving life together. They realize they share much more in common than both losing a spouse and a good friend in the same two people, Cathy Barton and Gary Libman, who hopefully are laughing and playing banjo together in heaven to the surprise of its other inhabitants. Their relationship began 12 years ago with music, camping and jamming at the festival in Winfield, Kan., a central focus for fun and friendship. That focus was allusive for months after Cathy passed, but Dave joined Erika's dance band, Cheap Shots, and Erika became part of Dave's band Snorty Horse, so Dave has found ways to keep music a vital part of his life. Erika is an



engaging singer often featured in the bands she has been in, and singing duets is dear and deep in Dave's heart, especially singing with the one you love.

Their repertoire and styles differ, but not too much, just enough to make for an enjoyable process of discovery. Erika's voice really sparkles with the bluesy side of things while Dave has spent a lot of time singing old-time songs, and both have echoes of the folk song revival in their heads. They continue to learn more about music and each other.

The question arose recently of why Dave and Erika haven't done a set at the festival, and the answer is they haven't worked up an act. But they both have performed enough to get some songs into shape for an opening set at the festival to honor the request. It is a happy task.