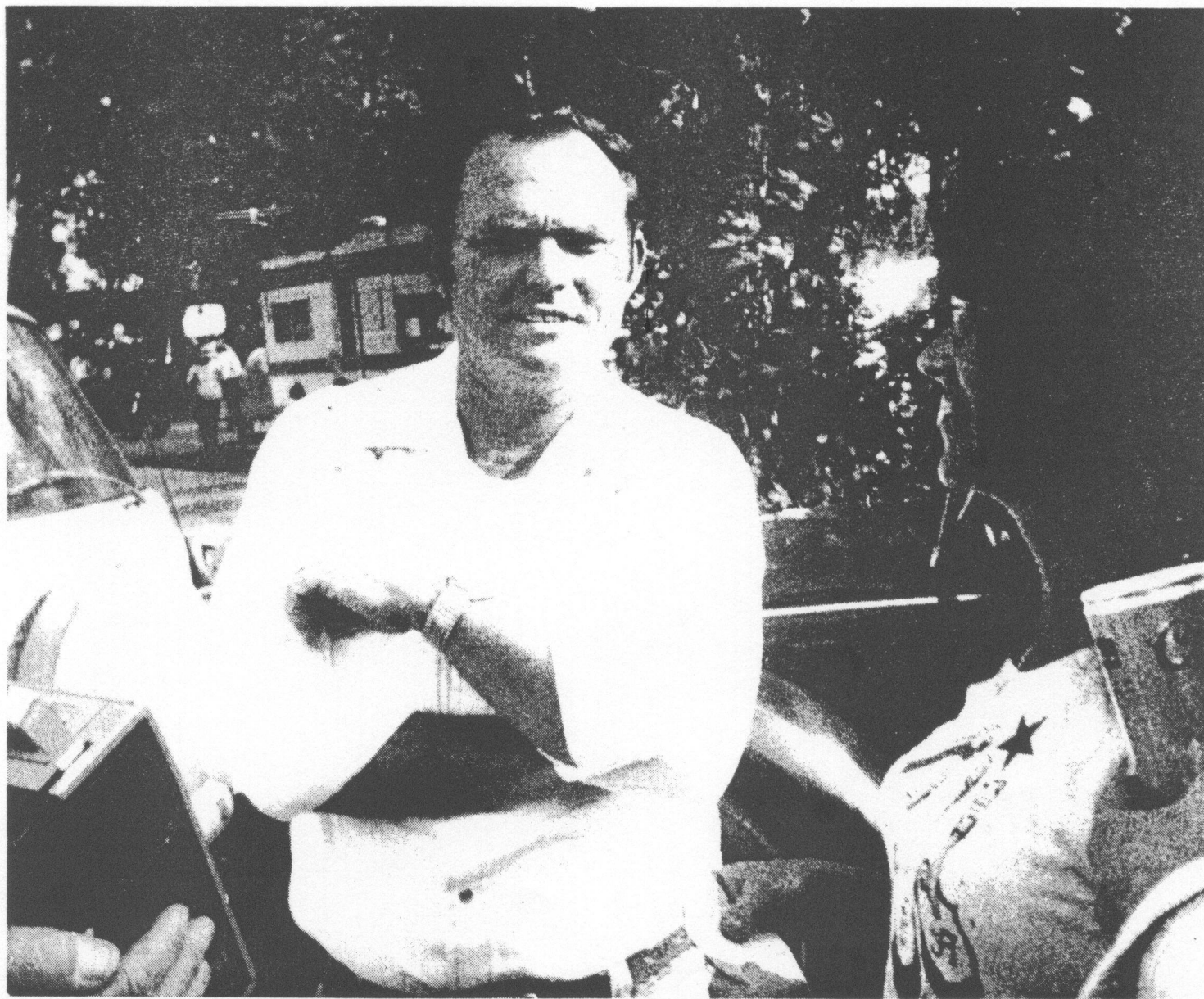


BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN

Vol. IV, No. 1

January-February 1978



CHARLIE WALLER
of the Country Gentlemen

WHO'S WHO IN THE CBA

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN is published bi-monthly at 357½ Valley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131 by Burney Garelick, Editor. It is the official publication of the California Bluegrass Association, which was founded in 1975 by Carl Pagter and is dedicated to the furtherance of bluegrass, gospel, and old-time music. Membership in the Association costs \$7.50 per person per year; a spouse may be included for an additional \$2.50, and all children under 16 for \$1.00. \$3.75 of the initial \$7.50 is for a subscription to BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN for one year. Band memberships are available at \$5.00 per member per year; each band must consist of not less than 3 persons and not more than 7 persons. Nonmembers of the Association may subscribe to BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN for \$5.00 per year. Each member family or band is entitled to receive a copy of each BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN newsletter, as part of their dues, and to reduced admission charges to all CBA activities. Direct all membership applications and inquiries to the California Bluegrass Association, P.O. Box 11287, San Francisco, CA 94101. Second-class postage paid at San Francisco, California. Publication Number 315350.

Officers and Directors of the CBA are listed below; (*) designates member of the Board of Directors. Board meetings occur the 3rd Sunday of each month; for details contact any of the following.

President

Jay Quesenberry (*)
3637 Snell Avenue, #303
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Activities Vice President

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415/365-0198

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Santa Clara, CA 95051
408/296-3123

Judie Cox (*)

2101 Shoreline, #412 after February 1:
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415/523-9566 Walnut Creek, CA
94595

415-938-4221

Jay Shrum (*)

2622 Sumac
Stockton, CA 95207
209/951-7341

Sue Shelasky (*)

7161 Elmwood Rd.
San Bernardino, CA 92404

ABOUT THE COVER: The cover of this issue, the first of the new year, features CHARLIE WALLER, the original COUNTRY GENTLEMAN. The photo, by the Editor, was taken at the Golden West Bluegrass Festival in Norco October 29 during an interview following a performance of this popular band. Charlie's interrogators are also pictured, more or less; they are from left to right Vic Cearley's hand holding the taperecorder without which the interview would have suffered; Judie Cox, without whom the interview would have taken on a totally different tenor; and Carl Pagter's hand holding his favorite beverage, without which the interview would have thirsted. The interview itself appears in the following pages.

special events

Friday, January 6 - BILL WHITE'S ANNUAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, Freight & Salvage, Berkeley. All pickers, singers, and celebrators cordially invited.

Saturday, January 14 - KELLEY KIRKSEY TESTIMONIAL 19TH CENTURY FIDDLING CONTEST, Citrus Fairgrounds, Cloverdale. Registration 9:30 AM, fiddling 10:00 AM to ?. Adults \$2.75, children under 12 \$1.00. Entry fee: Junior Division \$2.50, Open Division \$5.00, both include one accompanist free with fiddler. Prizes: Junior Division, 1st-\$75 + trophy, 2nd-\$25 + trophy; Open Division, 1st-\$300 + trophy through 6th-\$20 + award.

Last year's contest was a huge success, and this one promises another triumph. However, there is one important difference this year. The novel aspect of this contest is that the required hoedown and waltz must be played unaccompanied, while the tune of choice may be accompanied but will not be judged. This is the way it was often done in the old days.

Kelley Kirksey of Santa Rosa, a long-time devotee of old-time fiddling, originated the Federation of Old Time Fiddling Judges which, in addition to judging contests, often provides seminars on how to judge fiddle contests.

For further information write Cloverdale Historical Society, P.O. Box 433, Cloverdale, CA 95425, or phone 707/894-3495.

Saturday, January 21 - KPFA (94.1 FM) Berkeley, 11:00 PM - 1:00 AM, tentative. A tape of the entire RALPH STANLEY concert performed October 27 at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco.

Sunday, January 22 - BLUEGRASS CONCERT FEATURING GOSPEL SINGING, 1st Congregational Church, Post and Mason, San Francisco, 2:00-5:00 PM. Admission \$3.00, children under 12 accompanied by a parent free. Featured bands: HIGH COUNTRY and SOUTH LOOMIS QUICKSTEP. Organized by Steve de Haas with the able assistance of Violet Lankford.

Saturday & Sunday, January 28 & 29, GOLDEN WEST BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, Norco. Featuring The Bluegrass Alliance and much, much more. See two-page ad this issue.

Friday-Sunday, February 17-19 - 7TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF NAIRD--NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT RECORD DISTRIBUTORS AND MANUFACTURERS, Airport Marina Hotel, 1380 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame. Sheila Cogan of Bay Records and Tom Diamant of Rhythm Research Distributors chair the NAIRD convention committee. Representatives from over 100 firms attended the 1977 NAIRD Convention in Chicago. While the majority of those attending represented distributors or labels, there were also representatives of firms providing goods and services to the record industry as well as individuals preparing to begin new label or distributing operations.

FAIRFIELD sunday FEB. 12

Once again the CBA is proud to present a Sunday afternoon of bluegrass at everyone's favorite place--the Fairfield Community Center.

What makes this event slightly different, however, is that it will be combined with a brief Membership Meeting, an annual occasion required under our By-Laws. The main activity of this meeting will be the election of 9 members to serve on the Board of Directors. You may vote to confirm the 9 members already on the Board, or you may vote for whomever you choose. You must of course be a CBA member in good standing to vote, i.e. your dues must be paid up to date.

The rest of the afternoon will be devoted to pickin' and singin' as usual. Two bands will be featured--watch for flyers--but all others are welcome to perform. Don't miss Fairfield--it's always a super event!

\$3 adults \$1.50 members

BLUEGRASS BILLBOARD

ALLEN BROTHERS

every Friday & Saturday - Pizza Machine,
Danville. For further information,
contact Peter Allen, 414/935-4458.

THE CAFFREY FAMILY

No set gigs; for bookings contact
Patty Caffrey, 415/564-1464.

CHRISPY CRITTER CLAN

No set gigs; for bookings contact
Dennis Chrisp, 707/994-2901.

COLBY MOUNTAIN

every Tuesday - Nellie's Restaurant,
126 W. 2nd St., Chico. For further
information contact Larry Mitchell,
916/345-0310

COUNTRY HAM (JUDIE COX & CARL PAGTER)

No set gigs; for bookings, contact
Carl Pagter, 415/523-9566.

DELTA OLD TIME FIDDLERS & BLUEGRASS ASSN.

every 2nd & 4th Sunday - Garden Acres
Community Center, 607 Bird Ave.,
Stockton, 8:00 PM till ? For infor-
mation listen to Bill Robertson,
KSTN-FM (107.3).

DONE GONE

every Thursday - Paul's Saloon, 3251
Scott Street, San Francisco.
every Friday - Red Vest Pizza Parlour,
San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito.
For further information, contact Don
Humphries, 415/665-6806

FRESH PICKED

No set gigs; for bookings contact Joyce
Hennessey, 415/526-5027, or George
Martin, 415/237-4365.

GLORYLAND STRING BAND

No set gigs; for bookings contact
Bob Somerville, 916/253-2640.

GOOD OL' PERSONS

every Thursday - Red Vest Pizza Parlour,
San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, 8-11.
every Friday - Piacce Pizza, Appian-80
Shopping Center, Pinole, 7-10.
every Sunday - Paul's Saloon, 3251 Scott
Street, San Francisco.
For further information, contact Paul
Shelasky, 415/892-1265.

HIGH COUNTRY

every Wednesday & Friday - Paul's Saloon,
3251 Scott Street, San Francisco.
January 22 - Gospel Concert, 1st Con-
gregational Church, San Francisco.
See Special Events.

HIGH IN THE SADDLE

every Friday & Saturday (irregularly)
& Sunday - Woodfords Station, Woodfords.
For further information, contact Dana
Mohr, 916/694-2352.

MOUNTAIN GRASS

every Saturday - Straw Hat Pizza,
560 North Abel Street, Milpitas.

NEW BEAR CREEK BOYS

No set gigs at this writing; for latest
information contact Joe Kimbro,
408/427-3531.

NEW TONTO BASIN BOYS

No set gigs at this writing; for latest
information contact Joe Zumwalt,
415/967-4306.

OLD TIME FIDDLERS JAMBOREE

District 9, California State Old Time
Fiddlers Association
every 3rd Sunday - 1:00-5:00, Crockett
Park and Recreation Auditorium, 850
Pomona Street, Crockett.

OLD TIME FIDDLERS JAMBOREE

District 5, California State Old Time
Fiddlers Association
every 2nd Sunday - 1:00-5:00, Oakmont
High School, Roseville.

OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN BOYS

No set gigs; for bookings contact Jack
Sadler, 408/354-9359.

RAY PARK

New Riders of the Purple Sage album,
MARIN COUNTY LINE (MCA-2307).
Herb Pedersen's second album, SANDMAN
(Epic PE-34933).

JAY QUESENBERRY (CREME OF KENTUCKY)

No set gigs; for bookings contact Jay
Quesenberry, 408/227-2819.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY OLD TIME FIDDLERS

JAMBOREE

every 1st Sunday - John Muir Junior
High School, Branham Lane at Almaden
Expressway, San Jose, 1:00-5:00.

RIVER CITY RAMBLERS

No set gigs; for bookings contact
Cathy Del Chiaro, 916/457-0640 or
916/457-5755.

SHAG BARK HICKORY

every Tuesday & Thursday - Smokey
Mountain Saloon, The Factory, Campbell.
every Wednesday & Saturday - Mountain
Charley's, Los Gatos.
every Friday - Tower Saloon, San Jose.

SKUNK HOLLOW

every Saturday - Old Navy Inn, Chico.

SOUTH LOOMIS QUICKSTEP

every Sunday - Oasis Ballroom, 20th & I,
Sacramento.
every Tuesday & Wednesday - Bitter Creek
Tavern, Arden & Howe, Sacramento.
January 22 - Gospel Concert, 1st Con-
gregational Church, San Francisco.
For info call Ted Smith, 916/489-2316.

SUPERIOR CALIFORNIA FIDDLERS JAMBOREE

every 1st Sunday - Old Shasta near
Redding. For further information,
contact Adrienne Jacoby, 1463 Ridge
Drive, Redding, CA 96001.

TOUCH OF GRASS

No longer at Paul's Saloon! Now at
Chuck's Cellar, Los Altos. For
details contact Bob Lawrence,
415/592-1863.

BILL WHITE

January 6 - Bill's Annual Birthday
Celebration, Freight & Salvage,
Berkeley.
For latest information, contact Bill
White, 415/530-7192.

THE VERN WILLIAMS BAND

No set gigs; for bookings contact
Vern Williams, 209/772-1357.

WILLITS PICKING JAMBOREE

one Sunday, every month - Willits Grange
Hall. For information call Susan,
707/459-4325.

BUFFALO BOB AND THE COUNTRY BUTTER BAND

Jan. 8 - KSRO-AM, Santa Rosa, 7:30 PM
live.
Jan. 14 - Kelley Kirksey Testimonial
19th Century Fiddling Contest,
Cloverdale. See Special Events.
March 3 & 4 - Ski Festival, Bishop.
For further information contact Carmon
Brittain, 707/485-0258.

LATE NITE RADIO

No set gigs; for bookings contact Ellie
Mae Colville/Willy Siegel, 707/743-
1319 in Potter Valley or David Garelick
in Kelseyville.

P.S.

A NOTE TO ALL BANDS AND THEIR FANS

Please keep the BREAKDOWN informed as to
current gigs. It's impossible for me to
keep up with all of you--and I want to
keep times and places accurate. If there's
a band that should be listed, let me know.
Or, if there's one listed here that's no
longer valid, let me know that, too.

G. V. '78

Thanks! to all those who returned the
band preference poll for Grass Valley '78.
Your excellent suggestions have been noted
and will certainly help in the difficult
task of selecting bands. Final selection
takes place in January. More on Grass
Valley in the next issue!

A Dick Tyner Production...

At the Zen Crook Memorial Festival this past November, David Dickey, the low-slung guitarist with Lost Highway, introduced a song by remarking, "This takes me back to my roots. I really love rock 'n' roll; I only play bluegrass for the money."

The joke is obvious. Anyone who plays or promotes bluegrass does it for love of the music; he or she certainly doesn't expect to make a lot of money from it. Perhaps this will change; there is a lot of evidence indicating a continual expansion of bluegrass. But that remains to be seen.

Certainly there is one man who has not become rich from promoting bluegrass, but has done an incredible amount to popularize it throughout southern California. He is Dick Tyner of Bonsall, near San Diego. Originally from West Virginia, Dick retired from the Marines and about five years ago launched his career as festival promoter with the first Golden West Bluegrass Festival at Norco, which featured Bill Monroe. Since then Dick's had two festivals a year at Norco and this year plans to have four. In addition, he coordinates festivals and programs for others throughout the area, like the Zen Crook Memorial Festival sponsored by San Bernardino County. Dick has built up a huge mailing list, and because he has been generous enough to exchange lists with the CBA, you will be fortunate to receive announcements of his upcoming events at which he'll feature The Bluegrass Alliance, The Osborne Brothers, Ralph Stanley, Monroe, Jim and Jesse, The Country Gentlemen, and others.

But aside from big-name Eastern bands, Dick has created an arena for an incredible number of excellent southern California bands: Lost Highway, Pacific...ly Bluegrass, Hard Times, Zuill Brothers, Damascus Road, The New Expression, Floyd County Boys, Cream of Kentucky, Sagegrass, Traditional Bluegrass, Goldrush, Temperance Union, and on and on. He has also featured some northern California bands: The Caffreys, Gloryland String Band, and Country Ham.

All of this is no easy task, especially since Dick also plays banjo--he was with the now defunct Pain In The Grass--and would often rather be picking than performing the numerous tasks in preparing and running festivals. Of course he has built up over

the years a solid core of dependable assistants, but the final credit or blame rests with him. And, so far, the overall evaluation is one of credit for his endeavors. Credit, I might add, against the most formidable landscape: the "smugliness" of L.A. Dick doesn't have our beautiful Grass Valley--but somehow the music sounded just as good on the 400 barren acres of Prado Regional Park--which only proves the power of bluegrass!

Dick, his wife and their family--four daughters, a son, some sons-in-law, and grandsons--will be our guests at Grass Valley '78. You'll want to meet him, and he'll want to hear your ideas for promoting bluegrass in California. In the meantime, try to make his two Norco festivals, in January and April. Don't miss the opportunity to talk with this fine bluegrass gentleman.

clubs

PAUL'S SALOON, 3251 Scott St., San Francisco
Bluegrass (and old-timey) any night of the week.

FREIGHT & SALVAGE, 1827 San Pablo Ave.,
Berkeley. Bluegrass, old-timey, jazz,
etc. Tuesday through Saturday. For the
current monthly schedule phone 415/
548-1761.

RED VEST PIZZA PARLOUR, San Pablo Ave.,
El Cerrito. Home of the Good Ol' Persons
and Done Gone, a real supporter of
bluegrass.

BLACKSTONE HOUSE, 251 N. Blackstone, Fresno.
A variety of activities--folk, blues,
bluegrass, jazz, astrology and tarot.
A friendly place to go when you're in
the Valley. For information and/or
bookings contact Sue Lyon, 209/264-1628.

THE PLOWSHARES

A new coffeehouse just inside Fort Mason
at the corner of Laguna and Marina in
San Francisco. Sunday evening concerts.
Sponsored by the San Francisco Folk
Music Club. For information call
415/661-2217.

Notes from NORCO

OCT.
27-30
'77



LOST HIGHWAY practices a few licks behind The Country Gentlemen's bus. That's Sue Shelasky on fiddle, Lauren Seapy on banjo, and David Dickey on guitar. Dewayne Price, banjo picker with TRADITIONAL BLUEGRASS, looks on approvingly.



Three bluegrass spies from northern California--who enjoyed themselves so much they returned the following month! They are, of course, Judie Cox and Carl Pagter (COUNTRY HAM) who were booked at the Zen Crook Memorial Festival and your editor.

Pennsylvania Dutch Hex Signs

by Judie Cox

In the mountains and valleys of eastern Pennsylvania live the Pennsylvania Dutch. These people came from many lands, but most settled near Philadelphia. They brought with them a wealth of folklore and legend as they cleared the wilderness and built their big barns and homes.

The Pennsylvania Dutch are religious, industrious and superstitious, but they can be divided into two types: plain and worldly. The Amish, Mennonites and other "plain people" never had hex signs painted on their barns because it is against their strict religious principles. It is the "worldly people"--Lutheran, Reformed and other church denominations--who painted big, beautiful, colorful, geometric designs on their barns. These barns are found mainly in southeastern Pennsylvania. Some are built of field stone, but most are of wood, painted red and white. Many are "bank barns", built on or against a bank of earth so the top part of the building can be used to store farm machinery, hay and the like, while the lower part is used for milking and livestock.

Some of the traditional hex sign designs include tear drops, stars and rosettes. Perhaps originally the signs marked the home of a friend or identified another Pennsylvania Dutch family in a strange land.

A barn in Schuylkill (pronounced "Skookil") County had carved crosses on the overhang and on the doors leading to the stalls. They were accompanied by the phrase, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." The carvings were the work of the farmer himself, placing a blessing of the Holy Trinity on his cattle. I find that barn hex signs were often signs of faith and played a part in the legends and superstitions of the Pennsylvania Dutch.

Dutch hex signs were also carved into trivets and pottery, cut into tinware and painted on chests. The tulips, lilies and other flowers and birds found on hex signs do not represent the flowers of the field or birds of our land, but symbolize



man's love of God and his dream of the mystical lily that blooms at the ends of the earth. These are the flowers that grew in the Garden of Eden.

The Pennsylvania Dutch are superstitious in many other ways. For example, if a black cat crosses your path, it is a bad omen, and to get rid of it, you must first see a white horse and then a red-haired lady--otherwise, misfortune may fall on you. The Pennsylvania Dutch never date a check or letter on the 13th. We knock on wood for good luck, but never pass under a ladder and never pass anyone on the stairs as it may bring bad luck. And, of course, when combing our hair, we never throw it outside because the birds may get it and line their nests with it, and we may get headaches. There are many superstitions we believe in back home. But the hex sign, no matter what design, will always bring good luck.






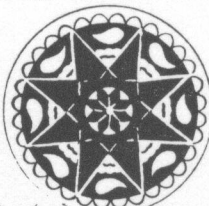
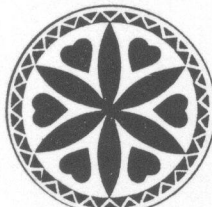

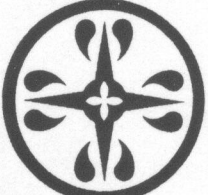
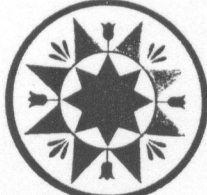









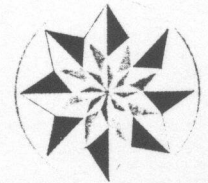


There are some 30 different patterns that I know of. At my home in Pennsylvania I have them all over my barn and outbuildings and even my house. They have kept my animals safe from lightning and sickness. The signs on the house provide house blessings and "Wilkom," which means "Welcome to my home." I have signs at each eave, and across the front of the house, I have placed five different designs. There are marriage signs, love signs, general good luck signs, rain signs, signs to protect barns and livestock, good will and

happiness signs, and signs for strength and success. The size of the signs varies from about 8 to 24 inches in diameter. Signs are usually painted to withstand wind, rain and general weathering of the outdoors, but a coat of clear varnish can help extend the life of the sign.

Whether you believe in luck or not, hex signs make beautiful, colorful works of folk art. They have fancied up my home, and I believe they have also protected my home. A number of Pennsylvanians paint hex signs, including the famed Jacob Zook and Professor Johnny Ott.

So, if you would like to have a hex sign for decoration or good luck, I will be happy to paint one for you and you can see for yourself if it bestows good luck on you and yours. Included with each sign is a brief description of the hex sign and its meaning. Signs are available in 8, 16, and 24 inches in diameter in the patterns pictured below.

I am happy I've once again been able to share the ways and beliefs of the Pennsylvania Dutch with you. Good luck and God bless you.

DOUBLE DISTLEFINK  No. 1	MIGHTY OAK for strength  No. 2	GOOD LUCK your lucky stars  No. 3	UNICORNS virtue & piety  No. 4	IRISH HEX  No. 5	SUN, RAIN and FERTILITY  No. 6
LOVE, ROMANCE  No. 7	VILKUM SIGN (welcome)  No. 8	RAIN and CROP ABUNDANCE  No. 9	"8" POINTED STAR abundance  No. 10	SINGLE DISTLEFINK  No. 11	DADDY HEX  No. 12
AMISH CARRIAGE HORSE  No. 15	HEREFORD  No. 16	MARRIAGE SIGN blissful marriage  No. 17	"12" PETAL ROSETTE joyous year  No. 18	COLONIAL EAGLE strength & independence  No. 19	DOUBLE HEADED EAGLE strength, courage  No. 22
HAUS-SEGEN house blessing  No. 23	STAR BURST wish upon a star  No. 26	MAPLE appreciation of life's beauty  No. 27	LOVE & PEACE  No. 28		

THE GOLDEN WEST BI FEA

SCHEDULE

Saturday

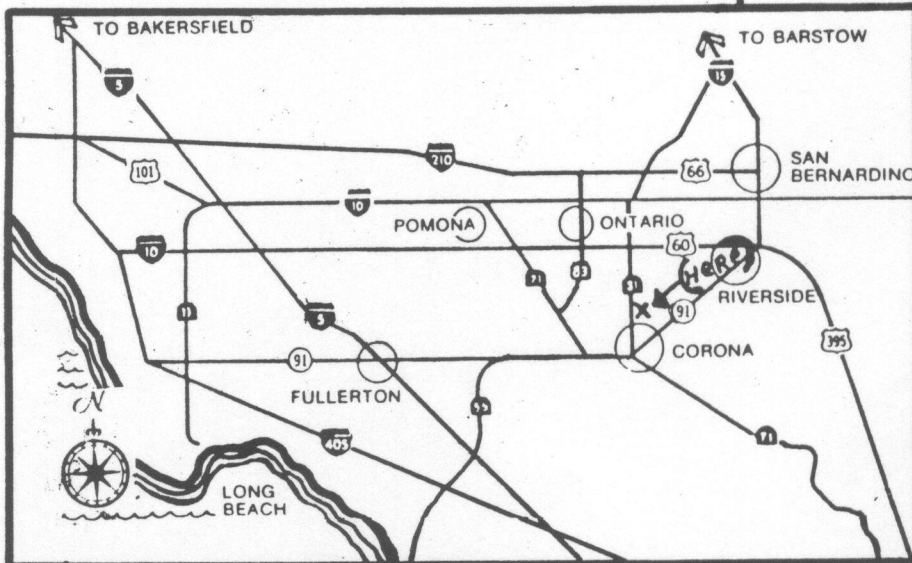
10:00 a.m.--3:15 p.m. Featured Performers
3:15 p.m.--4:15 p.m. Break
4:15 p.m.--5:00 p.m. Guests
5:00 p.m.--9:00 p.m. Featured Performers

Sunday

10:00 a.m.--11:00 a.m. Gospel Show
11:00 a.m.--11:30 a.m. Workshops (Host:
Dan Crary)
11:30 a.m.-- 1:00 p.m. Featured Performers
1:00 p.m.-- 2:00 p.m. Contest (Cash
Prizes)
2:00 p.m.-- 5:00 p.m. Featured Performers



KEITH SANSON



DICK TYNER PRODUCTIONS
P.O. BOX 341
BONSALL, CA 92003
714/726-3498

THE BLUEGRASS

DAN

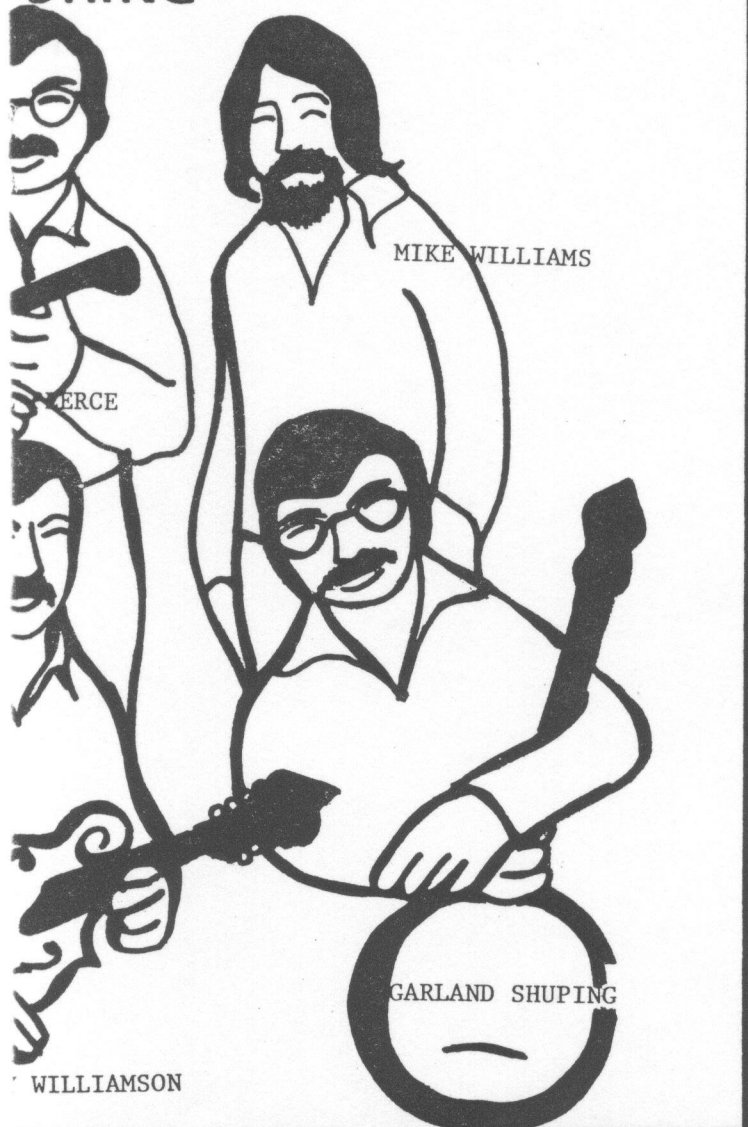
PACIFIC...LY BLUEGRASS
TEMPERANCE UNION
HARD TIMES
HOMEBREW
LAST CHANCE

JANUARY

SILVER LAKES PARK, **NORCO**

EIGHTH BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

TURING



ASS ALLIANCE

LSO -
CRARY

LOST HIGHWAY
DAMASCUS ROAD
ZUILL BROTHERS
GOLDRUSH
BORDERLINE BLUEGRASS

28 - 29, 1978

, CALIF. (5 miles north of Corona on Highway 31)

GENERAL INFORMATION

SEATING: Bring lawn chairs, blankets, etc.

TWO-WHEELED VEHICLES & SKATEBOARDS: None allowed.

VENDORS: Pre-festival arrangements required.

ATTIRE: Conventional street clothing.

DOGS: Please don't bring them!
(See below)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: In moderation, please.

JAM SESSIONS: All day, all nite ok

TAPE PLAYERS & RADIOS IN CAMPING AREAS:
Volume must be low enough not
not to disturb neighbors.

FIRES: Limited to non-grassed areas and
containers 18" from ground

GATE OPENS: 3:00 p.m., Friday, 1/27.

SPECIAL RATES: Families with more than
one person between the ages
of 10 to 16, write for special
advance rates.

FACILITIES: Food and music concessions
Motel - Corona Inn,
(714) 735-0230
Children's playground
Showers: Alternately hot
and cold
Camping: Without hookups
only (see below)

ADMISSION FEES

PER PERSON: \$5.00 daily
(Both days: \$8.50 - Advance only)

10 years and under, 65 and over, FREE

DOGS: Same as per person admission fees.
(Must be in containment or on
leash at all times.)

CAMPING: Festival camping (Fri.-Sat.
nites only). \$2.00 per unit
nitely. Camping for other nites
must be arranged with park
management (714) 737-5383.

DAY PARKING: \$1.00

PRE-FESTIVAL TICKET SALES: Send check or money order and
self-addressed envelope to the following outlets:

Dick Tyner
P. O. Box 341
Bonsall, CA 92003

The New Expression
3376 30th St.
San Diego, CA 92104

Blue Ridge Pickin' Parlor
5521 Reseda Blvd.
Tarzana, CA 91356

Shade Tree Stringed Instruments
28722 Marguerite Pkwy.
Mission Viejo, CA 92675

CHARLIE WALLER : a country gentleman meets country ham

Interviewed by Judie Cox, Carl Pagter, Vic Cearley, and Burney Garelick

Editor's Preface: One of the great pleasures of the Golden West Bluegrass Festival in Norco, October 27-30, was talking with Charlie Waller. A singer and guitar picker without peer, Charlie is the original and sustaining member of THE COUNTRY GENTLEMEN. This well-established band, based in the Washington, D.C./Virginia area, is as much a part of bluegrass as Bill Monroe and Ralph Stanley, and Charlie has carried the group through all its personnel and stylistic changes. What follows is a transcript of the delightful conversation with Charlie, Judie and Carl (2/5ths of THE COUNTRY HAM), and Vic Cearley, an honorary Country Ham, Virginia-style.

Judie: How do you like the atmosphere for bluegrass music in California?

Charlie: I love it. I really do. This is not our first time. We were out two--three times before. We were out in '72 on our way back from a Japan tour. And we were out here last December--played Tarzana, San Diego--can't remember all of 'em. But I like it, I'll tell you.

Carl: Good solid support would you say?

Charlie: Yes and I'm glad to see that it's growing. Course the weather--you can have festivals longer here than we can. Last December when we left Virginia--come out here and it seemed like it was June!

Vic: Dick has now set it up four times a year here.

Charlie: That's great.

Carl: He's going to have one in January.

Charlie: That's nice. I love it.

Judie: How do The Country Gentlemen concerts go over out here as opposed to the Eastern festivals?

Charlie: Well, like we just saw today--I thought it was very fine.

Carl: People have been buying your records out here for as many years as they have Back East.

Charlie: The music is not as big out here yet, but it's getting there and I'm really tickled to see it. I think

they're very fine audiences here; everywhere we've played they've been very attentive and nice people to play to.

Judie: What do you think of the development of bluegrass festivals in California? Are the promoters doing right by the musicians and performers?

Charlie: I think so. Tell you one thing: we pulled in the gate and we got paid before we even went on and it wasn't by request!

Vic: Can't hardly beat that.

Judie: No, you can't beat that. They don't do that Back East.

Charlie: We've only played two festivals out here but they've both been just top notch.

Carl: Have they both been for Dick Tyner?

Charlie: No, the San Diego--listen, I can't even think who that was for-- But they're doing a fine job.

Judie: Do you think bluegrass is being developed and promoted properly here, that is, are we doing it right in order to create long-term and lasting affection for the music?

Charlie: Yeah, I think so. The thing I'd like to say is I've noticed an awful lot of festivals that we've worked in the past--if they get a little bit out of hand to where they want to dance maybe with a jug in their hand in front of the stage, then they're doing something wrong--

Judie: That's right. We--

Carl: Right!

Charlie: They ought to stop that because it'll kill the whole thing.

Judie: That's right--

Carl: Right from the start.

Charlie: Nip it in the bud.

Judie: We never saw it till we saw it out here.

Carl: Did you see any of that when you were on the stage?

Charlie: No, no. Not at all and I think that's wonderful. We gave up our festival in Warrenton, Virginia. Seven years of it. We moved locations on it three times. The last time we moved it to Warrenton, our home, but that location had been abused by some promoters back there that had the wrong acts in there that drew the--

Vic: Rowdy?

Charlie: Problem, you know, so we had problems there last year and the year before and we just said we're not gonna do it anymore, so we moved our festival to a different place. We still have a Country Gentlemen Festival in Steuart, Virginia--and that's a real bluegrass--

Vic: Now you're getting down into good country!

Judie: We saw it--we were there this summer.

Carl: That was a neat festival.

Charlie: It was our first one. They used our name. It's run by a fellow, Cecil, who does just an excellent job, but it's under our name and I'm very proud of it.

Carl: You're going to continue running that?

Charlie: Yeah. Well, acutally, Cecil's running it; but it's The Country Gentlemen Festival. But he's up there at eight o'clock in the morning getting everything cleaned up--all the mess from the night before--it's just a well run--

Vic: And that's going to be an annual thing?

Charlie: That's right.

Carl: We made the first annual.

Judie: We made the first one. It sure was nice.

Carl: Saw Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper--well not Stoney Cooper--Wilma Lee.

Judie: Wilma Lee.

Charlie: Yeah.

Judie: Very good. . . .What influences were most important in your background as a bluegrass musician?

Charlie: I was an avid fan of Hank Snow. Now he's very country, but the sound that he had was, well, it just touched

my heart. A lot of his things, early Hank Snow songs just really hit me, so I started out more or less copyin' Hank Snow. And just a touch of Mac Wiseman--

Judie: Oh yes, I love Mac Wiseman.

Charlie: Well, I said I'm not gonna make a copy of somebody, so I started singin' like myself. But you can tell the intent is there.

Vic: Things like "Gonna Bid My Blues Good-Bye." Good ol' good uns.

Judie: One day we were driving down through Washington, D.C., Carl and I, and we heard someone on the radio, they said, 'Now is this Charlie Waller or Hank Snow?' And Carl and I couldn't tell the difference. And we didn't know till the end of the song and I think they said it was Hank--I said, 'That's Charlie Waller!'--but it was Hank Snow. It was a contest and we lost. That's how close you two sound.

What do you think the future holds for bluegrass music in the West?

Charlie: Well, the way it's been growin', I think it's on its way up. We're gonna get more plays on the radio one of these days. I think they've got to realize sometime that people really like bluegrass music and they need more of it on the radio. And I do believe--I just don't know where to lie the blame except that every radio station I ever talked to is allowed to play like one bluegrass record an hour.

Carl: You know they play 'em more than that because in essence they play it every station break and every ad--

Vic: When they want to generate excitement they play bluegrass.

Judie: They do!

Carl: But they don't really play it the way you're talking about.

Judie: When we were at the Great America Amusement Park last week the whole day they played nothin' but bluegrass.

Carl: Ninety percent of the music was bluegrass and old-time music.

Judie: They play that music to--

Charlie: Generate excitement.

Judie: That's right. Do you have any tours planned in the future to the West Coast or abroad?

Charlie: Not as my schedule shows. We were just talking to some people about coming back here next year. I hope we can.

Judie: We hope you do also.

Carl: When you come out here--the long distance it involves--do you like to put together appearances in different cities?

Charlie: Yeah, that helps us financially. You almost have to financially. It wouldn't pay us to fly so we have to bring our big Continental, you know.

Judie: Your bus!

Charlie: It takes a lot to operate that thing all the way across the country. So it helps. A lot of little places we play are not as up on bluegrass but we'll get somebody in the area who'll promote it and it's growin'. Just like here. We played Fort Collins. That's supposed to be a college town.

Carl: Yeah, it is. Colorado.

Vic: Colorado State University.

Charlie: The little place was full, called The Red Garter I think it was. I would say half the people really were listenin'. It's kind of a noisy crowd, but there are an awful lot of good fans there. We played Boulder--just about the same thing except that was more of a bluegrass show in an auditorium. Course it wasn't a good night--we had about a half a house.

Carl: A week night was it?

Charlie: Yeah. On our way out, it's hard to, you know, we gotta give 'em what we got comin' through. But it was still fine. And last night was outta sight. It was down at old Tucson, a movie location. We had been there visiting last year. Just went down for a visit. Didn't have any idea we was gonna be playing there the next year. I thought it was kind of cute: they had the speakers settin' in two buckboards.

Judie: Oh my gosh. That'd be really nice. Nice atmosphere.

Charlie: Certainly was.

Carl: How have you found the sound systems? Do you have problems with sound systems in little places like this?

Charlie: Lotta places when we get on the stage, I say, well, I knew I shoulda put ours up.

Judie: That happens to us, I know.

Charlie: Like in Boulder, we should have used our set, but now this is fine today.

Vic: He's got a pretty good system out there.

Charlie: Yes.

Judie: Do you have any particular advice for promoters of new festivals?

Charlie: There's beginning to be an awful lot of festivals. I would say keep 'em clean and--

Judie: Keep the booze out of the park--

Charlie: Right, out of the--

Carl: Performing area--

Charlie: Out of the performing area. You know you're not gonna stop people from bringing it--

Judie: And the dancing down because that distracts from the stage.

Charlie: I had 'em dance right in front of the stage so bad that the dust--we couldn't sing.

Judie: We had that at Conowingo (Maryland). The dust flew up and we couldn't--they couldn't see us on the stage. We were singin' and there was so much dust--so we understand and they should prevent this.

Charlie: If they really want to dance I think a place away from the area where they can still hear the music--

Carl: Didn't you down at Steuart have a little dance stage?

Charlie: Yeah. With a platform and they'd get up there and do clogs and stuff.

Judie: They clogged and flatfooted.

Carl: That's kind of neat. I like that. That's a good idea.

Vic: Similar to our thing at Grass Valley.

Carl: Yes. That was a good idea.

Judie: Would you comment on the deterioration of certain festivals such as Berryville?

Charlie pauses.

Judie: Maybe he doesn't want to comment like that. I went there for nine years or as long as it's been in existence--

Charlie: There's so many things that go into that answer that--

Vic: You think part of it is the things you said before about the dancers and the drinkers--

Carl: And the failure to control right from the start--

Charlie: If you don't keep that down, you might get a Berryville.

Judie: Not enough supervision and it gets out of hand.

Carl: Let motorcycles come in--

Charlie: It can't be blamed on any one thing. It's a combination of a lot of things. I know that whether the people are bombed out of their minds on booze or pot or whatever--if they're misbehaving then they should be thrown out. I'm not knocking anything; if they want to get drunk and be a problem, then they should be thrown out.

Judie: What do you feel about gangs of motorcycles being allowed to ride around on the grounds?

Charlie: I don't believe that at all.

Judie: When Carl and I went to Hillsville last year, they wouldn't allow them in the gate.

Charlie: They don't like the idea of driving a car in the area--

Carl: There've been some people run over.

Charlie: Take it in there and park it and go and be like the rest of the people.

Judie: That's right.

Carl: Have you played up in the Bay Area, in San Francisco before?

Charlie: No. I haven't.

Carl: We're gonna get you up there.

Charlie: Love to.

Vic: We are from the area up there in Northern California--

Carl: I know there was an attempt to find a place to have a concert up there this time when you're passing through.

Burney: And we're so sorry we couldn't find something too. We will definitely plan on it next year.

Carl: That's no reflection on you at all. It was just a--

Charlie: Well, it would be nice to come out and do one. That's far enough away--

Carl: You've got a big metropolitan area up there with a lot of people who don't get this far south.

Judie: Are there any other questions?

Vic: Yes. I have a very general question that's probably pretty hard to answer but, Charlie, I was a country music fan from sometime around the early 40s, late 30s, on up and through, oh, mid 50s-- and then country music went to hell! In my opinion. It went somewhere, it veered off. It went somewhere that I didn't like it. Now with my contact with bluegrass and bands like yours--I think that's where country left from.

Charlie: You're right. I think so too.

Vic: And I think you people are bringin' it back and I'd like your comments on that.

Charlie: It has the nickname bluegrass music because of Bill Monroe being the father and all. You know, I mean technically, it's really American country music, and country music isn't, what they call Nashville country music isn't-- to me it's not country music. But there are an awful lot of good songs that come out of Nashville. I'm not saying there isn't. I just don't dig--

Vic: But they're like nuggets in the dirt-- there's an awful lot of stuff--

Charlie: They kind of left the country out of it. Like in real country music-- that's why bluegrass is so close to it-- they don't use electric instruments because in real country music they didn't have electricity.

Carl: They weren't dependent on plugs. You can go anywhere in the world and play as long as you have your instrument.

Vic: But do you think that with this real music we're playing that there's going to be this big resurgence back to where it's going to be profitable and spread out around the country? When I say profitable I mean profitable enough so people'll want to play it so we're gonna have it widespread.

Charlie: I really believe our day is comin'. I don't want to shoot anybody out of the saddle, but we've been down people long enough. I think the radio stations 'll have to play it. It's just growing too big. They'll have to recognize people want to hear it. Maybe New York controls Nashville. I don't know.

Vic: I don't either, Charlie, but they can have it.

Charlie: Country musicians in Nashville feel the same way.

Carl: Something in support of bluegrass I was going to ask, in foreign countries like Japan and Germany and Holland--

Charlie: That's our biggest audience is Japan. I mean one of the most attentive and nicest tours I've ever made.

Vic: And surprisingly enough they're developing some good musicians too.

Charlie: We were in the bluegrass field in Japan years ago voted No. 1--I think it maybe switched back and forth between Ralph and us--I don't know what it is now. Maybe they're not even taking a poll any more. But we went over there in December-January '71-'72 and played about two weeks--Osaka, Sapporo, Kobe. Just the greatest time we've ever had, but the main thing is the people just loved what we were doing. We played all theaters, they were all full. We signed autographs for as long as they would allow us afterwards and then they had to cut it off and the people were just tryin' to get over top of each other for an autograph. Four deep in a line. We went and played a--we came from Sapporo back to Tokyo and played one afternoon in a big department store, something like Sears Roebuck. I thought, oh this is gonna be terrible playin' in a department store. Went up the escalator and they had cleared the whole furniture section, 8th floor, one whole floor, and they had it roped off and people were

just packed around the ropes waitin' for us. Some fellow said, 'Please, Mista Challie, do Hank Snow!' I had never recorded Hank Snow. I figured now where'd he hear that? So it had to be somebody who'd been in the States, taped it and took it back. That's the land of taperecorders, you know.

Carl: Have you ever made a European tour?

Charlie: No. Looking forward to it one day, but I haven't gone as yet.

Vic: According to PICKIN' Magazine, things are really goin' good over there.

Carl: Big in Holland.

Charlie: And Australia.

Judie: One of these days it'll get there where it's supposed to be--right on top of the line.

Vic: In all countries.

Judie: That's right. In all countries.

Charlie: We don't want to be exactly Number One--

Judie: No, but we want a place in society so people can hear our beautiful music.

Charlie: The Country Gentlemen have been from the beginning a breakthrough group. We've done things that a lot of people just don't care about country music or don't even know if they like anything else--something like "Greensleeves" and they sit up and listen and then we throw "Jesse James" at 'em. We done "Exodus", "Greensleeves", Tschaikovsky's Piano Concerto--

Vic: Some people have to be given this music as culture, as art, as folk art before they accept it. They can't stand to listen to hillbilly music. That would be too much for 'em.

Charlie: Course they might get it on the radio, turn it up and enjoy it. Pull up to a red light and turn it down. 'Fraid somebody'll see 'em.

Carl: Closet bluegrass fans!

Vic: I make this comparison to the homosexuals as closet bluegrass fans and I think the world's full of 'em.

Carl: Homosexuals or bluegrass fans?

Vic: Both probably.

Carl: Especially in San Francisco.

Charlie: We played the other night in Washington (D.C.) the 17th, for the Junior League of Washington which is a very exclusive women's club. They promote any charity, and we played in the Madison Hotel which is one of the most exclusive in Washington and they were all people who probably had never heard bluegrass. But we had the place roaring. I ain't kiddin'.

Carl: Have you played for President Carter yet? I understand he's a bluegrass fan.

Charlie: No. Hope we can.

Judie: You know, Charlie, last year The Country Ham played for President Ford. The primaries and would you believe the dignitaries there in their suits and ties--but they did like it.

Vic: The Crook Family played for Jimmy Carter.

Carl: Hasn't The Seldom Scene played for him too?

Charlie: No, we both played this thing in Washington. I'm trying to think what it was. I'm not close to politics. There was a big thing in Washington. There was country stars there, bluegrass, we worked at the Aeronautical Space Museum.

Carl: Smithsonian.

Charlie: Each of us got a letter from President Carter to hang on your wall as a thanks for this thing. I can't recall the name of the big event.

Carl: This wasn't the Inauguration, was it?

Charlie: Yeah, yeah. That's right.

Carl: That's what I thought.

Charlie: OK.

Vic: At least a President that likes the music is not gonna hurt bluegrass.

Judie: We love to play it and I'm sure Charlie feels the same way.

Carl: It's great to see you out in California.

Judie: It sure is.

Charlie: Well, thank you. It's nice to be here.

Judie: Well, thank you, Charlie, for your time, and we appreciate it for answering our questions.

the end

Re: Renewal

Don't forget to check your membership card to determine your date for renewal. Remember, you're always due a year from when you joined or last renewed. Renewals--and new memberships--have been arriving nicely--and that's most gratifying to the present and future of the CBA! Looks like bluegrass is here to stay in both northern and southern California!

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN advertising rates

Camera-Ready Copy:	Design, Layout and/or
\$30/full page 8½x11	Unprepared Photo(s):
\$20/half page	\$40/full page 8½x11
\$10/quarter page	\$25/half page
	\$15/quarter page

New Publication

Beginning this month THE TWIN FIDDLE TREASURY will begin publication. This monthly magazine, edited by TIM RUED, will include 5 traditional folk tunes, arranged for two violins. Most tunes will be Swedish, the rest from the U.S. and some from Ireland, Norway, and Russia. Arrangements will include chords for accompanying with guitar or piano. Cost: \$19.50/year for 60 tunes and other relevant information. Write THE TWIN FIDDLE TREASURY, P.O. Box 3776, Santa Rosa, CA 95402; phone 707/545-2218.

Classified Ads:

\$2.00 up to & including 3 column lines; 50¢/line thereafter.

Absolute deadline for ads and all other contributions: 20th of month preceding publication. Address all contributions to the Editor, address on page 2. Checks payable to California Bluegrass Association

....around the cracker barrel

. . . .The CBA sponsored its second spectacular Stockton event Sunday, December 4 at the Rod 'n' Gun Club. An enthusiastic crowd clapped, stomped, and cheered the always incredible VERN WILLIAMS BAND, the wonderfully enchanting CAFFREY FAMILY, and the wildly exuberant FOGGY MOUNTAIN CLOGGERS. Other bands to join the festivities included THE GLORYLAND STRING BAND, COLBY MOUNTAIN, BILL WHITE AND FRIENDS, COUNTRY HAM, and COUNTRY BUTTER. Members of the OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN BOYS were present but did not, alas, perform. Also present was BILL ROBERTSON of KSTN-FM bluegrass fame. New members and renewals kept your membership vice president busy, but a good time was carried on by all, some of us getting more carried away than others. . . .Coinciding with the Stockton event was the selection by the Board of Directors of JAY SHRUM of Stockton to fill the vacancy made by the resignation of RAY EDLUND. The CBA regrets Ray's departure as he has been with the organization almost from the beginning. But the CBA welcomes Jay's eager and valuable contribution to California bluegrass. . . .Soon it will be time for our annual membership meeting and election of directors, and you will have the opportunity to vote for Jay Shrum, for the other current directors (should they decide to run again), or for whomever you would like to see coordinate the activities of the association. . . . The last issue of the BREAKDOWN introduced two super fiddlers, JUNIOR DAUGHERTY and PAUL ANASTASIO. By way of update on their activities, Junior is no longer at Nashville West in Sacramento; he is current putting together his own band, after spending the holidays at home in New Mexico. As for Paul, up until the second week in December he was playing with a country band in Santa Rosa and working a day job. At that time he was hired by MERLE HAGGARD! At the suggestion of TINY MOORE, Paul drove to Reno (where Merle happened to be playing) to audition, and, accompanied by Tiny, ELDON SHAMBLIN, and GRADY MARTIN, he got the job. Merle will be using two fiddlers, Paul and GORDON TERRY. Paul's first official gig with Merle and The Strangers is January 6 in Denver. Watch for an appearance in your area. Congratulations, Paul, on this extraordinary accomplishment!

When this issue reaches you, THE COUNTRY HAM's second album should be released. Be sure to ask CARL PAGTER and JUDIE COX about it at the next event. All those who have heard a pre-released tape agree it's even more fantastic than the first one. . . . Our own Art/Publicity Director, LARS BOURNE, received a terrific honor recently: he won Second Grand Prize in PICKIN' Magazine's annual photo contest. His winning photo: The Foggy Mountain Cloggers doing a set at Grass Valley '77. If you haven't seen it, get hold of someone's November PICKIN'; it's a beautiful color shot. For his prize Lars won a dulcimer. . . .Another winner is BOB SADDLER, an excellent fiddler and native of Fresno. Recently Bob, who works for the Park Service, was transferred to Sullivan, Illinois, where he has just won the Illinois State Old-Time Fiddlers Contest. He received \$125 cash, several trophies, and the chance to represent Illinois in the National Old Time Fiddlers Contest in Weiser, Idaho, this coming June. As a Californian, Bob has already placed in the Top 8 at Weiser in 1975 and 1976, the only years he has attended the contest. . . . Another California fiddler and CBA member is STUART DUNCAN of Santa Paula. Stuart, age 13, was featured in the November BLUEGRASS UNLIMITED in a very nice and informative article. An extraordinarily gifted young man, Stuart currently performs with GOLDRUSH, a fine bluegrass band in the Los Angeles area. Stuart is always eager to learn fiddle licks, and he has had some excellent teachers. For example, BYRON BERLINE often gives Stuart some tips which Stuart understands but finds frustrating to accomplish because his hands are not yet as big as Byron's and his fingers just won't stretch! Presently, Stuart has developed an interest in singing but is worried that his voice will change and spoil everything; on a recent trip Back East, RICKY SKAGGS sympathized with Stuart and told him to keep singing high and perhaps he'd retain that tenor sound. . . . RAUL RENOSO, guitarist with HIGH IN THE SADDLE, won 2nd place in the Western Regional Flatpick Contest at the Zen Crook Memorial Festival in Ontario in November. Raul lost by one point to GARY CROOK in this exciting contest judged by DAN CRARY among others. . . .

CBA BAND REGISTRY/MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name of Band _____

Number of Members _____

\$5.00 per person per year

(minimum 3 persons per band, maximum 7)

Name of Contact Individual _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone number(s): Area Code _____

Number _____

Area Code _____

Number _____

Mail to:

Treasurer

California Bluegrass Association

P.O. Box 11287

San Francisco, CA 94101

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Each band is entitled to receive one BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN; each band member is entitled to a membership card in the band's name, to be retained by the band upon departure of that member. Each member of the band is entitled to one vote and to all membership privileges.

Please indicate the type of music you play:

_____ Bluegrass

_____ Old-Time (eg fiddle)

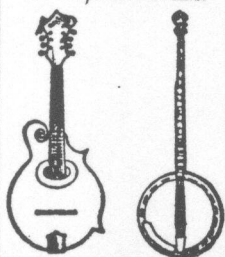
_____ Gospel

_____ Other or combination

Specify the instruments played

Please indicate regular playing jobs for listing in the Bluegrass Billboard section of the BREAKDOWN. If you do not have regular jobs, you will be listed as "No set gigs; for bookings contact (Contact Individual you list) _____."

California
Bluegrass Assn.



Founded in 1975 and dedicated to the furtherance of Bluegrass, Gospel, and Old-Time music. Each member family is entitled to receive a copy of each BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN newsletter, as part of their dues, and to reduced admission charges to all CBA activities. \$3.75 of the \$7.50 is for a subscription to BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN for one year.

SINGLE OR FAMILY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

This membership application is for single or family application. A family is defined as the two adult spouses and all children under the age of 16 years. There must be a main applicant at \$7.50 per year, and the spouse may be included for an additional sum of \$2.50. All eligible children may be included for the sum of \$1 (no voting right for children).

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