



THE CBA REPORT

Unity & Diversity
One Root, Many Branches



A woman with vibrant red hair is smiling and playing a banjo. She is wearing a green vest over a black long-sleeved shirt and brown cowboy boots. The background is a rustic outdoor setting with wooden structures and a teal metal barrel.

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CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Welcome to the first CBA Report.

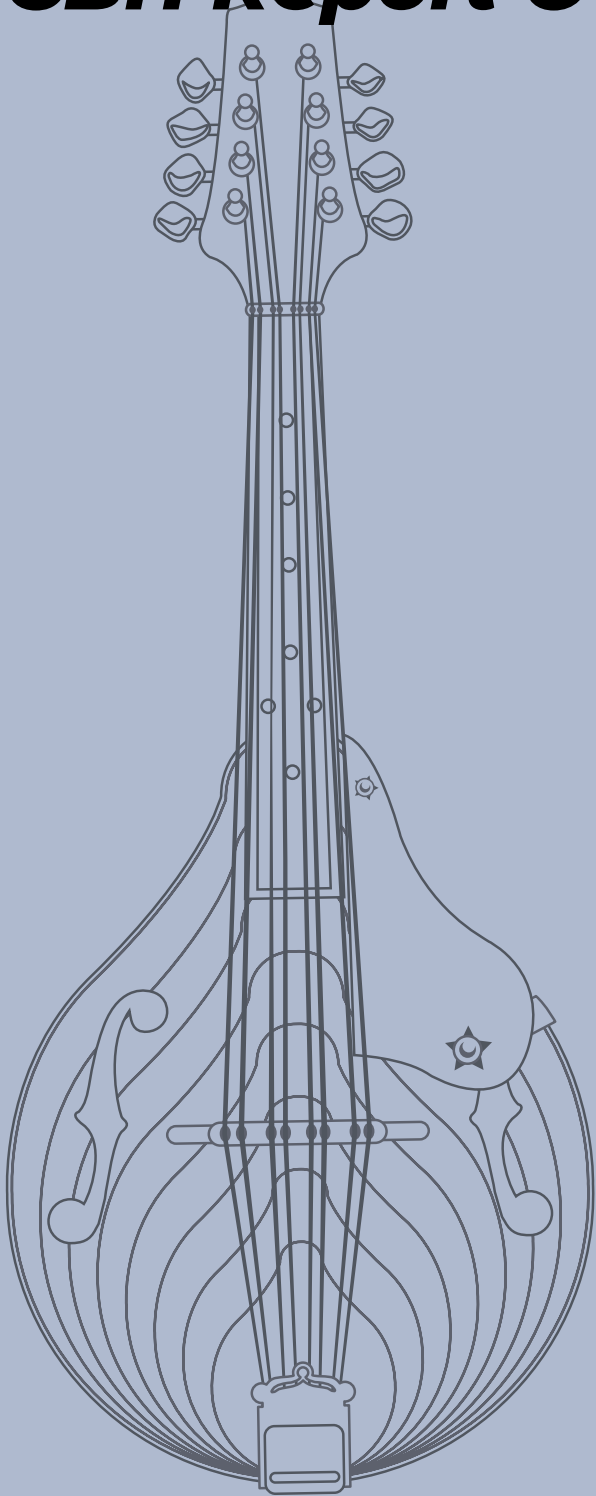
This is the brainchild of, and produced by, CBA board member Patrick Campbell. The idea is that the Report will serve some essential roles for our organization and will give us a different publication to tell you about our achievements for the year. One of those essential roles is that as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we are obligated to provide a financial summary to our membership and provide an accounting of how your membership fees are used and how the CBA uses funds raised from the Father's Day Festival, music camp, youth academy, campouts, and other events we produce or support.

It is my hope that we will be able to use the Report to support our efforts to raise money for the CBA from sources that we have not approached in the past. We were fortunate this year to have received a grant from the IBMA Foundation to support Kaz Inaba, one of Japan's premier professional bluegrass musicians, to visit the 2019 Father's Day Festival and to help us set up a music camp scholarship for Japanese bluegrass students. Our big picture goal here is to establish closer ties with bluegrass communities across the Pacific Rim.

Some of our CBA members who do fundraising from philanthropists and foundations are interested in trying to raise donations and sponsorships from those sources, and Lisa Burns, our corporate sponsorship coordinator, will have another resource she can provide to potential corporate sponsors to promote the CBA and our programs. This Report will be a stand-alone document that we can use for all those functions as well as its simplest and most important function: communicating what we do to our members. Be safe and pick hard.



CBA Report Overview



The CBA is a community.

Patrick Campbell

Our roots are one, but our California bluegrass and Old Time community is rich with diversity. Our music sings across borders: old and young, traditional and progressive, gay and straight, beginner and professional, urban and rural, national and international. Where have we come from, where are we going? What makes California bluegrass distinct?

This Report is a vehicle to help our members understand the larger sweep of who the CBA is and to tell our story to potential members, donors, supporters, and grantors.

As you will read in Carl Pagter's recollections, CBA was founded as an all-volunteer organization and has stubbornly resisted calls to hire staff. From erecting the Fathers Day Festival stage, to hosting jams, to overseeing the finances, nothing happens without our amazingly dedicated volunteers.

The CBA, through the vision and energy of retiring President Darby Brandli, has established a youth teaching program that has churned out nationally recognized bluegrass stars, and perhaps more importantly, educated several generations of young musicians in the importance of community and leadership. These programs, developed and nurtured by the CBA, have been emulated by other bluegrass groups across the US.

Millennials are increasingly filling the gap between youth and oldsters, particularly in the Bay Area and Los Angeles. Go to any urban bluegrass or Old Time jam these days, and you will see hipsters, beards, and tattoos aplenty. We will be hearing from them.

The CBA has embraced community involvement and diversity. We have provided replacement instruments to wildfire victims, engaged in international good will programs, sponsored Pride events, and shown that bluegrass is a force for good in this big old troubled world. Meanwhile, we are working to restore the bonds that unite the southern and northern California trad music worlds and rebuilding the relationship between the Old Time and bluegrass communities. We are spawned from the same roots, after all.

Many thanks to Kara Kundert, Brandon Godman, Ted Kuster, Val Cornejo – an inspiration for this Report, fellow photographer Alan Bond, and the CBA board of directors for shepherding the Report.

Now....here's the story.

BLUEGRASS FOLKS TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

Wildfire Instrument Replacement

Ted Kuster



On a fine November evening in 2015, Butte County bluegrass fans filled the United Methodist church for Bill Evans's annual Banjo Extravaganza. The next day, at least a quarter of the people in that audience had lost their homes and their beloved instruments to the Camp Fire. "It all happened so fast," said Lucy Smith, then CBA Area Vice President for Butte, Glenn, Tehama, and Plumas counties. "At 10:30 that night we were all going home from the show, and by 8:00 the next morning our world was upside down." Many CBA members lost everything.

Days later, Lucy was leading the CBA's campaign to help bluegrass pickers replace the instruments they had lost.

By the end of December we had raised over \$56,000, far exceeding anyone's expectations.

Meanwhile, Rick Anderson, general manager of Chico's KZFR radio station, was swinging into action. With help from Lucy and the Music Connection (a beloved local instrument shop) KZFR's "Music Around the Camp Fire" campaign came up with a similar amount. The CBA and KZFR agreed to merge the funds they had raised in order to maximize the number of people we could help.

Howard Goetz, a long-time CBA member, lost his 1994 Martin D-18 when his Paradise home burned. "It was my friend and family," Goetz said. That guitar

wasn't replaceable, but his new one, purchased with CBA/KZFR fire relief funds, is close and getting better, he said.

We still haven't tracked down everyone who's eligible for aid! If you, or anyone you know, lost instruments in the Camp Fire, please get in touch with us at firerelief@californiabluegrass.net so we can lend you a hand.

Bluegrass folks take care of each other. As CBA President Darby Brandli noted, "We came together because of the music, but we stay together because we're family." The CBA ties to the roots community are deep and strong, and this effort took full advantage of all of them. Banjo master Bill Evans dedicated a special edition of his regular Bangers and Grass show. The Bluegrass Pride team put on a concert and silent auction with the T Sisters, A.J. Lee and Blue Summit, the Lost Radio Flyers, and many other Bay Area luminaries. CBA founding member Laurie Lewis gave a sold-out house concert in San Rafael with her band the Right Hands plus singer-songwriter Rainy Eyes.

We will never forget the example set by mandolin master Radim Zenkl, who wrote a generous check early in the campaign even though he himself had lost his home and most of his instruments to the fire. Radim's was one of many acts of solidarity that emerged in this effort.



Introduction: Carl Pagter reflects on the early days of the CBA

Back in 1935 my family moved to California so my dad could take a job at the Benicia arsenal.

A couple of years or so afterwards, my mom died, leaving five kids who were later separated and soon farmed out to foster care around the state. After living in five different homes, I ended up in Van Nuys at a home for boys, where I sang in the junior high school choir, after which I was sent to Los Angeles. That was my start in music, and I realized that music provided me with a sense of family and community that I had sorely missed growing up.

Around 1960, while still in the Navy, I bought a long neck banjo from Griffin Music just as the folk scene was beginning, and by 1961 I was jamming at the Drinking Gourd in San Francisco while studying law at UC Berkeley. From 1961 to 1964 not even my heavy legal workload for



Kaiser Industries stood in the way of music! In fact, by 1970, after I was transferred to Washington, DC, I was spending every free moment in Maryland, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Delaware jamming like crazy at festivals and gathering friends. Songs like “Keep on the Sunny Side” have magic powers of healing: songs that have legs have strength, which is why they have gone into the oral tradition. I played these songs. They spoke to my heart and gave my life a sense of stability and continuum.

Just as my old-time band in DC (first named the Spout Run String Band and by 1975 Country Ham) was really getting going, I was transferred back to California, sadly leaving my rich music community behind and entering what appeared at first to be a traditional music desert. Soon, though, I was listening to and playing clawhammer banjo on Mick Seeber’s San Francisco radio show; it was there I met Jake Quesenberry. Then came jamming at

Los Gatos dentist Jack Sadler's Chicken and Picking bluegrass parties and breaking out Bloody Marys at my parties in Lafayette, which at times attracted over a hundred musicians. Out of this embryonic scene emerged the California Bluegrass Association.

It was clear to Jack Sadler, Jake Quesenberry, and me that the disparate and geographically separated California music groups needed a facilitator of communication to bring them together. Accordingly, I drew up Articles of Incorporation, by-laws, application to the state for charitable tax status, and the other requisite paperwork to establish the CBA as a not-for-profit entity. By late 1974 we had lined up forty charter members, and on January 3, 1975 we hosted the first board meeting of the fledging organization. From its inception, the CBA was inclusive: its Purpose was, in my words "to promote, encourage, foster and cultivate the preservation, appreciation, understanding, enjoyment, support, and performance of bluegrass, old-time, gospel and traditional music."

The CBA was, is, and I hope will forever be mostly volunteer-run.

One of the first orders of business was to launch a monthly newsletter (The Breakdown) and to establish a festival to showcase community in music. It was our intention to make the festival friendly to the audience. JD Rhyne and team found a venue in Grass Valley, and in 1976 we put on a festival featuring the great California bands of the day, including Good Ol' Persons, Josh Graves, The Vern Williams Band, and a few local groups.



A non-profit demands volunteerism. Volunteers are invested in the organization to an extent that paid staff will never be. Of course, over its forty-five years the CBA has seen its share of difficulties and crises, but it is our volunteers who have built the CBA into the largest and most innovative bluegrass organization in the US. The CBA has facilitated communication and interaction among professional and lay pickers, singers, and performers. We have spawned youth programs, outreach, inclusion of various factions, and yes, we still fill the stage with bluegrass, old-time, gospel, and traditional music, while uniting a diverse community.

BECOME A CBA MEMBER: <https://www.cbaweb.org/About/Join>

INTRODUCING YOUR CBA BOARD



Brandon Godman

I've been extremely impressed with the amount of excitement, energy and passion that is the CBA. It is contagious and felt nation-wide. I have been privileged to serve as a member of the Board of Directors for two years and serve as a member of the Talent Advisory Group. We have so much to look forward to in the CBA as we continue to reach beyond the borders of California with our mission, energy, and love for this music.



Chuck Hurd

I learned to play banjo listening to "Foggy Mountain Banjo" on my record player in the family laundry room, left it behind during 25 years around the world in the army, and then....upon my retirement, began the rebirth of my banjo picking, as I attended CBA jams, festivals, and met bluegrass friends. I decided it was time to pay back. I love being on the Board, but I must admit, I miss being able to relax, jam and listen to bands at the festivals.



Dave Gooding

I have seen the benefits to young kids and families in our CBA "family". It's not unusual to find teens and preteens jamming with folks old enough to be their parents, grandparents, or even great grandparents. As a board member I enjoy working with and supporting these fine youth programs. We are not only raising the next generation of Bluegrassers, we are raising the next generation of citizens.



Geoff Sargent

I was first elected to the CBA board in 2011, after several years as Music Camp Liaison. It is really amazing to realize the number of young professional musicians that have participated in our CBA camps and as part of our extended community. For me this is a large part of why I serve on the board: Yes to promote bluegrass and old time music, but more to try to ensure that our community will have a long, fruitful run and continue to touch the lives of everyone who enjoys the CBA.



Karen Celia Heil

Greetings to the CBA membership, and quick words on why I want to serve on the Board. As a working Old Time player on both the local and national scene, I can advocate for OT and nurture the (sometimes mysterious!) relationship between the Bluegrass and Old Time communities. Other interests include promoting live music, youth, diversity, SoCal and outlying regions participation. I would hope that all members, of every stripe, feel a camaraderie moving forward.



Kara Kundert

There is so much love for bluegrass among people of all backgrounds – there is no reason for us to be white-knuckling through our budget every year, sacrificing valuable programs and ideas due to a lack of resources. I want to draw on my background as a non-profit fundraiser to help us build a stable financial platform by taking our love of American roots music and breathing new life into the CBA's strategic planning.



Larry Phegley

Why I serve? I have been around bluegrass for about fourteen years. I started slow jamming and had many people patiently play music with me while I learned some repertoire and slowly built the minimal guitar (and now other instruments) skills I currently have. As my bluegrass network expanded, I met so many incredible people and a community was built. I felt it was important for me to give back to my community and provide others with the same experiences that I have had.



Mark Hogan

It is hard to believe it has been 45 years since the CBA's first Father's Day Festival in 1976. It quickly became the apex of the bluegrass scene in the West and paved the way for outdoor festivals like the Strawberry Music Festival. We have been on the cutting edge of such innovations as Kids on Bluegrass, Youth programs and music camps, out of which have emerged a number of talented musicians who have gained national stature. For years our award-winning publication "*The Bluegrass Breakdown*" has been the glue that helps keep the bluegrass community together. I feel fortunate to have played a part in it.



Patrick Campbell

A few years ago, I picked up the fiddle again after a twenty-year hiatus, figuring it was time to get back to my roots. I soon went to my first Fathers Day Festival, and was delighted to see diversity - young and old, urban and rural, bluegrass and old-time, all races, genders, and orientations - around me. I gathered the board must be doing something right, so I joined it, and am dedicated to furthering CBA's outreach into new communities.



Pete Ludé

My daughter, Helen, grew up in the Kids on Bluegrass program, and has gone on to be a very active participant in the CBA. This first-hand experience helped me fully comprehend the phenomenal potential of the CBA Youth Program. My professional background on the boards of non-profit and professional associations over the years has afforded me the opportunity to directly work on fundraising, educational and infrastructure initiatives, an experience which I trust will be of value to the CBA.



Steve Ladonga

I've been a CBA member for 7 years now and am currently serving my second term on the board of directors. The CBA and its members have become a very fulfilling part of my life. I am proud to say that I have formed lifelong friendships since joining the organization and have become a more accomplished musician as well! I strongly believe in carrying on the mission of the CBA in promoting bluegrass, old-time and traditional music. (Fun fact about me: each of my grandchildren has been gifted with a ukulele on their first birthday.) I have enjoyed being part of this welcoming community and look forward to every chance to share the love of this music with you all.

WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM AND WHERE ARE

California Uniqueness

Peter Thompson



Bluegrass came to California a few years after the music's inception in the early 1940s, but the state's musicians have had considerable influence on its growth during the past 50 years. Although there is (and has been) too much variety to identify a distinct "California Bluegrass" style, there are several noteworthy aspects to bluegrass in California:

- - the importance of women,
- - the relevance of songwriters,
- - the number of prominent stylists,
- - the admiration for traditional bluegrass, and
- - the inclusive nature of the region's music scene.

From Ingrid Fowler, Markie Sanders, Rose Maddox, and Patty & Brenda Caffrey through Kathy Kallick, Laurie Lewis, Kate Brislin, Suzy Thompson, and Alison Brown to Molly Tuttle, AJ Lee, and Brittany Haas, California women have always been at the forefront of bluegrass. This just hasn't happened anywhere else.

Everyone's a songwriter now; 40 years ago, most bluegrass bands were playing songs written by the founding fathers of the music. In addition to Kathy and Laurie, other Californians who were writing their own songs before it became commonplace include Ray Park, Rich Wilbur, Kate Wolf, Butch Waller, Herb Pedersen, Peter Rowan, and Keith Little.

California bluegrassers David Grisman (Dawg music) and Jerry Garcia (jamgrass) created musical genres and played, along with Peter Rowan and non-Californian Vassar Clements, in *Old & In the Way*, whose collection of live recordings was once the best-selling bluegrass album. Garcia, in the Grateful Dead, and Chris Hillman, in the Byrds, made bluegrass repertoire and sensibilities a part of successful rock & roll bands. Clarence White (and, through him, Tony Rice) revolutionized the role of guitar in a bluegrass band. Good Ol' Persons were the first to incorporate swing, Latin, and Cajun musics into a bluegrass band, one that also featured women as players, singers, composer, and bandleader. The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band recorded with some first-generation masters and created a new audience for bluegrass.

Through all this originality and genre-bending, the core of bluegrass in California has always remained traditional, with a special emphasis on the music of Bill Monroe. The Fathers of California Bluegrass (even though they were actually transplants from Arkansas), Vern Williams & Ray Park, were Monroe-based. The initial group of bluegrass players in Northern California learned the music from the live recordings of Monroe

WE GOING?

Uniqueness - cont

as collected and distributed by Neil Rosenberg, Sandy Rothman, and others. And Monroe has been a touchstone, even in bands like Muleskinner, the David Grisman Quintet, and Good Ol' Persons, as well as High Country and Blue & Lonesome.

The sound of California bluegrass is the sound of musical cross-fertilization and a wide variety of influences and expression. Nowhere is this more evident than at the CBA's annual Father's Day Bluegrass Festival. One of the country's oldest festivals, it was the first to include women in headlining bands on a regular basis and continues to provide a depth and breadth of performers unmatched elsewhere. Come to Grass Valley next June and see/hear for yourself!

Perhaps because women were included in the early days of California bluegrass, the scene has always been open to a wider variety of participants than can be found elsewhere. Frank Solivan Sr. started the CBA Kids On Bluegrass program some 30 years ago, and it's no surprise that many of the most exciting younger bluegrass musicians are from California, a trend likely to continue because of the growth of KOB plus the success of the CBA Youth Academy. Bluegrass Pride started as a CBA side project (a float in SF's Pride Parade) in 2017 and has quickly become an international force in the musical and professional development of LGBTQ bluegrassers. The Handsome Ladies evolved from a jam at the 2016 CBA Festival to a non-profit with branches in seven cities, encouraging the participation of women in bluegrass.

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The CBA—Where did we come from, where will we go? Reflections On Our Roots

Laurie Lewis



In 1975, the California Bluegrass Association sponsored its first event, at the Fairfield Community Center in Fairfield, CA. Since then, the organization has hosted a major festival every year (and for a while twice yearly), the Fathers' Day Bluegrass Festival, just referred to as "Grass Valley," by us old folks. From the outset, the festival was a success, due mostly to the healthy and vital bluegrass-and-related music community in the Bay Area and

northern Central Valley. This volunteer organization has gone through many growing pains, and its trajectory has been determined by the volunteers who have recognized the importance of this group to the continuing health of the "bluegrass community." I refer to us as a community, even though many of us may not see eye-to-eye about anything, outside of the fact that we all love that Lester Flatt G-run in Dear Old Dixie. For one reason or another, we people from all walks of life have come together to work for a more-or-less common goal for over 45 years. That's remarkable!

The CBA started out as a Bay Area-based musicians' festival, with the bands splitting the profits among those playing in the first couple of years. After that experiment in Socialism (which wasn't without a few kinks, but generally worked pretty well), it went to the more standard format of bands getting hired by the festival committee, and pay being based on the band's individual clout, who knows whom, or some other criteria. The CBA has helped the local scene, as having a carrot like Grass Valley to strive for has led many bands to practice their art

and hone their craft more diligently than if there were just a local jam to play every couple of weeks. It has also, however, hindered the scene, as more and more out-of-state bands took the coveted main stage slots from California musicians. Local musicians and music-lovers started the organization and, at times in the CBA's history, have felt cast aside as the festival attracted more and more non-California artists. (The California Showcase stage was formed to give high level California-only bands a special venue.)

The important thing to remember is that the CBA is a volunteer organization, and as with all such organizations, the best way to bend it toward one's own vision is to get involved.

The festival has suffered many hard-fought battles, including separating tent camping areas from an RV take-over, smoking vs non-smoking factions, local vs out-of-state musicians, dogs-or-no-dogs, and many more that I am probably not privy to, or that just seem too petty in the long view to mention here. But the main thing I want to stress is the fact that over the last nearly half-century of music-making, the CBA has grown ever more inclusive and diverse with every year that goes by. One of the most shining examples of the CBA's and the festival's inclusivity has been the programs nurturing and fostering young people's interest in the music. The CBA has sent many, many amazing young musicians out into the greater bluegrass world. Although the success of the programs is due to the diligence and practice of the participants, we can all bask in the reflected glory of their achievements.

Where Are We Going?

Marty Varner



One of my fondest childhood memories was meeting Marty Stuart. As a shy child, I allowed my father to speak for me. “Mr. Stuart, Marty here is a great young picker and would love to grow up to be a big bluegrass musician one day.” Mr. Stuart, a man of few words, responded, “Good luck, kid.”

Fast forward a few years later and that man is inviting California’s own Miles and Teo Quale onto the stage at the Strawberry Music Festival. This did not lead to jealousy on my part, but instead a realization that

youth bluegrass and California youth bluegrass specifically has reached a zenith of artistic recognition and respect. While this is the most recent example that solidifies California’s status as a bluegrass powerhouse, the Quales have followed in the footsteps of some of the most accomplished and inspiring young musicians in bluegrass and American music.

The Nevada County Fairgrounds in Grass Valley, CA have become hallowed grounds due to the legendary virtuosic displays of Chris Thile and Molly Tuttle. For young musicians, these are stories of legend that rise to the point of tangible lore.

This almost palpable, yet sacred, experience becomes the breeding ground for creative adventures that pay tribute to these figures, but that also allows the new artist to be part of the pantheon. Versions of songs such as “Rye Whiskey” and “Save this Heart” have extra weight in California, where the relationship between these future legends is as real as the connections between festival goers in the 1960s to the likes of Bill Monroe and Earl Scruggs.

These are the signs of a new tradition. One built on the values of our parents and respected elders. One of inclusion, diversity and a love for music and the community it can build. Not only can it establish bridges across places, but across time. A span of time reaching back to the music of the French Quadrilles and landing here, in California, with a new-found tradition and purpose that is ready to build on the best qualities and modes of the past.



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www.musiccamp.org/cba

CBA SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

SoCal Report

Scott Gates CBA SoCal VP



What a year, folks! There are truckloads of potential in the SoCal area, and I can't wait to continue to grow the CBA's connection with this historical bastion of bluegrass!

I entered the bluegrass world while Don and Barbara Tucker held down the scene in Southern California for decades, operating the legendary Huck Finn Jubilee with discipline, dedication and passion. The music camp preceding the Jubilee was a major factor in my local generation's schooling of musicianship, skill, and love for the community. This festival has recently been rebooted,

and I believe it will be well tended to in the capable hands of Roger and Nikki Malinowski. My CBA team and I are working closely with them to do Don justice in revitalizing this legendary festival through band procurement, planning consultation, CBA liaisons, pickers' resources, and more.

My goal as the CBA SoCal VP is to create a lively, inclusive scene of energetic, talented, knowledgeable pickers of all ages. We're achieving this through the following:

- Inform the public of bluegrass music and its communities
- Encourage festival attendance and CBA membership
- Perform/play as often as possible through residencies, busking, hosting public jams
- Offer services like lessons and proactive education
- Plan meticulously to create new festivals and grow existing festivals
- Genuine. Human. Connection.

You may find our bluegrass jams, band residencies, workshops and more in the greater Los Angeles area, Orange Co., and Riverside Co. in the CBA Calendar.



Old-Time Music in Southern California--A Personal Tale

David Bragger



I became involved in the old-time scene around 1999 when I was in my late 20s. At the time there were very few people in my age demographic playing OT music in Los Angeles. I could count them on one hand. In fact, as I traveled around the country it wasn't much different. I'd even be lucky if I encountered five people my age at the "Woodstock" of old-time festivals: West Virginia's Clifftop Festival. I am part of old-time music's "lost generation." Fortunately, things have changed considerably.

There are many hundreds, if not thousands, of millennials taking bow to fiddle and "claw" to banjo-head around the country. The baby boomers remain a major force at many festivals and often guide the younger folks via their direct experiences with older generations of traditional musicians.

I view SoCal as a microcosmic reflection of what is happening around the country in terms of old-time's growing popularity. When I began my journey, there was a solid bedrock of experienced old-time musicians that heavily contributed to the SoCal scene. Transplants like Earl Collins (MO), Mel Durham (IL), Bob Rogers (TN) and Ed Lowe (NC) had a huge impact on the repertoire and style of many local musicians including my guru Tom Sauber. Both Tom and Mel Durham taught me the fundamentals of learning to play old-time music. For

those of us who listened to our elders, we learned a lot. This is traditional music after all. DIY only gets you so far. It's the real personal connections that we make with older knowledgeable musicians that help keep the tradition alive.

In the last twenty years, both SoCal natives and younger transplants have embraced the older sounds and traditions of old-time music. There are public jams happening every week, monthly square dances featuring live old-time stringbands, house concerts, workshops and multiple festivals/venues including the Santa Barbara Old-Time Fiddlers' Festival, the Los Angeles Old-Time Social, the Topanga Banjo & Fiddle Festival, Southern Pacific Sessions (San Diego), Down at the Yard Music series (LA) and the Old-Time Tiki Parlour (LA).

My own obsession with playing, learning and teaching old-time music triggered an idea. Five years ago I founded the Old-Time Tiki Parlour in an effort to bring old-time musicians from around the country to SoCal. I've helped bring countless musicians to the area to perform, teach workshops and record for the Tiki Parlour website/record label. I also bring musicians to my Old-Time String Band class at UCLA and connect them with like-minded venues up the coast. It's my way of giving back to the musicians, as well as to our diverse SoCal community, who deserve to experience the sounds and perspectives of musicians like Dan Gellert, Bruce Molsky, Suzy & Eric Thompson, Brad Leftwich, Dom Flemons, Jamie Fox, Mike Compton, Joe Newberry, Rafe Stefanini, the Ozark Highballers, Spencer & Rains, Foghorn Stringband, Jerron Paxton and countless others.

BECOME A CBA MEMBER:
<https://www.cbaweb.org/About/Join>

CBA EVENTS: Summer Music Camp & Father's Day



 CALIFORNIA BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION 20th ANNUAL
MUSIC CAMP
JUNE 14-17 2020
NEVADA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
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REGISTRATION
FOR 2020 WILL OPEN
FEBRUARY 7th AT NOON



CBA Summer Music Camp happens in conjunction with the annual June Father's Day Festival in Grass Valley, CA.

Peter Langston and Tina Webster

The camp is directed by musicians Peter Langston and Tina Webster. In close coordination with other hard-working CBA staff members, Tina and Peter direct Music Camp as a beautiful setting for developing musicians of all ages. After all, no one ever stops growing! Music Camp is a supportive haven, providing accessible adventure, opportunity for personal growth, and uniting people in a community where all are welcome. Music Camp offers scholarships to students in need, thanks to generous donations from the community. Organized camp activities include intensive classes, electives, concerts, jamming, dances, and other social activities.

Along with highest-quality instruction, Music Camp owes its success to the talented dedication of its many volunteers. Our volunteers do the hard work of Camp and Festival set-up, office management, supporting and assisting our instructors, keeping the environment clean and safe, and attending to the comfort and well-being of our participants. Our students, instructors, and volunteers join together from all walks of life. CBA Music Camp celebrates the diversity of all its participants. No matter their role, all participants can increase musical knowledge and experience while building lasting bonds with each other.



ay Festival



EVENTS - CONT.

20th ANNUAL SONOMA COUNTY BLUEGRASS & FOLK FESTIVAL

Sonoma County Bluegrass and Folk Festival 2019

The Festival began in 1999 as a replacement for the CBA's Woodland Bluegrass Festival. Mark Hogan, the CBA Area VP for Sonoma County, was determined to spotlight bluegrass and traditional music in the North Bay's competitive music scene, and teamed up with the Sonoma County Folk Society to provide California bands an opportunity to perform in a festival setting.

Mark's determination proved instrumental in 2019, when torrential rainfall flooded the long-time venue a week before downbeat. Last minute phone calls to relocate the Festival to the higher ground of the nearby Sebastopol Analy High School auditorium were successful, and the show was on, featuring an eclectic range of acts from traditional bluegrass to cowboy poetry! March 14, 2020 will mark the Festival's 21st year.



A Night at the Grange Concert Series

Tim Edes

The Morgan Hill Grange was made for bluegrass music! In the late 1990s CBA co-founder Jake Quesenberry, started a small series of local concerts, and in 2003 passed the job on to CBA board member Tim Edes. Tim moved the burgeoning event to the Morgan Hill Grange and began building the concerts into a real community event: local merchants as well as personal sponsorships have made it possible to present a high grade of talent. What began as a modest, insider event has blossomed into a sold-out series that will feature at its next concert in February 2020 the same pure, traditional bluegrass music that has become a hallmark of the event. Come see Lorraine Jordan and Carolina Road, featuring Danny Paisley and Junior Sisk, at the 18th running of A Night at the Grange!

CALIFORNIA BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

GOLDEN OLD-TIME CAMPOUT



The CBA's Golden Old Time Campout was back again at its regular grounds at Lake Sonoma this year.

Rowan McAllister

Close to a hundred people gathered on the green grasses of Poker Flat to play tunes and sing songs under the plentiful shade trees. Usually held the weekend before Labor Day, the Golden Oldtime Campout is always a fun event for enthusiasts of old time string band music. Although there are no stage shows, musicians can attend free workshops on a variety of instruments, and of course there is plenty of jamming to be had. Or you can just pull up a chair and enjoy the music. Come join us next year!

BECOME A CBA MEMBER:
<https://www.cbaweb.org/About/Join>



Each January pickers gather in Bakersfield to jam, jam, jam!

Jack Pierce



The CBA created the Great 48 to bridge the gap between Northern and Southern California bluegrassers, and it has been successful beyond imagination! Players from beginner to advanced, participate in three days and nights of jamming, afternoon workshops, slow jams, late night showcase bands, band scramble, and open mic, not to mention develop camaraderie with new and old friends.

Additionally, the Great 48 event welcomes bluegrass musicians from areas outside of California. The weekend includes the annual Friday night performances by top California bluegrass bands on the Marriott Ballroom stage, with increasingly strong attendance numbers year after year.

Every year since its founding in 2007, attendance at the Great 48 has grown. Along the way, it outgrew each venue, until it ended up in its present location, the Bakersfield Downtown Marriott. The 2020 Great 48 anticipates 350+ bluegrassers to fill the hotel suites, rooms, floors, lobby areas, and hallways of the Marriott, which is given over exclusively to the event: as the hotel "big-wigs" say, "bluegrassers have the run of the house." In addition, 300 or more bluegrass fans from the surrounding community are anticipated to visit the Marriott to enjoy these various jams and attend the Friday night concert.

Hope to see ya there!



The California State Old Time Fiddle Association dates back to the 1960's.

Mark Hogan

Prior to the advent of bluegrass festivals, fiddle contests were one of the venues where bluegrassers gathered. But with the advent of bluegrass festivals, attendance at fiddle contests withered.

As a member of the CSOTFA Board of Directors I felt that the state contest was still a good musical product that would thrive if moved to a population center larger than its home in Oroville, California.

It seemed that partnering with the California Bluegrass Association was a natural alliance. Both the CBA and the CSOTFA are pleased at how well moving the fiddle contest to the host city of Lodi during the CBA Spring Camp

Out worked. Attendance was way up with 350 attendees and some 60 competitors. It was wonderful to have these musical cousins work together to make the event even more popular.





**California State
Old Time Fiddlers Association
2020
54th Annual
California State
Old Time Open Fiddle
& Picking Championships**

**April 17-18, 2020
Free Admission**

**Lodi Grape Festival Fairgrounds
413 E. Lockeford St.
Lodi, CA**

**In coordination with
California Bluegrass Association**



RV Camping
at Fairgrounds \$30 per
night water & electric
hookups limited.
Tent/vehicle camping
\$10 per night.

For More Info Call Contest Co-Chair
Mark Hogan 707-479-5529
email: hogiemoon@comcast.net
Sharon Barrett 530-604-5279
email: texshar@pacbell.net

Visit our website www.csotfa.org for full listings of schedules, divisions, rules & guidelines

CALIFORNIA STATE OLD TIME FIDDLERS ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION & PERPETUATION OF OLD TIME FIDDLE MUSIC



CBA CAMPOUTS 2019

Deb Livermore

As you may or may not know, the mission of the CBA is to promote and spread Bluegrass, old time and Gospel music to as many folks as we can. One way that we do that is to have Campouts. CBA campouts are held in the Spring and Fall; they are events that are for the people....no stage, no stress, no professionals.....just people playing music and jamming with friends - old and new. The only concern anyone might have is to learn a couple of new songs before you get there to share.

This year was a growth experience for the CBA's Spring Campout, held in April. We joined with the California State Old Time Fiddle Association to bring their Fiddle Competition to central California in hopes that more people would participate. I believe they did! The parking lot was pretty full, as was the building.

The Fall Camp Out, held in October, had a great

turn out as well. The weather was perfect, as was the music. Again, the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds was full of friends, food, and music.

Both events featured our traditional Saturday evening dinner and show. The bands were created by the CBA's Youth Ambassador, Ida Winfree, who put together two amazingly talented groups of young people. Teaching kids to play music and perform for an audience is a major goal of the CBA, and the Campout music was a reflection of this CBA core value. Thanks Ida! You did an amazing job! She passes the baton to Tessa Schwartz this year, and we expect great things from Tessa as well.

Please consider attending the Spring Camp Out, to be held in conjunction with the CSOTFA Fiddle contest, in April 2020. Bring your instrument, your voice, and your family. We love to share our beloved music with you all, including the young ones!





The annual Fathers Day Festival (FDF) is jammed (*no pun intended*) with kid music activities, all within hearing distance of the main stage.

Darby Brandli

Our recreational event KidFest is run by Kathleen Rushing and provides fun activities where the youngest folks gather for crafts, games, and music. The CBA Youth Academy is a four-day instructional day camp for kids from 8 – 16 that features instrumental and vocal instruction; in 2019 we were particularly fortunate to have Kimber Ludiker of the Della Mae band lead a wonderful staff of young music performers. All campers may borrow instruments from the CBA Instrument Lending Library, which is managed by the CBA's long-time volunteer Randy January. The Youth Jams, hosted by Jared Katz, encourage budding musicians to learn to play together and reinforce their relationships within the wider community. Kids on Bluegrass (KOB) was founded and directed for 25 years by Frank Solivan and is now directed by his successor, the young college student Helen Foley, who herself has risen through the youth camp programs beginning with KidFest. In short, not only do the CBA youth programs give children an opportunity to hone their music making and performance skills, but perhaps more importantly to work cooperatively with others and develop self-confidence.

Many older students who have moved through the above activities merge into leadership positions. Our Youth Jams are led by young musicians who learn how to teach and lead and mentor others their age. The Youth Academy provides opportunities for young musicians to develop into camp teaching assistant positions. With the exception of the Youth Academy leadership, all staff positions – including Darby Brandli, the founder and Coordinator of the overall CBA Youth Programs – are led by CBA volunteers. To keep the line of volunteers active and vibrant, we have developed the VolunTeen program, which places teens in community events outside the CBA.

– cont. next page



-FDF cont. from previous page.

VolunTeens have led jam programs at the Freight and Salvage, organized the Bluegrass Pride float, and the Alameda 4th of July Parade, among other outreach ventures. The VolunTeens are the next generation of CBA Leaders. The CBA is a 501(c)(3), and thus is able to provide documentation for high schoolers to meet their schools' community service obligation for graduation.

The Youth Academy charges a modest fee to attend, but all other youth Festival programs are gratis with FDF admission. All Youth jams during the year are free of charge. The entire Youth program is funded by donations; no funds come out of the General Fund of the CBA. We have expanded our fundraising to include a "scholarship" fund that provides financial aid for Youth Academy students, offers some limited scholarships for young musicians to attend the CBA Music Camp, and gives grants to musicians chosen to play in the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Kids on Bluegrass program in Raleigh, NC.

We are extremely proud of the young people who have branched out from our Youth programs to their own communities to serve the mission of the CBA. Helen Ludé, a graduate of KOB, formed her own 501(c)(3) last year called "Bluegrass for Good" and produced a bluegrass concert to support child adoption in China (more on that in the Report). The CBA was happy to advise and support her in this effort. Tessa Schwartz developed a bluegrass program in her old middle school and Sydney Roberts has launched a recess old-time jam at her middle school in San Francisco.

High school student and mandolinist Ida Winfree served in 2019 as the Youth Ambassador for a two year term. Ida participated in the planning stages for a Youth Gathering Place and developing a Youth Jam program at the Father's Day Bluegrass Festival. We changed the name of Teen Ambassador to Youth Ambassador during Ida's term to include the "almost" teens and to expand our

We have work to do to make our programs year-round. Doing so requires committed volunteers to identify opportunities for outreach to a younger generation. The two public school programs we have adopted and provided with resources and Lending Library instruments are the tip of the iceberg. Jared Katz in Pacifica and Erik Johnson in Visalia can instruct others how to develop a Bluegrass in the

If the mission of the CBA is to promote music (and it is), then it is our duty to bring the youngest generation into our sphere and make families welcome to participate at our events.

support to those up to 21 years of age. The numbers and ages of young people participating in our programs increased during Ida's term. Looking ahead, Tessa Schwartz will be taking over from Ida as Youth Ambassador.

Our Youth Program demonstrates CBA's commitment to diversity and inclusion. While the CBA has always welcomed everyone, we have never looked as racially diverse and supportive of women as our current "crop" of Youth Program participants looks. Six of the seven young musicians chosen for IBMA KOB were young women musicians this year. Our Academy faculty and Teaching Assistants in 2019 were almost all accomplished women musicians. Providing role models for young girls and women in bluegrass is essential to opening doors for our young women musicians. Developing positions of volunteerism and leadership for women is essential to the CBA's future.

School program. The CBA Youth Program will throw its support behind any teacher who can start such a program.

What we need from our membership and outside donors is money and time. We need to support families, foster the skills that lead to community building within the CBA, and position bluegrass and old-time music as a force for good in the world. A worthy goal indeed!



BILL AND FAYE DOWNS AWARD

David Brace and Larry Carlin are the 2019 Bill and Faye Downs awardees.

Mark Hogan



Mill Valley from 1999-2008; he founded the Marin Bluegrass Jam in 1999 that will celebrate its 20 year anniversary in June; he wrote the twice-monthly Carltone's Corner music newsletter from 2001-2011; from November 2007 until December 2010 he wrote the Almost Daily News column for the CBA website three times a week, and he's written dozens of CD reviews and other stories for The Bluegrass Breakdown. In addition, from 2002-2004 Larry served on the IBMA Showcase Band Selection Committee, which selected bands to perform at the annual IBMA World of Bluegrass every October.

The CBA is honored to recognize Dave and Larry!

The California Bluegrass Association is a volunteer organization. We have always been lucky that when a volunteer retires the CBA always seems to come up with new recruits for key positions. Such was the case when long time Father's Day Festival coordinator Montie Elston decided to retire and David Brace stepped up to take over the position in 2012.

David gave 110%, as the saying goes, in his efforts for the CBA. In addition to being the festival coordinator he also promoted



local bluegrass concerts in his home town of Modesto. David passed away this past February and will be missed by his CBA friends. It only seems fitting that Montie Elston, Dave's mentor along with Tim Edes presented the 2019 Bill and Faye Downs award.

Larry Carlin has been a longtime player, producer, promoter, and writer of bluegrass in Marin County. He led the bluegrass band Keystone Station during its 10-year run; he produced the monthly Bluegrass Gold series at the original Sweetwater in



near Petaluma, CA

2020 Camp Dates

April 16 - 19 / November 5 - 8

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Bluegrass & Old Time, plus Swing (Spring) & Irish (Fall)

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Montie Elston

Montie Elston CBA Person of the Year

A last-minute replacement Festival Director was desperately needed.

It was shortly before the opening of the 2019 Fathers Day Festival. The CBA board knew whom to call. The Director job is daunting: 42 Festival management teams, most comprising multiple volunteers, need to be wrangled, coordinated, and inspired to bring it off. From erecting the stage and setting up electrical circuits, to bringing in ice, and selling T-shirts: the Director must understand it all and make it happen.

Montie Elston is a son of the northern Central Valley. He left home early, joined the Army, served 23 years in Europe and the eastern US, and came back to his native Olivehurst upon retirement “*to get to know my folks as adults*”. This is rice and fruit country. After substitute teaching for many years, Montie signed on as a field rep for a local fruit processor, a job that demands a rare degree of patience and diplomacy to coordinate relationships between often oppositional fruit growers and processing companies at harvest time.

While stationed in Virginia as a recently single man, Montie discovered the many country and western dance halls that were clustered around the northern Virginia area, thanks to a diaspora of southerners heading north and bringing with them their hometown dances and music. Montie began dancing in the halls, and later joined the Country Steppers

on: of the Year – 2019

dance group, which performed regularly around the region and occasionally on TV shows. Oh...and while he was at it, he helped organize the local dancing association. One weekend when he wasn't dancing, he headed out to western Virginia, came across a bluegrass jam, fell in love with the music, and bought a bass. Thus began the second half of his life.

Back in California in 1989, he hauled his bass (*that ultimate instrument of order*) around to bluegrass and Old Time jams in the Sacramento area, gaining enough chops to perform with the Stone Creek bluegrass band at various festivals including the Woodland Festival....which (*should it come as any surprise?*) he soon directed. Then it was on to the CBA as a board member in 2001....and as FDF Director a year later. Perhaps it was his military training that gave Montie an appreciation for structure and procedures. Early on folks would come to him with a great idea. *"That's a great idea,"* he would say. *"Now, where are all your volunteers to help you make it work?"* He would make it clear that *"My vision is grounded in what is possible."*

In the Army, Montie had served as an Assistant to the Chaplain. His job was to protect the non-combatant Chaplain, and, as he says, *"do whatever was needed."* He is a religious and patriotic man, a fact he decidedly does not wear on his sleeve. Right away, he mandated three changes at the FDF: The Star Spangled Banner was to be sung on opening day, Emcees were to be graciously introduced, and a *"respectful and non-denominational"* invocation should greet each day. *"If the board did not like it, they could replace me."* They did not replace him, and the first two additions lasted beyond his final year as Director in 2011.

"A volunteer organization needs a change of management to keep it fresh and open to change." Though Montie retired from the board in 2017, he serves an Officer's role as Assistant Treasurer. His tenure as FDF Director was long because *"I have no hesitation to say No."* His respect for the bluegrass and Old Time community is deep: *"The people are the heart of bluegrass music. Such good hearts."* The aging volunteer pool concerns him: *"Perhaps we should have a Volunteer Tent at FDF to show our appreciation for those folks who put in hours each day in unpaid service to the CBA."*

Quintessential Montie: practical and caring.



CBA YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Academy

Darby Brandli



Although we already offered very successful Performance (Kids on Bluegrass) and Recreational (KidFest) activities during the Festival, it became clear that we needed to add an instrumental and vocal instructional component. So, eight years ago we farmed the project out to a private concession. It was a hit, and we sold out each year.

But by 2018 the CBA Youth Programs had developed a sufficiently deep pool of graduates to enable us to take over the management, increase the salary of the faculty, and provide paid opportunities for “Teaching Assistants” from our own pool of young CBA musicians.

The \$300 tuition for the four-day camp for 8-16 year old beginner-to-intermediate participants has not changed since 2013. The tuition funds the Director and 7-8 faculty for 50 children. Guitar, fiddle, mandolin, banjo, and bass are taught. Singing is emphasized. We publish our own CBA Youth Academy Songbook which each student receives. The songbook

was developed by CBA Lifetime Members Laurie Lewis, Kathy Kallick, Keith Little, and Butch Waller. Jack Tuttle and Justin Hiltner were pivotal in the production of the first and second editions of the book. The songbook includes classic bluegrass and old-time songs, as well as many songs by California Songwriters.

Justin Hiltner directed the Academy in 2018; and Kimber Ludiker took the reins in 2019 and will be returning for 2020. Over the years, faculty have included the bands Front Country, Steep Ravine, the Barefoot Movement, and Della Mae, in addition to many young CBA musicians over the years.

We are very proud that for the past seven years we have been able to provide scholarships to 100% of the families requesting them. We want every child to have the opportunity to learn how to play an instrument in a camp-like setting. The relationships the campers develop are important. Most of our “graduates” go on to participate in Kids on Bluegrass as their interest and skills increase. Lifelong friendships are created, as are bands (3 performing bands at last count), and we develop future leaders of the CBA Youth Program and the CBA. The Academy has been a huge success and has met all our expectations.



Ever since I first went to the CBA Father's Day Festival when I was very young, the bluegrass community has felt like an extension of my family.

Tessa Schwartz



The adults in the California Bluegrass Association have known me my entire life. They've seen me improve as a musician, develop my own views on the world around me, and become a more fully realized human being. It's an incredibly powerful thing to have a group of almost 3,000 people looking out for you.

Being a member of the bluegrass community is a source of great pride for me. I have devoted much of my life to a culture that very few people know about, and that's a good thing. There are just under 3,000 members of the CBA, making it the largest bluegrass association in the country. With a larger fanbase, we wouldn't have the tight-knit culture that is vital to bluegrass. Through bluegrass events, I have become friends with people that I ordinarily would never spend time

with, particularly adults. Whether we jam with them, learn from them, or camp next to them, bluegrass provides all sorts of opportunities for human connection. No matter our ability or age, anyone can feel like they're an invaluable part of the community.

As the California Bluegrass Association's new Youth Ambassador, I want to get youth more excited about the CBA, and about bluegrass in general. I want to improve and expand the range of activities available to young people at festivals. I also plan to adapt the CBA's internet and social media presence so that it is more refined and representative of the organization.



A Youth's Perspective on Keeping Traditional Music Alive

Sydney Roberts

On Club Fair Day, the sign-up sheet for Old Time String Band was wildly popular. At the club kick off, we had a huge attendance, but where I was looking for jam members I found mostly audience — almost no one brought an instrument. There were a couple of classical violin and guitar players, and a banjo, who had showed up to see what the buzz was about, but most of the people there were just curious to learn about a new style of music. Once they came the first time, they were hooked. Friends with whom I normally discuss social events and politics at lunch could get up and dance in the middle of the school day. It creates a safe space to be happy, let go, and learn without expectations.

As a club, we often sing songs from basics such as Cluck Old Hen to the Wailin' Jennys version of Wildflowers. Members will learn and lead square dances for the club. We have played Old Time, Bluegrass, Irish, Québécois, and more. The engagement of my friends is a great opportunity for me to do my own research and explorations to prep for teaching at the weekly meeting.

This is a small scale parallel to festivals and jams I have experienced. Traditional music is deeply rooted in oral history and passing down songs from person to person. My club has been a fun way to build community through live music performance. At this year's club fair we continued to find new members looking to join our little community, and I am excited to see where this year will take us.

CBA OUTREACH: GLOBAL

Bluegrass for Better

Helen Ludé



I am a 17 year old bluegrass loving San Franciscan fiddle player who was adopted from Fengcheng, China when I was nine months old. I founded Bluegrass For Better, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that aims to support and raise awareness about adoption through bluegrass music and to give back while simultaneously sharing the music I love with a wider audience. Thanks to the help of the CBA's generous sponsorship, our bluegrass benefit concert was a success, fundraising over \$5,500. In the future, we hope to release a CD (profits donated) and host a bluegrass benefit concert in Nanchang, China.

BECOME A CBA MEMBER:
<https://www.cbaweb.org/About/Join>



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BIG SUR FIDDLE CAMP

Keith Little International Project

Keith Little



Kazuhiro Inaba, better known as Kaz, journeyed from his home in Japan to wow the 2019 Vern's Stage audience with his mandolin playing and singing. Here's the backstory. Kaz and Keith have a 35-year history, that began with a jam at the 1983 FDF. Their friendship was further cemented when Keith made his first trip to Japan in 1991 with Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder and more recently in 2016 with Kaz's Bluegrass Buddies. As Keith says: "Kaz could play any bluegrass instrument, in anybody's band, anywhere."

Keith was determined to get Kaz back to FDF; and through CBA efforts secured an IBMA grant to help with the costs. Kaz directs a music camp in Japan that draws on the high caliber of interest and skill level of bluegrass students there. Next step: a potential CBA international exchange program between the two countries.

To be continued!

The IBMA Project

Ted Kuster



The CBA sends a team of volunteers to the International Bluegrass Music Association's annual conference in Raleigh, NC, every September. It's a great place to find out about hot new performers we might want to bring West for our members to hear, to show off music out of California that we think others should know about, and to stay in touch with the people who make bluegrass what it is today. The 2019 team was led by Lani Way and included Frank Solivan Sr., Karen Fichman, Dave Swartz, Teresa Michel, and Ted Kuster.

This year, we presented two showcase concerts and maintained a busy booth on the trade show floor. Our showcases featured hot young California talent: North Country Blue, Birches Bend, Crying Uncle, and AJ Lee & Blue Summit. (Blue Summit had won the band contest at the Freshgrass festival a week earlier and AJ Lee picked up the IBMA Momentum award as Vocalist of the Year the day before.)

We also presented more established California performers, such as Laurie Lewis and the Right Hands, the Evie Ladin Trio, and a selection of national performers popular with CBA members, such as Special C, Sideline, Italy's Red Wine, and Gina Furtado. California's own Molly Tuttle and Frank Solivan II were both mainstage attractions for the World of Bluegrass street festival that accompanies the conference. The CBA got a lot out of our IBMA presence this year and we have plans in the works to make an even bigger impression there on future visits.

CBA Membership Application



Name _____ Spouse or 2nd member _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Single membership (\$25/yr) _____ # of years _____ With Spouse/other added (\$30/yr) _____ # of years _____ Teens 16-18, voting (\$5/yr) _____ # of years _____

Patron membership (\$750) _____ Patron membership, couple (\$1000) _____

Birthdate (if senior citizen): _____

Credit card info (if paying by check, attach to form) ☐ Visa ☐ M/C ☐ Discover _____

Security code _____ Expiration date _____ / _____

Additional donations (tax deductible)

\$ _____ Youth Program \$ _____ CB A Music Camp Scholarship

\$ _____ Youth Academy \$ _____ CB A General Fund

Membership includes the *Bluegrass Breakdown*, and discount prices for all CBA-sponsored festivals and concerts. Prices subject to change without notice. Out of United States? Postal rates may be higher, please inquire. For information, call (831) 233-0448 or email cba.membership14@gmail.com

☐ New MembershipTotal \$ _____

☐ Renewal TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please make checks payable to California Bluegrass Association (CBA).
Mail to: CBA Membership Vice President Larry Phegley
P.O. Box 1143, Seaside, CA 93955

CBA TREASURY NEWS

The CBA's role in Bluegrass Music is *big*.

Val Cornejo



The CBA Board of Directors, Officers, Area Directors and Year-Round Job Holders worked hard. The recent financially successful Festivals and Music Camps were very encouraging and the excitement is building for FDF45. – the 45th! But costs every year are higher, regulations are tougher, and more volunteer hands are needed.

Cash assets total \$292,525. This seems remarkable for a small non-profit that does not have an office staff or even an office. Still a wise

Board wants to see a couple years of operational money in reserve. We need to put something away for a rainy day (or a rainy festival.)

CBA expenses totaled over \$600,000. What?!!!

Half of that is the cost to produce the Father's Day Festival. A big chunk is to provide the Breakdown. And the usual overhead costs are insurance, accounting, legal, office supplies, licenses and fees and the web site. The CBA relies on the net profits of the Father's Day Festival and Music Camp to make ends meet.

Guess What!

Our programs rely on volunteers. Many are no longer able to hold the positions they have held for years. There are big jobs and small jobs available. The scope of programs we maintain is considerable and in many years income does not stretch to cover expenses.

Donations are needed and sponsors will be rewarded!

*Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Cornejo, Treasurer
California Bluegrass Association*

BECOME A CBA MEMBER:
<https://www.cbaweb.org/About/Join>

California Bluegrass Association Balance Sheet

BALANCE SHEET - AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

CURRENT ASSETS

Total Bank Accounts	\$292,526
Total Accounts Receivable	\$1,855
Total Other Current Assets	\$6,403
Total Current Assets	\$300,784
Total Fixed Assets	\$119
Total Other Assets	\$77,199
TOTAL ASSETS	\$378,101

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Total Liabilities	\$771
Total Equity	\$377,330
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$378,101

GOALS & FOCUS: PROTECT CBA'S FUTURE, GROW CBA MUSIC PROGRAMS, FOCUS ON YOUTH, ENCOURAGE MEMBERSHIP GROWTH & PARTICIPATION, AND MAINTAIN ON-GOING DEDICATION TO THE MISSION STATEMENT:

"To promote, encourage, foster and cultivate the preservation, appreciation, understanding, enjoyment, support, and performance of bluegrass, old-time, gospel, and traditional instrumental and vocal music of the United States. To conduct and carry on, directly or indirectly, educational and promotional activities, including sponsoring or supporting festivals, contests, jamborees, jam sessions, presentations, exhibits, and performances, and to provide information relating to and to encourage playing and listening to bluegrass, old-time, gospel and traditional music."

California Bluegrass Association Income Statement

FY 2018/2019	INCOME	EXPENSE	TOTAL
ADMIN	53,853	59,004	-5,151
<i>Dues income totaled \$44,081. Donations \$3600</i>			
Breakdown	1,925	62,683	-60,758
<i>Not much paid advertising.</i>			
CAMP OUTS	21,090	17,210	3,880
<i>So much fun!</i>			
A Night at the Grange	13,744	11,123	2,621
OTHER CONCERTS	3,887	3,653	234
<i>Chico, Monterey, Clovis, Shingle Springs</i>			
Sonoma County Bluegrass & Folk Fest	10,766	9,836	930
<i>The venue flooded and still the music played.</i>			
FDF	344,208	304,592	39,616
<i>Costs are rising , regulations are tougher</i>			
Great 48	6,354	5,054	1,300
IBMA	5,601	6,235	-634
<i>Great raffle.</i>			
MUSIC CAMP	112,836	95,333	17,503
OLD TIME PROGRAMS	1,354	926	428
YOUTH PROGRAMS	28,182	23,997	4,185
<i>Donations to the Youth Program were \$11,269</i>			
Prev Year Carry Over	8,230	13,875	-5,645
TOTAL	612,030	613,522	-1,492
<i>Direct Program costs were \$492,000</i>			

THE URBAN HIP(STER) & OLD-TIME SCENE

Urban Hip(ster)

Allegra Thompson



In the past fifteen years or so, the Old Time music scenes up and down the West Coast have seen a revival, rejuvenated by an influx of tattooed and/or bespectacled young men and women wielding open-back banjos, Harmony guitars, and, of course, fiddles. Urban square dances have become a sea of plaid button-downs, faded black t-shirts, and artfully ripped skinny jeans.

How did these hipsters wind up sitting knee-to-knee playing the same tune in cross A for 15 minutes, or allemande-ing and do-si-do-ing with wild abandon? It may come as a surprise to learn that many of these young folks started out on the path to Old Time music in the Punk scene of the 90's and early 2000's.

Punk Rock might seem a wide leap from Appalachian fiddle and banjo music, but ideologically the two have a lot in common. Punk Rock philosophy is anti-elitist, and the whole point of the music is that it doesn't need to be produced in a studio: anyone can do it. Punk Rock also largely rejected rock-and-roll's habit of elevating the band's lead guitarist to almost godhood by cutting down on complex guitar solos, making the music itself more egalitarian and all about groove.

Old Time music and dancing share the same basic principles. Sure, the scene has its elites, and naturally there's skill involved, but the tunes and dances are simple enough for beginners to participate. The Old Time music style of jamming, where everyone plays the tune at once rather than taking turns with the melody, also aligns with Punk Rock's rejection of the solo.

Fancy instruments don't seem as important when you're playing music that until recently was played in barns or on front porches. The DIY approach grants Old Time players ownership of their music, even as it connects them to another time and place.

That Old Time Music

Karen Celia Heil



The San Francisco and East Bay Old Time music community has had an active late Summer and early Fall, starting with the relaxing CBA sponsored Lake Sonoma Campout in late August. The Berkeley Old Time Convention followed in September, and boasted a delightful variety of performers, from National Heritage Fellow recipient Thomas Maupin to Jerron Paxton, all mingling and jamming together at festival events and gatherings late into the night. Some of us Bay Area folks made the trip South to October's Santa Barbara Fiddle Festival, and had a great time mingling with our So-Cal music pals, such as David Bragger & Echo Mtn. String Band, as well as performers that came from afar such as the Horsenecks, Hog-Eyed Man, and Rafe Stefanini. Meanwhile, our local square dances in both Oakland and San Francisco are thriving, held down by our stellar local community.

What's Growing in the Tall (Jam)Grass?

Tyler Stegall



I have been an active member of the San Francisco bluegrass scene since 2014, after moving from my hometown of Canandaigua, New York. My very first day was overwhelming, spending time wandering around an unfamiliar city blanketed by a thick summer fog. While passing through a neighborhood I would later learn to be called “The Mission”, an enticing sound snapped me out of my geographical confusion. That

sound was bluegrass Monday at Amnesia.

Having then just recently started learning to play the banjo, I was pretty thrilled to have discovered this bar. The band featured a banjo, sometimes triple fiddles, mandolin, guitar, harmony singing, and more pedal tone electric bass than you ever knew you needed. Knee deep into the band’s second set I had started to make some new friends who were more than happy to answer my seemingly endless questions about bluegrass. It was then that I encountered a specific sentiment that I didn’t quite understand: “That’s not bluegrass music”.

It’s been more than five years since then, and discussions around what bluegrass music is seem to be occurring on a fairly regular basis in the San Francisco Bay Area. It feels like these discussions are happening during a time of uncertainty and change in the California Bluegrass Association. In a time where some of the most pressing questions are “how will the CBA stay relevant?”, “who will step up to volunteer at festivals?”, “how can we increase membership?”, or “how can we grow bluegrass music in California,” discussions around what is, or is “no part of nothing,” only get us further from answering these questions.

I’ve come to think of bluegrass and many other genres of music in the same way I think of trees. At some specific point in time a seed gets planted, and under the right circumstances it can grow.

When it flourishes it grows multiple branches, each one different from the rest but still originating from the same point of origin. Jamgrass, progressive bluegrass, mashgrass, newgrass, it all mostly comes from the same place. The most successful bluegrass festivals embrace all of these subgenres, thereby exposing more and more people to the music every year. Still, staunch traditionalists fear that bluegrass in its most traditional form may fall by the wayside and become a thing of the past. Perhaps some of this mentality is what’s kept the music going, but when it begins to make people feel excluded because their preferred flavor of bluegrass isn’t traditional enough it drives them away.

Many of those new fans inevitably find their way to Bill Monroe, Flatt & Scruggs, and if we’re lucky, CBA festivals and events.

There is no group I see this more in than the jamgrass crowd, a genre that is dominated by young adults who span the middle ground between youth and oldsters. At times it feels like there is much more distance between them and the California Bluegrass Association than there ought to be. The people I know in the jamgrass community are some of the biggest supporters of live music, attending music festivals with an excitement and energy that’s infectious. On top of this they love and respect traditional bluegrass and take the music into new and exciting territory. Jamgrass groups like The Infamous Stringdusters, Billy Strings, and others are selling out their tours, headlining festivals, and exposing new generations to their interpretation of bluegrass music. Many of those new fans inevitably find their way to Bill Monroe, Flatt & Scruggs, and if we’re lucky, CBA festivals and events.

THE CBA - 2770 MEMBERS - 500+ VOLUNTEERS

The CBA is a volunteer run organization made up of members who support the music we love, just because we love it.

Theresa Gooding, CBA President



For the past four years I have had the pleasure of volunteering backstage at the Father's Day Festival. It has been an incredible honor to get to know and work alongside the extraordinary backstage team of bluegrass lovers spanning all generations. Our mission is to keep the performances running smoothly

and on schedule for our audience. We want to help the bands perform at their very best and take away a positive impression of our festival and the CBA organization.

Our team includes Stage Managers, Hosts, Emcees and Hospitality. Stage managers act as the primary contact for the bands, ensuring that performers connect with sound engineers, have needed equipment, and stay on schedule. They also handle all surprises, like broken strings! The Host role manages all access to the backstage areas and provides transportation to and from the stage areas, merchandise, and workshops. Our talented emcees introduce the bands and ensure that announcements and information are provided to the audience. Jennifer Kitchen and her team provide an unparalleled hospitality spread for our performers. Everything is homemade including cookies baked fresh daily!

Obviously hosting top bluegrass talent is a treat, but the real fun is being part of this great backstage crew that keeps everything running according to plan. A heartfelt Thank You to the 2019 Backstage Team and a special shoutout to Bill Harmer, Kyle Slavich, Mark Hogan, and Joyce Hennessey for their work this year.

CBA Produced

Father's Day Festival
Music Camp
Sonoma County Bluegrass and Folk Festival
The Youth Academy
A Night at the Grange
Monterey Concerts
Clovis Summer Concert Series
The Bluegrass Breakdown

CBA Hosted

The Great 48
Spring & Fall Camp Outs
Old Time Gathering
Golden Old Time Camp Out
Bluegrass Jams

CBA Supported

Youth Talent
Kids on Bluegrass
The Instrument Lending Library
Scholarship & Travel Funds
International Bluegrass Music Association
Bluegrass Musicians Worldwide

Work in Progress

The Heritage Archive Project

Giving Back

California Fire Relief Instrument Replacement Fund

Identified Needs

Leadership: Key Job Holders
Support Team Members
Volunteers, Donors, Sponsors

CBA VOLUNTEERS AT THE FATHERS DAY FEST



BLUEGRASS DIVERSITY

The largest bluegrass association in the world, the California Bluegrass Association, exudes diversity.

Kara Kundert



Bluegrass is played in every corner of California, in countless styles, and by people of all backgrounds. It's what makes California bluegrass so special.

Since its inception, California bluegrass has been performed and celebrated all over the state. From Vern & Ray in the north to the iconic Ash Grove venue in Los Angeles, bluegrass doesn't just belong to San Francisco or Bakersfield: it belongs to all of us.

Similarly, many styles of bluegrass and roots music are played in California. Old-time thrives in LA, jamgrass grows in the Bay Area, and traditional hard-driving bluegrass burns bright in the Central Valley.

Since the beginning, women have played a pivotal role in the mission and success of the CBA and are featured prominently and often on the list of founding Charter Members. One such founding member is the inimitable Laurie Lewis. She along with many others, like Kathy Kallick and Sally van Meter, helped to define what California bluegrass is for the world.

Through the work of leaders like Darby Brandli, the CBA would go on to establish some of the first bluegrass programs for youth. Her tireless efforts, including the Youth Academy, Kids on Bluegrass, and the Instrument Lending Library, would help to create opportunity and access for children interested in bluegrass and old-time music from all over the state. It has proven to be a powerful force in creating more diverse and welcoming bluegrass, both in California and beyond. Our youth programs helped to train the first female IBMA Guitar Player of the Year, Molly Tuttle. Her old band mate AJ Lee is now also an IBMA Momentum Award winner.

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And finally, the CBA's community helped to create two new nonprofits devoted entirely to diversity and inclusion in bluegrass. The Handsome Ladies first took shape at the Father's Day Festival back in 2012, when several young women new to bluegrass happened to attend the festival in the same year. By forming their own safe and welcoming jam circles, they realized that they were stronger together, and went on to form a permanent community to help create those same kinds of opportunities for other women entering the world of bluegrass.

Less than five years later, the CBA board would vote to sponsor a float to enter the SF Pride Parade, becoming the first bluegrass organization in the world to celebrate Pride. This effort brought international attention to our association, along with the Best Overall Contingent Award in the 2017 San Francisco Pride Parade, making us the only organization to win the top prize in its first year. This project, known as Bluegrass Pride, has grown into a veritable force within the bluegrass and old-time communities. Since splitting off from the CBA into its own national nonprofit organization this past year, Bluegrass Pride has gone on to establish Pride celebrations in four cities across the country, start a monthly educational video series for beginner bluegrass and old-time pickers, sponsor dozens of shows and jams, and release a single that celebrates acceptance, love, and inclusion.

California bluegrass is great because its people are great. Our power and magic come from the fact that all people are invited into our circles. Our love of the music means that we love the people that play it, no matter who they are or where they come from.



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