

CBA Wintercamp in February 2010 still needs registrants



CBA Music Camp bluegrass banjo class

photo: Mike Melnyk

By Ingrid Noyes

Registrations are flowing in for the 1st annual CBA Wintercamp, which is our new music camp for players of bluegrass and old time music, to be held Feb 15th -18th at the Walker Creek Ranch near Petaluma.

A couple of classes are already full, and camp itself is getting close to halfway full, so if you'd like to come, you're advised to sign up soon for best choice of classes.

Walker Creek Ranch is situated in a beautiful location—out in the coastal hills countryside but only about 25 minutes from the towns of Petaluma or Novato. Vari-

ous accommodations are available there—you can bring your RV (or tent if you're up for winter camping!), you can choose "economy housing", which is like dorms with 6-8 people to a dorm, "semi-private rooms", which you share with one other person (or more), or if you want to pay the big bucks you can have a room to yourself. All these options come with three very good meals a day, served in the camp dining hall. Another option is to sign up as a "commuter", stay off site, and drive to camp each day, and then meals are optional, or you can elect to buy just lunch, dinner,

Continued on A-6

CBA Father's Day Festival 2010 Emerging Artist:

Frank Solivan and Dirty Kitchen

Each year emissaries from the CBA make the journey to Nashville for the big International Bluegrass Music Association's trade show and festival. Plenty of networking takes place and a bit of research, too. Member of the CBA's Talent Advisory Committee samples the best bluegrass the nation and the world have to offer. Tradeshow "showcases" allow up and coming bands to seek bookings at festivals everywhere. From these new and exciting groups are culled five of the best to consider for a main stage slot at the CBA's Father's Day Festival. This allows west coast artists to see the latest and greatest of old time and bluegrass music.

This year the hard fought battle was won by Frank Solivan and Dirty Kitchen. Their selection speaks to the CBA's Kids On Bluegrass program run by Frank's dad, Frank Solivan, Sr. The leader of our Emerging Artist band is an alumnus of the very earliest incarnation of the CBA's kids music program. Since then Frank, Jr. has become a nationally known, top shelf bluegrass musician, including a stint with Country Current, the U.S. Navy Band.

Recently Frank Solivan and Dirty Kitchen were big hits at Plymouth's Bluegrassin' In the Foothills Festival.

Be sure and look for this popular band at Father's Day Festival 2010, along with an all-star line up of fine artists.

PLUS...

- Feature Articles
- The Old-Time Rambler
- Studio Insider
- Luthier's Corner
- J.D.'s Kitchen
- Al Shank's Music Tidbits
- Brenda Hough's reviews
- ... and much more

Due to circumstances beyond our control there is no calendar of events this month.

Tenth annual Sonoma County Bluegrass & Folk Festival - March 13, 2010

By Mark Hogan

The Sonoma County Bluegrass & Folk Festival will be celebrating its tenth anniversary when it convenes at the Sebastopol Community Center on Saturday March 13, 2010 from 1PM to 9PM. This year's featured performers are Elmo Shropshire and Wild Blue, Ed Neff and Blue & Lonesome, the Kathy Kallick Band, 49 Special, Rita Hoskins & Cousin Jack, Evo Bluestein and the cowboy band,

Lone Prairie. The Sebastopol Community Center is located at 390 Morris Street in Sebastopol.

Advance tickets will be available January 1, 2010 on-line at www.cbaontheweb.org and by mail. For tickets by mail send a self addressed stamped envelope to SCB&FF, 3980 Monika Ct., Sebastopol, Ca. 95472. General admission is \$27 adv., \$32 at the door. For members of the Sonoma County Folk Society and the Cali-



Kathy Kallick and band will perform at Sonoma 2010.

photo: Mike Melnyk



Multi-instrumentalist
Evo Bluestein

fornia Bluegrass Association: \$25 adv., \$30 at the door. Children eleven years old and younger are free when accompanied by an adult admission. As has been the case in the past, food and beverage vendors will be available on site.

The Sebastopol Community Center is located at 390 Morris St. in Sebastopol off Hwy 12 going west from Santa Rosa. So come out and help us celebrate ten years of great bluegrass and folk music. For further information call 707-829-8012, 707-542-3798 or go to www.socofoso.com and look for more details in the Breakdown as things develop.

Time to renew your membership?
Check out the date
on mailing label below.

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2010 CBA Father's Day Festival

full hookups

- See page A-5 for reservation information

www.cbaontheweb.org



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 Address _____ Child(ren) _____
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 Phone _____ Email: _____

Membership Categories:

Single Membership \$25.00
 With Spouse/other added \$30.00
 Children 16-18 (voting) \$5.00 each
 (Under 16: free non-voting membership)
 Band Memberships Out of State Only
 (3-5 Members) \$40.00

Membership includes 12 issues of the Bluegrass Breakdown, and discount prices for all CBA sponsored festivals and concerts. Band memberships available for out-of-state bands. Each member is entitled to one copy of the publication. Please write names and addresses on a separate sheet of paper. **Prices subject to change without notice. Out of United States? Postal rates may be higher, please inquire.**

Please sign me up for the following:

_____ Single - 1 vote for _____ year(s) @\$25
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 For information, call 530-741-1259
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What's this?!



Looks like a membership application!

California Bluegrass Association Bluegrass Breakdown

is published monthly as a tabloid newspaper at P.O. Box 5037 Marysville, CA 95901, by the California Bluegrass Association. The CBA is a non-profit organization founded in 1974 and is dedicated to the furtherance of Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Gospel music. The views of the authors does not necessarily reflect the views of the CBA or its Board of Directors. Membership in the CBA costs \$25 a year and includes a subscription to the *Bluegrass Breakdown*. A spouse's membership may be added for an additional \$5 and children between 13 and 18 for \$1.00 per child. Children 13-18 who wish to vote will have to join for \$10.00. Names and ages are required.

Band memberships are only available for the out of state bands; cost is \$40. Subscription to the *Bluegrass Breakdown* without membership is available only to foreign locations. Third class postage is paid at Stockton, California. *Bluegrass Breakdown* (USPS 315-350). Postmaster please send address changes to: *Bluegrass Breakdown*, P.O. Box 5037 Marysville, CA 95901. Copy and advertising deadline is the 1st of the month, one month prior to publication (i.e. February deadline is January 1st, etc).

Members are encouraged to attend all board meetings. Please contact any board member or call the CBA office at 916 838-6828 for information and directions.

Please send all contributions and advertisements to:

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Special rates are in place for festival issues, due to the greater amount of issues printed and copies distributed. This is usually 200% of the regular rate, but the Board of Directors of the CBA reserves the right to change the policy at their discretion. Please contact the Editor for more details.

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Ads can be uploaded to the CBA FTP site at: <http://www.cbaontheweb.org/AdUpload.asp>

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK - Darby Brandli, CBA President

California's 2009 World of Bluegrass

When we talk about attending the IBMA World of Bluegrass, many in our local bluegrass community have little idea of the influence CBA members have in this event. While it is true many of our members live in other states and countries and also participate in the World of Bluegrass, I think it essential our membership body become aware of the "movers and shakers" in the IBMA and the World of Bluegrass who are card carrying members of the CBA and who reside in California. The CBA is a major player in "our" world of bluegrass.

The resident California CBA members were all over the place at IBMA: planning the event, winning awards, producing and/or performing at the Awards Show at the Ryman Auditorium, playing showcases (ours and others), hosting Gala Events, giving seminars at the Business Conference, performing at Fan Fest, sponsoring booths at the Fan Fest Exhibition and participating fully in all the events. I hope I don't leave anyone out of this mix....I could not be everywhere at once.

The big winners of the week were Roger Siminoff, Chris Stuart and Ivan Rosenberg. Roger won for Print Media Person of the Year for his contributions to Siminoff's Luthiers Glossary, Banjo Newsletter and the Bluegrass Breakdown. Roger is the current Area Activities VP for the Central Coast and a monthly contributor to the Bluegrass Breakdown, The Luthier's Corner. The Song of the Year Award went to Chris Stuart and Ivan Rosenberg (co-writers) for "Don't Throw Mama's Flowers Away" recorded by Dan Paisley & the Southern Grass. Chris' band, Chris Stuart and Backcountry, sang the song the night before the Awards Show at the Ryman when they performed in the CBA Suite.

These are huge honors for these CBA members.

Other resident California CBA members participating in the IBMA World of Bluegrass were (in alphabetical order):

1. Janet Beazley performed with Chris Stuart and Backcountry and was a member of the Showcase Talent Committee.
2. The Brombies (Jo Ellen and George Doering) had many performances at Artist Showcases and appeared in the CBA Suite with Patrick Sauber (CA) and Mike Bub. The Brombies also performed at the 2009 Father's Day Festival.
3. The Christian Bluegrass Association (Rich and Deb Ferguson) had a booth during Fan Fest.
4. Janet Deering of The Deering Banjo Company had a well visited booth and big presence in the Exhibition Hall during Fan Fest.
5. Bill Evans of BEML (Bill Evans and Megan Lynch) played showcases and I saw his book Banjos for Dummies on many an exhibitor's table.
6. Angelica Grim "hosted" our Suite and performed with her band at an Artist Showcase sponsored by Patuxent Music. Angelica's CD was getting a lot of attention at the World of Bluegrass from those in the industry.
7. Leroy Mack McNees and his wife Jan hosted the Bluegrass Chapel.
8. OMGG (Obviously Minor Guys and a Girl) were invited to appear on the main stage as part of the IBMA Kids on Bluegrass Program directed by Kim Fox and assisted by Frank Solivan. AJ Lee, Marty Varner, Nate and Max Schwartz stole our hearts. They were real pros and represented themselves and us well. OMGG also performed in our Suite and jammed like crazy everywhere. We can be very proud of them. They were four

of twenty-eight young people invited to play for the WOB.

9. Carl Pagter (CBA Member #1) is the Treasurer of the IBMA Foundation and co-hosted a luncheon and, as a Board Member, represented the International Bluegrass Music Museum.
10. Sammy Passamano III of Rural Rhythm Records was a presenter of Radio & Online Promotion in the Crash Course for Artists: an Intro to the Business of Bluegrass.
11. Rural Rhythm Records hosted a gala reception which featured just about everyone on their roster. The Passamano family presented their "Class of 2009" which includes the likes of Russell Moore & IIIrd Tyme Out, Carrie Hassler, Lou Reid, Audie Blaylock and Redline, The Lonesome River Band among others. Quite an impressive stable of artists for a California based company and their artists were up for awards and showcased everywhere all week long. Lovely people, lovely family.
12. Chris Stuart, in addition to being awarded the Song of the Year Award and showcasing his band Chris Stuart and Backcountry, wrote and produced the 20th Annual International Bluegrass Music Awards show held at the Ryman Auditorium. Chris was also a World of Bluegrass Program Committee member.
13. Yvonne Tater is a member of the IBMA Education Committee and also played bass for the Bluegrass Chapel.
14. Peter Thompson (radio host of Bluegrass Signal on KALW) was a discussion leader for a Broadcast, Label & Artist Forum: New Models for Effective Music Delivery.
15. Dana Thorin presented her line of music related goodies from her company Music Caravan all week at the Exhibition

Hall and was ably assisted by Brenda Hough.

16. Randy Torno was found in the Exhibition Hall presenting his Bluegrass Jam School program. This program was developed at The Blueridge Pickin' Parlor in Granada Hills and is now ready to hit the road. Randy has developed a very comprehensive program/package that provides everything necessary to establish and run a Bluegrass Jam School at a festival or as a continuous program.
17. Eric Uglum performed with Chris Stuart and Backcountry during the event.
18. Austin Ward, bass player with both Chris Stuart and Backcountry and Sierra Hull and Hwy 111. The Sierra Hull band performed on the main stage at Fan Fest and at the Ryman Auditorium. The band was nominated for the Emerging Artist Award. (Sierra Hull was nominated for Mandolin Player of the Year)
19. Christian Ward performed with Chris Stuart and Backcountry on fiddle.
20. Joe Weed of Highland Studios writes a monthly column for the Bluegrass Breakdown called "Studio Insider". Joe conducts business in Nashville during the IBMA World of Bluegrass week. Check out exactly what Joe does on the "tile" found on the website's message board page....pretty impressive career he has.
21. Betty Wheeler hosts a big Dobro Get Together in our Suite every year at the IBMA. Everyone who is anyone in the Dobro World comes through the door.
22. Craig Wilson, CBA Board Member, played mandolin and sang with the Leroy McNees Band during the Bluegrass Chapel. Craig is also making a name for himself as a luthier and brought three of his Wil-



photo: Mike Melnyk

Darby Brandli

son Mandolins with him.

23. Dwight Worden is on the IBMA Board of Directors and was everywhere during the week. Dwight moderated the Membership Constituency Meeting for Associations.

I have four more CBA Californians to add to this list although all four have moved out of state leaving only their parents here. Rob Ickes won Dobro Player of the Year again, a remarkable feat and a remarkable musician. Tashina Clarridge placed second in the Grand Master Fiddler Championship. Tashina is now performing in a band called the Bee Eaters who will be touring in California later this year. Megan Lynch performed with Bill Evans (Bill Evans and Megan Lynch) and moderated a seminar during the business conference entitled: Teaching Bluegrass: An Alternative Revenue Stream. Megan also conducted one of her Fiddlestar Music Camps preceding Fan Fest and appeared with Pam Tillis at the Grand Ole Opry. Frank Solivan & Dirty Kitchen performed brilliantly in multiple showcases and were selected as the CBA Emerging Artist and will appear as such at the 2010 CBA Father's Day Festival. The CBA is a major player in the IBMA and the annual event known as the World of Bluegrass held each year now in Nashville. Our membership should be proud of our Association and what we contribute to the music.

Minutes of the September 19, 2009 - California Bluegrass Association Board Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Rick Cornish, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 9:00 am at the Amador County Fairgrounds.

Roll call was taken and the agenda was set.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The motion to approve the August 16, 2009 board minutes was carried by unanimous vote.

PERSONS DESIRING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON UNAGENDIZED ITEMS

There were none.

OLD BUSINESS

2010 Talent

Carl and John reported that

everyone on the list that was approved at the last board meeting was booked and came in under the approved budget.

Gate Coordinator Replacement

Rick reminded the board that this vital position needs to be filled and we need to have this need prominent on the website and in the breakdown. In general, we need to emphasize the ticket is free to volunteers.

NEW BUSINESS

Ticket Prices

There was discussion regarding some of the expenses that are being increased this year. A few of our vendors will be increasing their prices and the stage is not

safe to use again. There was a lot of discussion on various ways those increases could be covered. A comparison was made of our ticket prices to other similar festivals it was determined that our prices were still much lower.

The motion for a small increase for the 4 day ticket price and the Friday and Saturday only prices was approved by unanimous vote.

Stage Rental Prices

Tim brought up the discussion of a stage rental using the company that Larry Baker is using for this festival. There was a lot of discussion of the size, the roof line and overhang. We might be able to work out a deal by offering a multi-year commitment or multi-festival commitment (by working

with Larry Baker and his festivals). There will be more investigating of this and other bids and a report will be made at the next meeting.

Write in Deadline for elections

Carolyn commented that she thought write in candidates should also be valid candidates. It should be made clear in the by-laws that write-in candidates are not subject to the same requirements as the "official" candidates. Any member can write in the name of someone other than those who are on the ballot.

Sound Levels in Grass Valley

George Rellis made a recommendation to the board that a clause should be added to the entertainer's contracts advising them

of the volume levels to which we must adhere, per our contract with the fairgrounds and that the entertainers (who bring their own sound man) will be fined for any breach of those levels, to be deducted from their fee prior to receiving payment. Carl is to have the precise wording for board approval by the October meeting.

T-Shirt Direction

The motion to appoint a design committee consisting of Darby, Rick, Mark Varner and Bruce Campbell was approved by unanimous vote.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report

Ed distributed a report and made a presentation.

Continued on A-9

CBA Father's Day Festival full hook-ups

By Ed Alston and Craig Wilson

Advisory to all folks wanting to reserve full hook-up RV spaces for the 2010 Father's Day Festival: Don't bother setting your alarm clocks to call CBA promptly at 8 AM on Nov. 1. In fact, you needn't call at all, since 2010 full hook-up (FHU) reservations will be determined solely by lottery as was done at the 2009 Father's Day Festival.

Obtaining FHU reservations for our annual Grass Valley gala has long posed a challenge. With only some 38 such spaces available, and with a first-come/first-served system determining who gets reservations, anyone who failed to call on the very day reservations opened – some seven months prior to the festival – stood little chance of reserving a FHU site. For last year's festival the CBA's board moved to improve the FHU reservation system. It adopted the below-outlined policy to insure fairness and convenience in awarding FHU reservations to future festival attendees.

In brief, this policy requires every member wanting to reserve a FHU space to first enter a qualifying lottery. To so enter, one need only mail his/her name, address, phone no., and CBA member number or submit that information via e-mail to the FHU Lottery Coordinator by January 15, 2010 – no multiple entries permitted. Those who place sufficiently high in the lottery to qualify for a reservation must tender their FHU fees to CBA by the date given in the notification of lottery results.

The remaining lottery entrants will be placed, in order, on a waiting list for notification whenever a reservation opens up. Anyone who might want to reserve a FHU space next June is strongly encouraged to read through the CBA's FHU lottery policy:

FATHER'S DAY FESTIVAL FULL HOOK-UP (FHU) RESERVATION POLICY

1. Reservation Lottery System: Effective immediately, reservations for FHU sites at Father's Day Festival (FDF) will be determined strictly by lottery. Lottery placement will govern assignment of specific reservable FHU sites (where requested by reservation holders).

2. Determining Reservable FHU Sites: By the December board meeting of the year preceding FDF, the Festival Director will submit to CBA's board the number of FHU sites to be made available through lottery, along with a list of FHU sites to be preemptively reserved for entertainers and for specific festival personnel.

3. Exemptions from Lottery: (a) Every lifetime CBA member will be exempt from the lottery

process, and entitled to one FHU reservation, so long as s/he (1) requests a reservation before December 15th of the year preceding FDF, and (2) complies with deadline for payment of FHU fees. (Note: some electrical hook-ups are available in the handicapped camping sections.)

(b) Any CBA member with disability requiring FHU amenities will be exempt from the lottery process, and is entitled to one FHU reservation, so long as s/he (1) provides his/her DMV placard no. and requests a reservation before December 15th of the year preceding FDF, and (2) complies with deadline for payment of FHU fees.

(c) The board may authorize additional exemptions for good cause at any duly noticed board meeting prior to January 1 of each year.

4. Lottery Eligibility: Every CBA member who intends to buy a 4-day FDF ticket, and who will not have a reservation through exemption, is eligible to enter the FHU reservation lottery. Each CBA membership number is restricted to just one lottery entry. No lottery entry may be transferred.

5. Reservations Non-Transferable: No FHU reservation may be transferred, whether obtained through exemption or through lottery. If a reservation holder is compelled to cancel his/her reservation, CBA will refund the amount paid consistent with existing refund policy, and will offer that reservation to the next person in order on the FHU waiting list.

6. Lottery Procedure: (a) Each participating CBA member will mail (or e-mail) his/her entry, without payment of any fee, to the FHU Lottery Coordinator, beginning November 1 of the year preceding FDF. Each entry must list entrant's name, address, phone no., and CBA no. Entries may be submitted in any legible format which includes all requisite information. If confirmation of entry receipt is desired, SASE must accompany mail entry; all e-mail entries will be confirmed by reply e-mail.

(b) Entries will close January 15th – entries postmarked after January 15th will be added to the bottom of the waiting list, in order of postmark dates.

(c) The FHU Lottery Coordinator will confirm eligibility of all entries received. S/he will then assign sequential numbers (beginning with 1) to each valid entrant, and prepare confidential listing of this data. This list will be placed in sealed envelope marked "CONFIDENTIAL – NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL LOTTERY CONDUCTED."

(d) Within three days following close of entries, the FHU Lottery Coordinator will telephone or e-mail CBA Chair, Director of Operations, and Festival Director to convey the number of valid entries received. These three will thereupon select (by majority decision) a procedure for prioritizing each entrant's number by a wholly random method.

(e) The selected procedure will be completed in the presence of at least two disinterested board members or officers not later than January 25th. When completed, the FHU Lottery Coordinator will then open the aforesaid sealed confidential envelope, and match results with entrants names, to compile a prioritized list for dissemination to concerned staff.

(f) The FHU Lottery Coordinator will convey the prioritized list not later than January 30th to Festival Director, and E-Commerce and Advance Ticket Coordinators. Each coordinator will retain this list through June of the following year.

(g) The FHU Lottery Coordina-

tor will then notify all entrants of their placement in the lottery, that is, numerical position on either the reservation holders list, or the waiting list.

(h) Notification of lottery results will be made by post card to every entrant, unless s/he requests otherwise. Notification to "winners" will include BOLD-FACE UPPER-CASE advisory of deadlines for (a) payment of FHU fees, and (b) for purchase of at least one 4-day festival ticket, together with advisory that failure to meet either deadline will cause reservation to be forfeited [with return of fees tendered, consistent with CBA's refund policy].

(i) Deadline for payment of FHU fees will be set at least 10 business days after notification. Deadline for reservation holders' payment of 4-day FDF ticket fees will be set at least one month after the FHU-fees deadline at Early Bird ticket prices.

(j) Should any of the above-noted intermediate deadlines be extended in conducting the lottery, subsequent deadlines (e.g. for payment

of FHU fees and purchase of 4-day FDF tickets) will likewise be extended.

(k) Any member desiring to appeal lottery results must so notify CBA's board within 10 days of receipt of notification of such results. The board will decide such appeal consistent with its written procedures, and within 45 days, unless good cause exists for continuance.

7. Policy Revision: This policy, adopted Sept. 2007, will be subject to board review after each festival, whereat the board will consider input from any interested CBA member. Revision of this policy may be effected consistent with CBA's by-laws.

Contact information:

Craig Wilson
FDF FHU Coordinator
11119 Academy Avenue,
Bakersfield, CA 93312
661-589-8249
cbahookups08@gmail.com



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CBA Wintercamp in February 2010 still needs registrants

From page A-1
lunch and dinner, etc.

Prices range from \$350 (commuter, no meals) to \$700 (private room with meals)—see our registration form for the full details.

This camp is modeled after our very popular summer camp, and was created to accommodate the increasing demand for this fun and valuable experience. Camp starts the Monday of President's

Day weekend (Feb 15th) with some of our favorite classes, some introductory jam sessions, and staff introductions. Tuesday through Thursday mornings are instrumental and vocal classes, with about ten students to a class, and a variety of elective classes in the afternoons. In the evenings, we offer dancing, jams, and a staff concert, and camp ends Thursday late afternoon with our student concert.

We're working on some ideas for a nearby Thursday evening event for those who want to linger—more on that soon!

The camp is designed for "advanced beginner players" (you know the basics of your instrument, can tune it and play some tunes) through upper intermediate (you jam a lot, maybe play in a band, are comfortable with your instrument, but want to learn

more, meet people and have fun!). For more details on class levels, see the instructor page of our website, where you'll also find class descriptions with recommended prerequisites, and instructor bios.

Also on our website, you'll find answers to frequently asked questions and lots more information about the camp. You can sign up online with your credit card from the website, or you can mail

in your registration form with a check (the form is in this newsletter, you can also print it out from the website).

Some scholarship money is still available for those who need financial assistance (see the FAQs page for details or call).

Check it out at www.cbamusiccamp.org or call 415-663-1342 for more information. Hope to see you there!

CBA Winter Camp - 2010 Registration Form

Name _____ Age, if under 18 _____
first nickname? last

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

e-mail _____
(or fax # if you don't have e-mail)

Phone, home: _____ cell: _____ work: _____

Instrument—Check one, or indicate first and second choice, for morning classes. *Please see Instructors page of website, or contact us, for descriptions and prerequisites for each class, before making your selection.*

banjo, bluegrass, level 1 _____	dobro, level 1 _____	guitar, level 1 _____
banjo, bluegrass, level 2 _____	dobro, level 2/3 _____	guitar, Carter, level 2 _____
banjo, bluegrass, level 3 _____	fiddle, level 1 _____	guitar, crosspicking, level 3 _____
banjo, oldtime, level 1 _____	fiddle, bluegrass, level 2/3 _____	mandolin, level 1 _____
banjo, oldtime, level 2/3 _____	fiddle, oldtime, level 2/3 _____	mandolin, OT/early BG, level 2 _____
bass, level 1 _____	vocals, level 1 _____	mandolin, bluegrass, level 3 _____
bass, level 2/3 _____	vocals, level 2/3 _____	

Sign up early for best choice of classes!

Please check if applicable:

_____ This is my first time at a CBA camp. I heard about it from _____

_____ I am a CBA member.

_____ I'm under 18. My parent's or guardian's name is _____

Cost: (campers 10 and under, call for discounted rates; family non-camper members, no classes, call for rates)

\$ _____ **Commuter, no meals** (or buy individual meals, call for information)--\$350

\$ _____ **Commuter, with meals**—\$450

\$ _____ **Tent or RV Camping** (circle one) with meals—\$450

\$ _____ **Economy cabins with meals**—(6-12 people per cabin) \$500

\$ _____ **Semi-private room with meals**—(2, or up to 5, people per room--\$600

\$ _____ **Private room**—\$700

\$ _____ **Enrollment fee for child or sibling** (to age 10—over 10 call for rates) for Fungrass program, includes meals and lodging—Camping \$100; Economy \$125; Semi-private \$175
child's name(s) and age(s): _____

\$ _____ **Contribution to scholarship fund** (optional--help a low-income camper come to camp!)

\$ _____ **Reduced fee, scholarship requested** (to apply, please call or see FAQs page of website)

\$ _____ **Late fee**—after Jan 1, add \$35

\$ _____ **Total amount enclosed** (checks payable to CBA Music Camp)

Send this form, filled out, with payment, to:

We will contact you within a week of receiving your registration. **Please wait one week,** and then if you haven't heard back, contact us to confirm your registration status.

You are not enrolled until you receive confirmation and a registration code.

Questions? check the frequently asked questions (FAQs) on our website: www.cbamusiccamp.org or contact director Ingrid Noyes at (415) 663-1342 (after 9 a.m.), or info@cbamusiccamp.org

CBA Music Camp
PO Box 840
Marshall, CA 94940

Lost and Found from Father's Day Festival 2009 Grass Valley

By Carolyn Faubel
Membership VP

Our upcoming annual meeting and campout at Colusa Fairgrounds may be your last chance to claim your lost items! After November 1, all items will be gone through; some donated to charity, some will find use within the CBA, and some might find other disposition. Please go through this list if you have lost something at the festival last June and contact me at cbamembership@syix.com, or 530-741-1259 if something looks familiar.

Miscellaneous items are: REI member card, pink and black notebook, Betty Boop pin, PVC pipe nipple, pillow case with floaty toy, hoop earring, key on a piece of black webbing, probably a house key, pink sparkly shoe (kid's size), Martin guitar key chain, lipstick in case, lady's bicycle gloves, baby doll in pink outfit, banjo head and sets of strings, pocket knife, tuner (not those little square ones), woven grass handbag with little kid's vest and pj bottoms in it, digital camera (I think this one was found during music camp), 4 pairs sunglasses, 1 pair sunglasses found at Zuniga's camp, 4 pairs prescription glasses, money.

And now, the clothes: Kayak Adventures tee shirt, Hardly Strictly tee shirt, appliquéd chambray shirt, navy blue zippered sweatshirt, new festival tee, Mercedes Benz ball cap, CPPA ball cap (Hog Hat).

Lost items that have still not surfaced--Do you have them?

REI tent, blue and yellow
Red camera
Bill Clifton CD
Cell phones
Wheel chair cushion
Men's wallets
Book, Charlie Wilson's War
Cloth back folding chair, green

IBMA 2009 - The Business Conference

By Ted Lehman

Used by permission from
Ted Lehman's Bluegrass Blog
<http://tedlehmann.blogspot.com>

On Monday morning, the first day of IBMA, a panel convened by Archie Warnock examined "The State of the Industry" with a clear, incisive panel committed to discussing the many issues confronting bluegrass music in this time of rapid change and a discouraging economy. Brandi Hart of The Dixie Bee Liners, John Lawless from the Bluegrass Blog, and Ronnie Reno who (unbeknownst to me) is deeply involved in Blue Highway TV and working to get television opportunities for our music.

Their presentations examined ways to use technology more effectively at the band level for distributing music as well as gaining, building, and maintaining fan bases through use of today's emerging technologies, with a special emphasis on social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, ReverbNation, and others. The well-attended panel met from eleven until one and set what, for me, became a major theme of the business conference: Using technology to grow bluegrass music. Panels and meetings held throughout the first four days of IBMA looked at this theme from many angles. A look at some of the topics dealt with in conference sessions suggests the breadth of the knowledge and discussion available:

New & Improved Web Sites
Teaching Bluegrass: An
Alternative Revenue Stream
Internet Marketing & Social
Networking 101
Web Video 101
Maximize Your Money:
Understanding Financial
Management in the Music
Business
Finding, Managing, and
Keeping Good Volunteers
Negotiating A Performance
Contract: "You Want What?"
New Developments in Live
Sound Technology

On Tuesday afternoon, I was privileged to sit on a panel entitled "Writing for the Internet: Blogging & Building an Audience" moderated by John Lawless of the Bluegrass Blog with Ashby Frank (mandolin player with Special Consensus), Craig Shelburne from CMT.com, and me. Each of us blog for a different purpose in different styles and with differing orientations to what we do. About twenty or twenty-five people attended a session scheduled for an hour and stayed an hour beyond the scheduled ending asking good questions and stimulating a fascinating discussion about how to build a blog and use it to drive people toward you. Of particular interest to me was the emphasis in both the presentations I attended on keeping a web site, social network site, or blog very active in order to encourage readers to re-

turn. There was lots of general talk as well as specific technical details suggested to help people attending. It's not easy to make such sessions appear glamorous for an effort like my blog. While I'm using pictures, people won't perk up and take note, but those wanting to build their expertise, professionalism, and incomes will pay attention. A useful and worthwhile conference well designed by the staff and the volunteers will provide much for attendees to benefit from. IBMA did that every day, providing genuine value for those willing to spend the relatively small amount the registration costs as an investment in their careers. To make it "about the music," musicians and others in the music business have to learn how to attract and maintain fans, and doing that requires more than just playing well.

On Wednesday, one of the featured activities was a Health Fair. IBMA has shown a significant concern for the mental and physical health of bluegrass musicians. There was a panel on weight management and diabetes at the conference, one on the new health care plan, and a mentor session on maintaining your singing voice. IBMA has found a health care provider to offer health insurance musicians can afford. I got involved in this element of IBMA's efforts a couple of years ago when I met a Tennessee attorney named Scott Madden at Merlefest, and we discussed his son's interest in focal dystonia, a syndrome threatening the careers of many musicians. A year later we met again and talked some more. Scott's son Jared is a Dr. of Osteopathy who teaches at the newly formed DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine at Lincoln Memorial University. The school has developed an interest in research and treatment of musicians suffering from repetitive motion injuries, a serious problem that has ruined the careers of many pickers. I offered to make an overture to Dan Hays, and even though it was late in the planning season, space was made available for DeBusk to spend one day describing its services and treating people. All day long musicians and others were lined up to spend time having Dr. Jared Madden treat them, and reports I received were highly enthusiastic. My own experience of having Jared treat my neck was highly positive. I'll be writing a separate blog entry about this in a month or two, but people suffering from dystonia or other repetitive motion injuries should give the school a call.

Whether a person attended IBMA as a performer, a promoter, a record executive, a techie, a writer, an agent, an equipment manufacturer, a broadcaster, or a merchandiser, the program provided opportunities for people to learn, share, and develop. I counted about 35 different workshops and labs during the daytime hours. In addition, to the health fair, the exhibits, the gig fair, mentor sessions and much,

much more. Included was a day-long seminar for teachers focused on teaching bluegrass in the classroom. Anyone wishing to develop and build their knowledge base or get more skills could have kept busy all day for each day of the business conference. I was surprised not to see more musicians participating as attendees at the seminar presentations I attended. I know they

\$340.00 including three banquet/meals and all associated events except the awards ceremony. The program offered a multitude of opportunities for musicians and others to learn to be more professional and to increase their income significantly through taking advantage of and understanding the changes we all face. No person associated with bluegrass could fail to learn

Networking is a crucial activity at IBMA. Performers are looking for festivals to perform at, record labels to release their work, agents to help them book, and broadcasters to help disseminate their sounds. All these people mill around the halls of the convention center, the hotel, and the exhibition hall, chatting, meeting-and-greeting, and moving on to the next person or group. I was particularly interested in putting faces and voices to the people who have become my readers and friends through Facebook. People who see this as a useless activity, who maintain that it's all about making the music and letting that stand for itself are just fooling themselves. The gig fair, held on Wednesday afternoon, gives bands a chance to contact individual promoters for a quick presentation. Many other opportunities to do careful self-promoting exist every day.

During the entire week, however, large festivals and smaller promoters are constantly meeting, talking to, and listening to bands they've never heard before. At official showcases and after hours showcases, many bands that have not been very high profile get a chance to display their skills and showmanship, while promoters try to take it all in and to make choices that will

enliven and strengthen their events. During the first four days, at three meal events and an evening showcase, official showcases presented eighteen bands in the banquet hall to large audience. Each day, except Thursday, when the Awards Show took place, there were after hours showcases. There were 51 separate showcases with each presenting between one and ten bands during the period 11:15 PM - 2:00 AM. Some presented high profile bands (Illrd Tyme Out, Lonesome River Band, Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper) while others presented bands just turning out (Jerry Butler & the Blu-J's, Darin and Brooke Aldridge, The Quebe Sisters Band, Tina Adair Band) for twenty or twenty-five minutes each. Some bands performed at several different showcases. There were also private, invitation only events and private showings in hotel suites and small meeting rooms. In other words, the music was put to the front and bands got a chance to be seen by the people who count in terms of booking and promotion. Getting booked at these events requires hard work during the year. Bands can't just sit and wait to be invited. Dave Burley also promoted a series of alternative showcases at Layla's Bluegrass Inn, just a couple of blocks from the convention hall, where a dozen or more bands were seen over four days. At the one we attended, several promoters were in evidence.



Team CBA in the IBMA CBA suite: John Duncan, Frank Solivan, Mark Hogan, Dave Gooding, Carl Pagter, Angelica Grim, Darby Brandy, Montie Elston, Christine Grim, Susan Bell, Jack Hyland, Bruce Campbell, Larry Kuhn, and Ed Alston.

attended the gig fair, because this event provides a direct opportunity, especially for new bands, to get some contact with many potential gigs in one place and time, but I was told there were few enough participants that people were able to do quick walk-bys at festival tables they had not scheduled.

I've read a good many criticisms in the forums and mailing lists about the expense of IBMA and its loss of connection to the musicians. For a person seeking to increase income, visibility, and skills at the business end of being a bluegrass musician or associated with bluegrass in almost any other capacity, IBMA represents an unparalleled opportunity to learn and develop. We live in a changing world in which the recording industry has been turned upside down, the computer has entered into almost every aspect of our lives, the economy has been in a decline, and the life of a touring bluegrass musician or members of a local or regional band has become increasingly challenged. The conference itself seems to be expensive, but one price provides access to all aspects of the event. I checked the cost of attendance at the National Council of Teachers of English, an event I attended from time to time in an earlier incarnation, and found that full attendance at the conference, a couple of seminars, and a banquet or two could easily add up to more than \$500.00, a significant sum for a working teacher. This year's early bird registration for IBMA cost

new and valuable information and skills if they attended conference sessions or used the assembled people to increase their visibility and knowledge through careful and focused networking. And it's all deductible.

Irene has pointed out to me that there are significant ways to reduce, or nearly eliminate the costs of attending IBMA. One way is to volunteer. Volunteers, who work about four hours a day during the convention, receive free admission to all elements of IBMA except the meals. Staying in accommodations other than the headquarters hotel can help achieve significant savings. One woman she talked to paid \$40.00 a night to stay in a hotel by using PriceLine to get a discounted rate. Parking in the lot only three blocks away cost just \$10.00 per day. In other words, you can make the event more affordable. In the end, however, not attending IBMA and using it to improve your visibility and skills costs more than being there. And you miss the fun, too!

The only problem for me was that there were too many interesting sessions which conflicted with other events and activities I wanted to involve myself in. One involved meeting and chatting with people I've known for years as voices on the forums and mailing lists or performers from the stage who I haven't had a chance to interact with. What a rich interpersonal soup the business conference presents.

Bill Evans and Megan Lynch tour California

Bill Evans and Megan Lynch - fresh off their third UK/Ireland/Wales tour are welcomed back to the US with several Northern California concerts:

Thursday November 5: Freight and Salvage (the new one!) Berkeley
 Friday November 6: Mission City Roasting Company, Santa Clara
 Sunday November 8: Pleasanton Library
 Friday November 13: San Jose House Concert
 Saturday November 14: Asbury United Methodist Church, Livermore

For details and further info: <http://www.myspace.com/bill-evansandmeganlynch> or call Maria Nadauld 510-828-6961

Since teaming up as a touring duo two years ago, bluegrass mainstays Bill Evans & Megan Lynch have been performing all around the United States and in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Banjo player and Banjo For Dummies author Bill Evans has performed with Dry Branch Fire Squad, Peter Rowan, David Grisman, Hazel Dickens, Laurie Lewis, Jody Stecher, Kathy

Kallick, Bluegrass Intentions and his own Bill Evans String Summit. Folks know Nashville resident Megan Lynch from her National Championship fiddling credentials and from her performances with 3 Fox Drive, Due West, Pam Tillis, Dale Ann Bradley, Tony Trischka, Chris Jones, Roland White and Jim Hurst. Together, Bill Evans & Megan Lynch are much more

than a fiddle and banjo duo. While virtuosic instrumental work is to be expected from these musicians, it's the outstanding lead singing of Megan and the pair's rich duo vocal sound that is a revelation.

Oak Grove (The Schwartz Family Band) is opening for Bill and Megan at Asbury United Methodist Church in Livermore on Saturday November 14.



Bill Evans and Megan Lynch are touring Northern California.

SCVFA's Eighth Annual Youth Fiddle Contest

The Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association (www.scvfa.org) will hold its eighth annual Youth Fiddle Contest on Sunday, November 1, 2009 at the Hoover Middle School, 1635 Park Ave, San Jose. The contest is open to fiddlers through the age of 16. It is very informal. We encourage young fiddlers to give it a try even if they are just starting to learn violin or fiddle. It is also a great opportunity to meet folks their own age.

The contest is limited to 25 contestants who can pre-register for \$5 or register at the contest for \$10, provided there's still room. Each contestant receives a free pass for one adult. Details and entry forms are available online at www.scvfa.org/contestinfo.shtml. Admission to attend the event and the jam is \$5; youths 16 and under are free.

Each contestant is required to play two tunes in four minutes

or less: a "traditional-style" tune and a tune of choice. The players are judged on qualities including rhythm, intonation and fiddling style, and they may have an accompanist or two who cannot play the melody.

There are three age divisions: 8 and under, 11 and under, and 16 and under. The top five in each division will receive cash prizes and certificates, and the top winner in each division will also receive a custom-made trophy. All contestants who perform receive participation certificates and ribbons and will be entered into the grand-prize drawing for a student fiddle outfit (fiddle, bow and case) donated by Steven Joynes (The Fiddle Guy), Violin Restoration and Sales.

For more information, visit the website or contact Pete Showman, the SCVFA Fiddle Contest Chairman, at (408) 255-0297.

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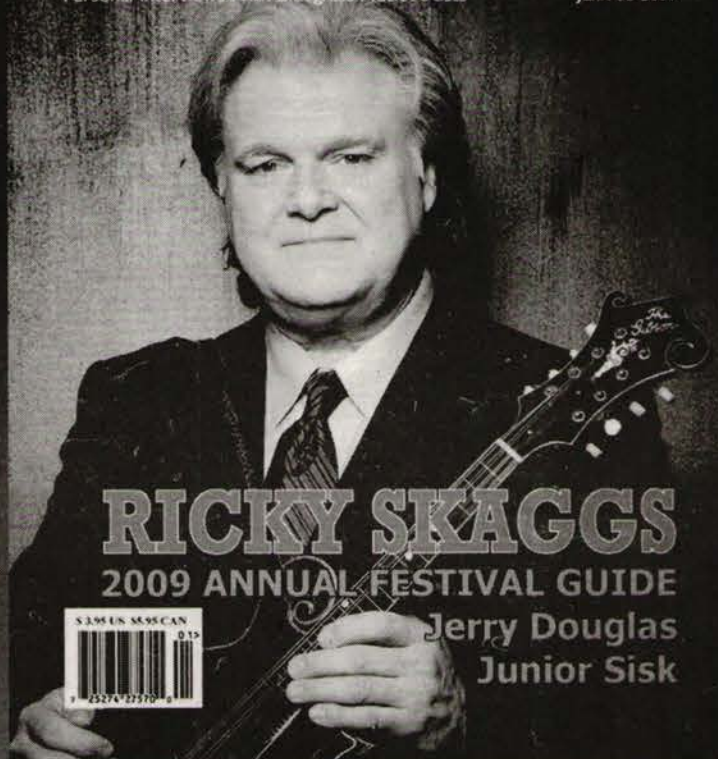
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Shelby Ash Presents in San Francisco!

TURKEY TROT 2009: an Americana Music Feast - Friday, November 27. The 10th annual "Turkey Trot" will be unlike any music event in history! Well that's not true, it's gonna be kind of like last years Turkey Trot and the 8 before that - only better! This year's feast gives its listeners its largest variety of Southern smoked and deep fried Americana yet: from old-school and outlaw bluegrass to alt-country to Southern-punk-grass. The tasty line up includes; the Pine Box Boys, Trainwreck Riders, the Earl Brothers, and the Mighty Crows. Wet Naps included with admission. @Cafe du Nord, 2170 Market Street, SF. 415-861-5016. 7pm/8pm, \$12/\$15. Advance tickets at www.cafedunord.com, or without service fee at The Music Store, 66 West Portal, SF. Show info: www.shelbyashpresents.net

AMERICANA JUKEBOX: Hill-billy Music For The 21st Century! "Americana Jukebox" is an all new monthly music series, every 3rd Friday, where you can catch some of the hottest hillbilly bands around playing a variety of music; bluegrass, honky-tonk, rockabilly, western-swing, alt-country, Cajun, and gangsta rap! Ok, just kidding

Minutes of the September 19, 2009 - California Bluegrass Association Board Meeting

From Page A-4

Membership Report

Carolyn distributed a report and made a presentation

Deb reported that they are working on the volunteer pins and limiting it to 5 and 10 year volunteers.

SET TIME AND PLACE FOR THE OCTOBER BOARD MEETING

Next meeting set for Sunday, October 18 at the Fall Campout held at the Colusa Fairgrounds.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

about that last one. Plough & Stars, 116 Clement, SF. 415-751-1122. 9pm. \$6-\$10 sliding scale. Show info: www.shelbyashpresents.net

11/7/09, CARELESS HEARTS (San Jose) good old country rock-n-roll.

12/5/09, KEMO SABE (SF) wild acoustic bluegrass with punk-rock attitude.

1/5/10, LEFT COAST SPECIAL (SF) '40s & '50s traditional Cajun dance music.

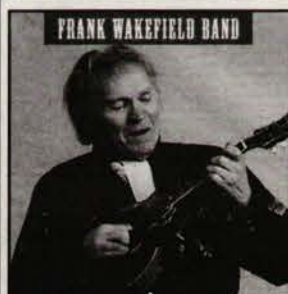
BLUEGRASS BONANZA! - Fri-

day, November 20 "Bluegrass Bonanza!" has been held each and every 3rd Friday for the last 5 years at San Francisco's favorite Irish watering hole, the Plough & Stars. 49 SPECIAL (SF via Alaska) have only been kickin' out the grass for one year now, but somehow over

night became SF's pride and joy by winning the coveted RockyGrass Band Competition (2009). www.fortyninespecial.com. Plough & Stars, 116 Clement, SF. 415-751-1122. 9pm. \$6-\$10 sliding scale. Show info: www.shelbyashpresents.net

Redwood Bluegrass Associates Presents Concert Season

2009-2010



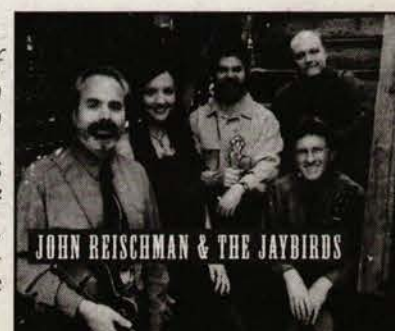
FRANK WAKEFIELD BAND

OCT. 24/09: FRANK WAKEFIELD BAND
with Jim Lewin, Jim Mintun, Louise Mintun, and special guests

"Frank was the first mandolin player to transform the bluegrass energy of Bill Monroe's style into something new. He split the bluegrass mandolin atom. Some of us, obviously, will never be the same again." - David Grisman

NOV. 14/09 JOHN REISCHMAN & THE JAYBIRDS
with Trisha Gagnon, Jim Nunally, Nick Hornbuckle, and Greg Spatz

"Unprecedented musicality. John's concept of tone, sense of melody, and attention to detail continues to astound not only students of the instrument but the entire contemporary folk community." - Chris Thile



JOHN REISCHMAN & THE JAYBIRDS



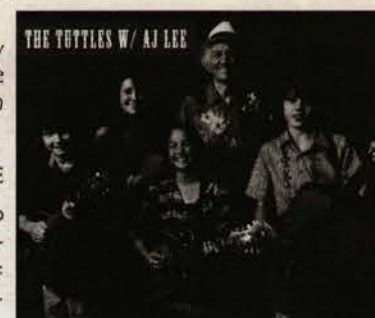
PETER ROWAN BLUEGRASS BAND

DEC. 5/09: PETER ROWAN BLUEGRASS BAND
with Keith Little, Jody Stecher, and Paul Knight

"I have always followed Bill Monroe's advice: if you can play bluegrass, you can play anything. At some point, I realized the songs I write take me in that bluegrass direction." - Peter Rowan

JAN. 23/10: THE TUTTLES WITH AJ LEE

Bluegrass teacher extraordinaire Jack Tuttle returns with two of the finest young singers in the country and a band of dazzling instrumentalists. They happen to be his talented children: Molly (16), Sullivan (14), and Michael (12) -- plus AJ Lee (12).



THE TUTTLES W/ AJ LEE



NASHVILLE BLUEGRASS BAND

FEB. 13/10: NASHVILLE BLUEGRASS BAND
with Pat Enright, Alan O'Bryant, Stuart Duncan, Mike Compton, and Andy Todd

"All the qualities of classic bluegrass: drive, precision, and most important, soul. Plus: exquisite harmonies." - Washington Post

MARCH 6/10: DRY BRANCH FIRE SQUAD
with Ron Thomason, Tom Boyd, Brian Aldridge, and Dan Russell

"I don't know which I enjoy more: DBFS's hard-core, purebred bluegrass music, or Ron Thomason's hilariously droll 'country bumpkin' (but not really) monologues" - Jonathan Takiff, Philadelphia Daily News



DRY BRANCH FIRE SQUAD



JOY KILLS SORROW

APRIL 10/10: JOY KILLS SORROW
with Emma Beaton, Wes Corbett, Matt Arcara, Jacob Jolliff, Bridget Kearney

"This Boston-based quintet is one of those young bands that manages to meld bluegrass, old time, and country into a cohesive sound that makes them 'poster children' for the Americana format." - JL, Sing Out!

MAY 1/10: KATHY KALLICK BAND
with Tom Bekeny, Dan Booth, Greg Booth, and Annie Staninec

"A mountain gal at heart, Kathy's singing has always been earthy and passionate. As a songwriter, she knows how to pen beautiful impressionistic pieces with memorable contemporary messages." - Joe Ross, Bluegrass Now



KATHY KALLICK BAND

BUY SEASON TICKETS

FALL 2009 SERIES: 3 shows, Oct-Dec: \$50
SPRING 2010 SERIES: 5 shows, Jan-May: \$87



ALL CONCERTS ON SATURDAYS AT THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1667 MIRAMONTE AVE. (AT CUESTA DR.), MOUNTAIN VIEW

5 PM: JAMMING BEGINS / 7 PM: DOORS OPEN / 8 PM: SHOWTIME - DELICIOUS PIES & BAKED GOODS AVAILABLE
TICKETS: \$18/ADVANCE, \$20 DAY OF SHOW (EXCEPT 12-6: \$20/22 AND 2-13: \$24/27)

INFORMATION: 650-691-9982, WWW.RBA.ORG



John Reischman and the Jaybirds: "Up In the Woods" live

For their Redwood Bluegrass Associates concert on Nov. 14th, John Reischman & the Jaybirds are doing something a little different: the second set of the show will be a performance of John's all-instrumental, all-original masterpiece album, "Up In the Woods," on the 10th anniversary of its release.

Perhaps inspired by what the

Contra Costa Times calls the "latest concert trend: classic album, from start to finish," John & the Jaybirds are in synch with the likes of Van Morrison ("Astral Weeks") and Devo ("Are We Not Men?"), but are the first bluegrass band to do this.

"Up In the Woods" is a landmark recording, showcasing both

John's extraordinary compositional skills -- does anyone else write such memorable tunes? -- and his peerless mandolin playing.

John Reischman is, of course, well-known to California bluegrass fans. After playing and recording for many years with the Good Ol' Persons and the Tony Rice Unit, he moved from the Bay Area to

Vancouver, BC, where he's led John Reischman & the Jaybirds since 2000. The band is currently recording their fifth album, and have set new standards for the successful integration of bluegrass and old time music. As FolkWax says, John Reischman & the Jaybirds offer "clarity, energy, good ensemble work, classy originals, and an ad-

venturous approach to the world of bluegrass and folk music -- along with engaging stage humor in powerful live shows."

The band is comprised of musicians ideally suited to perform the "Up In the Woods" tunes, as well as the extensive Jaybirds repertoire.

Jim Nunally, a San Francisco Bay-area veteran of several decades as a leading guitarist, songwriter and singer, appeared with John on the Grammy-winning CD "True Life Blues, The Songs of Bill Monroe," is a producer and session stalwart, and is also a member of the David Grisman Bluegrass Experience.

Chilliwack, B.C.-based Trisha Gagnon (acoustic bass) is portrayed by SingOut! as "one of the most versatile" and "irresistible" vocalists in bluegrass, her strong and distinctive style ranging from "mournful and plaintive" to "hopeful and yearning."

Nanaimo, B.C.-based Nick Hornbuckle has developed his own voice on the five-string banjo, a unique sound with a two-finger roll unlike other contemporary banjo players. "His banjo can be downright spine-tingling," wrote the L.A. Daily News.

Spokane, WA-based Greg Spatz is hailed as a "world-class bluegrass fiddler" by Fiddler magazine; his wide-ranging chops have made him a popular West Coast player for years, including stints with the legendary Frank Wakefield, and resophonic guitarist Rob Ickes.

Joe Ross (BLUEGRASS NOW) reviewed "Up In the Woods" when it was released: "This highly-recommended album is one that you can listen to over and over without ever tiring of it. If you like tone, clarity, and dynamics in your instrumental music, then this album is for you. While each tune has its own story, I was particularly impressed with the overall feeling that I was left with when the last few measures of track 12 came to an end. I just felt like spinning the entire album again...and again...and again."

The 2009-10 RBA Concert Season presents a number of masters of the mandolin, including Frank Wakefield, Mike Compton, Jody Stecher, Tom Bekeny, and Ron Thomason -- as well as John Reischman. Bill Monroe's legacy is in good hands, and this will be most evident on Nov. 14th when John Reischman & the Jaybirds play all of "Up In the Woods."

John Reischman & the Jaybirds in concert:

Fri., Nov. 13 (8 pm): Freight & Salvage, 2020 Addison St., Berkeley: freightandsalvage.org
Sat., Nov. 14 (8 pm): First Presbyterian Church, 1667 Miramonte Ave., Mt. View: www.rba.org

Workshop: Sat., Nov. 14 (11 am): Bluegrass Band Band Rhythm, Freight & Salvage, 2020 Addison St., Berkeley: freightandsalvage.org/workshops.html

CBA Winter Camp 2010



Walker Creek Ranch near Petaluma February 15-18, 2010

Bluegrass banjo: Bill Evans, level 1; Keith Little, level 2; Avram Siegel, level 3.

Oldtime banjo: Steve Baughman, level 1; Evie Ladin, level 2/3.

Bass: Missy Raines, level 1; Bill Amatneek, level 2/3.

Dobro: Ivan Rosenberg, level 1; Mike Witcher, level 2/3.

Fiddle: Megan Lynch, level 1; Jack Tuttle, level 2/3 bluegrass; Brad Leftwich, level 2/3 oldtime.

Guitar: Jim Nunally, level 1; Carol McComb, level 2 Carter style; Kathy Barwick, level 3.

Mandolin: Roland White, level 1; Dix Bruce, level 2 oldtime; John Reischman, level 3 bluegrass.

Vocals: Chris Stuart, level 1; Janet Beazley, level 2/3.

Jamming 101 (electives and evening classes): Sid Lewis

Kids Fungrass program



Old Time Banjo Class
CBA Music Camp (2009)



INFORMATION:

For detailed class descriptions, recommended prerequisites, bios of the instructors, schedule, and lots more information about the camp, please see our website: www.cbamusiccamp.org.

On-line registration will be available the morning of September 18th at www.cbamusiccamp.org. For more information, you can call director Ingrid Noyes at 415-663-1342 or e-mail info@cbamusiccamp.org



Join us at our new location at the
Hyatt Regency in Bellevue WA!
Wintergrass rooms at the Hyatt are \$109 per night!
(double occupancy)

FEBRUARY 25-28, 2010

The Hyatt Regency, Bellevue

Lonesome River Band (th)

Tim O'Brien (fri)

Steep Canyon Rangers (fri)

Kenny & Amanda Smith Band (fri/sat)

The Infamous Stringdusters (fri/sat)

Crooked Still (fri/sat)

The WIYOS (fri/sat)

Väsen & The Duo (Mike Marshall & Darol Anger) (sat)

John Reischman & the Jaybirds (sat)

Sarah Jarosz (sat)

Seldom Scene (sat/sun)

Dry Branch Fire Squad (sat/sun)

The Wilders (sat/sun)

Mountain Heart (sat/sun)

Downtown Mountain Boys (th/fri)

The Bluegrass Regulators (th/sat)

Prairie Flyer (fri/sat)

Shearwater Bluegrass (fri/sat)

Absynth Quintet (fri/sat)

One Horse Shy (sat)

Sawmill Road (sat/sun)

Heartbreak Pass (sun)

New! Intense!

1 DAY ACADEMY with
Dudley Connell, Kenny Smith
& Sammy Shelor
Thursday, Feb. 25, 2010

- dances
- workshops
- kid-friendly activities
- greatly expanded
jamming and vendor space!

Always New, Always Fun!

2 DAY YOUTH ACADEMY with
Joe Craven, Beth Fortune, Renata Bratt
Feb. 25 -26, 2010

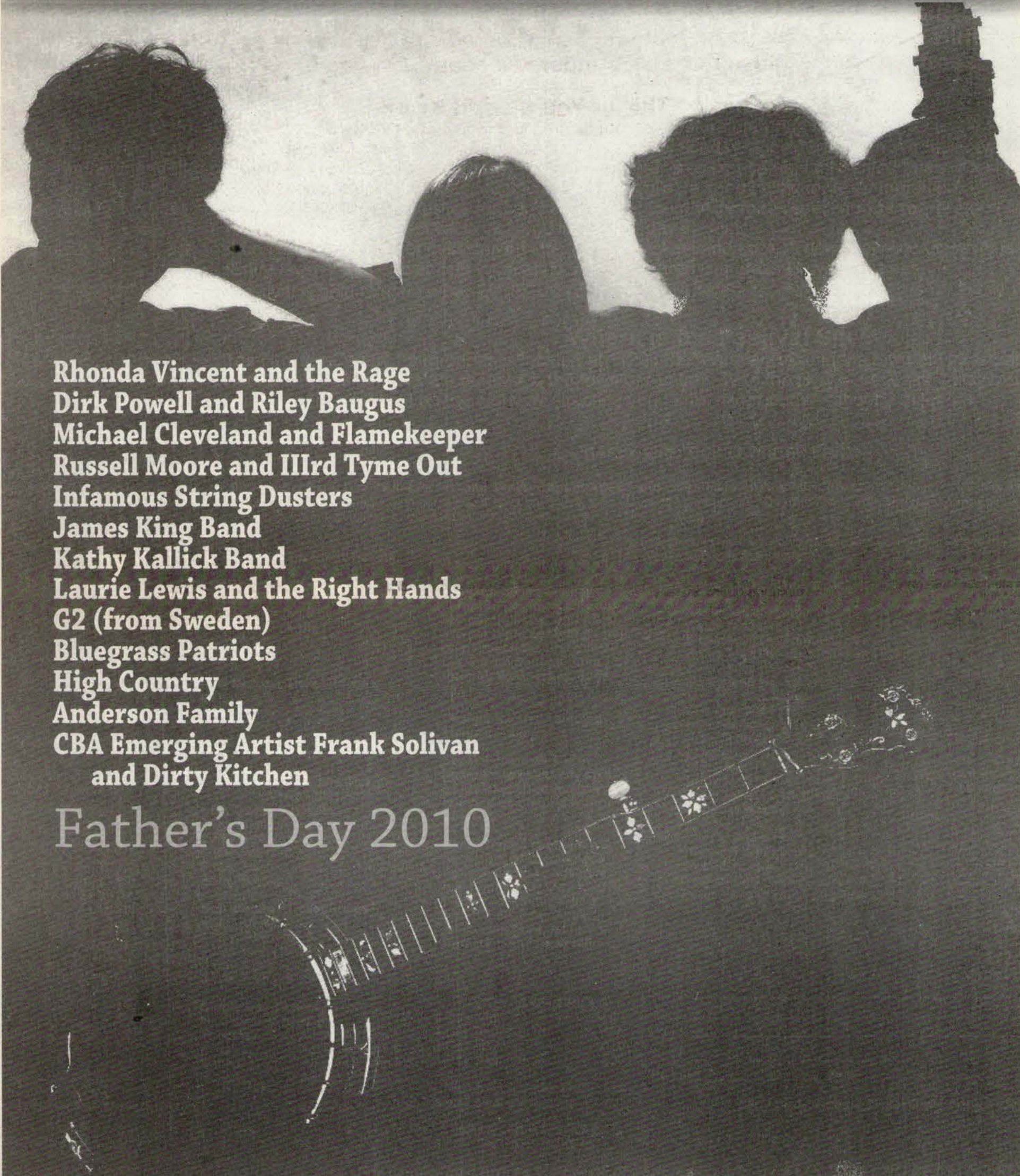
Tickets and info:

WWW.WINTERGRASS.COM

253-428-8056

Wintergrass
POB 2356
Tacoma WA 98401

June 17, 18, 19 & 20, 2010
Nevada County Fairgrounds in Grass Valley, California



Rhonda Vincent and the Rage
Dirk Powell and Riley Baugus
Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper
Russell Moore and IIIrd Tyme Out
Infamous String Dusters
James King Band
Kathy Kallick Band
Laurie Lewis and the Right Hands
G2 (from Sweden)
Bluegrass Patriots
High Country
Anderson Family
CBA Emerging Artist Frank Solivan
and Dirty Kitchen

Father's Day 2010

Early Bird Tickets on sale November 1, 2009

Information: www.cbaontheweb.org

Come and join us in our 35th Annual Fathers' Day Weekend Bluegrass Festival at the Nevada County Fairgrounds in Grass Valley, California!

Four days of family fun, jamming, workshops, Children's Programs, Luthier's Pavilion, Kids on Bluegrass, camping on site and the best in Bluegrass and Old Time Music on stage under the beautiful pine trees.

Things You Should Know

- Absolutely NO PETS allowed on the festival grounds before or during the festival.
- Camping is in the rough on the festival site beginning Sunday, June 13 through Wednesday, June 16 for a fee of \$20 per unit per night (lots of grass and big pine trees), on a first-come, first-served basis. Designated tent only camping area available. Guaranteed electric only sites available - see below for fee information.
- Limited number of campsites for handicapped persons. **Advance reservations required by May 1, 2010.**
- Camping during the festival is included in 3 and 4 day tickets.
- Food and soft drink concessions on site, (picnic baskets and coolers permitted - no glass, please).
- Bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating. Audience area is a grassy lawn with trees.
- Festival is held rain or shine -- ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS.

Where is the Festival Site?

The Nevada County Fairgrounds is located at 11228 McCourtney Road in the town of Grass Valley, California. From Sacramento, take Interstate 80 east to the town of Auburn. Take the Hwy. 49 - Grass Valley exit and go north about 28 miles. There are signs on the highway directing you to the fairgrounds -- about 2 miles.

~ EARLY BIRD TICKET ORDER FORM ~

CBA Member Early Bird Ticket Prices and Senior Citizen (Age 65 and over) Discounts are offered to CBA Members only. Members are entitled to purchase 1 discount ticket for a single membership or 2 discount tickets for a Couple's Membership. **Deadline for Early Bird Discount tickets is February 28, 2010.** No member Discounts available at the gate.

Early Bird Discount Tickets (11/1/09 - 2/28/10)

CBA Member Tickets	
4-Day Adult.....	\$105
4-Day Senior (65 & over).....	\$95
4-Day Teen (16-18).....	\$45
3-Day Adult.....	\$85
3-Day Teen.....	\$38

Non-Member Ticket Prices

4-Day Adult.....	\$120
4-Day Senior (65 & over).....	\$110
4-Day Teen (16-18).....	\$50
3-Day Adult.....	\$100
3-Day Teen (16-18).....	\$43

Advance Discount Tickets (3/1/10 - 5/31/10)

CBA Member Tickets	
4-Day Adult.....	\$115
4-Day Senior (65 & over).....	\$105
4-Day Teen (16-18).....	\$55
3-Day Adult.....	\$95
3-Day Teen.....	\$45

Non-Member Ticket Prices

4-Day Adult.....	\$130
4-Day Senior (65 & over).....	\$120
4-Day Teen (16-18).....	\$60
3-Day Adult.....	\$105
3-Day Teen (16-18).....	\$45

Single Day Tickets

No discounts available	
Thursday.....	Adult \$30/Teen \$13
Friday.....	Adult \$40/Teen \$18
Saturday.....	Adult \$45/Teen \$20
Sunday.....	Adult \$30/Teen \$13

Camping is included in all 3 and 4 day tickets. Early camping opens Sunday, June 13. Camping fees are \$20 per night per unit (RVs), \$15 per night per unit (tents) on a first come, first-served basis from Sunday, June 13 through Wednesday, June 16.

Designated tent camping area available.

Special campsites with guaranteed electricity spaces @ \$90 each with advance reservations (Monday thru Sunday).

Handicapped campers who need special accommodations must make advance reservations by May 1, 2010. Please call JohnSkaar at 509-427-8928 or e-mail: johnskaar@saw.net for information and reservations.

GATE TICKET PRICES

4-Day Adult	\$140
4-Day Teen (16-18)	\$65
3-Day Adult	\$110
3-Day Teen (16-18)	\$50

Children 15 & Under FREE with a paid adult admission.

NO MEMBER DISCOUNTS ON GATE TICKETS.

Please send me the following Early Bird Discount tickets to the CBA's 35th Annual Father's Day Weekend Bluegrass Festival:

CBA Member Tickets

- ___ 4-Day Adult @ \$105
 - ___ 4-Day Senior @ \$95
 - ___ 4-Day Teen (16-18) @ \$45
 - ___ 3-Day Adult (Th/Fri/Sat) @ \$85*
 - ___ 3-Day Teen (16-18) (Th/Fri/Sat) @ \$38*
 - ___ 3-Day Adult (Fri/Sat/Sun) @ \$85*
 - ___ 3-Day Teen (16-18) (Fri/Sat/Sun) @ \$38*
- Non-Member Tickets
- ___ 4-Day Adult @ \$120
 - ___ 4-Day Senior @ \$110
 - ___ 4-Day Teen @ \$50
 - ___ 3-Day Adult (Th/Fri/Sat) @ \$100*
 - ___ 3-Day Teen (16-18) (Th/Fri/Sat) @ \$43*
 - ___ 3-Day Adult (Fri/Sat/Sun) @ \$100*
 - ___ 3-Day Teen (16-18) (Fri/Sat/Sun) @ \$43*
- *Please specify which 3 days

Single Day Tickets

- ___ Thursday Only @ \$30 ___ Teen @ \$13
- ___ Friday Only @ \$40 ___ Teen @ \$18
- ___ Saturday Only @ \$45 ___ Teen @ \$20
- ___ Sunday Only @ \$30 ___ Teen @ \$13

Camping Reservations:

- ___ nights Pre-festival tent camping @ \$15 per night (first-come, first-served) for a total of \$ _____
- ___ nights Pre-festival RV camping @ \$20 per night (first-come, first-served) for a total of \$ _____
- ___ Reserved space with guaranteed electricity @ \$90 per space. (6/14/10 - 6/20/10)

CBA Member No. _____
Date of Order _____
Total for Tickets _____
Total for Camping _____
Total Enclosed _____

Mail ticket order form, a SELF AD-DRESSED, STAMPED BUSINESS-SIZED ENVELOPE, and check or money order payable to the California Bluegrass Association (CBA) to:

CBA Festival Tickets
John Erwin
2172 Vineyard Hills Ct
Vacaville, CA 95688-8732

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Early Bird Discount Ticket Order Form -- Deadline 2/28/10

For Credit Card orders visit www.cbaontheweb.org -- ABSOLUTELY NO PETS. NO REFUNDS.

Joe Weed's Studio Insider

IBMA and travels in the heartland

I woke up at 5:30, my cell phone alarm pleading with me to get out of bed. I thought about ignoring it, wondering how long it would take to give up on me, but then the radio alarm that the previous guest had set for 5:30 blasted me into motion. I threw on warm clothes, grabbed the cameras and tripods, nabbed a cup of old coffee from the motel lobby, and navigated my way to Waco Lake with one eye open. I had scoped out the area the night before, after the drive down from Dallas. I knew the back roads that lead to the boat ramp where the locals go. I got out of the car in the pitch black and set up my tripods. The crickets were singing. The black sky was impassive. For the next hour, I sat in the car and waited. Finally the sky began to lighten. A couple of fishermen arrived and backed their boat trailer down to the water. They got out to do the little things that fishermen do before they launch their boat. And then, the rain started. Not just a mellow sprinkle, but a

downpour of monumental proportions and volume. I grabbed the cameras and hurried them into the shelter of the car, leaving the tripods for later. The fishermen said they were going out anyway. After an hour and a half of waiting for a beautiful sunrise over Waco Lake that never happened, I gave up and drove back to the motel. Ah, the romantic part of a documentary maker's life.

IBMA

The more successful parts of the trip started the week before, back in Nashville. I'd flown east for the IBMA annual conference/festival, where I had planned meetings, recording sessions, and pre-production work for an upcoming album of fiddle music from the "Little House on the Prairie" book series. (More about that later.) On lay-over in the Phoenix airport, I spied another hungry traveler picking up food for the rest of the flight. He had a mando case slung over his shoulder, and seeing my fiddle case, he came over and struck up a conversation. He's Whit Washburn, a

CBA member from Sacramento, also headed to IBMA.

I'm putting together a sequence of many different musicians playing the "Westphalia Waltz." Whit laid down a track in the improvised recording studio in my room at the Nashville Renaissance. Rick Cornish had just finished playing some great left-handed fiddle. Both musicians were tracking parts on camera, as well as through a good microphone into a portable ProTools rig. At Cliff Goldmacher's nearby studio I ran a couple of days' sessions with some of Nashville's best fiddlers, including California native Megan Lynch and Nashville's Matt Combs. At night, in the Renaissance I visited with CBA folks at the 18th-floor suite where the CBA hosts nightly showcases with some of the top bluegrass groups in town for IBMA. It's a warm and friendly gathering place. The wine isn't bad, either.

Early Friday morning en route to the airport, I spied Neil Rosenberg in the lobby. Neil wrote "Bluegrass: A History" and with Charles Wolfe, "The Music of Bill

Monroe," both published by the University of Illinois Press. These are two well researched and documented books. If you want to learn about Bill Monroe and the beginnings of bluegrass music, check out these titles.

Before coming back to California, I flew into Dallas, Texas, and drove to the home of Ray Yarnowski, who learned to play fiddle, mandolin, bass and guitar in the tiny Polish-Texas enclave of Bremond, Texas, about 45 miles from Waco. Ray still performs in Dallas. His playing career began before the first recording of the "Westphalia Waltz" was made in Waco in 1946! Ray and his fellow Polish-Texan musicians in Bremond had been playing "Pytala Sie Pani" for years before Waco native Cotton Collins re-named it "Westphalia Waltz" and recorded it Texas fiddle style on a Blue Bonnet 78. They are still bemused by the name change. I spent several hours interviewing Ray and scanning his



Joe Weed

old photos. The next morning I was back again, helping Ray and his guitar player nurse hangovers at their favorite restaurant before they recorded "Westphalia Waltz" for me in Ray's home studio.

Then it was back into the car for the drive down to Waco and nearby Westphalia, where the tropical downpour gave a sad and grey tone to the pictures I took of Westphalia's parish hall and the old wood buildings that have survived for generations.

After the rain-soaked attempt to film sunrise over Waco Lake, I headed south to the German settlement of Schulenburg, about 100 miles west of Houston. Along the old principal street by the railroad, the buildings' brick facades showing the town's German heritage gleamed in the emerging afternoon sunlight. I four-fer Engelmann Hall and went in, passing by the historic bar in the saloon. As I climbed the stairs to the second story dance hall, I heard Louisiana native Cory McCauley and the Evangeline Aces playing Cajun music. Twenty or thirty couples danced on the old plank dance floor, seemingly unchanged since the late nineteenth century. Fiddling with the group was Brian Marshall, a Polish-Texan who lives near Houston and whose musical roots go back to Bremond. Cajun music is popular in southeast Texas, and these musicians were well appreciated. I filmed some of their performance, and after the gig, Brian and I headed up to his place, several hours away in Tomball. The darkening sky was clearing, and the full moon illuminated the little villages and cattle farms we passed as we made our way along country roads to Tomball. A day later, I was flying home to California, trying to stay awake and jot down the dizzying array of adventures from the past week.

Joe Weed records acoustic music at his Highland Studios near Los Gatos, California. He has released six albums of his own, produced many projects for independent artists and labels, and does sound tracks for film, TV and museums. He recently worked on the PBS film "Andrew Jackson, Good, Evil, and the Presidency," which premiered nationally on January 2, 2008. Reach Joe by calling (408) 353-3353, by email at joe@highlandpublishing.com, or by visiting joeweet.com.



Double Decker Stringband

By Geff Crawford

The Double Decker Stringband is Bill Schmidt, Bruce Hutton, Craig Johnson, and John Beam. These guys are wonderful musicians, "worth their weight in gold" according to Tracy Schwarz of the New Lost City Ramblers, and either have a great sense of humor about themselves or are so out of touch with reality it isn't funny. Here's some stuff from their web site, <http://www.doubledeckerstringband.com/index.html>

First of all, their motto: "We play old-time music. It's supposed to sound like this"

Bill was born and raised in Trenton, NJ. He began playing guitar and uke during the 'Folk Scare' of the 1960's, and became a New Lost City Ramblers fan while in high school. He started playing banjo and fiddle in the early 70's and was a founding member of the Double Decker Stringband. He

rejoined the band in 1999 after a brief 15 year hiatus. He also plays fiddle with the Hoover Uprights. In his other life, he's a sculptor and painter who teaches at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore.

Born in 1948, Bruce was about 10 years old when an exploration of the family attic in Massachusetts uncovered his mother's ukulele and his great uncle's mandolin. At about the same time he discovered his older brother's hi-fi and stash of Folkways albums. At high school in the Cambridge area he managed an on-campus coffeehouse presenting Boston area artists. He frequented Boston and Cambridge coffeehouses and the Newport folk festival where he listened to John Hurt, Clarence Ashley, and the group that proved to be his greatest inspiration, The New Lost City Ramblers. Upon moving to DC Bruce met banjo player/collector Reed Martin, who provided Bruce with his first 5-string banjo and an up-close look at his dazzling clawhammer style. Reed also introduced Bruce to the Folklore Society of Greater Washington where he met musicians who became friends, many of whom including Reed performed with him on his 1978 Folkways album. During the 70's and 80's Bruce hosted an open mic every Monday at the Red Fox Inn in Bethesda, Md, (Thursday home to the newly formed bluegrass band--The Seldom Scene). Scheduled artists were added to the open mic format and the Red Fox featured many folk music legends. Tuesday became Old Time Music night, which brought out the local cloggers. Newly formed Double Decker Stringband was a regular.

Craig grew up in the Detroit suburbs during the 1950s and 60s. No wizened uncle strummed the dulcimer or expectorated on the dog at his house. Rather, he was raised on Broadway show tunes (he can still sing several selections from "Flower Drum Song"), Arthur Godfrey, and, a bit later, the Monkees. He played trombone in the high school marching band. None of this music meant much to him. It was just there. Toward the end of high school he got his hands on a Woody Guthrie album and an autoharp and became obsessed with traditional music. He then found Mississippi John Hurt, Leroy Carr and Scrapper Blackwell, Dave Macon, Leadbelly, and Roscoe Holcomb and purchased a series of shoddy guitars and banjos, attempting to play and sing along with each. His friends and family were tolerant and quietly appalled. In 1971 it was off to the U of Michigan, ostensibly to be prepared for a career and self-sufficiency. College was interesting but the Ark Coffeehouse and the wonderful musical community it supported was really compelling. It was an education just to sit and listen. That's when he joined his first stringband.

And a bit of stream of consciousness from John...North Jersey under the shadow of Manhattan...trumpet lessons 5 to 8th grade...a 78 by Elvis...allowance \$ for 45's...the Hollywood Flames, the Casuals, Everly Bros., Danny and the Juniors, Buddy Holly and the Crickets, Ersel Hickey...father's dismay...pantomime of Link Wray's "Rumble" on \$12 metal-taped guitar...Lp's by Cash, Frizzell, Kingston Trio, Ray Coniff(?)...

sang Dion in Y camp...white buck loafers...U of Virginia...wore out copies of Flatt and Scruggs doing Carter Family, Dylan's Freewheelin'...learned 7 guitar chords and blew smoke rings instead of studying...mother's dismay...switched to art school Newark...Jesse Fuller and spin the bottle at party...'66 Triumph Bonneville...then Van Ronk, Hardin, Hurt, Muddy, Diddley...drafted at wrong time...\$80 guitar in Nam...mail order Baez, Redding, Doors on reel-to-reel...\$400 D-28 NYC 1969...harmonica in radioless VW microbus...hitchhiked length US...Hair in LA...trying to make up for lost time...met Bill in Baltimore...old-time tunes with no end...Double Decker...art instructor 27yrs Maryland Institute...owns aNoPheles Blues gallery Chincoteague, VA...a big fan of my band mates.

Their albums, oldest to newest: "Giddyap Napoleon", "Sentimental Songs and Old Time Melodies", "Evolution Girl", "For An Old Time, Call", "Chasing Rainbows", and "The Rest Is Yet To Come". First two are LPs, next three are cassettes, and the last is apparently the only one still in print, a CD from 2006, from 5-String Productions.

Here are two clips from "Chasing Rainbows". "Jake Limber Leg Blues" refers to Jamaican ginger extract, a patent medicine from the early 20th century designed to bypass prohibition laws, containing 70-80% ethanol. The Treasury Department cracked down on Jake, resulting in a toxic adulterant being added to get around regulations. Wikipedia takes it from there:

"In 1930, large numbers of jake us-

Continued on A-18

The Allan French Column by Allan French

The Bear Went Over The Mountain ... To See What He Could Pick

On October 2, my truck, my banjo, and I climbed over the Santa Cruz Mountains. The first stop was a visit with my cousin's family in Felton. He has played piano and guitar for several decades and has performed in jazz and rock bands. Besides all the familial chit-chat, we also talked about music, and we played a few songs together banjo and acoustic guitar. However, his home is very rustic and has poor indoor lighting, so I was unable to read my sheet music. It never occurred to me that I would need to bring my headlamp with me – this wasn't a festival campout after all!!

On Saturday we visited Roaring Camp Railroad – where I haven't been for twenty-plus years – as well as Henry Cowell Park. JD Rhynes surely would have chewed me out if he'd been there at Cowell Park, when I put myself between a buck deer and his offspring and snapped a photo of the buck from less than twenty feet away. Oops.

That afternoon I attended the Johnson Farm Picking Party in Boulder Creek. It was a fun, casual event, and the "farm" setting was perfect for an unpretentious jam session. I strummed chords discreetly during a half-dozen songs and sang along on a bunch of others. I'm not ready to take breaks, but it was fun to play in the periphery. I'm no longer annoyed by the occasional need to capo-up. I was pleased to see about half as many kids as adults. Not all of them played music, but it was a nice all-ages musical event. Besides ex-kids Kyle and Luke Abbott, Jessica Evans' sons were there (but without instruments), and Kathy Cress was there with her three daughters (and with instruments in hand, yay!). A very young friend of the Cress's was there, with her quarter-sized fiddle.

Traveling on Highway 9 for the first time since my immersion into bluegrass, I got to see Don Quixote's, Henfling's Tavern, and Brookdale Lodge – all important venues within the local music scene. I was a fun weekend of music, hiking, sightseeing, and socializing.

Gryphon's Giveaway: Close But No Guitar

On September 26, Palo Alto music store Gryphon Stringed Instruments celebrated being 40 years in business. Eight or ten bands performed during the daylong festivities, including the bands of several Gryphon staffers. Birthday cake, cookies, coffee, and soda were served. Crackers and exotic cheeses were available to sample. (Garlic-infused cheese, yum!) With the request for people to come get numbered raffle tickets, a line of people queued up. Through the raffle, they gave away lots of Gryphon

logo merchandise, as well as some unique and valuable items. The biggest giveaway was a limited-edition Martin guitar that features a portrait of founder Christian Frederick, commemorating Martin's 175th anniversary. It was won by the guy who immediately preceded me in the raffle ticket line. (Yes, I'm completely serious.) With its unusual artwork, it will be a helluva conversation piece for winner Robert Parker of San Jose.

On Kids and Kitchens

In mid-September, the "Kids On Bluegrass" once again gave us a very entertaining performance. Several of the more seasoned kids were unable to attend "Bluegrassin' In The Foothills," so the ensemble performances had fewer members. On the upside, though, this allowed each performer a little more time in the spotlight than they might otherwise have gotten. Fiddler Tim Elson, guitarist Cameron Little, and mandolinist Josh Gooding all got to show off their chops more than usual. (A goal of the KOB program is to create a group experience, but I enjoyed seeing these folks standing out.) KOB alumni Angelica Grim and Frank Solivan II sang a duet or two. For folks

who've known them many years, this was a treat, as both Angelica and Frank now live out of state. They are longtime friends – and their current musical endeavors are a testament to the value of children to bluegrass fans of ALL ages.

On Saturday night, surely the most happenin' jam was held at the Solivan-Elliot Compound. Frank Solivan II and the "Dirty Kitchen" band were there, along with fellow ex-Navyman Wayne Taylor. They jammed for two hours or more, just a tight-knit group of seasoned performers. Around the perimeter were fifteen or twenty observers. At one point, Frank Sr had a clever idea. One by one he brought a series of ladies into the center of the jam circle. In some cases they sang along, in other cases they simply listened to the music. (Quadraphonic means four sound sources; I'm not sure what you call it when you're encircled by seven or eight musicians, but it must be quite an experience.) Marty Varner switches easily between hangin' with the kids and holding his own against musicians twice and thrice his age, and he joined in for a while. He gave us a preview of his KOB selections planned for the next morning. I suppose that evening was

like a belated Father's Day party for the two Franks, and it was a grand experience for many of us observers as well.

During my first evening at Plymouth, I spent a lot of time at Jennifer Kitchen's campsite, listening to her and the "Kitchen Help" band and their friends. An observation from this amateur critic: It is rare to see a bass player who sings lead. So often the bass and bassist get hidden behind a bunch of axe-wielding folks who walk, shuffle, twist, and sway; and the less-mobile instrument gets seen only sporadically. On the bright side for Jennifer, while she might occasionally be stuck in the second row, it's her name on the sign by the stage.

Speaking of kitchen activities: Sharon Elliot asked for permission to publish my "ode to coffee." It wasn't intended for a wide audience but she thought some of you would enjoy reading it. It should be in here somewhere, this month or next.

Musical Poetry

May I suggest that you to do an online search for "The Song of the Banjo," a lengthy poem by Rudyard Kipling, from 1894. The action and imagery are described



Allan French

from the viewpoint of the instrument, in first-person voice, as if the banjo could speak. In one notable passage, the narrator/banjo declares "I [am] the war-drum of the White Man round the world"; and elsewhere it states that "I can rip your very heartstrings out."

And, how's this for a description of a jam session: "With the feasting, and the folly, and the fun / And the lying, and the lusting, and the drink / And the merry play that drops you, when you're done / To the thoughts that burn like irons if you think." If you're a fan of Victorian-era literature or you're a banjo freak, I suggest you take the time to read the entire poem.

For those of you who are steadfastly not fond of banjos (you weirdos!), check out the poem "The Silent Banjo" by George Harrison Conrad.



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Chuck Poling

Bluegrass Comes to Town

By Chuck Poling

Explaining the differences between old-time and bluegrass music has always been a tricky proposition. For every rule stated about one music – for instance, old-time is more dance-oriented and bluegrass more of a concert style – you can easily find a host of exceptions. Yes, you may see more clawhammer banjo in old-time acts and more finger-picking of the instrument in bluegrass bands, but again you'll catch elements of each style crossing over to the other.

For the members of the Black Crown Stringband, the distinction between the two styles matters less than the inspiration they draw from each to create a unique synthesis of the two. Whether playing a concert – such as their knockdown performance at Vern's Stage at this year's Father's Day Festival – or as a dance band at a local square dance, they deliver their music with energy, soul, and serious skills. "Bluegrass is the natural evolution of 'old-time music' as far as the feel and soul of the music goes," said guitarist and lead singer John McKelvy. Mandolin player Tim Hicks agreed, "Old-time is only one of many influences in bluegrass." But for banjo player Matt Knott, finding good songs

is more important than classifying them. "I don't particularly pay heed to the distinction all that much," he quipped.

The San Francisco quintet, which also includes Elise Engleberg on fiddle and Rob Mellberg on bass, has just released a self-titled, seven-song EP that demonstrates how their fusion of old-time and bluegrass merges the best elements of both styles. Recording all traditional songs, with the exception of Curly Ray Cline's "Pretty Little Indian," the Black Crown Stringband capitalizes on the individual talents of its members to create music that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Lexington, Kentucky, native Elise Engleberg is one of the finest old-time fiddlers in the Bay Area, with a driving, rhythmic style that could make a Baptist deacon turn a do-si-do on Sunday. Though she's from the heart of the bluegrass country, Elise grew up surrounded by classical music and was more familiar with Brahms than Bill Monroe. "Growing up in Lexington, bluegrass music was always around, but I wasn't that aware of it. When I was first trying to learn how to play fiddle, I bought a Tommy (Jarrell) and Fred (Cockerham) CD of fiddle banjo duets. I loved it immediately, but had no idea it was 'old time music,'" she recalled. "I think it was meeting (Stairwell Sister) Stephanie Prausnitz at the Father's Day bluegrass fest that I found out about old time music. I was hooked."

Matt Knott claims to have been introduced to bluegrass music "in utero" and I believe him. The son of bluegrass DJ and local legend Cuzin' Al Knott, Matt has contributed his tasty banjo licks to bands like All Wrecked Up and the Mercury Dimes. Both these bands, like the Black Crown Stringband, featured Matt's old-time/bluegrass hybrid style on banjo.

Born and raised in San Jose, Matt played bass in a jazz band and guitar in his high school pep band before circling back to banjo. Equally adept at three-finger picking and frailing, he doesn't adhere to any preconceived notions of how he should play on one song or another. "I frail on a couple of things, but usually just play whatever comes easiest or most intuitively for that particular tune," he said. Matt draws inspiration from many sources, and his ideal jam session

would include David Hidalgo of Los Lobos, Willie Nelson, Emmylou Harris, and Frank Lee of the Freightliners.

Rob Mellberg hails from Mountain View and brings quite a musical resume with him. An outstanding bass player and showman, Rob has performed with numerous rockabilly bands, including the Kingpins who took home a \$100,000 prize on "Star Search," the "American Idol" of the 1980s. His introduction to bluegrass music was, shall we say, the full immersion experience.

"In 2000 I was making a record with Chicken Coupe DeVille in Nashville at Steve Earle's studio," he recalled. "We did an acoustic song and the producer wanted to put mandolin on the record...Marty Stuart couldn't make it so they called Ronnie McCoury. He ended coming by with Rob McCoury. The first notes that I ever played with a banjo player and mandolin player were with the McCoury Brothers. Talk about getting thrown into the deep end."

Rob parlayed that gig into a stint with the Earl Brothers and discovered a whole new world in bluegrass music. Unhindered by rigid definitions of old-time versus bluegrass, the biggest difference he's noticed between the two concerns the footwear of performers. "Bluegrass guys like boots without laces, like cowboy boots," he said. "Old-timers lean more towards boots with laces, like logger's boots, machinist boots, and Redwings. Mark my words – take a look at the next bluegrass/old-time gathering."

Tim Hicks has built up an impressive bluegrass resume starting with, well, life. Like Matt, Tim grew up in a family where bluegrass music was an important part of the daily diet. His father, Ray, grew up in East Tennessee, sang in Baptist church choir and caught the bluegrass bug while in college. "He is a very gifted and natural musician," said Tim. "I'm very fortunate to have spent countless hours jamming with him."

While Dad inspired Tim, he didn't push him to follow in his footsteps. "I was never forced," Tim said, "I only did it because I wanted to figure out the music for myself." Originally a flat picker of the Doc Watson/Clarence White school, Tim added old-time banjo and mandolin to his skill set. His hometown of Morgantown, West Virginia, proved to be a fertile ground for his talents. He and Ray performed together in an old-time band called Wild Hog and later the Falling Run Bluegrass Band. It was with the Falling Run outfit that



The Black Crown String Band straddles old time music and bluegrass.

Tim started playing mandolin, and he was a member of the band until moving out to California.

Tim concedes that there are some tangible differences between bluegrass and old-time music, but whether he plays one night at a bluegrass concert or the next night at an old-time square dance, he's just as happy. And with the Black Crown Stringband he has the opportunity to play both and bring the two styles together. "I think we have an edgy, old school, high lonesome sound," he noted.

Lead singer John McKelvy's distinctive voice is well known to bluegrass fans in the Bay Area and beyond from his tenure with the Earl Brothers. Born in Ocala, Florida, John grew up on Top 40 and Southern Rock with a detour to punk rock. It was from his grandparents that he learned about bluegrass and old-time music.

"They were from Tennessee and loved country music," John recounted. "I remember watching Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys with them on CMT (Country Music Television) and being strangely interested in the music he played. Later, when I lived in Savannah, Georgia – in my early 20s – I would see bluegrass bands play on River Street which further sparked my interest. I started buying CDs from other bluegrass artists like Jimmy Martin, Jim and Jesse, Doc Watson, and The Osborne Bros. I became obsessed with this music while meanwhile playing in a hard rock band... Little did I know I would switch over to playing this kind of music in the years to come."

John's high lonesome vocals perfectly complement the edgy old-time sound that the Black Crown Stringband is becoming known for. He isn't too worried about how their music is classified, as long as people enjoy it.

"It's interesting how people seem to put a box around how these types of musical forms should be played," he said. "Our main ob-

jective is to make the songs move people – emotionally, spiritually, or literally, on the dance floor! We're not too hung up on how it's 'supposed' to be played."

Their new CD does an excellent job of capturing the Black Crown Stringband's joyful performances, but honestly, to get the full experience you need to see them live. Inspired less by the letter and more by the *spirit* of the music, they play with energy and enthusiasm and bring some serious chops to the party. When Tim pushes his voice into the stratosphere to sing tenor above John's piercing lead, the audience reacts loudly with appreciation. "John and Tim really sound like high lonesome mountain men when they sing," quipped Matt. Elise whips her fiddle into a frenzy and Matt (her husband) backs her with a driving three-finger banjo roll, and soon everyone is dancing some sort of dance. Then Rob is twirling his bass around like a rockabilly dervish and a whoop goes up from the crowd.

Following their well-received performance at Vern's Stage this year, they continue to gain new fans and build a reputation for satisfying crowds wherever they go. Next up?

"We're trying to put together a SoCal tour this coming spring, built around a show at the Red Barn Community Music Series in Los Osos," said Matt. "We also have a UK tour planned for next fall."

Bluegrass and old-time music fans across the pond are in for a real treat. But they'll have to wait until next year, while you have the opportunity to catch them now and hear and see what the buzz is about.

The Black Crown Stringband will be standing up on Thursday, November 5, at the Atlas Café and sitting down for a square dance on Sunday, November 14, at the Café DuNord.

<http://www.myspace.com/blackcrownstringband>

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Bluegrass Bard

- Cliff Compton

Jerry and Gordon and Ruth

And Jerry from Montreal was Playing "Mama Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys"
And I'm looking at Gordon from Arizona's beheaded banjo
Trying to figure out how he can tune that thing when it ain't got any tuners to tune
And he sees me looking and laughs and says "this banjo never goes out of tune" and I'm
thinking, "yeah, right!", a banjo that never goes out of tune.
Next thing he'll tell me is that somewhere there's a fiddle player that can't play in the key of D

And then I'm taking a break on Jerry's song
And wondering how a French Canadian from Montreal ends up in the circle "bluegrassin' in
the foothills in Plymouth California, so at the end of the night I ask him.

And he tells me that he was sixty-four years old, living a pretty good life north of the border,
growing older and starting to fall apart like the rest of us
When he got to thinking that maybe he was missing something
And he didn't want to die before he found out what it was
So he sold everything he owned except his mandolin
Bought some kind of recreational vehicle
And headed for the border
And now he's here
Reversing the aging process
Living
Instead of dying

And I saw Ruth Truesdale
And I wanted to hug her,
But she was probably too sick to be here
So I hugged her from a distance
And showed her my book
With the cover of the picture she had drawn
And given me a year ago
Right here in Plymouth
That picture that made me cry
Because she captured my soul
And made me feel immortal
Instead of walking down the backside of the hill
And on Saturday night, I saw her through the open door of her tent
Laying there looking sick
So I pulled up a chair in the breezeway outside her tent
And sang her a few songs
Because
When somebody captures your soul
And makes you feel immortal
Even for a moment
You owe them a song

.....
Maybe a book

And Saturday night we were burning it up
Under the bright lights
Fifty yards from the stage
Rainy, and Corey, Mark Varner, and Billy from Bean Creek
And people were moving into the jam
Leaving their pixie dust
And then continuing on
And it was getting better and better and better
Till about 2:30 in the morning
And it got just too good to contain
And we cut that sucker off
So we could freeze it in time
Me and Gordon from Arizona, and Jerry from Montreal
And Corey from anywhere I'm lucky enough to be picking
And we all knew we were in magicland
Just shaking our heads

And Sunday morning Jerry comes over to my tent
With an mp3 player and mic
And asks me to record this song for him
And I do

"I feel like a freight train
In the middle of Nebraska
Blowing my whistle in the soft morning light
Not knowing where I'm going
Not remembering where I came from
Just watching the North Star
Spinning my wheels
And feeling alright

And says, "That's me.
That's the way I feel."

Sept 2009



Cliff Compton

CBA & the San Francisco bluegrass scene

By Jeanie and Chuck Poling

We heard a rumor that there's a very active and vibrant bluegrass music scene in San Francisco. Really. There was even this great big festival in October with all kinds of bluegrass legends and contemporary stars. Yeah, and hundreds of thousands of folks turned out for it. So we're following up on that rumor to encourage just .001% of that crowd to join us regulars at our local bluegrass shows.

During the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass festival, Chuck spent a good amount of time at the California Bluegrass Association's booth near the Banjo Stage. Along with our intrepid volunteers - thank you one and all - he passed out Bluegrass Breakdowns, flyers about upcoming events, and other information. While chatting with the festival-goers, he heard the same thing over and over. "I love this music, but I didn't realize there was so much going on." Chuck pointed out the various happenings - venues that sponsor bluegrass like the Atlas - jams, radio programs, etc. and encouraged one and all to follow up, check out the scene, get involved, and take advantage of the lively San Francisco bluegrass scene.

Despite the plethora of bands, jams, gigs, teachers, programs, camps, festivals, and concerts available to residents, there seems to be an information gap. Or maybe it's a generation gap. While traditional print media and radio have been

the primary source for bluegrass news, maybe it's time to get downright viral. Young folks are tweetin' and textin' up a storm while some of us are still trying to figure out where to plug in the headphones.

But we don't think there's any substitute for good old fashioned schmoozing. So we're asking all our bluegrass pals to each spread the word to at least two newbies. Then they do the same and on and on. It's like a Ponzi scheme - only nobody loses, everybody wins. Think of your family, your friends, your coworkers, your periodontist. Think of how their lives have this big banjo-shaped hole that's just sucking their souls into a black void of tuneless despair. Just a few minutes of your time could change all that.

Let the world know you love bluegrass music. Say loud and say it proud! Apparently there are thousands of potential bluegrass fans out there who just need a little guidance and it's up to us to provide it. It's a great feeling to bring someone into the fold and watch them blossom into a full-fledged bluegrass maniac.

We highly recommend using the Bluegrass Breakdown as bait. The CBA booth volunteers handed out hundreds of copies that many folks enjoyed while waiting a half-hour for a porta-potty. Never underestimate the power of a free press. Now go forth and spread the news.

Help put instruments in the hands of kids...



Bethany McHenry sang and played her own guitar (signed by Rhonda Vincent) at the CBA's 2005 Grass Valley Festival. Other children are not as fortunate. Photo by Bob Calkins

The Darrell Johnston Kids Instrument Lending Library is a program for lending instruments to budding young musicians so that they can learn to play Bluegrass music. You can help our kids by donating instruments or money. The cash donations will help fix what the luthiers can't or even help us purchase, if necessary, parts or instruments that we might not get through donations.

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Al Shank

Al's Music Tidbits... By Al Shank

Minor Keys

I started giving mandolin lessons a few weeks ago to a fellow who lives here in Woodland. Last week I was showing him some minor-chord positions, because his band plays some songs that use a VI chord (E minor in the key of G major). Then last week I decided to fill a rather serious hole in my own repertoire by learning Bill Monroe's "Kentucky Mandolin", which is in G minor. I went back and read some of my earlier "Tidbits" and it occurred to me that I gave rather short shrift to minor keys and scales. So, I'm going to make a digression from my articles about practicing and delve more deeply into three Monroe tunes in minor keys: "Cheyenne", "Kentucky Mandolin" and "Crossing the Cumberland".

Minor keys are somewhat more complex than major ones, because there are really three different forms of a minor scale:

- The "natural" minor scale (Aeolian mode) has the same notes as the major scale a minor third above it. This is called the "relative minor"; E minor is the "relative minor" to G major. In this scale, the third degree is a minor third, the sixth degree a minor sixth and the seventh degree a minor seventh above the root. Instead of:

G A B C D E F# G
we have:
E F# G A B C D E

- The "harmonic" minor scale is the same as the "natural" one except that the seventh degree is the "leading tone" from the major scale, a half-step below the tonic.
E F# G A B C D# E

This scale is the result of the dominant-to-tonic effect so important in Western music. The B minor triad formed on the 5th degree in the natural minor scale lacks the D# "leading tone" that has that strong tendency to resolve upward to the tonic.

- The "melodic" minor scale uses the major sixth and seventh degrees in ascending passages and the minor versions in descending passages:
E F# G A B C# D# E D C B A G F# E

In each of those forms, except for the ascending melodic, the IV chord is a minor triad, so your typical Bluegrass progression of I IV V I would be minor triad, minor triad, major triad or dominant 7th and back to minor. However, the IV chord is used rarely in Bluegrass minor keys; much more common is the VII chord built on the minor 7th degree, which is also often used in major keys. Another technique found in Bluegrass is a temporary modulation to the "relative major" before going back to the original, minor key. These examples, all in G minor, illustrate all of the above and can be found at <http://www.cbaontheweb.org/tidbits.aspx>

The first example, with the simplest structure, is "Kentucky Mandolin". Besides a little solo intro, it has two parts, the first a repeated set of two phrases, the first ending in a half cadence, and the second in a full cadence. The chords are:

|GmGmGmGm|GmGmGmD7|
|GmGmGmGm|GmGmD7Gm|

Here we see the common use of the dominant 7th, using the leading tone (F#) rather than the F natural from the natural minor scale. In musical notation, the key signature would be "two flats", Bb and Eb, the same key signature as Bb major. In notation, there would be a '#' sign on the line or space for the F in the D7 chord.

After these phrases are repeated, the "B" part shifts to the higher register and these chords:

|GmGmGmGm|F F F F|
|GmGmGmGm|GmGmD7Gm|

This part uses the triad built on the natural-minor 7th degree, adding a different color to the tune, before again using F# in the V7 chord. Note, also, that the mandolin plays an F natural in the melody against the D7 chord, so both modes "co-exist" there.

The second example is "Cheyenne". The first part sounds like a minor blues, with a very similar chord progression to the first part of "Kentucky Mandolin". The chords:

|GmGmGmGm|GmGmGmGm|D7D7D7D7|GmGmGmGm| X 2

Both phrases end in a full cadence. This part is played by the fiddle, mandolin and banjo, although on the sound clip it's just played once before leading into the B part. Before the B part, the last part is |GmGmFF|, which leads us into Bb major, the relative major of Gm. Think of it like this:

|I I VII VII| in Gm
|VI VI V V| in Bb

F major is the VII chord in Gm, but it's the dominant in Bb. The next part is in Bb, and goes:

|BbBbDD|EbEbBbBb|BbBbFF|BbBb| X 2

The D major chord (or D7, optionally) is V of VI with an "up one" irregular resolution. This is the same as the first phrase from "Old Home Place". The tune then goes back to Gm.

The third example, "Crossing the Cumberland", actually uses the IV chord in the A part:

|GmFGmCm|GmGmD7D7| half cadence
|GmFGmCm|GmD7GmGm| full cadence

Here we see the minor 6th and 7th degrees, but also the leading tone. The second part goes:

|GmGmGmGm|GmGmD7D7|
|GmGmGmGm|GmD7GmGm|

For a great song that combines major and minor modes beautifully, I recommend "There's a Better Way", by The Nashville Bluegrass Band. The chords can all be interpreted in the key of F major, but it begins and ends on a D minor chord and really has D as a tonal center. However, there is no A major chord (or A7) in the song. It's on the "Twenty Year Blues" album; check it out!

As always, please send questions or suggestions for subject matter, including other songs to learn, to: squidnet@notoriousshankbrothers.com.

Double Decker Stringband

From page A-14

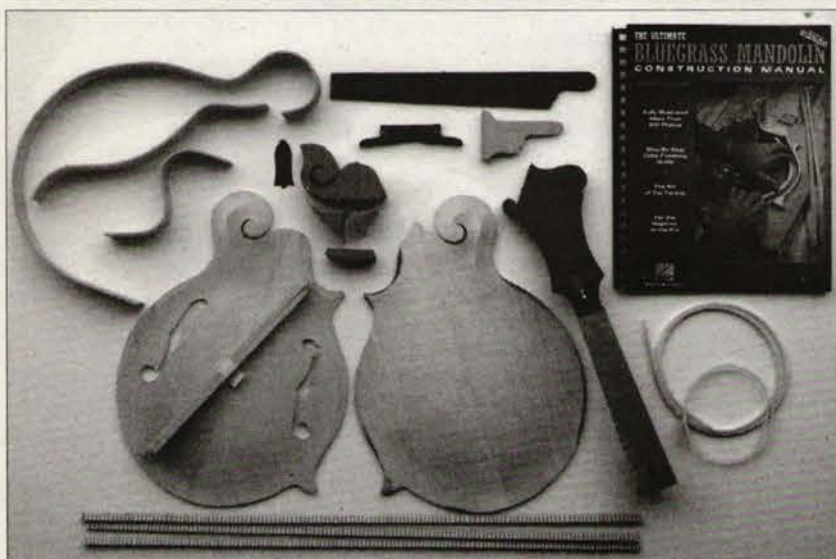
ers began to lose the use of their hands and feet. Some victims could walk, but they had no control over the muscles which would normally have enabled them to point their toes upward. Therefore, they would raise their feet high with the toes flopping downward, which would touch the pavement first followed by their heels. The toe first, heel second pattern made a distinctive "tap-click, tap-click" sound as they walked. This very peculiar gait became known as the jake walk

and those afflicted were said to have jake leg, jake foot, or jake paralysis. Additionally, the calves of the legs would soften and hang down and the muscles between the thumbs and fingers would atrophy."

So on that cheery note, we move on to "Don't Get Trouble In Your Mind", a much tamer song from Frank Blevins' Tarheel Rattlers.

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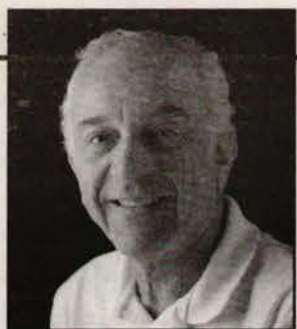
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Roger Siminoff

Q: I have an RB250 banjo and am getting a buzz at the 4th fret, third string, when I fret the string at the 2nd fret. Can you tell what's happening and how I can fix it?

A: It's difficult to tell exactly what is happening without seeing the banjo, but I can offer some suggestions of what might be happening so that you can do some further tests:

1) If you have an older 250, and it has been played for a long time, there is a good possibility that the second fret is worn. However, if this is the case, the string would buzz at the 3rd fret before it buzzes at the 4th fret. (But it could happen if the 3rd fret is also badly worn.)

2) If the string is only buzzing at the 4th fret and not at the 3rd fret (when fretted at the 2nd fret), there is an outside chance that the 4th fret has come loose or raised slightly (but this is very rare).

3) There is a possibility that the neck has developed a "bow" so the fretboard is higher in the center than at either end. But even if this is the case, the buzz would be sequential – that is, it would occur at the next fret and not occur two frets further up the fretboard.

4) It is possible that the action is too low. This can be changed by using a taller bridge or changing the attitude of the neck by adjusting the coordinator rods.

As to fixing the problem, the only thing I would suggest that you consider doing yourself is changing the bridge or adjusting the coordinator rods. If the neck is bowed, it should be adjusted by a skilled repair person. Anything relating to the frets – which might lead to either fret adjustment or a complete re-fretting job – should also be left to a competent repair person.

The coordinator rod adjustment is fairly simple, but if done carelessly can lead to forcing the rim out of round. Most Gibson-style banjos have two coordinator rods: an upper one and a lower one. The forward end of both rods thread onto the neck's lag screws and are the means by which the neck is attached to the rim. The upper rod has a large nut inside the rim at the tailpiece end. The lower rod has a large nut both inside and outside the rim.

The rods should be attached firmly to the neck's lag screws. There is no "adjustment" here, just a connection point for the neck. To tighten the coordinator rods to the neck, put a small nail in the hole in the center of the rod and tighten the rod to secure it to the rim. There should be washers between the ends of the rods and the inside face of the rim. Hand tighten only; do not use a wrench or similar tool.

(For the following neck-angle adjustment, keep the nail in place and use it to prevent the coordinator rod from turning. Do NOT use pliers as they will damage the rod and/or nuts.)

To lower the action, tighten the large inside nut on the upper coordinator rod (so that it exerts pressure against the rim) and then tighten the outside nut on the lower rod (loosen the inner one, first). This will force the neck pitch down and lower the action.

To raise the action, loosen the outside lower nut, and tighten the inside lower nut against the rim, it will force the neck pitch upwards and raise the action. Note that the nut on the upper rod doesn't do anything to help the neck pitch come upwards; the strings' tension will help to do this to some extent. Once the adjustment is made, make the upper inside nut snug.

When you are done, snug up the nuts you didn't use to keep them from rattling. The maximum adjustment you should make would be two turns with any of the large nuts. If you need to go further, remove the neck and put a shim on the upper or lower contact point of the neck-to-rim connection to help the neck move in the direction you want it to go (down or up), reassemble, and try the nut adjustments again. Do not exert excessive force to tighten the nuts.

Roger Siminoff wins IBMA's Print Media Person of 2009 award

Our very Roger Siminoff has won the IBMA Print Media Personality of the Year award at this year's ceremonies in Nashville. The author of the CBA Bluegrass Breakdown's monthly Luthier's Corner column, Roger was honored with an award that recognizes outstanding service to bluegrass music in the field of print media and journalism. The recipient must be judged by the committee for their: contributions to the field of endeavor, professionalism, work in their community, demonstrated ability to foster bluegrass music's image. Because this is not a lifetime achievement award, longevity of service alone is not a factor.

Other nominees this year were Tom Adams, Banjo Newsletter and Dan Miller, Flat-picking Guitar Magazine.

Roger's latest book, *The Art of Tap Tuning*, is his 11th published text and features a 50-minute DVD that fully explains the process of adjusting the structure of acoustic stringed instruments to improve their sound.

Q: In the September issue of *The Breakdown*, you showed a picture of a dovetail joint for the mandolin and said that you routed the opening in the headpiece but that "for one-offs or a few hand-fitted instruments, cutting is fine." I've tried to do this dovetail joint and keep getting sloppy fits. Any ideas on how I can correct this?

A: Well, I'm not exactly clear on the process you are using, but the most important thing to consider is that if you get a "sloppy fit" there is really nothing wrong with shimming the dovetail joint to get it to fit correctly.

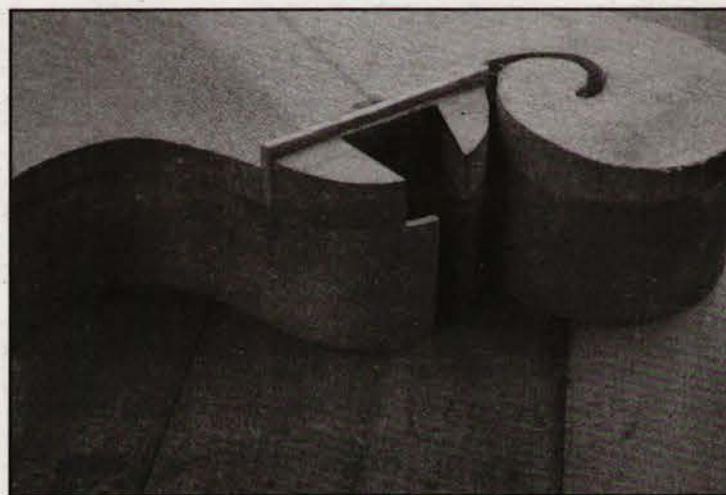


Fig. 1. This dovetail joint has been prepared with a special router bit (the dovetail was routed in the headblock before the rim was attached), but the dovetail joint in the neck and the headblock can be cut on the bandsaw and then hand fitted.

I've done repair work on numerous early Gibson instruments and many of them had shimmed dovetail joints. The good thing about the shims is that you can't see them from outside. If you fit the shims well, there is absolutely nothing wrong with using them. The thing you want to be very careful of is to not use a lot of glue to fill the hole. The best joint has a good wood-to-wood bond, and the best way to achieve this is to use glue for the purposes of bonding the pores of one piece of wood to the pores of another piece of wood. Under no circumstance should you attempt to use glue as a joint filler – when the glue dries and shrinks, you have nothing!

Q: What about plastic or gut strings on a banjo for a softer sound. Has it been tried?

A: Yes, gut strings have absolutely been tried on the banjo. In fact, gut was the very first type of string used on the banjo. Nylon (i.e., "plastic") is the space-age replacement for gut and has the advantage of not being susceptible to changes in humidity. Lots of old-time (i.e., open back) banjo players use gut or nylon today. And, you are correct, gut or nylon would impart a warmer, more mellow sound. Unfortunately, it is not a traditional sound – that is, "it doesn't sound like Earl's banjo" – so most folks stick to steel strings.

Q: I was wondering what your thoughts were about nuts and saddles. I use 1/8" saddles and nuts. Do you think I would get more drive from a 3/16" nut and saddle or would the mass be too great? I am using tusq from Graph Tech.

A: Before I respond, I assume you are referring to nuts and saddles for guitars. The needs are very different – from a standpoint of mass – when it comes to bridge saddles and nuts. For nuts, you need a rigid, dense material that will not damp (absorb) the energy from the strings. In essence, you want the nut to be a strong support on which the strings can vibrate without their energy dissipating through or being absorbed by the nut. Although some of the strings' energy is transmitted to the neck, the amplitude is so minimal that it is inconsequential. So, as it relates to nut material, the harder and denser the material is, the better.

Saddles play a very different role. While they also support the strings' vibrations, their main job is to assist in transferring the strings' energy to the soundboard. For saddles, you need a light and strong material that helps to transmit the strings' energy while at the same time doesn't interfere with the transmission of the strings' energy to the soundboard. So, as it relates to saddles, you really don't want significant mass, but you do want light weight, strength, and rigidity.

And, just to be sure clear about "mass," it refers to an object's weight and size as it relates to the amount of energy needed to set it in motion.

See you next month!

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If you have questions you would like answered, please email: siminoff@siminoff.net, or write to Roger Siminoff, PO Box 2992, Atascadero, CA 93423.

Roger Siminoff was the founder of *Pickin'* and *Frets* magazines and has written numerous books on instrument set-up and construction. His latest book, *Siminoff's Luthiers Glossary*, released by Hal Leonard Publishing, is available from better bookstores, most music stores, and luthier supply houses. In October 2009, Roger was awarded IBMA's Print Media Person Of The Year Award for his work on his column in *The Breakdown* as well as other texts. For more on Roger Siminoff, *Siminoff Banjo and Mandolin Parts*, Gibson, and Lloyd Loar history, visit his web site at: www.siminoff.net or write him at siminoff@siminoff.net.

J.D.'s Bluegrass Kitchen by J.D. Rhynes

Howdy, Howdy, Howdy! Ah, Fall at last! I purely love these Indian Summer days here in my beloved mountains of Calaveras county! Warm days and cool nights really make fer some good sleeping weather. It also makes fer a good appetite that longs fer those so called "comfort" foods we all love so much. When this time of the year comes around, and the leaves start to change colors, I know that it won't be long till I can start to heat up the 'ol oven, and cook some of my very favoritest cold weather dishes. There's nuthin' like smelling a big pot roast cookin' in the oven, or a big cast iron dutch oven of chicken and dumplings a'bubblin' on the stove, jes a'beggin me to dive into 'em! When the weather cools off, you welcome food like this that warms the kitchen, as well as fillin' yer belly real good. One of my very favoritest memories as a young man, was coming home from school to my mom's kitchen on a cold fall day, to find it warm, and full of wonderful aroma's of roast beef, hot bread baking in the oven, and a couple of fresh baked pies fer dessert. (One fer me, and the other fer the family.) Smashed 'tater's and gravy, and Bacon green beans was some of my Mom's favorite menu items. I can still smell that gravy as she would stand at the stove, stirring it to perfection. Fall always brings back such wonderful memories for me, and I hope it does fer you as well. PLUS, this month is my very favoritest holiday of 'em all, namely Thanksgiving! Sooo, I'm gonna feature a complete menu fer yer Turkey Day meal. So jes park yer 'ol truck under the black oak out back there, and come on into the kitchen where there's a big pot of "Cowboy Coffee", pour yerself a big mug and let's get started palaverin' over some good vittles!

Over the last 23 years, I've featured a lot of Turkey recipes fer yer Holiday meals, and they usually involve roasting the turkey. When I tried this recipe I jes knew I had to include it in this month's column. It comes out so durn good, I doubt that I'll ever roast a turkey again, unless I do it in my BIG meat cooker, where I cook with wood, and I can cook up to 4 large turkeys at one time. A few years back, I cooked two 32 lb. and one 15 lb. turkeys fer Thanksgiving in my meat cooker, which I fired with manzanita and oak wood. They came out perfect and the flavor was

so good that by noon the next day there was no leftovers to be seen! BUT, that's another story fer another time.

This recipe calls for a turkey breast of 2 to 3 pounds and is jes right fer a small dinner fer two or maybe even four folks, according to their appetites. That way there's no left over turkey carcass to deal with and if there is any left over meat, it makes fer some great sandwiches the next day. As I get older, the more I like things to be easy!

Now for years I have always brined my turkey for at least 24 hours prior to cooking it. It makes all the difference in the world as to the way it tastes, and once you have turkey fixed like this, you'll taste the huge difference in flavor immediately. So here's how to fix some:

Brined, Grilled Turkey Breast

Brine solution

2 quarts of cold water, divided
1/2 cup Kosher salt
1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
1 tbsp. whole peppercorns
1 boneless, skinless turkey breast, 2 to 3 pounds

Basting Sauce

1/4 cup canola oil
1/4 cup sesame oil
1/4 cup soy sauce
3 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp honey
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 tsp dried thyme
1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes

Combine 1 quart of water with the salt, brown sugar and peppercorns, and bring to a boil. Cook and stir until the salt and sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat, add the other quart of water, and let cool to room temp. Place a zip lock bag into another one, jes fer insurance, add the Turkey breast, and pour in the brine mixture. Seal bags, place in a pan and refrigerate at least 6 to 8 hours, or overnite.

Prepare yer BBQ fer indirect heat, and use a drip pan. Mix up the basting sauce. Place the turkey over the drip pan, baste real good with the sauce, and grill fer 1 1/2 hours, covered, till the meat is at 170 degrees internally. Baste occasionally while cooking. When done, let stand fer 10 minutes before carving. Some of

the bestest turkey you'll ever get on the outside of!

Now how easy can it get? I love turkey cooked like this! No mess or fuss, and the clean up after is a breeze! Here's a real time saving tip. As the turkey breast is cooking put some foil wrapped taters on the grill to roast along side of it, and you've got roasted taters, or you can throw 'em into a pot when they're done, and smash 'em up with some butter and cream and a couple cloves of garlic, and you've got garlic smashed taters! Top a big pile of these with gravy, and yer in country boy heaven!

Now what would a Thanksgiving meal be without some dressing? You've jes got to have dressing fer the meal to be complete! Here's a recipe fer dressing that you cook in yer slow cooker, and it comes out great every time. I love using my slow cooker, because you don't have to worry about burning anything, and if it cooks a little longer than it's supposed to, so what. Plus, if you're having a buffet style dinner you can jes take the cooker to the table and the dressing says good and hot.

Sausage and Mushroom Dressing

1/2 lb. bulk Italian sausage
4 cups seasoned stuffing cubes
1 1/2 cups crushed corn bread stuffing
1/2 cup toasted pecans
1/2 cup fresh parsley, minced
1 tbsp fresh sage, minced
1/8 tsp salt
1/8 tsp pepper
1 3/4 cups baby Portobello mushrooms, sliced
1 5 oz. pkg. fresh shiitake mushrooms, sliced
1 large onion, chopped
1 med Apple, peeled and chopped
1 celery rib, chopped
3 tbsp butter
1 14 1/2 oz. can chicken broth

Cook sausage in a skillet till no longer pink. Drain, place in a large bowl and stir in stuffing cubes, corn bread, pecans, parsley, sage, salt and pepper. In the same skillet, sauté the mushrooms, onion, apple and celery in the butter till tender. Stir into the stuffing mixture. Add the broth, and mix good, turn into a 5 qt slow cooker, cover and cook on low fer 3 hours, stirring once. Yummy!

Jes thinkin' about this good dressing has throwed a case of the "slobbers" on me! I purely love good dressing! There ain't nuthin' as good as a dressing sandwich made with Miracle Whip slathered about a half an inch thick on two slices of home made bread, and a big slab of dressing in the middle! It don't get any gooder than that fer a day

after Thanksgiving lunch! WOWSER'S! That was one of my ol buddy Vern Williams favorite sayin's, when he liked something.

One of my favorite things that my mom would always fix fer Thanksgiving would be some sweet taters, usually candied or with melted marshmallows on 'em. Either way, i jes love 'em, so when I ran across this recipe fer sweet taters and apples, I jes knew I had to include it in this month's column. It's kinda like having yer pie at the same time with yer supper. I know you'll like this one as much as I do.

Sweet Taters and Apples

5 medium sweet taters
5 medium tart apples, peeled and siced thin
1/2 cup sugar
1 Tbsp corn starch
1 cup cold water
1 tsp lemon juice
1/4 cup butter, cubed
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp fresh ground nutmeg
1/8 tsp salt

Place whole sweet taters in a pot, cover with water and bring to a boil, and cook until tender. Drain and cool slightly. Peel 'em and slice 1/4" thick. Take a greased 9" x 13" baking dish and layer half of the taters and apples. Repeat the layers. Combine the sugar, cornstarch, water and lemon juice in a saucepan till smooth. Bring to a boil and cook stirring fer 2 minutes till smooth and thickened. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Pour over the taters and apples. Cover and bake at 350 fer 30 minutes, uncover and bake 10 minutes longer, or until apples are tender. Pure heaven on yer plate!

Now fer a good meal to turn out a great meal, as my good friend Larry Kuhn sez, you've jes got to have some dessert! Well Larry 'ol roomie, if'n you like bread pudding as much as I do, you'll love this dessert. I don't think I've ever had a dish of bread pudding that I didn't like. Granted, there were a few times over the years that I've had a few places serve me some mediocre bread pudding, but the way I look at it is this; some bread pudding is better than no bread pudding. It's kinda like breathing. Some air is better than no air! So with that lil' gem of wisdom out of the way, here's a recipe fer some of the bestest bread pudding you'll ever slide down yer gullet

Apple Raisin Bread Pudding

3 tbsp butter melted
1 1 lb. loaf, day old cinnamon-raisin bread, cubed
3 cups peeled tart apples,



J.D. Rhynes

chopped
7 eggs
2 1/2 cups milk
3/4 cup sugar
3 tsp vanilla extract

Vanilla Sauce

2/3 cup sugar
1 tbsp cornstarch
1/8 tsp salt
1 cup cold water
1 tbsp butter
1 tsp vanilla extract

Grease a 9"X13" baking dish with the 3 tbsp of melted butter. Combine bread cubes and apples, and add to baking dish. Mix the eggs, milk, sugar and vanilla, and pour over the bread mix. Bake uncovered at 325 for 40 to 45 minutes. For the sauce, combine the sugar, cornstarch, salt and water. Bring to a boil over low heat, stirring constantly. Cook and stir for a couple of minutes until thickened, remove from the heat, stir in the butter and vanilla. Serve with the warm bread pudding. A real treat fer breakfast as well as being a great dessert.

Larry, this one reminds me of the bread pudding I had fer dessert after that great meal we had in Louisville, Kentucky the last time we were at IBMA in that great city. As I recall, you and I were the only ones to order dessert, because "da Rick" said he didn't want any, then we had to listen to him beg fer a bite of ours! It didn't do him any good though did it. Serves the bum right! HA!

Well folks, that's it fer this month's edition of the 'ol Bluegrass Kitchen. I pray that all of my Bluegrass family has a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner with all of their family and friends this year. Our Thanksgiving Holiday is a unique American tradition, and I am so proud to be called an American citizen. I am proud of our nation, and I am especially proud of our service men and women who keep this land the home of the Free and the Brave. For without our Brave men and women of our armed services, we would not be the free people we are today. Please keep all of them in your prayers, and may GOD grant us all peace and health. GOD BLESS AMERICA! Yer friend, J.D. Rhynes



BRENDA and the Reviews

Nell Robinson In Loango

Red Level Records
Berkeley, CA
www.nelrobinsonmusic.com
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Song list: In My Dear Old Southern Home, When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold Again, Forgotten Soldier Boy, Misty Moonlight If Tears Could Heal, I Walk The Line, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, Love Me or Leave Me Alone, Butch, Trouble-Minded Blues, No Part of Nothing, Scraps From Your Table, He Left Me Standing There, You Really Lose Your Mind.

When Hilary Perkins decided to pursue her dream of a singing career, she took the name of her grandmother, Nell Robinson, and the ancestral hometown of Red Level, Alabama to honor her roots. The songs on the album are a sentimental look back at a simpler time and place – the small Alabama farm towns of Red Level, Brooklyn, and Loango are filled with Robinson kin folk, and it's a delightful journey accompanied by a photograph of both Nells perched on the bumper of an old Chevy truck.

A stellar cast of local musicians including members of the Jaybirds joins Nell on the album. Laurie Lewis and Jim Nunally produced the songs on the album, and their careful blend of musicians and songs gives each song its own special setting. "In My Dear Old Southern Home" is an old Jimmie Rodgers song, and the image of an old home cabin is graced with a yodeling duet from Laurie and Nell. Nell and Keith Little blend their voices in "When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold Again," and John Reischman's mandolin, Nick Hornbuckle's banjo and Greg Spatz's fiddle just invite a nostalgic sing-a-long. Keith and Nell sing the stirring hymn, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" with a cadence that would move the rafters of the old white church house. "Misty Moonlight" has a Joe Craven and Jim Nunally instrumental backdrop with steel guitar and percussion and the music just invites a little dance around the porch. "Butch" is a tribute to Nell's Dad who had the "heart to rise above sorrow" and follow his own dreams. Hazel Dickens' "Scraps From Your Table" is a love song with an attitude and Nell gives her rendition the right dose of vinegar as she sings of being "tired of picking up the mess she makes of you." Cary Sheldon and Nell perform two DeZurik Sisters songs complete with hen cackles, yodels, and a vintage bounce that makes you happy to listen. Southern hospitality would dictate that any visitor would be treated to the best in the house, and Nell's songs have a love of life and a joy of discovery that will make you pull up a rocker and rest a spell.

Ricky Skaggs Solo: Songs My Dad Loved

Skaggs Family Records
PO Box 2478
Hendersonville, TN 37077
www.skaggsfamilyrecords.com
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Song list: Foggy River, What Is A Home Without Love, Colonel Prentiss, City That Lies Foursquare, Little Maggie, Sinner You Better Get Ready, Pickin' In Caroline, I Had But 50 Cents, Green Pastures in the Sky, Calloway, This World Is Not My Home, Branded Wherever I Go, God Holds the Future In His Hands.

Ricky Skaggs has been singing and playing since he was a toddler, and his father taught him the traditional songs that Hobart and his brother Okel had learned and sung together since childhood. Ricky sings these traditional songs with his own accompaniment on mandolin, resonator guitar, mandocello and octave mandolin, fretless banjo, piano, bass and fiddle. It's an impressive display of talent as he weaves words and music around those ancient tones of old Kentucky.

While Ricky's work with Kentucky Thunder is fast-paced and pounding bluegrass, this collection is more intimate and the listener is drawn into the homey, sit-by-the-fire, sharing in the songs. Ricky's warm baritone sings of lost loves, old home places and love of the Lord. "What Is A Home Without Love" is a slow waltz with the comforting images of a home with a baby and a wife to kiss you goodnight. It harkens back to a simpler time. "Colonel Prentiss" is one of three instrumentals featuring Ricky's fiddle playing overlaid with a pulsating banjo. "I Had But 50 Cents" is a humorous, corny song about a very hungry girl friend who proceeds to eat the contents of an entire restaurant much to the horror of her boy friend who only has 50 cents! "Branded Wherever I Go" is a mournful prisoner song written by Ray Acuff and Ricky revives "Little Maggie" with a banjo accompaniment that sounds as old as the hills. His rendition of "The City That Lies Foursquare" has that haunting, sparse sound that Ralph Stanley popularized in "O Death." This is Ricky at his roots and the well-spring of his musical soul.

Lou Reid & Carolina: My Own Set of Rules

Rural Rhythm Records
Box 660040
Dept. D
Arcadia, CA 91066
www.ruralrhythm.com
www.LouReidandCarolina.com
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Song list: Amanda Lynn, Picture Me There, She's More To Be Pitied, It's So Hard To Stumble

(When You're Down On Your Knees), In Despair, Beat The Train, Daddy Tried, John in the Jordan, Left Handed Dreamer, Mama, Over in the Promised Land, Blue Ridge Girl, A Tall Cornstalk.

If the IBMA ever has an award for "Bluegrass Superman," they would have to award it to Lou Reid. Lou has been in more top bluegrass bands playing more instruments than anyone else in the business: bass with Quicksilver, banjo with Ricky Skaggs, guitar and mandolin with the Seldom Scene and mandolin with his own band, Carolina. And to top off this instrumental prowess, Lou has one of the best voices in bluegrass, period.

His voice soars through heartfelt songs and his solo singing of "In Despair" just hands out the tear-stained hankiechiefs. "Daddy Tried" is one of those classic bluegrass songs about home, heart and heaven, and the singer sings with regret, "a rebel and a rounder, I guess I never heard a word he said." The other parent gets recognition too, and "Mama" also tried – "you turned to Jesus when my ways were too much to bear."

But Lou has also managed to surround himself with band mates that can put together a bluegrass song. Lou's wife Christy plays bass and sings lead and harmony vocals, Shannon Slaughter plays guitar and lead and harmony vocals, and Trevor Watson plays banjo and sings harmony vocals. Ron Stewart adds fiddle to the songs and his marvelous playing helps to define the edges around the vocals. Trevor's instrumental, "Beat The Train" is a great example of his banjo playing, but Lou's mandolin quickly adds a flurry of notes followed by Shannon's crisp flatpicked guitar.

"John in the Jordan" begins with a spirited banjo introduction and then the lead vocal is followed by a full-bodied four-part gospel harmony chorus embellished with a splendid mix of mandolin and guitar. "Over In The Promised Land" also has a mix of harmony vocals with Christy's voice soaring above the others.

Christy also takes the lead vocal in Carter Stanley's "She's More To Be Pitied." Lou Reid and Carolina have put together a great collection of music; as Lou mentioned in the liner notes, "the songs bring in all the elements of the bluegrass I love; the contemporary,

traditional and gospel."

Valerie Smith & Becky Buller: Here's A Little Song

Bell Buckle Records
PO Box 142
Bell Buckle, TN 37020
www.bellbucklerecords.com
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Song list: I Got A Letter, Life Is Not A Guarantee, Heart of the House, Tennessee Courtin' Time, Cottonmill, Whisper Baby, Hand Of Help, There Is A Time, The River, Hot Grease at Midnight, Four Wet Pigs and the Ham Chorus, Your Goodnight Is My Good-bye.

Valerie Smith and Becky Buller are both members of Liberty Pike, an award-winning band based in the historic town of Bell Buckle, Tennessee. Valerie and Becky's distinctive vocal harmonies give Liberty Pike its signature sound and the two gals have gathered a collection of songs to showcase their vocal styles and Becky's skills with fiddle, banjo and guitar. Joining Becky and Valerie are Wayne Benson on mandolin, Kristin Scott Benson on banjo, Justin Carbone on guitar, Bobby David on bass and Chad Graves on dobro.

Valerie has a distinctive voice, a bit like a country road – a touch of gravel and dust and a meander that always touches home and hearth. "Life Is Not A Guarantee" is filled with front porches and a homespun philosophy about life: "we're the only ones when it comes down to it, we can rise up or dig our own grave." The emptiness of a house after a loved one departs is the theme of "Heart of the House" and the mournful dobro and vocal harmonies set the mood. Holly Tashian's "Cottonmill" tells the



Brenda Hough

story of the workers in the cotton mills and Valerie and Becky's powerful a cappella rendition adds poignancy to the hard life of these children who had no childhood. "Your Goodnight Is My Goodbye" is a beautifully arranged song with Valerie's heartfelt solo of farewell with guitar, fiddle and mandolin adding a backdrop.

On a more light-hearted note, Greg Brown's "Four Wet Pigs & The Ham Chorus" is a delightful romp with jaw harp, guitar, mandolin and banjo extolling the

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BRENDA and the Reviews

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wonders of collard greens, ham and bacon. One of the CD's photos shows Valerie holding a porcine companion.

Becky's "Hand of Help" is a rousing call to assist your brother and has some wonderful mandolin passages from Wayne Benson. "The River" is another one of Becky's songs and her clawhammer banjo weaves all around the tale of the ill-fated Dan Harper and his wife Sarah – it's a "Banks of the Ohio" with a twist. Valerie and Becky have named the album, "Here's A Little Song," but it could easily be "here's a little life" – love, family, jobs and a little bowl of ham and greens.

Herschel Sizemore: B-Natural

Amandolena Records
www.fqms.com
www.herschelsizemore.com
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Song list: B Natural, Augusta Heritage, Slidin' Back, Charlotte's Reel, Mayberry Flash, Monroe's Dream, Shootin' Creek, White Oak, Tamba's Waltz, Alberta

Clipper, Derrington Express, Crooked Road.

Herschel Sizemore can trace his mandolin interest to an early admiration of Bill Monroe and a mandolin on loan from a friend during World War II. He played with second generation bluegrassers Del McCoury and Jimmy Martin and in this album of original tunes, he has surrounded himself with some stellar instrumentalists: Terry Baucom on banjo, Jimmy Haley on rhythm guitar, Ron Stewart on fiddle, Mike Bub on bass and Alan Bibey on harmony mandolin and lead guitar.

"B Natural" is an apt title for a song and the album. Herschel has written many songs in the key of B, and the flurry of notes that naturally flows from his mandolin are crisp and full of a woody deep texture that only a master can summon from his mandolin. While Herschel's mandolin is a prominent part of each song, the melding of instruments and the sharing of melodic leads makes each song a band effort. Terry's banjo starts "B Natural" and the flow from the pulsing banjo to the fiddle to the wolfy mandolin chop underlying

the rhythm seems as natural as balancing a log in the river – it's easy if you know how.

"Augusta Heritage" and "Mayberry Flash" are two high-spirited tunes and your feet might want to start dancing as the musicians take turns playing the themes. Alan's guitar playing has the depth of authority as each note rings out to be followed by the mandolin taking the woody lower registers and then switching to the upper strings. Herschel's mastery of melody and timbre is evident in all the songs and his "Monroe's Dream" has some of that Monroe magic. The stately "Tamba's Waltz" was written for Herschel's daughter while the faster-paced "Derrington Express" was written in honor of Gibson mandolin maker Charlie Derrington. Herschel also presents workshops and has instructional materials for the mandolin player available so fans have opportunities to have more Sizemore.

Adam Steffey: One More For The Road

Sugar Hill Records
PO Box 120897
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Song list: Deep Rough, One More For The Road, Don't Lie To Me, Let Me Fall, Durang's Hornpipe, Warm Kentucky Sunshine, A Broken Heart Keeps Beatin', Trusting in Jesus, Half Past Four, Please Don't Tell Me How The Story Ends, What Gives You the Right, Barnyard Playboy.

Adam Steffey has been a road warrior, and it's not without reason that he called this new album "One For The Road." As part of the original Alison Krauss and Union Station, the Lonesome River Band, the Issacs, Mountain Heart and now the Dan Tyminski Band, he and his mandolin have certainly covered a lot of territory. The title song, written by Josh Shilling and Craig Market, is filled with images of the traveling man – the diner at 3 am, the miles, one horse towns, and a host of regrets. Adam's husky baritone gets the mood just right and Randy Kohr's dobro and Ron Stewart's fiddle enhance the song's mood. "Please Don't Tell Me How The Story Ends" was written by Kris Kristofferson, and Adam's solo vocal captures the hope before the collapse of a love affair while "A Broken Heart Keeps Beatin'" is one of those happy-it-hurts country songs.

Dan Tyminski's lead vocal on "Let Me Fall" is a joyous celebration as Ron Stewart's banjo and Adam's mandolin go full tilt with the Barnyard Playboys adding background vocals. Alison Krauss and Dan blend voices on "Warm Kentucky Sunshine" and Adam's mandolin introduction has his sig-

nature flowing, crystal clear notes joined by Ron's fiddle and Randy's dobro. It's a Union Station moment.

Just in case you've forgotten that Adam is a mandolin player, "Half Past Four" opens with a flurry of mandolin notes with Stuart Duncan's fiddle and Ron Block's banjo following and upping the tune's density, and then Adam returns with an even more intricate flow of notes. The album ends with Adam's original "Barnyard Playboy" and you can almost hear the strutting steps of a rooster impressing the hens. It's great to hear Adam taking a turn on center stage!



To be reviewed

Send your materials to:

Brenda Hough
PO Box 20370
San Jose CA 95160
or write to:

hufstuff2003@yahoo.com

Do you have a child who would like to participate in the Kids on Bluegrass Program?



Frank Solivan, Sr.

Currently the Kids on Bluegrass program, under the direction of Frank Solivan, Sr., takes place at the CBA Supergrass Bluegrass Festival in Bakersfield, Calif., the CBA Fathers Day Bluegrass Festival in Grass Valley, California and under the title of 'Kids on Stage' also at Larry and Sondra Bakers "Bluegrassin' in the Foothills" festival in Plymouth, California.

Frank Solivan, Sr. has been directing this program for approximately 16 years and he and his kids consistently delight audiences with high quality and highly talented young people.

This program is open to children ages 3 through 17. The children must be able to sing and/or play their instrument WITHOUT parents or guardians help. Songs MUST be completely memorized (again without help). Children must have good enough understanding of their instrument to have good timing, know their chords and be able to change chords quickly, easily play 2 or three songs and the ability to play in a group.

Rehearsal takes place many hours during the day for several days at each festival and culminates in a stage production on the main stage at each festival. Parents and children must be ready to commit to all of the rehearsals.

To find out if your child is ready to participate in this wonderful program, visit Frank Solivan, Sr. at his campsite at any one of these festivals.

www.kidsonbluegrass.com

2009 CBA instrument raffle results

The winners of the 2009 CBA instrument raffle were drawn at the Fall Campout in Colusa. Congratulations to the winners and many thanks to the generous sponsors who made this fund raising raffle possible.

Sponsor: Martin Guitar

John Jennings of Hollister won a Martin D18V (Vintage model) guitar with mother of pearl inlay reading "CBA Grass Valley 2009."

Sponsor: Deering Banjo

Marty Shellhammer of Concord won a Deering "Sierra" model banjo.

Sponsor: San Diego Old Time Music and Collings Guitar

Carol Barra of Sacramento won a Collings A model mandolin.

Sponsor: Sacramento's 5th String Music Co.

Melanie Litty of Huntington Beach won a Cremona upright bass.

Sponsor: Saga Musical Instrument Co., importer of fine musical instruments

Corbin Pagter of Berkeley won a Cremona fiddle ensemble.

2009/2010 CBA Board of Directors election results

By Josh Michaels

Based on current membership 299 votes were required for a quorum. 437 votes were tallied. The quorum was exceeded. Online vote accounted for the largest portion at 167, mail 107, fall campout 63, Plymouth 54, Hobbs Grove 45. 14 additional votes were not tallied due to expired membership, duplicate votes, or because the voter could not be determined.

There were eleven candidates for eleven seats on the board. All eleven candidates received more votes than any write-in candidate.

The following eleven names make up the 2009 board of directors.

Tim Edes 384

Darby Brandli 383

Montie Elston 383

Deb Livermore 381

Bruce Campbell 380

Lisa Burns 378

Rick Cornish 371

Rich Evans 370

John Duncan 367

Craig Wilson 362

J.D. Rhynes 332

There were an additional 17 write-in candidates:

Bob Schwartz 7

Mark Hogan 3

Mark Varner 2

Ed Alston 1

Chris Avila 1

Donald Brown Jr. 1

George Calhoun 1

Pat Calhoun 1

Don Evans 1

Carolyn Faubel 1

Angelica Grimm 1

Jim Ingram 1

Cathy Kirkpatrick 1

Larry Kuhn 1

Ryan Richelson 1

And... Darth Vader 1



The 2009/2010 CBA Board of Directors: J.D. Rhynes, John Duncan, Deb Livermore, Tim Edes, Darby Brandli, Montie Elston, Lisa Burns, Rick Cornish, Carl Pagter (CBA Chairman Emeritus). Not pictured: Rich Evans, Bruce Campbell and Craig Wilson.

Please join us in congratulating the new CBA Board of Directors. Contact information for all these directors and other CBA

leadership can be found on page two of the Bluegrass Breakdown. Thanks to all who voted.

CBA CLASSIFIED ADS

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FOR SALE: STELLING BANJO, 1997 Bill Emerson "Signature" Red Fox - Curly Cherry. Matte gold finish, custom engraving & inlays, S/N 4646. Limited edition signature model to honor the achievements of Bill Emerson.

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BANJO LESSONS WITH ALLEN HENDRICKS of Hendricks Banjos, the California Quickstep and formerly of the South Loomis Quickstep. I teach all styles of five-string banjo playing that can be done with finger picks. All levels from rank beginner to accomplished player who may need additional direction to take his or her playing to a higher level. Private individual lessons as well as teaching your group to compliment each other's styles and abilities. I teach at my own private studio in the Sacramento Area. I also teach in my home just north of Placerville. I play banjo, I make banjos, and I sometimes buy and sell banjos and other stringed instruments. For further information or to schedule lesson times, please call 916-614-9145 or 530-622-1953.

LESSONS

BANJO LESSONS IN BAY AREA from Bill Evans. Rounder recording artist, Banjo Newsletter columnist and AcuTab author. Beginners to advanced; Scruggs, melodic and single-string styles, back up, theory, repertoire. Lessons tailored to suite each student's individual needs, including longer evening or weekend sessions for out-of-town students. Over 20 years teaching experience. Albany, 510-528-1924; email bevans@nativeandfine.com.

Did you know that by buying a pair of early bird tickets for the CBA Father's Day Festival at the member's price you save enough to pay for a couple's membership fee? It's like getting free memberships with your ticket order!

The Bluegrass Breakdown is one of the premiums of membership in the California Bluegrass Association. You can also receive this newsletter in pdf form at our website: www.cbaontheweb.org

Hooked on Bluegrass

Each month we present a story from a bluegrass addict... This month's bluegrass confession is from:

Aimee Anderson

CBA KOB veteran and member of the Anderson Family Band

I got started playing bluegrass music when my Dad and sister Paige were learning to play banjo and guitar together, which looked like a lot of fun! So I wanted to play an instrument. At the 2003 Fathers Day Bluegrass Festival I saw someone playing "Orange Blossom Special" on fiddle, and I really liked that instrument a lot so I decided to play the fiddle.

Mostly my Dad and sister Paige inspired me to play music, but my Uncle Lloyd plays fiddle and bag pipes, so he was a big influence on me playing music.

A couple months after the 2003 CBA's Fathers Day Festival I told mom and dad that I really wanted to play fiddle. So they got my first fiddle from the local luthier, Luke Wilson.

After that, Mom and Dad signed me up for lessons with Rick Toles, and I was having a blast!

My main instrument is the fiddle, but recently I have been learning the banjo from my dad,



Aimee Anderson

and mandolin from my brother, Ethan.

I have always played bluegrass. It is my favorite type of music. I would like to accomplish being a really good fiddle player, and I would love to compete in some fiddle competitions. My dream would be to play at the Grand Ole Opry someday with my family band!!! That would be a lot of fun!

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B-Section--the-bluegrass-buzz

Kids On Bluegrass - Plymouth 2009

By Sharon Elliott

We rolled through the gates into the Plymouth Festival late on Friday morning. Normally we get there on Thursday evening so



Jesse Valdez picks for KOB show.
Photo: Steven Elliott

that we will be ready to start Kids on Bluegrass rehearsals on Friday morning with Frank Solivan. This year however, we just couldn't get away until Friday morning and it wasn't until about noon that we arrived in the heat of the day!

I think it was the second Plymouth festival we attended long before Larry and Sondra started Bluegrass in the Foothills that I remember it being this hot! We set up camp this year next to Frank in the back field and it seemed to just be like a dessert. As I sat there melting I asked him how many kids he had seen so far and wondered if I was going to be able to sit in a hot room to rehearse. Since school is back in by this time of the year, most of the kids don't get to the festival until Friday afternoon but usually there are still enough kids to get started.

On this day however, Frank decided that since there were so

few kids there on Friday that we would just relax for the day and get started on Saturday. So we settled in and took some time to just walk around and see some friends.

Saturday morning Frank and I walked over to the rehearsal room and found only three kids waiting to rehearse! Only three and only one of those three had been with the Kids on Bluegrass before! Joshua Gooding 11-mandolin, Dave Gooding's son, had been with us once or twice but we had not yet met Jacob Gooding-9-bass, Dave's second child. The third child was a very enthusiastic young boy by the name of Jesse Valdez-9-guitar. Both Jacob and Jesse were new to us and as I looked at these three I wondered for a few moments just how we might put on a show with three kids! I knew that Marty and Veronica Varner were at the festival and Tim Elson, but they were not at rehearsal yet. Frank however,



KOB Plymouth 2009.

Photo: Steven Elliott

just walked in sat down and got started by asking Jacob and Jesse their names and what they could play. Josh told Frank that Jacob was his brother and that he could play some songs but that he was just learning the bass. The bass is a half size bass that was donated to the

Darrell Johnston Kids Instrument Lending Library and I was able to loan the bass to Jacob last year. Jacob told Frank that he could play in certain keys but not all of them yet. Jesse had a few songs for Frank and really wanted to sing too so we

Continued on B-2

Brenda's Excellent IBMA Adventure A first timer's experience with the Nashville event

By Brenda Hough

Whenever anyone I knew talked about IBMA, it was with a mixture of awe and Disneyland excitement. Tales of non-stop, excellent quality music and bluegrass star sightings made this event one that I had to experience.

I finally got to attend IBMA for a week of intense bluegrass this September. It's a mixture of slumber party (mostly lack of slumber) and picking party with bits of Disneyland theme park thrown in for good measure.

If you start with Adventureland, the airlines are sure to please. I managed to arrive in Nashville with all my luggage but other travelers have tales of late flights and misdirected luggage. Other adventures await on Nashville's main street, Broadway. I discovered Jack's Barbecue culinary delights and during the week sampled such delights



The band OMGG did a fine job at the IBMA Kids On Bluegrass show.

Photo: Brenda Hough

as biscuits and gravy, grilled ham, pork chops and deep fried pickles. Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, the Bluegrass Inn and Robert's Western World (featuring Burgers, Boots, Beer and Booze) had non-stop

music and wandering through any of these would give you an earful of hard-rocking, complete-with-drums-and-guitars country music. Broadway also has Gruhn Guitars with the largest collection of new and vintage guitars, mandolins, banjos and other instruments for any bluegrass player's delight. Another evening venture was to the famed Station Inn where we heard Michael Cleveland and Flame-keeper perform fun songs like Monster Truck and rip through instrumentals like Jerusalem Ridge and Lee Highway. It's no surprise that the band won Instrumental

Continued on B-2

Remembering Hobbs Grove 2009

By Kelly Broyles

Well, another Hobbs Grove is in the books! I really have to thank all our volunteers for all their hard work again this year and taking care of the jobs they were assigned! Earl and Laura Taylor did another great job of running the gate with their helpers to perfection! And again my Dad on his four-wheel quad with the help of Ron Jefferson and others ran the parking very smoothly, many thanks to Bud Camp for keeping the trashcans tidy. And our MCs did a great job Kevin Campbell, Deb Livermore,

Stan Allen and myself held down the fort and kept the ball rolling.

Phil and Mona were tireless on the raffle sales and really did a great job along with their crew! Thanks to Candy Sponhaltz for helping with the ice sales and programs production and all our printing and e-mail notifications.

Thanks to Ann Munson and so many others. Linda Guerrero did the best job we've seen so far with getting a full-page article in the Fresno Bee and other advertising. Bob Ratliff took care of hospitality

Continued on B-3



Bay Area band the Barefoot Nellies are popular with the Sanger audience.

photo: Candy

Also in the B section...

Whit Washburn's IBMA photo review
Mike Melnyk's HSB photo review
Dana Gordon's Brown Barn photo review
Dix Bruce guitar tab
and more features, photos and articles



Kids On Bluegrass - Plymouth 2009

From page B-1
got started with these three kids and within the hour a few other kids wandered in.

Kiernan McNamara-8-mandolin joined the Kids on Bluegrass for the first time. Kiernan had just borrowed an A-style mandolin from the instrument lending library that was handmade by Harwood Mandolins. I was thrilled when he walked in and wanted to watch the kids rehearse. We asked him what he could play and he said



Jacob Gooding

Photo: Steven Elliott

he didn't really know anything yet. I think he was a little shy because as it turned out he could play an Irish toon called "Lisdoonvarna" and Kiernan opened the show with that song! In rehearsal we showed him how to "chop" along and he was able to take part in many of the songs and it was really fun to watch him enjoy himself and get to go on stage. Kiernan is now taking lessons and just loves his mandolin!

It wasn't long before Marty and Veronica Varner showed up and then Tim Elson and Dana Frankel. These four are long time veterans of the Kids on Bluegrass and with the addition of these kids we knew we had a show. Then the Anderson kids, Paige, Aimee, Ethen and Daisy came by and asked if they too could take part in the show.

Marty and Veronica always have a slew of songs they can do both together and apart and I think it would be fun to watch these two at home picking out songs together and then working on them! Veronica-10-fiddle & vocals brought another new song "You Don't Know What Love Is" During rehearsal Frank asked Veronica "Do you know what love is"? Veronica was a little perplexed by this question but Frank continued by saying, "Listen up kids, I'm asking that question because when you sing, you need to really understand the words in the songs you are singing because you are telling a story to your audience. When you really understand what you are saying, then the emo-

tions of the song will show in your face and voice and that will make the audience feel those emotions too."

These kids are young to understand everything but each time they come to us we work with them on the art of performing and they do begin to learn and it doesn't take long for them to begin to know and then teach the newer kids themselves! As with Marty and Veronica, they are very comfortable with being on stage and these two work well on stage together. Great job Marty and Veronica!

Jesse wanted to sing "Sunny Side of the Mountain" and Josh and Marty played with him. In rehearsal Jesse has some trouble remembering the words and was reading from his paper. Frank told him he would not be able to read the words on stage so he had only that one day to make sure he knew the words. As he tried to sing, he was a little tentative and Frank and I both tried to get him to sing louder. He worked and worked and really tried and soon was beginning to sing louder and with more confidence and by the time he got to the stage he did a great job! As much as I would like to be out front watching the show, it is so fun to see the kids RUN down the steps with their HUGE smile of excitement after their performance. Jesse was just absolutely pumped up. This kid loves to be on stage! I didn't get to see this but I was told that during the Encore he was really pumped up and tossed his guitar pick out to the audience!

In the afternoon rehearsal on Saturday another young man came in and asked to join us. By now it's getting down to the point where we really have to get this show in line! We only have this afternoon.

Cameron (sorry I don't have his last name) came in with his guitar ready to sing some songs. Cameron fit right in easily as he plays great guitar and has a wonderful voice. With Marty, Veronica, Dana, Josh and Tim, we have a good backup band that can just create their own breaks without prior rehearsal! Cameron sang "Reubans Train" and "In the Pines".

Dana Frankel-10-fiddle has now added "vocals" to her performance. She also started playing the bass this year having borrowed a bass from the lending library that was donated by the Schwartzs.

Dana said she had a song she wanted to sing. Up until this time Dana has only played the fiddle so I was thrilled to hear she was now singing. She sang "Bury Me Beneath the Willows" What came out of her mouth though was a wonderfully strong and confident voice and she looked straight out at where her. Dana is another one of our kids that just walks right out on stage and let's loose! As the day progressed we needed a few more songs and Dana and Veronica wanted to sing a song that they had written but they couldn't quite get

it so they said they will get it ready for Grass Valley. They're only 10! In the end we asked Dana if she could sing any other songs and she gave us "Down the Road". I asked her mom Vicky, when she started singing and she said, "You know, she just started doing it. She sees all these kids that she works with in the Kids on Bluegrass sing and she just decided she wanted to do it too! I really don't push her, it's just what she wants."

Josh Gooding and Marty Varner wanted to do something really fast and had a lot of fun on "New Camptown Races" We've been listening to Mary play really fast songs for a long time now and he is always a show in itself, but this was the first time I had seen Josh rip it up!! He is wonderful on the mandolin and kept right up with Marty! Since we hadn't worked with Josh but once or twice before, we didn't really know what he could do. These two really really packed a punch.

Marty Varner sang "Roving Gambler" and "Same Kind of Crazy as You". During rehearsal it was really nice to see Marty helping Jacob Gooding and Keirnan with their instruments on some of the songs and on a couple songs that were in a key that Jacob didn't know how to play, Marty took the bass and played it for those couple songs. Marty's voice was strong and clear and as usual he put his own flair on everything!

Jacob Gooding is learning to play the bass but he really did a great job on all of the songs that he played. Occasionally he needed a little help but I loved having him there with his brother and really hope he comes back as we always need a bass player. Great job Jacob! You're going to be a great bass player.

While standing back stage, Dave Gooding was waiting to go on with his band following the KOB and it was as much fun watching him dance around telling everyone back stage that "that was my kid, and that one too"! He was a very proud dad on that day!

The Anderson Kids, Paige, Aimee, Ethen and Daisy took the stage to sing "Never Leave Harlan Alive" and "Harbor of Love". I never get tired of listening to these kids. They are powerful! Paige's voice can be so haunting especially on a song like Harlan. When we were in the rehearsal room the acoustics on this song was intense and brought tears to my eyes! It's amazing to see how Ethen is playing his mandolin now and the breaks he takes! And his singing has become much stronger so you can really hear his harmony. Aimee also is superb on her fiddle and her singing is too. Her voice is so different from Paige's but yet they blend so wonderfully and then you add little Daisy on the high part and you have incredible family harmony. Their performances are always tight and so professional and entertaining. Wow!

As Frank was just ready to announce the Encore, he suddenly remembered that he had two more kids that he had forgotten about. From back stage out came our newest graduate of Kids on Bluegrass Angelica Grim and one of the first Kids on Bluegrass, Frank Sullivan II to sing "Little Annie" and "If I needed You". It was a really special moment to reflect on how this program came about and the amazing talent that has graced our stages through this program.

Our kids then joined Angelica and Frank on a rousing Clinch Mountain Backstep that literally had Jesse bouncing on the stage and then he threw his guitar out to the audience to end the show!

Working with these kids is always a joy! There are always surprises and sometimes you just don't know how the show will possibly come together, but they always do. As the older kids grow up and move on there are always new kids coming forward to take their places, eager for just the chance to perform with the Kids on Bluegrass.

LETTERS

To the CBA

Dear CBA,

On behalf of my friends and husband Gary (George Bush look-a-like) I would like to thank the CBA for a great time in the CBA suite at IBMA this year! Everyone always makes us feel welcome!

Sincerely,

Myrna and Gary Lunsford
Lancaster, Ohio



Brenda's Excellent IBMA Adventure

A first timer's experience with the Nashville event

From page B-1

Group of the Year at the IBMA Awards and that Michael won fiddle player of the year, Jesse Brock won mandolin player and Marshall Brock won bass player of the year.

Other winners included our very own Roger Siminoff as Print Media Person of the Year. Roger's monthly luthier column in Bluegrass Breakdown and his numerous instrument construction and Physics of Sound books have all added to our musical knowledge and appreciation.

The IBMA Business Conference featured band and business workshops and several of the seminars touched on the use of computer social networking and on-line websites to promote bluegrass. Outreach programs to promote bluegrass in schools, on the radio and bluegrass songwriting help the genre to grow more popular. This forward-looking "Tomorrowland" also included newer bands. Each evening was filled with artist showcases and bands such as Bull Harmon, Spring Creek, the Davidson Brothers and G2 performed at night and met fans in the Exhibit Room.

Any mention of the "tomorrow" in bluegrass has to feature the Kids on Bluegrass. California's OMGG closed the Kids on Bluegrass show with their strong singing harmonies and outstanding instrumentation. Other kids and family bands performed during the show and 7 year-old Isaac Moore brought down the house as he played Old

Joe Clark with his mandolin upside down and backwards across his shoulders!

The CBA Hospitality Suite was a popular jamming spot all week. It was great to have a "home away from home" and see some familiar and friendly faces so far from our usual stomping grounds at Grass Valley. Thanks to all the volunteers who provided refreshments for the weary and hungry, and to the musicians who performed nightly at the suite. Among the performers during the week were Bill Evans and Megan Lynch, the Brombies, OMGG, and Bradley Walker.

The "Main Street" highlight of the IBMA week is the Friday to Sunday Fan Fest which featured 60 different bluegrass acts all on a main stage flanked by two large video screens. There was not a bad seat in the house and the fans clapped and cheered as award winners Dailey and Vincent, Michael Cleveland and Dale Ann Bradley performed. Other bands are on everyone's most popular in bluegrass: Doyle Lawson, Del McCoury, the Grascals, J.D. Crowe, Randy Waller and the Country Gentlemen, Mountain Heart, Grassdowne, Cherryholmes and the Infamous Stringdusters to name just a few.

Ed Sullivan used to call his TV program "a really big show," but IBMA is a one-of-a-kind yearly adventure and the biggest bluegrass show in town. Plan to attend next year from September 27 - October 3, 2010.

Remembering Hobbs Grove 2009

From page B-1

for the bands this year and ran it to perfection! I was so pleased with all the bands that we had in our line-up this year. They did a great job! From the Brombies, the Nellies with Molly Tuttle standing in, The Andersons were a real treat for all of us here and were loved by everyone! It was amazing to see the talent that such a young family is blessed with. And Deep Elem! They all did such a great job right down to the Kingsriver Gospelaieres!

We had a strong Old Time representation with Uncle Ephus opening the show, Red Rag Andy and CountryGrass with Tina Louis Barr! California has some amazing talent and the rest of the Country will be taking notes.

Of course, thanks to my wife Julie and Don & Sandy for decorating the stage and surrounding area so perfectly! I can't tell you the number of folks who came up to me and said this was their first time at Hobbs and what a wonderful and comfortable feeling the Hobbs park has, and how everyone seemed so friendly and happy to be there!

Of course we can't forget to thank Mr. Frank Solivan for coming down and organizing the Kids On Bluegrass show again and how much fun we all had watching them light up to take the stage and play and sing for us all clapping, cheering, whistling and encouraging them! It was really priceless as always! I must thank the Visalia Elk Vagabonds for their continued support and their numbers seem to grow every year!

This was a very special year for us here at Hobbs; in such a tough economy and still have such a great turnout! And we were so proud to dedicate this years Festival to Wayne Nolan and wish his family all the best and to know that he will be missed by all of us who knew him. The first Festival I attended was Hobbs five or six years ago and was lucky enough to camp along side him and have camped by him every year since! He really made you feel welcome and like you were part of his family.

Well it's all in the books for 2009 and soon we will be planning 2010! Marcos Alvira has agreed to help me out next year as Co-Director for Hobbs!! He may not realize how big a job he's in for, but I really look forward to his help. He's been to a lot of our local jams so we all know him and what a great guy he is. And he always helps out at Hobbs so welcome aboard Marcos!! And see you all next year!

CBA's 48 Hour Jam 3rd Annual January 8-9, 2010 Bakersfield

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at kelvin@gregspetro.com.

2009 IBMA World of Bluegrass and Fanfest

Photos by Whit Washburn



Each year bluegrassers from everywhere descend on Music City.
All photos this page: Whit Washburn



The jamming in the illustrious CBA hospitality suite is almost non stop. Just about everyone winds up there eventually!



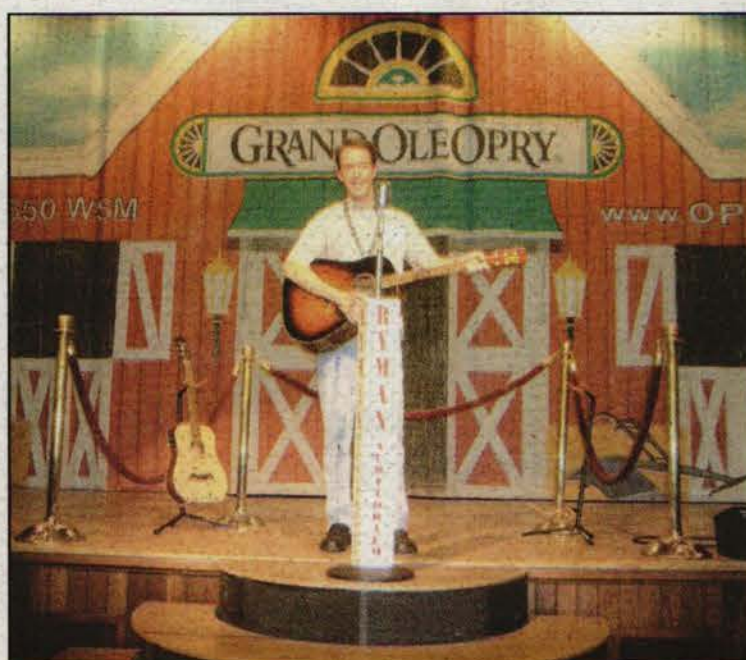
Supergroup: the Dan Tyminski Band perform.



Frank Solivans, junior and senior with Rob Ickes.



Angelica Grim and Rick Cornish talk business at the IBMA trade show.



The CBA's Whit Washburn finally makes the big time in Music City, USA.



Just one wall at the historic Hatch Show Print Company.

2009 Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival

Photos by Mike Melnyk

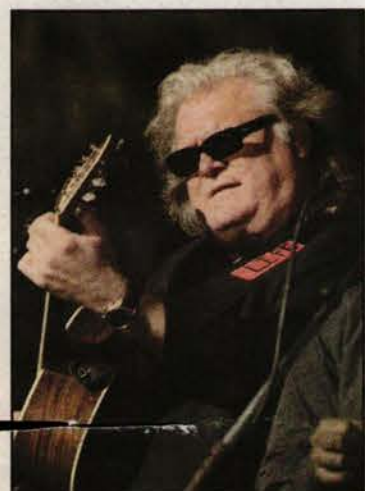


The Del McCoury Band takes their bluegrass to the San Francisco audience.

All photos this page: Mike Melnyk



California favorite Annie Staninec.



His hipness Ricky Skaggs.



The beautiful Emmylou Harris.



Nicole Solis of the Barefoot Nellies.



Laurie Lewis and Claire Lynch.



Steve Earle and wife Allison Moorer.



Del McCoury, Rob McCoury, Ralph Stanley, Earl Scruggs, Doc Watson, Gary Scruggs and Ronnie McCoury.

2009 Brown Barn by photographer Dana Gordon



Natural Drift plays traditional bluegrass.

All photos this page: Dana Gordon



Snap Jackson and the Knock On Wood Players is the fun new band on the CA bluegrass scene.



Mineral Kings play it old school.



Vocalist for Bean Creek, Billy Pitrone.



Dave Hanks, Dore Coller and Steve Kallai of Savannah Blu



AJ Lee and Betsy Riger sit in with Angelica Grim (center).



Sidesaddle's Lisa Burns.



Alan Shank of the Notorious Shank Brothers.



Longtime band Earthquake Country.

'O Christmas Tree'

- Guitar arrangement from the new Mel Bay book by Dix Bruce

I love Christmas music. It probably has to do with the warm memories of the holiday season that I have from my younger days. As a musician, I often play Christmas music on guitar and mandolin at a variety of events, parties, and get-togethers. Over the years I've played the whole range of holiday repertoire from traditional and classical carols to pop ballads to bluegrass versions of all types of holiday songs.

Here's a guitar arrangement of "O Christmas Tree" in the flatpicking or Carter style. It's from my new Mel Bay book/CD set "Christmas Favorites for Solo Guitar: 30 Best Loved Traditional Songs for Bluegrass Guitar." "O Christmas Tree" or "O Tannenbaum," a traditional German melody, is usually performed in 3/4 or 6/8, waltz time. I decided to change the meter to 4/4 to give it a peppy, robust, bluegrassy feel. I'm hoping those traditional Germans won't mind!

This arrangement, like the others in the book, is aimed at beginning and intermediate flatpicking/bluegrass guitarists. The key to playing these types of solos, and most Carter-style solos as well, is to hold the given chord for as long as possible. That's because most of the melody notes are chord tones and if you're holding the correct chord, most of the fretting work will already be done for you. Melody notes that aren't chord tones will be close by so it's important that you anchor your fretting hand in the chord position. The Carter style is built on playing a melody note and then punctuating it with a chord strum. You end up playing lead and rhythm at the same time. That's another good reason to hold onto your chords. You just don't have time between notes and strums to re-form your fretting hand.

The small numbers in italics between the standard notation and the tablature staffs are suggested fretting hand fingerings: 1 = index, 2 = middle, 3 = ring, 4 = pinkie. "h" denotes hammer on.

Since most of these songs are traditionally sung, I've listed typical vocal keys. At the top left of the music you'll see this: "M:D, capo 2, F:G, capo 7." I started adding this vocal key data in my "Parking Lot Picker's Songbooks" and with this general information and a capo, you'll be able to play along with singers of all ranges. I used my own voice as a starting point. My voice is a fairly typical male voice, not too low, not too high. I have found that if I sing a song in the key of G, a typical female voice will sing the same song in the key of C or D, a fourth or fifth higher than where I sing it. In the code, "M:D, capo 2, F:G, capo 7," "M": stands for "male voice," which will sing the song in the key of "D," with the capo on the second fret. "F": stands for "female voice," which will sing the song in the key of "G," when the chords shown in the music are capoed as suggested. Obviously, you can locate the capo just about anywhere on the fingerboard and individual vocal ranges may require a capo adjustment one way or the other.

You can hear and download an MP3 of the "O Christmas Tree" solo at <http://musixnow.com/christmasgtrsolos.html>.

We only had room for one set of lyrics in the music, and they're small, but you can download a full color-booklet

of complete lyrics to all thirty songs in the book including "Silent Night," "Away in a Manger," "Joy to the World," "Jingle Bells," "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Go Tell It on the Mountain," "Children Go Where I Send Thee," "Jolly Old St. Nicholas," "The

First Noël," and 21 others. Here's the link: <http://www.musixnow.com/christmasgtrsolos.html> I hope you'll enjoy them at holiday parties, while caroling, or singing around the tree.

Dix Bruce has authored over fifty books,

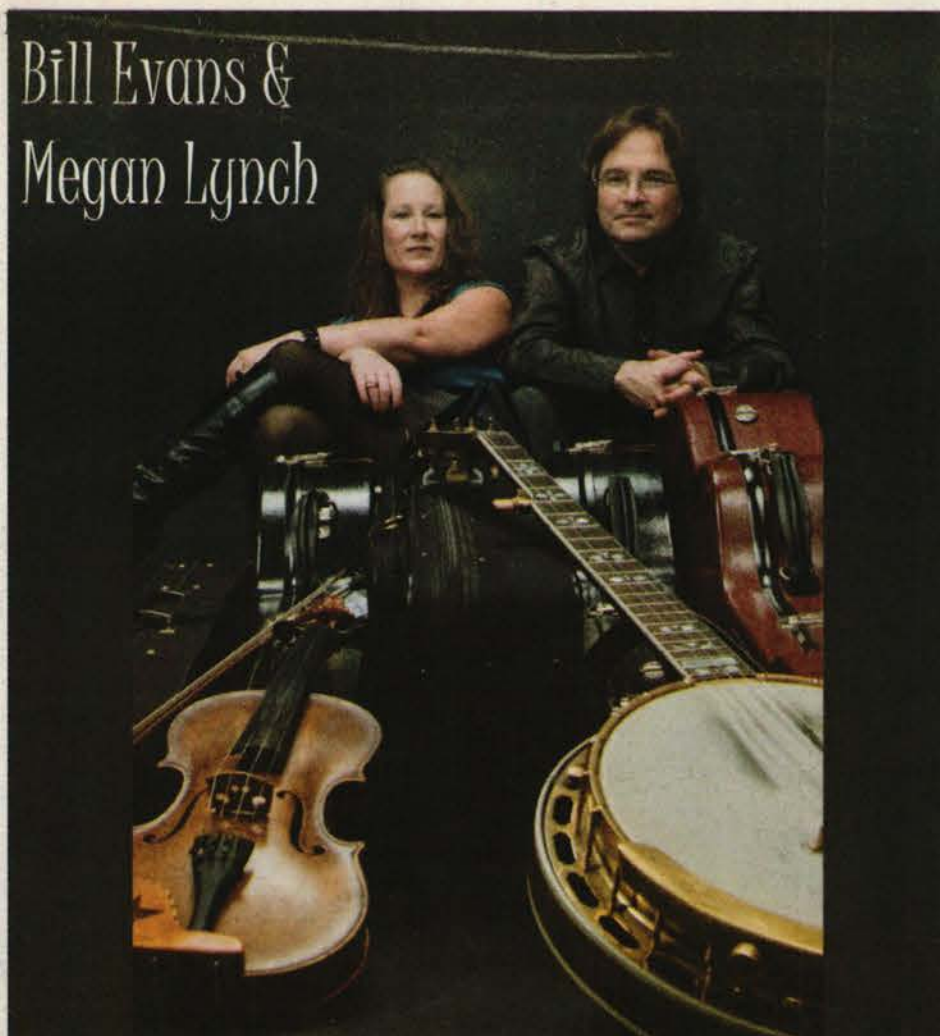
recordings, and videos for Mel Bay Publications, including The Parking Picker's Songbooks. He has released four CDs of traditional American songs and originals with guitarist Jim Nunally. His website is: www.musixnow.com.

O Christmas Tree

M:D, capo 2, F:G, capo 7

The arrangement is for the song "O Christmas Tree" in 4/4 time. It is written for guitar with a capo on the second fret (M:D, capo 2) and a capo on the seventh fret (F:G, capo 7). The music is presented in two systems, each with a standard notation staff and a guitar tablature staff. The tablature includes fingerings (1, 2, 3) and a hammer-on (h). Chord diagrams for C, A7, G7, and C are provided. The lyrics are: "O, Christ mas Tree, O, Christ mas Tree, You stand in ver dant beau ty. O, ty. Not on ly in the sum mer time, But al so win ter is thy prime. O, Christ mas Tree, O, Christ mas Tree, You stand in ver dant beau ty." The arrangement is copyrighted © 2009 by Dix Bruce.

Bill Evans & Megan Lynch



Saturday, November 14, 2009

at 7:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:45 p.m.)

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