



The California Bluegrass Association, a non-profit dedicated to the furtherance of Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Gospel music [californiabluegrass.net](http://californiabluegrass.net)

## Turn Your Radio OnLINE

Connecting our Community and Raising Funds for Musicians



**Pete Ludé**  
CBA Secretary

CBA's new fundraising project, Turn Your Radio OnLINE is off and running. This weekly webcast series kicked off on Saturday, May 23, and is continuing each Saturday evening at 6:00 pm Pacific time through Father's Day weekend, June 20. Upcoming performances include CBA favorites North Country Blue, Boston Ravine, Kathy Kallick, and many others. Each week there will also be kids' songs from the CBA Youth program and a series of "Pocket Lessons" from top Bluegrass and old-time instructors. The series culminates with the gala webcast on June 20, featuring many of the performers that we had hoped to be with at the Father's Day Bluegrass Festival.

## CBA Youth Report



**Tessa Schwartz**  
Teen Ambassador

When I got an email in March declaring that Berkeley schools would be shut down, I was more anxious than excited about a near-limitless expanse of free time. I really enjoy school and I feel much better when I have structured, directed activities. So as soon as I realized I had to design my own schedule, I quickly wrote down a list of things I'd been meaning to do for months. Among them were "repaint dresser," "start a Dungeons and Dragons game," and "get into Larry Sparks."

I've been in the bluegrass scene since I was a baby, so I've been vaguely aware of Sparks for a long time. I had never taken the time to listen to him until I saw him at the RockyGrass festival this past summer with my friend Ida Winfree and her dad, who are both huge fans. His voice stuck with me for months, all the way to the first few weeks of quarantine, when I decided to finally dive into his albums as I sanded and painted my dresser drawers. While his lonesome songs aren't exactly uplifting, his voice is proud and powerful, and it brings me joy in these strange times.



**Online Auction open now through June 20**

Along with the webcast series, CBA is conducting our first-ever online silent auction. You have the opportunity to bid on everything from music accessories to online lessons, premier instruments, and rare bluegrass collectables—but the auction ends on June 20, so start bidding now! All money raised goes to the CBA COVID Relief Fund, with 25% earmarked to help offset some of CBA's losses from cancelled events this summer and 75% going directly to bands and instructors impacted by the pandemic.

To learn more, bid on auction items, donate, or join the mailing list, go to [TurnYourRadio.online](http://TurnYourRadio.online). For help getting online, and for any questions, we have set up a toll-free hotline—just call 888-850-1975.



**Ann Smith**  
Regional Contributor

Summergrass Festival decision will be forthcoming. San Diego North County Bluegrass Fall Campout is in discussion. Dave Richardson moved his recording studio from Altadena, CA to Longmont, CO. Dennis Caplinger is alive and well producing, recording, and studio work.

Had a conversation with Eric Uglum, New Wine Recording & Mastering, Apple Valley, CA, a favorite among aspiring and developing regional and national acts.

Eric began playing at 13 when he got his first guitar. At 21, he won the West Coast Flatpicking Guitar Championship. From there, he played in numerous bands (Weary Heart, New Wine, Copperline, Chris Stuart & Backcountry, Lost Highway) and has collaborated with Sean Watkins, Ron Block, Allison Krauss, and Ralph Stanley. He hasn't had much down time the last 2 months as he's developing a Nashville relationship for recording, mixing, and mastering. He has a new project with Joy Louise Williams in the works and they'll be touring nationally. Eric's niche is primarily acoustic. You can find him at [ericuglum.com](http://ericuglum.com)

## WELCOME TO THE JUNE BREAKDOWN

Bluegrass music has proven to be a highly adaptable art form. It has morphed over the years into a number of offshoots, all of which speak to our common human experience. From its inception, bluegrass has been a shared, not private, music. Even in these times of separation, our musicians—as you will read—find ways to gather and share what inspires them.

Many folks have helped make the Breakdown newsletter possible: CBA board of directors and officers; the legacy contributors (Brenda Hough, Joe Weed, Dave Berry, Marty Varner, Wayne Erbsen, Alan French); CBA photographers (Robin Frenette, Alan Bond, Patrick Campbell). If any of you folks out there with design interest would

*continued on back >>>*

## Regrouping and Charging Ahead



**Geoff Sargent**  
CBA Board Chairman

I have to admit that these 200 word columns for the new Breakdown format feel like trying to write a Haiku, which is more-or-less a 3 verse, 17 syllable poem about something to do with nature. Well Bluegrass music has its own structure built around (mostly) 3 chord songs about something to do with broken love, problems with the farm, and anything to do with railroads. One description of Bluegrass songs that I like is "happy songs about death, murder, divorce, poverty, drug abuse, alcoholism, unrequited love, infidelity, loneliness, and losing the farm". Maybe we should add "sheltering in place" to that list; it certainly promotes all the above "happy song" subjects.

Meanwhile, we are charging ahead. Pete Ludé has launched Turn Your Radio OnLINE, and Pete has recruited some amazing CBA volunteers to help out. I am really excited about this because I am hoping the TYRO project will lead to the CBA being able to offer virtual Bluegrass concerts, music, open mics, and maybe even jams. Deb Livermore is planning our Fall Campout, Jack Pierce is moving ahead with planning the Great 48, and soon the CBA will start laying the groundwork for the 2021 Father's Day Festival. Hopefully life and the Coronavirus will cooperate and we will soon be jamming together again.

## PORCH PRIDE 2020

Bluegrass Pride is excited to announce Porch Pride! In the wake of nationwide Pride parade and festival cancellations, we've chosen to move our programming online. Our two-day online festival will stream on Facebook and Instagram from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm PDT on June 27 and 28. Performers will include Molly Tuttle, Kimber Ludiker, Brandon Godman, Justin Hiltner, and many more, and the event will be hosted by the CBA's own Tessa Schwartz. Join bluegrass and old-time greats in celebrating Pride on their very own porches this June. For more information, check [bluegrasspride.net/porchpride](http://bluegrasspride.net/porchpride)

## CATCHING UP WITH CBA PRESIDENT Theresa Behr Gooding



**Dave Barry**  
CBA Contributor

### Hi Theresa, how are you and your family doing and how many are at home?

We're doing as well as most. The upside for me was having all three boys at home with school and live performances canceled. Josh is back in Tennessee now, but I'm grateful to have had a full house for the early weeks of the shelter at home.

### Other than the coronavirus, how has the transition to CBA President been?

Well, I'll say this...very quickly my sons observed, "nice job mom, your first year as president and the festival is canceled." Other than that, my approach is to not attempt to fill Darby's shoes. That would be a fool's errand. My hope is to connect on a personal level with as many of our members as possible; hearing ideas, encouraging participation, building community.

### What is the state of CBA affairs after having to cancel/postpone the Father's Day Festival?

I am so impressed with the hard work, dedication, skill, and creativity that our CBA board, volunteers, and members are demonstrating. It is very difficult for small, non-profit organizations like the CBA to weather significant financial impacts like the cancellation of our festival, but I'm confident that the hard work and hard decisions being made will not only see us through but also allow us to support our impacted community.

### Did you get any interesting messages from artists when it was canceled?

We received many messages of genuine understanding and heartfelt support. This is a time of such great personal challenge for our artists; the words of encouragement sent from them were very touching. Hopefully, the CBA's TYRO program will be of help to them.

### What are some strategic long-term goals or directions you think are most important for CBA?

I would like to see the CBA continue its outreach and partnership efforts to expand and strengthen our community of artists and fans.

### Thank you, Theresa, for stepping up and we're all behind you as we move through this challenging period.

Thank you too. We'll all get through this together!



## WELCOME TO THE JUNE BREAKDOWN *continued*

like to volunteer to give a hand in producing the Breakdown, we would love to hear from you. Suggestions and comments are welcome. If you would like to submit a short piece or news item for the Breakdown, please contact [patrickcampbell@californiabluegrass.net](mailto:patrickcampbell@californiabluegrass.net).

## NEW MUSIC REVIEW

### And Laurie Lewis



**Brenda Hough**  
Music Contributor

Laurie Lewis has been at the forefront of Bay Area bluegrass as part of the landmark bands the Good Ol' Persons, Phantoms of the Opry, and her own bands Grant Street and the Right Hands. Her powerful vocals and original songs have earned many awards and she has been a strong supporter of younger musicians.

This collection of thirteen songs includes six written by Laurie, some traditional songs, and songs that highlight the skills of her collaborators on this project. Laurie has also included a very detailed booklet with the album that contains song lyrics, her connection to the song and the duet singers, as well as information about the instruments used on the recording.

Kathy Kallick and Laurie sing "Old Friend"

with affection and grace, and Barbara Higbie's piano flows gently with Laurie's rendition of Dick Oxtot's bluesy "Ain't Got the Blues Like Me". Mike Marshall's guitar and Laurie's fiddle join on the traditional murder ballad "O The Wind and Rain". Todd Phillips plays a jazzy bass accompaniment to Laurie's "Baby That Would Sure Go Good", while Craig Smith's banjo adds an old time flavor to Laurie's "Rooster Crow". Nina Gerber's electric guitar playing adds a flavor all its own to "This Is Our Home" and to the epic Rosalie Sorrels song "My Last Go-Round".

Laurie has been involved with many music camps, and among the rising stars in acoustic music are Molly Tuttle and Tatiana Hargreaves. Molly's stellar vocal style and guitar playing are featured on the Carter Family's "You Are My Flower" and Emily Mann's melancholy "The Lonely One". Tatiana's fiddle playing adds another voice to Laurie's banjo in "Mama Cry" and "The Pika Song". This is a landmark collection for Laurie with collaboration, cohesiveness, and contemplation joined together.

Because of the Coronavirus, Laurie and her band are not doing any touring or performances. She has started a daily song presentation on her Facebook account. Facebook members can Friend and Follow her and receive a new song daily. Laurie presents her original songs accompanied by her guitar, and the video includes views of her guitar playing, so learning guitar technique is a bonus attraction.

### Festival Week Refund

If you paid in advance for anything associated with Festival week in June (music camp, camping, hookup, Father's Day Festival), *you must request a refund*. Your payment will not be applied to 2021. You need to make this request by July 5, 2020 or you could lose your payment. Go to the CBA website or email CBA treasurer: [Valeriecornejo@californiabluegrass.net](mailto:Valeriecornejo@californiabluegrass.net)

### Read The CBA Report Online

Several months ago, the CBA Board commissioned the creation and publication of a 32 page Report to highlight CBA's history, activities, volunteers, and vision. Its purpose was to promote the CBA to potential members, donors, supporters, and grantors; it was scheduled to be distributed widely at FDF 2020. The planned rollout has of course been put on hold by the pandemic. But you can now download the Report at: [online.pubhtml5.com/qbtl/ehyl](http://online.pubhtml5.com/qbtl/ehyl)

### Become a CBA Member

The CBA Board of Directors is sending this Bluegrass Breakdown newsletter to the California bluegrass and old-time community. We would like to thank current members for their support and we invite those who are not members to join the CBA in this difficult time. If you are not sure of your status, please contact Larry Phegley at [cba.membership14@gmail.com](mailto:cba.membership14@gmail.com). Many thanks, keep our music alive, and stay safe.

### CBA Archivist Announcement

It's been forty-five years since the founding of the CBA, and a lot has happened in that time. To document our rich history, the CBA board has recently appointed Mark Hogan as the CBA Archivist. Mark has been busy gathering and organizing recordings, historical documents, and memorabilia. Please contact Mark with any relevant items you would like to donate to this valuable resource. [markhogan@californiabluegrass.net](mailto:markhogan@californiabluegrass.net) • (707) 479-5529

### Got Photos?

We're looking for historical photos from past CBA events. If you have photos you would like to share on the CBA Photo Website, please contact [cba.photographers@gmail.com](mailto:cba.photographers@gmail.com)

### CBA Board of Directors

Patrick Campbell  
Brandon Godman  
Dave Gooding  
Karen Celia Heil  
Chuck Hurd  
Kara Kundert  
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### CBA Officers

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Brandon Godman  
Chuck Hurd  
Geoff Sargent

[cbaweb.org](http://cbaweb.org)



# Bluegrass Inspiration

*We're living in some mighty strange times, and we all could use a little inspiration! We asked some musicians, amateur and pro, to share with us what inspires them.*



## Lisa Burns

Mountain View

The Goat Hill Girls have had several rehearsals using Zoom, which works pretty well for learning new material: one person sings their song and folks play along on mute. I have become reacquainted with my guitar and ukulele here at home, and am writing new songs, some about the pandemic, some not. Here's a verse from my new song:

When It's Over  
(c) 2020 Lisa Burns

*When it's over, we'll play and sing  
We'll count our blessings, every single thing  
We'll scorn the ones that lied  
And mourn for those who died  
When it's over, we'll let the music ring*



## Tom Sours

Napa

Cancelling gigs and jams is the right thing to do, and I support that completely, but dang, I miss y'all.

I've been working on my vocals and learning new songs. As a bass player, solo practicing has long been a challenge. I'm spending more time with the metronome for more solid timing, working the whole beat, front, middle, and back. Also working on scales and intonation.

One of my first teachers impressed on me that "it's all about timing and tone". "Strum Machine" ([strummachine.com](http://strummachine.com)) is great tool for solo practice. Lastly, I've been working on my Dobro playing, so just fair warning that some of you might have to endure that.



## Tom Bekeny

Albany

All this newfound extra time allows more music practice which is always fun and never seems like "work": ear training and rhythm exercises (check out [mdecks.com/politonus](http://mdecks.com/politonus)) jazz mandolin study that's recently been given a huge boost by some terrific instructional videos by guitarist Bruce Forman; revisiting Bill Monroe and right hand mechanics; bluegrass fiddle; singing.

I know I've been extremely lucky that this is the biggest personal impact the pandemic has had so far—almost feel a bit sheepish to say I'm enjoying myself at a time when suffering is so acute and widespread. I am really missing playing live music with friends, though.



## Steve Baughman

San Rafael

I feel guilty loving the isolation, connecting with my guitar like never before. Five or six hours a day of practice, often more, and working on 17th century harp pieces arranged for fingerstyle guitar. And then there's that world of music on YouTube. For some reason, jazz guitar and German and British World War II songs have captured my fancy during the shutdown. Boredom seems a foreign concept.

When the world is going to hell in a handbasket, a musical high sure makes the trip a lot more pleasant.

Janis Ian has invited folks to post homemade shelter in place videos of themselves performing this brand new song. It's a great song that's very amenable to Bluegrass and old-time arrangements Here's mine: [youtu.be/l2W6PKXct4s](https://youtu.be/l2W6PKXct4s)



## Dana Frankel

Pacifica

As I've had more time to focus on writing my own music and listen to more music, I've been drawn towards Blues, Reggae, and Alternative/Indie artists. But more recently, I've found myself drawn to what I grew up listening to and what still inspires me: The Stanley Brothers.

Although it makes me a bit sad to listen to bluegrass right now because I can't pick with my best pals, the sound of The Stanley Brothers just hits home. It's real and it puts me in the moment, and it also makes me excited to play bluegrass.



## Craig Wilson

Bakersfield

My musical listening habit had mostly been tuning in to Bluegrass Junction on Sirius/XM satellite radio and occasional forays with "old" country on Willy's Roadhouse. With the pandemic lockdown, trips in the car have been few and far between, so getting my Bluegrass or any other music fix has been limited.

What's happened, though, is that I have been spending my now more available time improving my guitar playing. Facebook and Youtube videos are plentiful and they have given me an opportunity to delve deeply into the structure, technique, and nuances of playing an instrument. You not only can listen intently, but you can also observe how players go about what they do. It's a great tool!



## Mark Shutts

Westminster

Recently, I have been listening to lots of John Prine's fine music; I'm a huge fan of his and have seen him a number of times... pure and simple, sincere. Lots of Larry Sparks, Stanley Brothers, Monroe, Bryan Sutton. I just watched a video of Bryan and Chris Thile, whew!

I'm taking some online lessons from John Moore just now. He's inspirational and encouraging. He sent me this: *Deliberate practice is above all an exercise in concentration and focus.*

The violinist Leopold Auer once said: *Practice with your fingers and you need all day. Practice with your mind and you'll do as much in 1 1/2 hours—and you'll be exhausted!*



## Jason Winfree

Turlock

The Skaggs/Rice album is in heavy rotation, and I've been learning some of the parts. There's a lot happening there. How do they make so much space sound so lush? How do those voices blend so well while remaining so distinct?

I've also been listening to Blue Highway's latest, "Somewhere Far Away"—as always, great songs with strong melodies. Music for building a fence: J.D. Crowe with Keith Whitley and Lou Reid, Terry Baucom & Carolina. Music for cooking: John Coltrane, David Grisman, Tony Rice, and Chet Baker. Music to look forward to: North Country Blue's new CD, "Flight".



## Karen Fichman

Sebastopol

Recent hits keeping me up at night include "Silver Linings" by the Honey Dewdrops, "Caledonia" by Dougie MacClean and "Ode to Billy Joe" by Bobby Gentry. (I recently heard AJ Lee sing that last song; I couldn't figure it out in 1967 and I STILL can't figure out what really happened!) I just listened to "Crowded Table" by the Highwomen and became wistful for the days when our table can be crowded with family and friends again.

My favorite NEW music is the nightly neighborhood howl, announced each night by our neighbor blowing a conch shell. What a great release to walk outside, throw my head back, and howl. I didn't realize how much I need to howl.



## Kathy Barwick

Grass Valley

Like many people, we've been listening to a lot of John Prine lately. His songs, whether funny or sad, always plumb the depths of human emotion, and mean something to me each time I listen.

I've also been fortunate to play with 2 outfits that both love JP. At a party a few years ago, we found ourselves playing all JP, and ended up putting together a few shows of all Prine material. We've done several, including one just last January. And, we got to see him at Mondavi Center last fall—easily one of the best concerts I've ever seen.