

Songsmith – Austin  
February 16, 2026 Critique Session

The Songsmith – Austin Critique Session was held via Zoom from 7:07 to 9:45 pm on Monday, February 16, 2026, moderated by Mr. MBA candidate Christopher Meyer. We had 12 attendees and heard 12 excellent songs in various stages of creation. A few attendees included a song from this month's participation in February is Album Writing Month (FAWM).

Bill Basinski started the session with his guitar/vocal song “Blame The Victim!”, an AAA ode about the history of powerful people assigning blame to defenseless persons. Bill's song was appreciated and only a few minor lyric suggestions were offered. Sing it, Bill!

Phil Fielder provided his AI song “Small Town”, a very descriptive country tune about late night life in a small west Texas town. This song had great sensory images and comments from the group included alternative song titles and some format/structural changes. Nice start, Phil - thanks!

John Stearle sent in one of his FAWM songs “You'll Always Be My Number Two”, a very descriptive and funny AI ditty about, well, you can guess - especially if you know John. There were a few suggestions for making this song lyrically stronger as well as modifying the tempo. Hmm...John meets AI = dangerous.

Stewart Moser provided “2.7 Day” a happy ode to the successful return of (future Hall of Famer) Jose Altuve to the Houston Astros, perhaps returning to second base. Very upbeat (and with great chords), this song was appreciated by the listeners, with only a few minor comments for the chorus. Great work, Stewart!

Joe Strouse send his FAWM ballad “Grey Vinyl Chair”, nostalgia for a late 1950s/early 1960s barbershop where his grandfather would take him (when needed). Comments included appreciation for the images and how life has changed.

Mitch Lobrovich submitted a draft of his AI song “I'll Carry You With Me” a heart-rendering ballad about a fiancée losing her soon-to-be betrothed. Mitch's

images were great and the listeners provided a minor number of lyrical suggestions for strengthening this song. Super start, Mitch - thanks!

Scott Badger sent an AI version of last month's submittal "Hey, I'm Right Over Here", this time, featuring a female vocalist. While the song was very effective with a female voice, there was a good discussion over which version was preferred. Thanks for keeping us thinking, Scott!

Kevin Mallory (another great FAWM-er) provided "Warrior", a 6/8 song about the hero in the song always fighting to do the right thing. This song was very thought-provoking and there were several comments including who exactly the warrior was. Keep up the great work, Kevin - thanks!

Gerald Lucas sent his AI song "Denim And Diamonds", a country rocker about a slightly misunderstood woman in a dance hall, who was dressed to the nines, as they say. The twist was appreciated by the listeners and Gerald provided a deeper explanation regarding her motivation for being there. Great start, Gerald!

(Nearly) newbie Phil Kappaz provided a studio version of his song "A Memory", written about 50 years ago. This song described the singer's nostalgia for a relationship that hadn't lasted. Comments included some structural changes to the title location and verses. Great vocals and instruments - welcome, Phil!

Mary Dawson sent "Above The Clouds", a wonderfully-produced song about how things are better once that you get above the clouds of life. There were some truly great lyrics in this positive song and suggestions for making it stronger were few. Great work, Mary - thanks!

Chris Meyer provided a draft song for one of his accounting classes, entitled "Lemonade Stand Accounting" for which he gets extra class credit! Chris successfully used a number of accounting/economic terms in this draft. Of course, there were many additional suggestions. Great start, Chris - thank you!

Songsmith meets three out of the four Monday nights each month. As always, Songsmith has a Salado meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday for the Austin meeting, and a DFW meeting (4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month) where your

songs can be heard and you can get feedback - always free – no dues, spam, or other obligations.

As always, we're looking for Zoom-knowledgeable person to run the audio and visual portions for the DFW and Salado meetings. If you're interested, please contact Mary Dawson at [Mary@MaryDawson.com](mailto:Mary@MaryDawson.com).

We hope to see you next year on Monday, March 16, 2026 or sooner!