



# The Washington Guitar Society Newsletter



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## Basic Hand Anatomy and How it Affects Us

By Keith Filppu

### Basic Anatomy:

Each finger is controlled by two sets of tendons; flexor tendons which allow the motion of making a fist, and extensor tendons, which allow extending the fingers outward. The position of the wrist and hand can change the length of the tendons. By dropping the wrist downward the flexor tendons become longer since they stretch over the backhand side of the wrist. By bringing the wrist up the extensor tendons become stretched on the palm side of the wrist.

Near the wrist all of these tendons are held together by the "retinaculum", a super strong sheath. This sheath allows for greater hand strength by combining the individual tendons into a group. But by having all the tendons working together for greater strength it reduces their individual flexibility. Some people may have a smaller or larger "retinaculum", that will affect their flexibility. Having a thicker "retinaculum" or one that extends

farther back into the arm will mean decreased flexibility, whereas having one that is thinner and shorter will mean greater flexibility.

The "palmaris longus" is a muscle which helps in flexing the wrist. This structure is vestigial (like the appendix), meaning since we don't need it anymore not everyone is born with this muscle.

### How it Affects Us:

Try holding your arm straight out with your wrist straight and your palm facing down. Try flexing and extending your fingers, you should find this rather easy. Now drop your wrist. Try flexing your fingers so that you make a fist, you should find this harder because the flexor tendons are stretched out over the top of the wrist. Now bring your wrist up so that your knuckles come back toward your body. Try extending your fingers all the way, this should be a little more difficult because the extensor

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## From the Desk of the Editor

By Bob Wysong

Welcome to the newly revised Washington Guitar Society (WGS) newsletter. I want to first thank Bill Dykes for all his efforts in putting the past issues together and his help in transitioning to the new one. The newsletter is an excellent way for all guitarists and aficionados in the local Washington, DC area to stay attuned to what is going on and where!

With this issue, you will notice some additions and changes as we have redesigned this newsletter. Please take a look at the "Take Note" section that will list upcoming meetings, concerts, and notices. As always, we need your help in keeping not only this newsletter active, but the Society together as well. One way to keep down mailing costs would be for us to send this newsletter out via e-mail. If you would like to sign up to receive our letter this way, please contact me.

I am also soliciting feedback on what members expect from the

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**On the Airwaves: WCVE -- 88.9FM now has a weekly feature called "Hour with the Guitar" which airs every Sunday morning from 7 - 8 a.m. and is hosted by Grete Dollitz.**