

Wintercamp is on! But changes to offerings

Fingerstyle guitar class, and level 2 rhythm guitar added!
Prices go up January 1st

By Ingrid Noyes

We have bad news and good news from the CBA Winter Music Camp, which will take place February 15th-18th at Walker Creek Ranch west of Petaluma. The bad news is that, due to very low enrollment (like zero so far), we are going to cancel the level 1 oldtime banjo class this year. Level 2 oldtime banjo will proceed as planned, taught by Evie Ladin, and ambitious level 1 students who are up for a challenge can sign up for that class if they want to—we'll have a good teacher assistant there to help you along if you do. We will also offer level 1 oldtime banjo in the afternoons as an elective class, every day if you want it.

The good news is that Steve Baughman, who was going to teach that class, will instead offer a fingerstyle guitar class, which we've had requests for in the past but never had a chance to offer before. So all you fingerpickers, here's your opportunity to learn from someone who's an amazing fingerstyle guitarist and a fantastic teacher. Here is the course description, and instructor bio:

"Guitar, Fingerstyle, level 2/3--What do Freight Train, Deep River Blues and Wayfaring Stranger all have in common? Each uses the Alternating Thumb/Travis Pick technique to get that awesome

groove that has made these tunes such a big part of American traditional music. And once you have the technique in your blood you'll be able to play these and tons of other songs. In this class we will drill the technique into our souls and fingers and emerge being able to apply it to these three songs as well as to vocal accompaniment. This is a drill-oriented class with lots of playing, so be prepared for sore fingers.

This class is for people who have some basic fingerpicking skills and can change chords easily. No Travis picking experience is necessary.

Steve Baughman has been on staff for eight years at the Swananoa Gathering in North Carolina, teaching guitar and old time banjo. He is on the Digital Dream Door list of the 100 Best Acoustic Guitar Players in the world and he has recorded with Rounder and Solid Air Records. Steve performs and teaches all across the United States and Canada and has written 5 fingerstyle guitar books for Mel Bay Publications. He is a hands on teacher and believes in drilling students so that they leave camp as better guitar players than they were when they arrived."

One other class has low enrollment, and that is level 1 guitar. So we are opening that class up to level 2 students also, and welcome intermediate players to sign up for it as well as beginners. There will be

Continued on A-9

CBA Morgan Hill concert, March 20, 2010 The Gibson Brothers

By Tim Edes

How good can it get?

It was over six years ago that I was talking to our dear friend Jake Quesenberry about the possibility of promoting a concert in Morgan Hill. Jake was really excited about the idea, especially since it looked like someone besides himself was interested in bringing bluegrass to Morgan Hill. It makes sense now because I believe Jake was working on setting up his own gig somewhere on the other side of the Jordan. We lost Jake a couple years back, but heaven gained a heck of a good guitar man and singer. We here on earth are trying to keep alive his memory and visions for bluegrass.

Continued on A-7



The Gibson Brothers, coming to Morgan Hill

CBA's 48 Hour Jam - Bakersfield January 8-9, 2010 Sawmill Road show added

By Slim Sims

Plans are in place for the third annual 48 Hour Jam in Bakersfield.

Mark your calendar for January 8th and 9th, 2010. The event will again take place at the Doubletree Hotel on Rosedale Hwy., just west of S.R. 99.

The 48 Hour Jam is just that, two days and nights of bluegrass jamming. Pickers of all skill levels and all gridders are welcome. Since there are no paid entertainers, there is no admission charge for the event. Last year's attendance, 125,

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New in San Jose Jam at Coleman Still



The Coleman Still. San Jose landmark hosts new CBA jam.

"If These Walls Could Talk" Contest

By Duane Campbell

CBA South Bay Activities VP

Someone said once that if you

could wait just long enough, things will come full circle. Well, I'm not sure that it's true, but we may be coming full circle at a favorite dining, watering hole, and landmark

Continued on A-10

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- ... and much more

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

**2010 CBA
Father's Day Festival
full hookups**

- See page A-5 for reservation information

www.cbaontheweb.org



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California Bluegrass Association Membership Application

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Spouse: First Name _____ Last Name _____
 Address _____ Child(ren) _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Year of Birth _____
 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:

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 _____ Add _____ voting Children @\$5 each

Children's names and birthdates: _____

If Senior Citizens (65 and over), please list birth years: _____

New _____ Renewal of Member # _____
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 CBA Heritage Fund \$ _____
 Kids Instrument Lending \$ _____
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Please make checks payable to California Bluegrass Association (CBA). All donations are tax deductible.

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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!

California Bluegrass Association Bluegrass Breakdown

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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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The current rates for classified ads are based on 3 1/2 inches of typed copy and are as follows: \$8.00 for the first three lines and 50¢ for each additional line.

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

I opened up the CBA website this morning to find my daughter's Hooked on Bluegrass submission: "I was not hooked on bluegrass—I was FORCED into it by my parents. I am still fighting them all the way. They have turned their attention to my son and it terrifies me how obsessed he has become with the banjo!!!"

When Rick Cornish invites members to submit their "Hooked on Bluegrass" stories he does not know what he might get. Not everyone is "hooked" on bluegrass, true enough. There were definitely rewards our daughter received through the association with the music however. Both my children loved the Nevada County Fairgrounds and environs and our daughter Kelly met James Crocker, her future husband, at another festival held on the Fairgrounds. Kelly has brought her son, Dorian Crocker, to the Father's Day Festival twice (he is only two so has been attending his entire life). The first free weekend she and her husband had without their toddler was a result of the grandparents taking Dorian to the Colusa Fall Campout where he celebrated his 2nd Birthday (and was strumming many a banjo). Kelly and James are definitely not bluegrass fans but are still active members in the CBA as is our son, Kurt Brandli, who is also not a fan. Kurt volunteers each Father's Day at the gate which gets him as far away from the stage and the jamming at our camp as possible. Both our children still belong to the Association and still attend the Festival because they have lifelong friends who also attend. I believe the CBA "community" is as big a draw as the music.

The CBA is a big family and we try hard to be "family friendly" to attract people to our events, the biggest of which is of course the Father's Day Festival. Providing activities for families is essential to meet that goal. Our own family explored all of Nevada County when our children were young and swam in every swimming hole and visited every museum....there was only a short Children's Program sing along event when our kids were young. The CBA has since developed a vibrant Youth Program which includes our Father's Day Children's Program, the Kids on Bluegrass Program, the Music Camp Scholarship for Children's program, the Darrell Johnston Kids Instrument Lending Library and now a Teen Program. These programs vary in the age group they target and include activities that also vary in that they are recreational, educational and/or performance based.

Betsy Riger continues to coordinate the Youth Program. Frank Soliva continues to run the Kids on Bluegrass event. Ingrid Noyes is still the director of the Music Camps and administers the Scholarship Fund for Youth wishing to attend camp. Ingrid has Kathleen Rushing as director of the Music Camp Kids Program.

Our Youth Program has a few new faces administering them this year. Ann Juell (an old high school friend of mine who has attended

33 Father's Day Festivals) is taking over the Children's Program from Angela Weaver. Ann has recruited Annie and Rae Sours, some of the young adults who were raised with our children on the Fairgrounds, to



Dorian kicks up his heels at Grass Valley '09.
photo: Dave Weiland

assist her. I am certain our grandson will be attending his first sessions of the program in 2010.

Bruce Long is working with Sharon and Steve Elliott to run the Instrument Lending Library. Deb Livermore is working with Paige Anderson to expand the Teen Program next year.

Valerie Cornejo is working with Treasurer Ed Alston to administer/focus specifically on all the tax-deductible donations we receive for the Youth Program or for the specific programs in the Youth Program. (Yes, one can donate directly to the Youth Program or specify which of the sub-programs your dollars might help). Chef Mike's Campout Potluck raised money specifically for the Kids on Bluegrass while Bonneau Dixon's wine booth raised money for the Youth Program and Scott Tichenor's Mandolin Café fundraiser this year was specific to scholarship money for Music Camp. All instruments go directly to the Darrell Johnston Instrument Lending Library and money can also be specified for that program. We welcome all donations and donors may specify which activity they want to support or donate directly into the Youth Program whose funds can be used for whichever of the programs needs it.

I have served on the Board these last several years with the goal of increasing the membership and reaching out to a new demographic (young people and new families) in order to broaden the fan base and keep the music alive in California. My own children are members and supporters of the community but not fans of the music. My grandson might be a different story however. Kelly is correct in that he is "obsessed"



Darby Brandli

photo: Mike Melnyk

with the sound of a banjo and he also recognizes and can differentiate (at age two) the difference between banjo, guitar (his dad is a professional guitarist), mandolin, bass and fiddle. My grandmother, Eleanor Phillis, published a poem in the Saturday Evening Post in the 1940's about the difference between children and grandchildren. I publish the poem here and wonder. Does it suggest her great great grandchild's interest in bluegrass?

Maternity

The love I bear my own child
Is wild and deep and free
Like the high wind blowing
Through every towering tree.
Up mountain peaks of triumph
Down valleys of despair,
In ecstasy and anguish
Each joy and grief I share.

The love I bear my child's
child

Is like to none of these—
It is the soft breeze blowing
Through brightly blooming
trees.

Or, raindrops lightly falling
On flower-bedecked plain,
It's love and joy and laughter
And springtime come again.

Are there any tiny banjos available in the Lending Library?

Minutes of the October 18, 2009 - California Bluegrass Association Board Meeting

CBA Minutes recorded and compiled by CBA Secretary Diana Donnelly

CALL TO ORDER

Rick Cornish, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Fall Campout and annual membership meeting in Colusa, CA.

Roll call was taken and the agenda was set.

The motion to approve September 19, 2009 board minutes was carried by unanimous vote.

PERSONS DESIRING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON UNAGENDIZED ITEMS

Nancy Zuniga spoke to the board regarding our volunteer time policies. Rick advised her that this issue would be added to the next agenda and we would get back to her.

Ed Baker addressed the board on an incident that took place at the gate. He apologized for his behavior.

2009-2010 CBA Leadership Team Appointments

The 2009-2010 Leadership team appointments were made and passed by unanimous vote. The website and Breakdown will be updated in a timely manner.

The position of Gate Crew Coordinator has been tabled until someone has been found.

The position of Stage Construction coordinator has been tabled.

OLD BUSINESS

Stage Rental prices vs. Purchase of new stage cover

The stage rental company was approached and gave us a quote based on a 3 year contract for 3 festivals (GV and 2 of L&S Productions festivals) they dropped their price from \$6800 to \$5400 per festival. There was a lot of discussion regarding the old stage, storage, set up etc. The cost of just replacing the cover of the old stage would be around \$18,000.

The motion to enter into contract with Mobile Stage Rentals for the new stage was carried by unanimous vote.

Winter Camp Update

Lisa reported that registration for the winter music opened on Sept 18 and one month later we have 85 registered. It was felt that we would easily meet the minimum, break even number of registrants.

The motion to move ahead with the Winter Music Camp was approved by unanimous vote.

FDF Full Hookups

Montie will re-write the full hookup info that will be published in the Breakdown.

Statewide Activities Report

Steve reported that there were 93 campers at this campout. He would like to propose having the next fall campout in Isleton. There was some discussion on this and that we have this one up in Colusa

because we try to have one of the campouts in a more Northern location. However, it was pointed out that Bob Thomas looked into this last year and said that a very large majority of CBA members live in a two hour radius of the Central Valley and that, although Colusa is closer for some CBA members, it is far less convenient for the majority. Someone else will look into this before a decision is made.

Steve asked about how his comp tickets were to be used if he wasn't using them himself. This was explained to him.

Morgan Hill Concert

Tim Edes reported that the next Morgan Hill concert is scheduled for March 20, 2010. He will be able to report who the selected group is by the next meeting.

Sound Rider

Jim Ingram and Carl Pagter provided the background regarding the volume levels and additional equipment problems that have

been encountered at the Father's Day Festival and the need to add a clause to the contract that spells out what the limitations are and what the fine will be for exceeding the set limitations.

The motion to authorize Carl to rewrite the language of our current contract to include a significant fine for a breach of the sound rider contract was carried by unanimous vote.

Jim will send the new stage information to George Rellis.

NEW BUSINESS

Adoption of FDF Emerging Artist Recommendation:

The motion to contract with Frank Solivan & Dirty Kitchen as the 2010 Emerging Artist was carried by unanimous vote.

Raffle Coordinator - Alston

Ed Alston reported on his investigation into the California laws

Continued on A-6

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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Bluegrass Bard - Cliff Compton

Lloyd Butler

And it was right after the Colusa campout
When Betty Nolan called
She said, "Are you sitting down?
Lloyd's dead."

It took a while to process.
I knew he was awful sick
But that old Rascal had beat death before
And I didn't expect he'd go easy
I loved that old man
I'm not taking it well

I was watching Rick Cornish playing with Melinda's lab at Colusa
They were rolling around on the ground trying to establish
Who was the alpha dog
And I was laughing at them
But quietly thinking about how that big old crippled dog of his
Had just had his last meal
And now was residing in another world
And Rick was probably missing him pretty bad
Considering that dog was pretty much family to him
And he'd loved him for a long time

And I got to thinking about Wayne Nolan
And Lloyd Butler
And how many times we'd set in a circle
And played "I'm Crying My Eyes Out Over You"
And "Sitting On Top of the World"
And I'm thinking about how they won't be there in body
When we sing those songs again

And after the campout, I drove home
And my wife met me with bad news
C.C. had died

C.C. was one of our two cats
He was old and in bad health
And we knew it was just a matter of time
But you're never prepared

And my eight year old, Joe
Had never faced the grim reaper
Never seen the darkness
In his sunny little world
And it was not easy
As we buried her in the ground

And I'm thinking about the first death I saw
A frozen bird laying on the ground
Outside my church in Yakima Washington
And how it shocked me

But I never really noticed death much when I was young
Because I was immortal
And planned to stay that way
But I'm older now
And hope to get older still
And death is real
And getting more real by the day

But I'm thinking of another cat
His name was Blackie
And when he died we buried him right by where we buried C.C.
Right where the grass is the greenest in the yard
And I'm thinking of rebirth
How that grass is so green

And if death is all there is
It's a cold world
But I remember Lloyd used to sing this song:

*I'm a pilgrim
And a stranger
Traveling through this wearisome land
I've got a home in yonder City
That's not made by human hands
I've got a mother
Sister and a brother
Who have gone on before
I know that I will meet them
Over on the other shore*

And I can accept death
with that as my hope



Cliff Compton

Lloyd Butler passes

Jerrell Lloyd Butler
April 13, 1929
— Oct. 26, 2009

Jerrell Lloyd Butler died
October 26 at his Sonora
home. He was 80.

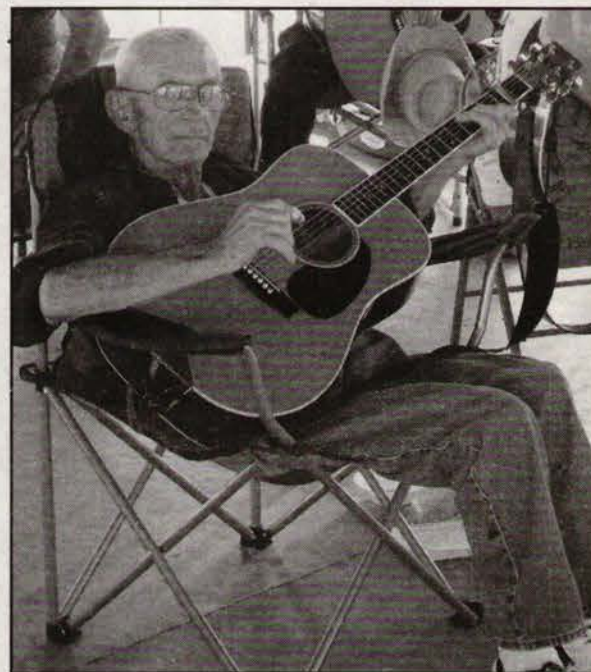
A native of Bristow,
Okla., Mr. Butler lived in
Sonora for 52 years. He was
a painting and building contractor.

He is survived by his
wife of 62 years, Doris Butler,
of Sonora; children, Roger
Butler, of Sonora, Marcus
Butler, of Sonora, and Karen
Tynan, of Modesto; eight
grandchildren; 17 great-
grandchildren; and siblings,
Jack Butler, of Los Banos,
Betty Strachan, of Mississippi,
and James Butler, of Mississippi.

Lloyd was well known
and well loved among the
Northern California blue-
grass community. His personality was en-
ergetic beyond his years. He always seemed
to have a guitar strapped on and was usu-
ally surrounded by a circle of jammers, and
beyond that circle another circle of folks
who were just enjoying the scene. We lost
Lloyd's pal Wayne Noland recently, leaving
a quiet and empty place in every campout
and festival. It's hard to imagine what the
next generation of bluegrass folks will do
to equal the spirit of friends like Lloyd and
Wayne.

CBA president, Rick Cornish said this
in the wake of Lloyd Butler's parting:

"First and foremost on my mind today
is the loss of Lloyd Butler. Few people in



Lloyd Butler jamming at a CBA campout.

my nearly thirty-five years in the CBA have
come to personify the Association's sense of
community more than Lloyd. Day or night,
from a jolting cup of early morning coffee
to a 3:00 a.m. swig from his Red Mountain
gallon bottle, Lloyd and his encampment
were always a welcoming destination at fes-
tivals and campouts alike. Our friend had
an uncommon love of the music, and with
it, an infectious enthusiasm for playing it
with who ever happened to wander up to
his camp. With each new year we're fortu-
nate to be able to welcome new members
to our bluegrass family, and thank God that
we are, because each year we lose some dear
ones."

CBA Morgan Hill concert, March 20, 2010 The Gibson Brothers

From page A-1

And so....we put on a concert. The
Mighty Crows opened for the MacRae
Brothers....Jake's band. It was fantastic!
That old Grange building came alive. You
would of thought we were in the Smoky
Mountains somewhere deep in the heart
of bluegrass country. The people loved it.
Most were not even bluegrass fans, but they
were fans by the time they left.

Well, coming up is our seventh "A night
at the Grange" March 20, 2010. People
ask me every year when leaving the concert
"How are you going to top this one, Tim?"
And every year I ask myself the same ques-
tion. Even my wife said..."Yeah, how are
you going to top last year's Rhonda Vincent
concert?" For awhile I was a little unsure
myself. However, I believe we may have hit
another homerun. Get this....The Gib-
son Brothers! Yes, all the way from New

York. They are without a doubt one of,
if not the finest brother group to ever play
bluegrass. In 2009 they were nominated
for best song by the International Bluegrass
Music Association for their tune "Iron and
Diamonds". Folks, you do not want to
miss this concert. They rarely make a west
coast appearance so don't miss this chance.
You will not regret it!

The Tuttles with AJ Lee will open the
show.

The concert takes place at the Mor-
gan Hill Grange Hall, 40 East 4th Street,
Morgan Hill on March 20, 2010 at 7:00
PM - 10:00 PM. Doors open 6:00 PM.
Tickets are \$23 for CBA members and \$25
for non-members. For information call you
host Tim Edes at (408) 779-5456 or (408)
595-4882, by email at t.edes@verizon.net
or visit www.cbaontheweb.org.

High Country
Father's Day 2010

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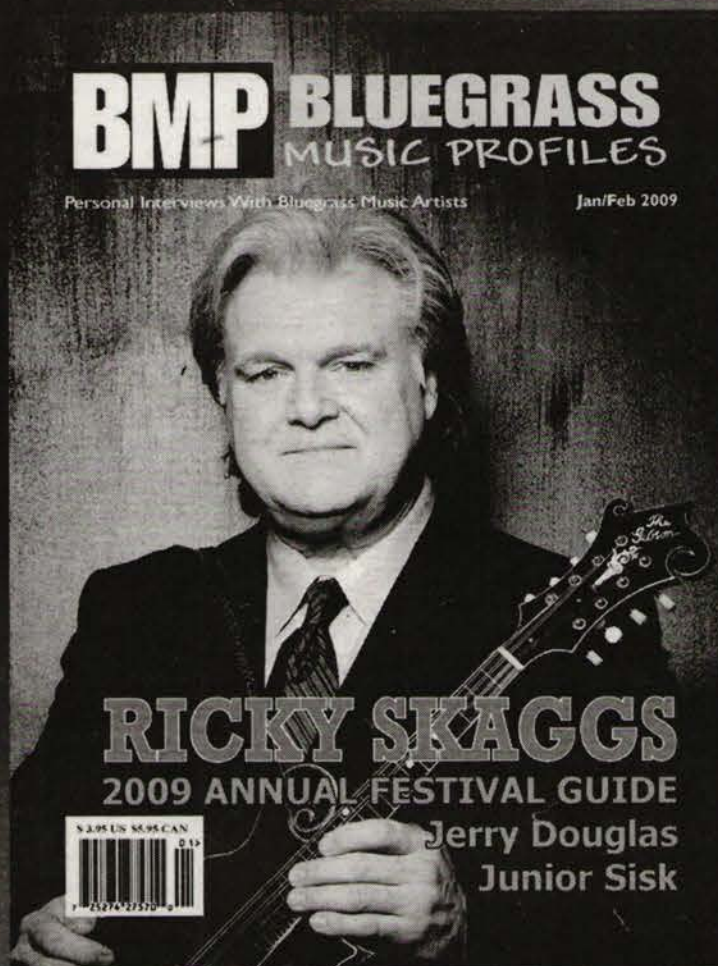
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Questions? Please call or email our Camp Director, Kali Nowakowski, at 805.365.7111 or kali@siminoff.net.

Wintercamp is on! But changes to offerings

From page A-1
an experienced teacher's assistant to help the beginners along, and the class will be taught by Jim Nunally, a camp favorite teacher, and will be similar to his class that we have offered every year in the past at Grass Valley.

We will keep the website updated with these and any other changes, so check out www.cbamusiccamp.org to keep up with the camp news.



Steve Baughman

In case you're not familiar with our music camps, they are 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. This winter 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.

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. Various 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 3 or 4), or if you want to pay the big bucks you can have a room to yourself. All these options come with meals—three

very good meals a day, served in the camp dining hall. One other 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, 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. Prices go up by \$35 after January 1st, so register this month for the best deal. If you're not sure yet about your plans in February, just know that we have the most forgiving refund policy you'll find anywhere (see our FAQs page)—better

to sign up early and have to cancel than wait and get left out.

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.



Redwood Bluegrass Associates Presents

The Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band

DECEMBER 5TH, 2009

Co-sponsored by the Northern California Bluegrass Society



The Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band

DECEMBER 5TH, 2009

One of the most popular musicians to grace the RBA stage, Peter Rowan (guitar, vocals) returns with his red hot bluegrass band — Jody Stecher (mandolin, vocals), Keith Little (banjo, vocals), and Paul Knight (acoustic bass) — for some amazing vocal trios, classic bluegrass and classic Rowan songs, and a show that provides genuinely moving moments and a satisfying evening of music.

Peter Rowan is internationally-known for his music on more than 50 albums and decades of memorable performances in a variety of stylistic settings, but it is with bluegrass that he has made his most enduring music. Peter was a member of Bill Monroe & the Bluegrass Boys, Old & In the Way, and Muleskinner, and has collaborated extensively with a number of bluegrass giants, including Tony Rice, Nashville Bluegrass Band, Jerry Douglas, Ricky Skaggs, and now his great bluegrass band!



PURCHASE TICKETS

1. TicketWeb at www.rba.org/tickets.html or www.ticketweb.com - Service charge applies.
2. Gryphon Stringed Instruments: 211 Lambert St., Palo Alto - Cash, check or credit card.
3. Mail Order to: RBA, P.O. Box 390515, Mountain View, CA 94039 - Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your check or money order, AND note what you want to order.

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

CBA's 48 Hour Jam - Bakersfield January 8-9, 2010 Sawmill Road show added

From Page A-1
doubled the number of the first year's, and an even bigger turnout is expected this time. Bluegrassers from all over California (and beyond) are invited to attend.

All activities take place indoors, so weather will not be a problem. Rooms have been set aside for our use.

Saturday night there will be a band scramble and open mic in the hotel lounge for those wishing to participate.

The Doubletree Hotel is a first-rate venue, including all the amenities. It is close to many and varied restaurants, including Buck Owens' Crystal Palace.

A special room rate of \$89/

night is available for this event and a large block of rooms has been set aside for it. Call for reservations at 800-222-8733. Reference the "Bluegrass Jam" and the dates of your stay to get the special room rate, good until 12-27-09.

For more information, contact Craig Wilson at craigw1@sbcglobal.com or Kelvin Gregory at

kelvin@gregspetro.com.

The 48 Hour Jam is sponsored by the California Bluegrass Association (www.cbaontheweb.org).

On the evening of Thursday, January 7th, the Kiwanis Club of East Bakersfield and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society are sponsoring a dinner and concert at the hotel. Featured performers are the

bluegrass band, Sawmill Road. Social hour is at 6 PM., dinner is at 7 PM., and the concert begins at 8 PM. Tickets are \$50 and proceeds benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. For tickets or information call 661-589-8294 or 661-747-2855.

Those attending the dinner/concert may reserve a room for the \$89 rate as well and get a running start at the 48 Hour Jam!

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: 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: Steve Baughman, fingerpicking level 2/3; 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



Jam at Coleman Still

From page A-1

called "The Coleman Still". Yep, that right, and from what I'm being told there are stories and memories and who really knows what all went on back in the day, but "The Coleman Still" is not only opened for business but they are now the unofficial home of our new San Jose Open Bluegrass Jam.

That's why we're having a "If These Walls Could Talk" Contest, to kick off our Open Bluegrass Jam every 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 6:30-9:00, Starting November 4th 2009. Please submit your entry by November 18th and the winner will receive a \$30.00 dinner voucher, to be redeemed at the Jam on December 2nd. Please folks, keep it clean, and all entries need to have at least two verifications to qualify for the prize.

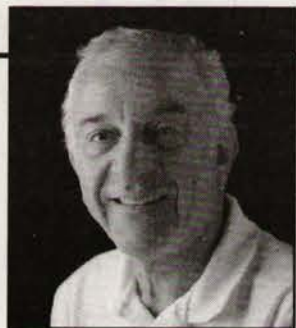
Easy access from the peninsula, just one exit south of the cross roads of 880 and 101 (Coleman Exit then north 1/2 mile to 1240 Coleman Ave), 15 minutes from the south end of San Jose, and 15 minutes from Los Gatos, Cupertino, Mountain View and Milpitas. Folks, this is a perfect location for our San Jose Jam. The Still has several suitable rooms for different jam circles as well as a front and rear patio for jamming if the weather permits.

Here is the website: <http://www.colemanstill.com/> and if you're on Facebook, become a Friend of the Coleman Still for more detailed information and updates.

Additionally, we need a couple of volunteers to step-up and be the jam host and coordinators.

Please send inquiries and suggestions along with your contest entry to dcfiddles@gmail.com or phone Duane Campbell 408-892-9157.

The Luthier's Corner - Roger Siminoff



Roger Siminoff

Q: I'm building a banjo and getting ready to put the binding around the resonator. The binding I bought sticks out when I put it in the groove and I can't find binding that's a little thinner (it's either this size or a lot thinner). Should I sand down the binding first, before I attach it? And, will sanding ruin or change the color of the binding?

A: Binding the instrument — especially going around a resonator — is a fairly easy task. Actually,

if the binding you have sticks out a bit, that's fine. If you have the tools to rout the channel a little deeper, it is the best way to get a good fit. If you can't rout the channel deeper for one reason or another, it is absolutely fine to use binding that is a little oversize with the idea that you will scrap it flush to the wood after the binding is glued in. The scraping process will level the binding, wood, and glue in one step to one common plane. And, while scraping sounds like a chore, it's actually quite easy.

Every luthier has his or her favorite scraping tool. Some folks like flat cabinet scrapers; others like the side edge of a chisel, putting tape around the pointed end so they have a long tool with a handle at both ends for two-handed scraping. The builders at Gibson used to use hacksaw blades cut in half and ground to a chisel-like edge, with the sharp edges of the teeth quickly dulled on the grinder. The long blade gave them something easy to hold, and the serrated but dulled edge gave them a good grip. I prefer single edge razor blades because they are reasonably cheap, they have a wide straight edge, and for just a few cents, you can always be assured of having a sharp one. I hold the blade between my thumb and index finger, and I keep the blade straight up and down to the work. In this way I am not "cutting" the binding, just using the sharp edge of the blade to scrap away a thin layer of plastic with each stroke.



Fig. 1. A single-edge razor is the ideal tool to use when scraping the binding and glue flush to the neighboring wood.

In addition to scraping to get the height correct, scraping is an important step for the finishing process. Most builders stain over the binding when they color their instruments (it's a lot better than trying to mask off the binding) and then scrape the stain off the binding just before the instrument gets its clear coat. (However, I usually recommend spraying one clear coat over the stain to protect the stained finish before the scraping process.)

Most bindings are made of celluloid, although it's getting more difficult to purchase, nowadays. Celluloid is a very hard plastic, and you will not damage the binding or change its color if you scrape it. The material is quite durable. In fact, a minor reason for using binding is to decorate the edge joint. The major reason is to use a very hard material on the edge of the instrument to protect the edge from dings.

Some cautions: If you sand celluloid on an electric sander, you can melt it. If you sand it too hard and try to remove a lot quickly, celluloid is highly flammable and the heat could cause it to burst into flames (one of the reasons it is more difficult to purchase, today). Obviously, be careful handling the razor blades, too.

Q: In the November issue of the Breakdown, you said that the dovetail joint in the [mandolin] headblock can be cut on a bandsaw, but you didn't say anything about tilting the table back and forth to get the correct taper. How do you do that for each side of the cut, and how much taper do you use?

A: The main reason I didn't suggest anything about a taper in the dovetail is because most mandolin makers don't use a tapered joint, preferring to use a straight-sided dovetail-shape, instead. The female straight slot (Fig. 2) is rather easy to make in the headblock because it is a simple but precise cut on the table saw. On the other hand, the corresponding male dovetail joint in the neck requires holding the neck in a fixture at a 6° angle (for an F5 mandolin) or 4° (for an F4 mandolin) while the dovetail is being cut so that you have the correct neck pitch. Then the two joints are hand fitted together. So, other than having a dovetail shape and having the neck's dovetail cut at an angle to the fretboard plane, both the male and female parts of the connection are basically a straight, non-tapered slot.

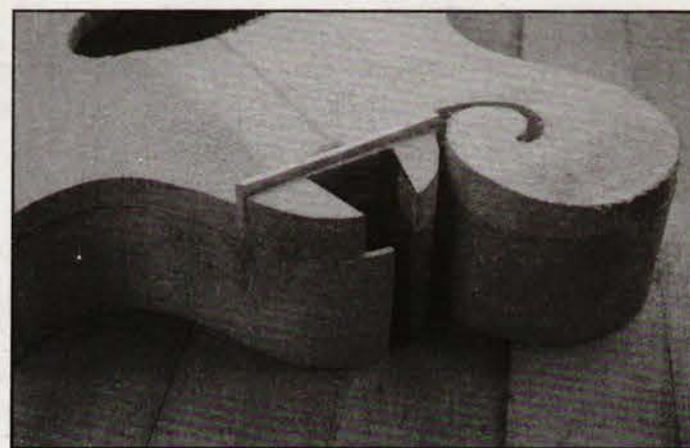


Fig. 2. Unlike the dovetail joint in most guitars, the dovetail joint in the mandolin is a straight-sided, un-tapered joint.

For guitars, using tapered vs non-tapered dovetail joints is another story, and its usage basically varies from guitar builder to guitar builder. Martin has used the tapered joint (Fig. 3) from their earliest guitars, to today. Some makers, especially those in the Pacific Rim, use straight dovetail joints, with no taper. The tapered joint is easier to do on a guitar because the parts are larger and the method of routing the joint in production is different from how the neck and joint are created for the mandolin.



Fig. 3. The butt-end of this C.F. Martin neck shows the tapered dovetail joint.

Q: I'm building my first mandolin and am having a bit of trouble trying to be neat with gluing on the binding. As you can see in my photo, I have cement everywhere (I'm using Duco). Are there any tricks for working neater?

A: First of all, my compliments to you — your binding work and body scroll shaping looks REALLY GOOD! Congratulations!



Fig. 4. The excess glue around the binding of this luthier's mandolin can be scraped and sanded away during the finishing process.

As to the glue, I wouldn't worry too much about being extra neat when you glue on the binding. The primary job is it to get the binding shaped, make sure the joints are well mortised, and ensure that the binding is securely and properly fitted into the binding notch (and it looks like you've done this quite well). As long as you don't have gobs of glue here and there, the glue should clean up well in the scraping and sanding operation (read the first

Continued on A-23

35th Anniversary
**FATHER'S DAY
BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL**



JUNE 17-20, 2010 · GRASS VALLEY, CA

CALIFORNIA BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

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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**

Early Bird Tickets on sale November 1, 2009

Information: www.cbaontheweb.org or 209-530-9101

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

- No pets are allowed with the sole exception of house cats that stay in the RV. Service animals (as defined by state and federal law) are always allowed.
- 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: skaarjohn@gmail.com for information and reservations.

For other information call 209-530-9101.

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:

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

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John Reischman & the Jaybirds (sat)
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Seldom Scene (sat/sun)
Dry Branch Fire Squad (sat/sun)
The Wilders (sat/sun)
Mountain Heart (sat/sun)
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The Bluegrass Regulators (th/sat)
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The Allan French Column by Allan French

Your Input: Are You Licensed to Pick?

For a future column, I am preparing a segment in which I cite vanity license plate numbers that relate to music in one way or another. Do you know of any vanity plates that our readers would find interesting? Example: Is "D28" (a popular Martin guitar model) embedded in the number of your license? Example: Around 1953, piano duo Whittemore and Lowe were photographed next to a car (probably not theirs) with a license plate reading "88-WL." Example: Did you randomly end up with "TN27" in your license? (This suggests the 1927 Bristol TN recording sessions.) Or maybe your license includes the letters GBSN or CLEF or SAX or FDLL.

I won't disclose who owns the vehicle, but knowing the vehicle model or its "special story" would be nice. I am mainly looking for real plates, but would also consider clever fictitious ones. Please e-mail contributions to AFrench123@comcast.net. I've got a ton of out-of-state examples (via internet searching), so please step up and help represent California!

Concerts & Contests

Next weekend I will listen to lots of music; too much, in fact. On the 13th there's a coffee house concert I'd like to see (the "John Henry's Farm" band, headed by the son of CBA member and guitarist George Bradshaw). At the same time there will be a house concert hosted by friends (the Antes family), featuring Bill Evans and Megan Lynch. On the 14th, Bill and Megan lead a workshop at the Freight & Salvage (the holy grail of local venues, where I haven't yet been). Then that night there's a RBA concert in Mountain View ("John Reischman & the Jaybirds"). At almost the same time, the Schwartz Family (as the "Oak Grove" band) will open for Bill and Megan's evening concert in Livermore. Simultaneously there will be a "celebration of life" service for someone I knew (not related to our musical association). The next day, on the 15th, the Schwartz family hosts the monthly Pleasant Hill Jam at "Smokin' Okies BBQ." I've got a few days left to sort it all out. How am I supposed to choose one event over another? Ahhhhhh!!!

On December 5, 'Bout Time will perform during the morning in Sunnyvale, while the Peter Rowan Band performs for RBA in the evening. Okay, I can handle that.

Speaking of RBA: I attended the Frank Wakefield concert in October. Those of you who read Mark Varner's Oct. 26 website welcome, where he described the concert at Don Quixote's, you got a very clear picture of what the Mountain View concert was like. As Marty Varner did in Felton, Josh Gooding got to perform with Frank Wakefield in Mountain View, as did another young man whose name I don't

know, and also Kathy Kallick.



Frank Wakefield and Jim Lewin

In mid-October, I watched "Jennifer Kitchen and Kitchen Help" perform at a Mountain View coffee house. Halfway through the evening, George Bradshaw walked in with his son (whom I briefly mistook for Yoseff Tucker). They came to hear the band and also to scope out the venue for John Henry's upcoming concert.

I attended the SCVFA Youth Fiddle Contest in early November. With six-time-winner Griffin Stoller not participating this year, Ben Jackson attained first place

among the older competitors. Like last year, Ben not only aced his age-group on fiddle but accompanied on mandolin when his sister Amanda played in her age bracket. Six-year-old Tessa Schwartz managed to get 4th place in a field of about seven competitors – in her FIRST-EVER fiddle contest! The older members of the Schwartz family performed during one of the intermissions. Other competitors whose families I've gotten to know include Will Antes, Ashlyn Murphy, and Angelina Cress. Awards are given to the top five places, and all competitors get a certificate.

There's a Hole in my Collection, Dear Liza

In mid-September, both Marcos Alvira and Bruce Campbell commented on the CBA website about how music connoisseurs occasionally are shocked to realize that they own zero recordings of a particular artist whom they admire. In the wake of Mary Travers' passing, I was dismayed to notice that I do not own a single recording of Peter Paul & Mary. PP&M was among of the first vocal groups to grab my attention as I was beginning to understand about the world beyond my little neighborhood.

Well, lo and behold, I'm looking through my CD collection, gathering music to accompany me up to Plymouth, and I happen on a neglected CD box-set, featuring historical recordings by folkies of the '40s to the '70s. Not only does it have an entire disc of PP&M, but it also has discs of The Weavers and The Almanac Singers! The latter two, though prominent in the folk music world, I had never actually heard, except perhaps on YouTube. There are CDs of the Kingston Trio and Harry Belafonte in this box set, too. I wasn't too familiar with Belafonte before; now I've heard him sing both "John Henry" and "The Fox." He also does a song called "Soldier, Soldier," which may have been the inspiration for "Jenny Jenkins." (There is similar silly dialogue between the two speakers in each song, and there is likewise a recurring discussion over what clothing should be worn by one of them.)

Is there a goldmine sitting on your bookshelf? How long has it been since you looked through the albums in the darkest corners of your filing cabinets and Case Logic storage crates? How many of your CDs and DVDs still have the cellophane wrapping intact?




Allan French

Bluegrass at Bedtime

Rather than ending the column with a musical quote or inspirational thought, this month I will lull you to sleep with a bluegrass lullaby.

The CBA website welcome message of Oct. 1 focused on Nancy Zuniga's observations about all-night jam sessions. Lynn Cornish posted on the message board that she found it hard to go to sleep inside an RV next to a loud jam. I stated that "I have no problem going to sleep while there's a jam going on just outside the paper-thin walls of my tent. I LOVE IT! Even when living in a dormitory, my philosophy was, 'If you can't fall asleep despite the noise, you shouldn't be in bed yet.' At home, my radio plays for a while as I drift off to sleep. Maybe I should host jams in my bedroom."

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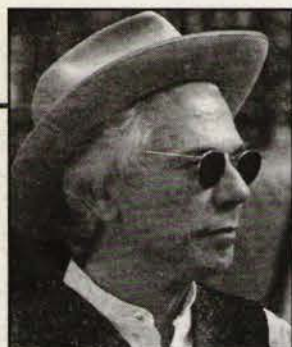
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Chuck Poling

Bluegrass Confidential - By Chuck Poling

Cabin fever?

As the days grow shorter and the temperature drops, bluegrass fans seek ways to fill the void in their lives left by the end of festival season. The camping equipment is all packed away and those blessed balmy days in Grass Valley are just a memory. Cabin fever is a clear and present danger. There are some popular indoor festivals coming up, but as much fun as I had at Wintergrass last year, it can't compare to pickin' in the shade of the California pines. So bluegrassers have to get resourceful to keep up both their spirits and their chops.

For those of us who are in a band – or bands – there are always gigs to rehearse for and projects to work on. There are regularly scheduled events throughout California, and the Bay Area in particular.

While I sorely miss festival season, I don't have much trouble filling my bluegrass calendar the rest of the year. Getting involved with the CBA keeps you pretty busy. I've got this column to write and I host the monthly Bluegrass Country jam with my wife Jeanie. I'm getting acquainted with a new guitar and I'm working on Monroe-style mandolin. Jeanie and I always have new songs to work up and other musical activities, like

organizing the December 12 Li'l Ole Opry Country Music Variety Show at the Café International in San Francisco.

I was curious what my bluegrass pals are up to, so I asked them what they do to take up the bluegrass slack during the festival off-season. Here's some of the responses I got.

Dave Berry hosts the first-Tuesday-of-the-month Fiddle Tunes Jam at the SoCha Café in San Francisco:

Our semi-regular Friday night "Red Cork Ramblers" get-togethers keep us going through the winter months until the outdoor season returns. You should be able to ascertain from the title what the priority besides pickin' is.

Mike Staninec keeps busy by playing guitar with the band String Break:

String Break was originally put together from local jammers in Marin County in 2007. The current lineup covers all the instruments: Dave Hanks on mandolin, Bruce Thompson on banjo, Mike Staninec on guitar, Ted Garber on dobro, Dane Miller on fiddle and Duncan Draper on bass.

String Break plays traditional bluegrass with standard acoustic instrumentation and three-part vocal harmonies on most songs. We cover some standards from the classic days of bluegrass as well as some less known gems and newer numbers written by Frank Wakefield, Butch Waller and the Osborne Brothers. Check out our website on <http://stringbreakbluegrass.com>. The calendar is up to date, even if

some other details may not be.

Pam Brandon a.k.a. **Belle Monroe**, San Francisco's original bluegrass chanteuse:

The Brewglass Boys and gals are woodshedding new original material, with a view to recording early 2010 and releasing our second CD in May 2010.

I am producing a show/recording about the life and music (from the '40s and '50s) of the underrated Texas swing/boogie woogie singer Ella Mae Morse.

Also, as of yesterday, I am the bass player in the new musical theater production "Cotton Patch Gospel," running four nights a week from Nov 24th for five weeks with a possible extension to Dec 23rd.

Musically, other than Brewglass and Lost Weekend gigs, that's what I am up to!

Jesse Polteraski plays guitar with Bluegrass Revolution:

This is California. There's no such thing as cabin fever. We just take our instruments with us up to Tahoe on the weekends and pick with all our friends who live up there – on the hill where they do the boogie. Nothing better than a day on the mountain followed by playing bluegrass tunes about mountains.

Jim Letchworth picks banjo and mandolin and is a regular at the Bluegrass Country Jam:

My 16-year-old fiddler son Tommy and I prepared for the no-outdoor-camping season by going to the very last CBA campout in

Colusa for the first time. The air was warm, the ground was wet from dew rather than rain, the picking was fun and folks were friendly. I have a cousin with walnut ranch in Williams and we had a little side visit on Sunday.

I have to add that the campout is at the Colusa Co fairgrounds, and they had scheduled a demolition derby for Saturday night, lots of roaring engines and crashes in the mud. Many campers were hanging out on the perimeter fences in wonder. Tommy and I actually paid admission, sat in the stands and met a few of the locals. This crowd would have loved to have a bluegrass band playing between heats – maybe next year.

For me, it's onto the Fifth String jam in Berkeley on Thursdays at 7:30pm, hosted by the talented and easygoing Emery Barter, and of course Jeanie and Chuck's first Wednesday of the month rocking Bluegrass Country jam at the Plough and Stars on Clement Street in the City.

Lynn Quinones:

Well, of course there is always "the job" which, because I have to produce two music performances a year at two different school sites, occupies a more prominent place in my music endeavors. I try to make more jams, including being in the house band at the Armando's Jam in Martinez every last Wednesday.

I also get together with the alter ego band – Lynn Quin and the Safety Pins. We dare to have a percussionist, do original material that cannot be coerced into the bluegrass genre, and will be performing at the Two Day Town music festival in April. That about brings us back to bluegrass season.

Larry Carlin is Marin County's Grand Poobah of Bluegrass, as well as an inveterate bluegrass scribbler whose writing appears in these pages.

Cabin fever? Isn't that a bluegrass band from the South Bay? I have never experienced a bout of the virus. While playing in three bands, writing a monthly column for Bluegrass By the Bay for the Northern California Bluegrass Society, a twice monthly music newsletter called Carlone's Corner, and the three-times-a-week Almost Daily News column for the CBA website, there's no time left to get bored or climb the walls. Heck, if people want to find out what to do during the winter months, just have them read any of these aforementioned publications. There is more good music going on during the winter than one might be led to believe...

Avram Frankel plays dobro in Kitchen Help and is passing on the bluegrass bug to another generation:

I try to wangle invitations to as many jams as I can! In years past, I also pursued lessons with professionals when possible. This off-season is focused on gigs and shuttling my daughter Dana around to her fiddle lessons. We just bought her a mandolin as well.

Jon Myers is big presence at festival jams throughout the summer. Looks like he'll be spending some time in the woodshed during the off-season:

This winter I'll probably study and practice Jimmy Martin's guitar strumming technique. You know, get away from the ubiquitous boom-chuck. The bass has already got the 1 and the 3 covered and the mandolin's holding down the 2 and the 4, so why not fill out the rhythm more and induce some drive into the songs.

Peter Thompson fills the airwaves with the sound of mountain music every Saturday on KALW's Bluegrass Signal and produces shows for Redwood Bluegrass Associates:

[Shows are on] Saturdays at the Mountain View Presbyterian Church (<http://www.rba.org>). Also, going to shows at the Freight and McGrath's, reading all the fabulous new publications from the University Of Illinois Press, swapping mix CDs, and listening to and/or making bluegrass radio programs.

'Tis the season of, um, dare I say intimate musical experiences, as opposed to socializing in fields and woods and parking lots. Bonus: no concerns about the weather.

Ted Silverman plays mandolin with Belle Monroe and Her Brewglass Boys and is a frequent contributor to the Bluegrass Breakdown:

So, for me, the winter months are about generating new songwriting ideas, recording rough demos in my home studio, heavily drilling my own original songs and fiddle tunes in hopes of introducing them to the band and keeping my mind and ears wide open for new songwriting hooks.

Personally, aside from playing bluegrass mandolin and guitar, I play rock guitar, upright and electric bass, and drums. Our house has a modest-sized studio complete with PA, drum kit and a quiver of instruments and amplifiers, and we've been hosting a weekly rock n' roll clinic for a bunch of 8- to 12-year-old kids who make use of the talents of Stuart Silverman, our own 11-year-old rocker. I love enabling these kids to get involved in the musical groove, and this has been a fun little slice of the "School of Rock" right in our own basement.

My interest in music in general never wanes.... It's in my DNA.

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Joe Weed's Studio Insider

Adios, Norton Buffalo

Our first session

He showed up early for our first session in Petaluma. He was singing in Walter Brennan's voice as he carried cases of harmonicas down the dim hall and walked back to the control room of the recording studio. He waltzed into the room, announced himself, and we began a friendship that lasted for 20 years.

Norton Buffalo died last weekend, his life cut short by an aggressive lung cancer that was diagnosed only a couple of months ago.

Norton's varied and rich career spanned over four decades. For over thirty years, he was the harmonica player for the Steve Miller Band. He played in the band and acted with Bette Midler in "The Rose." He played on recordings by the Doobie Brothers (including the Grammy-winning "Minute by Minute"), Kenny Loggins, and for over twenty years with blues guitarist Roy Rodgers. Our own friendship and musical relationship began in the late 1980's.

American Portrait

I was putting together an album of original music that would portray a sense of some of the parts of the country that I enjoyed visit-

ing. I wanted players who could give me a rootsy sound, but who wouldn't add a cast that would place the music squarely in a pre-existing genre. I needed players who could listen with big ears, who could play composed parts, and who could bring improvisation, passion and communication to the music. So Norton came quickly to mind. He certainly played with great passion, and his uncanny ability to capture a vibe with improvisation was unmatched.

When I called Norton to set up the sessions for "American Portrait," his touring schedule made it difficult for him to come down to my studio, so I booked a room in Petaluma, much closer to his place in Glen Ellen. We ended up using the studio, Northern Lights," for several sessions over the next few years, until my own place was finished and Norton was able to make the drive to the Santa Cruz mountains.

Lullabies

A few years later, I asked Norton if he would be interested in playing on an album of lullabies I was working on. My two children benefited at bedtime from the smooth and soothing voice of their mom (my wife, Marty Kendall), but on the nights that I put them to bed, they had to do without the singing, since I was not gifted with

a good voice. So I would play lullabies for them on my guitar. By the time the kids were in school, I had a pretty good stable of lullabies worked up on the guitar, and decided to do an album of them. I asked Norton if he would be comfortable with the soft, wistful vibe needed for an album of lullabies, and he was happy to comply. As we worked on the tracks, a side of Norton emerged that I hadn't often heard in his playing, but which I knew was there. As he did with any project, Norton threw himself completely into capturing the right vibe and working up the best parts. By the time we were finished with the recording, I felt that he had created a fine and unique piece of American harmonica music that spanned the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and reached from California to the Missouri River.

In the studio

Exuberance was probably the foremost trait in Norton's remarkable musicianship, as well as in the way he lived. He also enjoyed working in the studio and constructing a more private and introspective sound, though, and in the years that we worked together, he artfully delivered the complete spectrum of emotions and musical styles.

In later years, Norton was a frequent contributor at my studio,

either on my own albums or on projects I produced for others. I always looked forward to his visits and to working together. He gave completely at every session, delivering exactly what the music needed, and frequently leaving clients open-mouthed as the soulful sounds of his harp transported a tune to a higher level.

Lisa

One day a few years ago, I got a call from my dear friend Lisa Flores. Lisa was the youngest daughter of my old Sicilian mandolin player/musical partner Tony Flores. She told me "Joe, I just met a friend of yours -- Norton Buffalo!" They were married shortly after that, and Norton and Lisa welcomed Tony into their home in northern California during his last years. Tony's music was central to the large Flores family, and visits with Tony after Norton joined the family included a new and beautiful dimension with Norton's warm and soaring harmonica sounds.

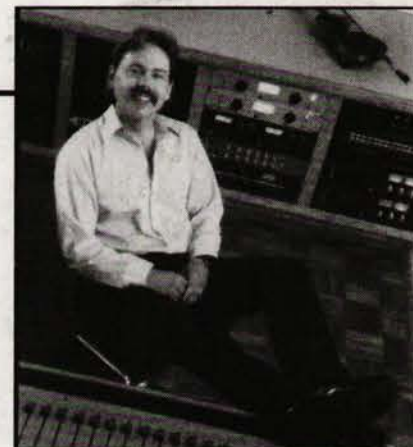
As I listen to the music that Norton left us, I'm saddened by his departure -- after all, who can fill the enormous musical void? But I'm also warmed by the memories of much good hard work together, and I'm thankful that as long as I

can hear, I'll be able to enjoy the immense gifts that he left.

Adios, old pal. We'll miss you.

Joel Selvin of the San Francisco Chronicle wrote a nice piece about Norton's career here <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/11/02/BA031ADOLJ.DTL&tsp=1>.

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. Joe was featured in the cover story of "Mandolin Magazine" in the Spring 2009 issue. Reach Joe by calling (408) 353-3353, by email at joe@highlandpublishing.com, or by visiting joeweet.com.



Joe Weed

Geff Crawford's



The Haints Old Time Stringband

Here's a bit about The Haints from their website, thehaints.com:

The Haints Old Time Stringband started performing together in 2007 and have played festivals, concerts and camps since. Members of the band are: Erynn Marshall (Galax, VA / Victoria, BC) - fiddle, vocals, banjo-uke, Pharis Romero (Cobble Hill, BC / Horsefly, BC) - lead vocals, guitar and Jason Romero (Cobble Hill, BC / Arcata, CA) - banjo, guitar, lead vocals, banjo-uke.

The word "haint" is a southern

expression for a spirit or ghost...and these Haints have gleaned inspiration and repertoire from a wealth of sources old and new. Sometimes they have learned tunes from favorite archive recordings and other times from older tradition bearers - fiddlers or singers who are no longer with us. The music lives on, adapting and breathing in a living tradition of which they are a part. And with these traditions, The Haints Old Time Stringband want to share their favorite tunes and songs with you.

The Haints' first CD project, Shout Monah, features traditional old time fiddle & banjo tunes (from Kentucky, West Virginia, Mississippi and beyond), vocals duets with stringband accompaniment, silver dagger ballads and more. With a penchant for tunes old and obscure, as well as great archaic songs that have almost been forgotten, they offer up tunes that get under your skin and make your heart ache. They also deliver on their love for stringband tunes from the era of early radio and before.

Now for a little background on the three Haints themselves, again from their website and from Erynn's, hickoryjack.com:

Erynn Marshall is known for her smooth, bluesy fiddle style, love of old tunes and her joy of

performing home-made music with and for others. She has an MA in ethnomusicology at York University, Toronto. In 2006, Erynn's first book, "Music in the Air Somewhere: The Shifting Borders of West Virginia's Fiddle and Song Traditions", was published by the West Virginia University Press. This book was the culmination of several years of fieldwork in West Virginia with seventy-five to ninety-five year old singers and fiddlers. Frequent southern trips allowed Erynn to learn elements of Appalachian fiddling directly from older tradition bearers Melvin Wine, Lester McCumbers, Leland Hall, Art Stamper and others who were very generous teachers. She is a regular performer and fiddle instructor at prominent Canadian and US festivals and music camps, she has directed two stringband ensembles at York University in Toronto and was a featured musician on the roots music documentary "I'll Fly Away Home" (Bravo) and "The Clifftop Experience" (Outlook, WV Public Broadcasting).

Jason Romero is well known for building among the finest old time and bluegrass banjos available. He built for several years for world-renowned Wildwood Banjos, and you may have heard his instruments being played on recordings by Dirk Powell, The Foghorn

Stringband, Ricky Skaggs, and Ivan Rosenberg. Jason is also an amazing clawhammer (and bluegrass) banjo player, performing regularly with fixtures of the old time and bluegrass music scene in Northern California for many years.

A festival favourite since she was four years old, Pharis Hope Romero is a musician and performer, a collaborative character with a great desire to combine the skills of other like-minded musicians into a community of music. Deep in the Cariboo interior of B.C., in her hometown of Horsefly, she found both classical and old country mentors. She is a prolific songwriter, influenced by early roots and country music, but looking to British Columbia and Canada incidents, accidents and issues. Songs about daily living - work, divorce, drug addiction, love and death - based on an upbringing in a small resource-based community have followed in her songwriter father's footsteps. Described by the B.C. Folklore Society as a "B.C. historical treasure", in particular for her song "The Mill", a song also noted as an "instant classic" by Vancouver Co-op Radio, her singing and songs have enjoyed regular radio play, including CBC nationally, NPR, and BBC Radio 2.

As you see, these three come fully pedigreed, two even with Ca-

nadian papers. (Did you notice "favourite"? (And in other paragraphs from their website talking about festivals they've played, I discovered that the Canadian provinces have two-letter abbreviations similar to the US state abbreviations. Before you listen in on the Haints, see if you can name the provinces abbreviated by AB, BC, MB, NB, NL, NS, NT, NU, ON, PE, QC, SK, YT. Ready...go! Wasn't that fun?) I myself was in one of Erynn's workshops in 2008, and her level of energy was beyond remarkable. There's not enough caffeine in the universe to account for it, it's just her.

Okay, now for a couple of tunes from their album, "Shout Monah". The first is a very beautiful waltz composed by Erynn for Jason and Pharis's wedding, called "Life's Fortune", with the otherworldly Daniel Lapp on harmony fiddle. (Daniel Lapp will certainly be an Old-Time Rambler subject in the future.) The second is a tune from the late Melvin Wine, "Eadle Alley". (Melvin will also be coming soon to an Old-Time Rambler near you.) I believe that on the final Sunday morning of Clifftop each year that she's there, Erynn leads a Melvin Wine jam at her campsite for anyone interested, a loving tribute to a musical hero to a lot of us.

Good tunes, these.



Al Shank

Al's Music Tidbits... By Al Shank

Number-System-Spreadsheet

I keep promising to get back to writing more about practicing and maintaining your repertoire, but keep getting sidetracked. However, on the new "Learners" page on the CBA website (<http://cbaontheweb.org/learners.aspx>) Ran Bush has some good ideas about how to divvy up one's practice time. You can read about them at:

<http://cbaontheweb.org/featuredarticle.aspx?featuredid=10>

Also on the Learners page is a link to a couple of articles about the "number system", which, in its simplest form, is just a number for each scale degree, allowing one to express a chord progression that applies to all keys, not just one. So, 1 4 5 1 means G C D G in G major, A D E A in A major, etc. etc. Personally, I use Roman numerals for chords and Arabic ones for notes, so I would use I IV V I for the above progression.

I have written quite a bit about "dominant harmony" or "the dominant effect" in these "Tidbits", and about "borrowed" or "secondary" dominants. The V-to-I (including V7 and V9) change is so powerful that it's often used for other "up four/down five" changes, like I-to-IV and II-to-V. In other words, we play I-to-IV as though it were V-to-I in the key of IV, and we play II-to-V as though it were V-to-I in the key of V. I indicate that as "V of IV to IV" and "V of V to V", because that is what's really going on. Also, if we play V of IV as a dominant 7th chord, the 7th of that chord is not the 7th degree of the scale, but a half-step below that; in fact, it's the 4th degree of the major scale built on the 4th degree of our home (tonic) scale. Huh? Yes, temporarily we are in a different key; we have borrowed a note from the scale of the subdominant (IV). The same thing happens when we play V of V instead of II. The II chord in a major key is a minor triad, and II V or II7 V is a very common change in other kinds of music, but not in Bluegrass. Remember the song "Some Old Day" that I beat to death a few months ago? Listen to the first sound clip for this month's Tidbits. (<http://www.cbaontheweb.org/tidbits.aspx>) This is how "Some Old Day" sounds playing the II chord instead of the V of V, in this case a G minor instead of G major or G dominant 7th. As a reminder, I sing it a second time with the V of V. The difference between the two chords is just one note, the 4th degree of the scale in the II chord and the sharpened 4th degree in the V of V, which is really the leading tone in the scale of V.

This stuff is so clear to me, but that's because I've been thinking this way for 40 years, since I studied classical harmony. It's difficult to describe it in words, because there are too many numbers, referring to different concepts, like the chord, the degree of the scale, the factor of the chord, even scales built on scale degrees. Yikes! Using Roman numerals for chords takes some of the confusion out of it, but the "5" can still refer to the fifth degree of the scale, the fifth (as opposed to root or third) of a chord, and if we talk about V of V, we then have to talk about the major scale built on the fifth degree of the "home scale". This is madness!! Therefore, I tried to figure out a graphical way to illustrate the relationships among a "home scale" (the tonic) and its nearest neighbors, the subdominant and dominant, which only differ from the tonic scale by one note.

The result is the spreadsheet on the right.

Minutes of the October 18, 2009 - California Bluegrass Association Board Meeting

From page A-6

to report that Bakersfield 48 hour jam is a go.

Kiwanis & Leukemia Society are putting on a concert with Sawmill Road on the Thursday before.

Mark reported that the jam in Sebastopol is still going.

John Hettinger reported on the jams up in the Sacramento area.

SET TIME AND PLACE FOR THE NEXT YEAR'S BOARD MEETINGS
Nov 14, 2009 - Modesto

Dec 12, 2009 - Modesto
Jan 16, 2010 - Modesto
Feb 13, 2010 - Modesto
Mar 14, 2010 - Sebastopol
Apr 18, 2010 - Spring Campout Turlock
May 15, 2010 - Modesto
July 10, 2010 - Rick's home, Jamestown
Aug 14, 2010 - Modesto
Sept 12, 2010 - Tim Edes' home, Morgan Hill
Oct - Fall Campout

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 3:45.



Scales and their close relations

note	tonic	subdominant	dominant
	scale	scale	scale
A#/Bb			
A			
G#/Ab			
G			
F#/Gb			
F			
E			
D#/Eb			
D			
C#/Db			
C		1 tonic	
B		7 leading tone	
A#/Bb		pt subtonic	
A		6 submediant	
G#/Ab		pt	
G	1 tonic	5 dominant	
F#/Gb	7 leading tone	pt	
F	pt subtonic	4 subdominant	
E	6 submediant	3 mediant	
D#/Eb	pt	pt	
D	5 dominant	2 supertonic	1 tonic
C#/Db	pt		7 leading tone
C	4 subdominant	1 tonic	pt subtonic
B	3 mediant		6 submediant
A#/Bb	pt		pt
A	2 supertonic		5 dominant
G#/Ab			pt
G	1 tonic		4 subdominant
F#/Gb			3 mediant
F			pt
E			2 supertonic
D#/Eb			
D			1 tonic

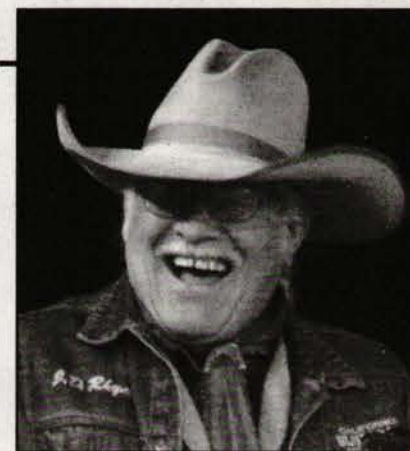
As you can see, the leftmost column is just notes, about three octaves' worth. The other three columns are for the three closely related scales that come into play in lots of Bluegrass tunes. As shown above, the tonic scale is G major, the subdominant scale C major and the dominant scale D major. The way they are juxtaposed, you can easily see that the 4th degree of the subdominant scale is the subtonic of the tonic scale (F in G major), the note we see in V7 of IV. In addition, the leading tone of the dominant scale is in between the 4th and 5th degrees of the tonic scale (C# in G major). In Excel, I used colors for each scale, red for tonic, green for subdominant and blue for dominant. The "pt" indications mean "passing tone", which are sometimes inserted between scale degrees. Again, in Excel the "pt subtonic" in the tonic-scale column is green, to indicate it is the note "borrowed" from the subdominant scale in V7 of IV, and the "pt" between the "5 dominant" and the "4 subdominant" is blue, to indicate it's the note borrowed from the dominant scale in V of V. Therefore, the tonic-scale column shows all the notes normally used in Bluegrass, with the exception of tunes that go farther back around the "Circle of Fifths", like "Raw Hide" or "Dear Old Dixie".

You can download the actual spreadsheet, with colors, from the CBA website at the same URL as the sound clips. You can open it or save it. If you save it, it's going to have a filename consisting of a long timestamp and the .xls extension. I suggest you rename it! If you open it, then you can use "Save As" and give it your own filename.

Next month, I will talk about how you can "transpose" the three scale columns to any key, and how you might apply this principle to your instrument, as well.

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

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



J.D. Rhynes

Howdy, Howdy, Howdy!

On my mind, on my mind, yer always in my heart and on my mind. Oops! I've got bluegrass playing in the background as I write this month's column and 'ol Lester is a' sangin' "On My Mind" and I couldn't help but follow along, seein' as to how that's one of my most favoritest songs ever! (I had to get up and turn it off or I'll never get this column wrote in one day.)

Well, as I write this month's column the leaves are really falling and the fall colors are absolutely beautiful here on my mountaintop. Fall is one of God's blessings for us mountain folks. The days are warm and the nites are gettin' cold, which makes for some real good sleepin' weather. It's been cold as a wedge fer the last three days here on the mountain so I fix me a good hot fire in the ol shop stove and everyday after I go get my mail and get it read, I take the phone off of the hook, and lay down next to that hot stove and take me at least an hours nap. What makes it even better than that is when it's a' rainin' and the pitter, patter of the rain on the roof lulls me to sleep in about one minute! Man! What a life! It don't get any gooder than this folks! Well, yes it does. In fact, this mornin' I got up, turned on the oven and baked me up some biscuits along with some bacon, gravy and eggs fer brekfuss! And about one o'clock, after I get the mail read, you know what I'm a' gonna be doin'? So before I get too sleepy to do much of anything, park yer 'ol Dodge truck under the ol' Oak tree, and come on in here where I've got a big pot of Cowboy rocket fuel a' perkin on the stove. Grab a big cup full, and let's "make medicine" over some good vittles.

Earlier this week, my sister and I got to reminiscing over the big breakfasts our mom would cook up on Thanksgiving or Christmas mornings. It was as big or bigger than the evening supper she would fix. There were always at least 12 to 15 of us there for breakfast on the holiday mornings, and sometimes as many as 22 there fer supper. Aunts, uncles, and cousins everywhere, it seemed! Mom would have at least two hot cereals, hot cakes, biscuits, hot buttered pastries, fried ham, bacon, sausage, fried taters, scrambled eggs, poached eggs, and fried eggs. When my mom and my three aunts were fixing breakfast the kitchen was off limits to us kids but we didn't mind because we was ready fer the feast that was being fixed fer us. We usually ate breakfast by 7:00 or 7:30 at the latest because it had to last you until about 5:00 or 6:00 when supper was put on the table. It's a shame that families don't do that anymore, but there's only one constant in our lives, and that's change. But, I got to thinking of those golden hotcakes we always had on those mornings, so I figgered I'd share one of my favoritest recipes fer yer Christmas breakfuss this year. This

is my favorite sourdough hotcake recipe of all time and it's from my good friend Grady Spears' cookbook, "A Cowboy In the Kitchen."

Sourdough Pancakes

4 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
2 tsps kosher salt
2 Tbsps baking powder
4 eggs
3 cups milk
8 Tbsps melted, unsalted butter
1 1/2 cups sourdough starter
2 tsps pure vanilla extract

Beat the eggs for at least 1 to 2 minutes. Add the milk and beat some more, then add the melted butter and beat again. Sift the dry ingredients together in a separate bowl. Add to the wet stuff and mix real good. Wipe the griddle down with some peanut oil and cook golden brown. Enuff fer about 12 pancakes. Serve hot with real butter, and real maple syrup. WOW! It's against the Mountain Code of Justice to serve imitation butter and syrup on these.

Now a big stack of these along with a couple of scrambled eggs will keep you till the supper's ready around 5:00 PM. Now fer some real Christmas dinner recipes, that'll knock yer hat in the creek!

My mom used to fix creamed carrots as a side dish occasionally, and I purely love 'em fixed like that, but here's a way to fix carrots that's as easy as fallin' off of a peeled foot log over 'ol Piney Creek. These use a couple of bags of the ready to eat, "baby carrots", and once you try this recipe, I know it's gonna be one of yer family's favorites.

Roasted Carrots with Sage and Walnuts

2 -16 oz. Bags of baby carrots
3 Tbsp unsalted butter
2 Tbsp honey
1/3 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped
1 Tbsp fresh sage, chopped fine
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat a baking pan in a 475 degree oven fer 10 minutes. While the pan's heating microwave the butter and honey together fer about one minute and toss with the carrots in a bowl. Spread the carrots on the baking pan and roast, shaking occasionally to turn, about 30 minutes. Toast the walnuts in a dry skillet about 5 minutes over medium heat. Chop fine. Return the roasted carrots to the bowl, add the nuts and sage and toss to mix good. Serve hot. The sage, walnuts, and honey add a nice flavor in every bite. Yummy!

Now what would a Christmas dinner be without some corn-

bread dressing? Droll, that's what! I've had other kinds of dressing at times but they jes don't measure up to a good heaping helping of good 'ol cornbread dressing! Now to make the best dressing, you have to make yer own cornbread from scratch. None of those box mixes are allowed here. Remember what I said about the Mountain Code of Justice. That also applies here too. Sooooo, with that said, here's a great recipe fer cornbread and dressing, fer yer Xmas enjoyments.

Homemade Sausage and Cornbread Dressing

Cornbread

2 2/3 cups of milk
1/2 cup vegetable oil
4 large eggs
2 cups cornmeal
22 cups flour
4 tsps baking powder
1 tsp salt

Heat yer oven to 400 degrees, and put a couple of tsps of shortening in a cast iron skillet, and heat fer about 10 minutes in the oven. Beat the eggs, add the milk and oil and beat good, then add the dry stuff and mix good. Take the skillet out of the oven and pour the batter in and put back in the oven fer about 20 to 30 minutes till golden brown. Let set in the skillet fer about 10 minutes and turn out on a wire rack to cool. After it's cooled, slice into one inch squares and let it set out fer at least a day to get good and stale. You can bake the cornbread up to 2 days in advance. This is the secret to good cornbread dressing.

The Dressing

1 1/2 lbs. of bulk sausage
2 onions, chopped fine
3 celery ribs, chopped fine
6 Tbsps unsalted butter
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp dried sage
1 tsp dried thyme
3 1/2 cups low sodium chicken broth
1 cup half and half
4 large eggs
1/2 tsp salt
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper

Cook the sausage till it's done in a large skillet. Remove to a paper towel lined bowl. Pour off all of the fat but two tablespoons from the skillet. Add the onions, celery and two tablespoons of the butter to the skillet. Saute about 5 minutes and add the garlic, sage, and thyme, and cook fer about another 30 to 45 seconds. Stir in the broth, remove from the heat and let cool fer 5 minutes. Whisk the half and half, eggs, salt and cayenne in a LARGE bowl. Slowly whisk in the warm broth mixture until mixed real good. Fold in dried cornbread and sausage and let set, tossing occasionally, until saturated, about

20 to 25 minutes. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Transfer to a greased skillet or pan. Melt the remaining butter and drizzle over the top, and bake fer 30 to 40 minutes till a golden brown. Real dressing!

Now there's a real Xmas dinner staple if'n there ever was one! When I take a big bite of this, all I've got to do is close my eyes and I'm a 16 year old boy again a' settin' at my momma's table eatin' Christmas dinner! Great food and greater memories.

Now fer the main part of the meal, namely a good roast turkey. I purely love roasted turkey when it's cooked good, and this recipe is one that makes some of the bestest roasted turkey you'll ever get on the outside of! This is an Italian recipe fer roasted turkey, and I know you'll love it as much as I do.

Garlic, Sage, and Orange Roast Turkey with Gravy

1 14 lb. turkey
4 cups of broth
8 whole heads of garlic
1 large bunch of fresh sage
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
4 large oranges
1/3 cup unbleached flour
Fine sea salt
Fresh ground pepper

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Cut 1/2 inch off of the garlic heads. Finely chop half of the sage leaves. Save 2 tsps fer the gravy. Combine remaining sage and the oil, add the grated orange zest from 1 1/2 oranges, and season generously with salt and pepper. Place turkey in roasting pan and rub all over, including cavity, with the seasoned oil. Cut the 2 grated oranges into quarters. Place the oranges, remaining whole sage, and 2 heads of garlic inside the cavity. Put the garlic heads around the turkey, trimmed side up. Cut the peel in strips from one of the oranges, avoiding the white pith, and put on the garlic. Juice the two remaining oranges and set aside. Bake the turkey for one hour, rotate the pan 180 degrees, and pour the orange juice over the bird. Continue roasting until the thigh meat registers 165 to 170 degrees on a thermometer. When done, drain the juices inside the bird into the pan, and set aside fer 30 minutes before carving. Place the heads of garlic in a fine mesh sieve, over a two quart measure, along with the oranges. Straddle the roasting pan over two burners, add one cup of broth and boil at high heat, scraping the pan fer the "goodies." Strain the pan juices through the sieve pressing firmly to get the juices from the garlic and oranges. Skim off

the fat and reserve. Add enough broth to the pan juices to make a total of 5 cups. Whisk together flour and 6 Tbsps of the fat (use butter to make up any shortages) in a heavy saucepan till golden brown. Then add the broth mixture, whisking all the time, bring to a boil, then simmer fer about 10 to 12 minutes till thickened to yer liking. Whisk in the reserved sage and a pinch of pepper, season with salt to taste, and serve with turkey.

There my friends, is one fine way to cook up yer Xmas turkey this year! Well folks, this brings to a close, another year of the 'ol Bluegrass Kitchen. I've been writing this column fer about 23 years now, and I hope my health lets me do this as long as you want to read it. I thank all of you for all of the wonderful compliments about my ramblings here over this last year. It's really heartening to know that some one really reads all of this, and once in awhile gets a laugh out of it all. I really try to insult a lot of my good friends in my writings from time to time, albeit in a good way. I'm sure that you've noticed that I rarely use Rick Cornish's name in this column, mostly because he's not that close of a friend. Ha ha ha ha. (That will cost me!) For all of my good friends that I've left out of my column, please have patience, as I will get around to insulting you when the right time comes along. I usually have to have a reason to mention their names herein, like last month's story of how John, Harold and I drank all of Vic's beer. Then there's the time that Cuz'n Al, bad mouthed my Biscuits and Gravy on his radio show! He did it right on the air! Al, I got you fer that one, and believe me, I'll get you again! Bad mouth my Biscuits and Gravy? How low can one get! As you can see folks, this is a lot of fun at times, and I wouldn't take a million bucks fer all of the good times that's came out of it all. I pray that you all have the bestest Christmas ever for you and yer family.

Please remember all of our service men and women who are in harms way, a long way from their families this Christmas. Pray for their safe return, and may God grant us all peace and health. GOD BLESS AMERICA!

BRENDA and the Reviews

Perhaps the holiday season is your favorite time for sharing your love of music with friends and family. There are many new instructional videos for every instrument in a bluegrass band and you may even want to leave little "hints" for gifts for yourself. While Mel Bay and Homespun Tapes continue to offer the largest selection of instructional materials, many California artists and companies have some products that may be the perfect gift for someone special.

Cliff Compton: Playing on the Right Side of the Grass

Infinity Publishing
info@buybooksontheweb.com
www.buybooksontheweb.com
Toll-free 877 BUY BOOK
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Cliff writes a monthly "Bluegrass Bard" column for Bluegrass Breakdown and his poems offer insights and glimpses into the life that we all share in bluegrass. I often see his poems as gems in a shop window to give pause to admire or reminisce but having a whole book full of poems is like having one of Forest Gump's box of chocolates — many choices to savor and some of the bittersweet coatings have the sweetest nougats inside!

Cliff's poetic bluegrass journey is peppered with folks that are legendary — there are poems focused on James King, Les Paul and John Prine and there are others on the folks that are the backbone of the CBA jams — Allen Light, Chef Mike, Yoseff Tucker, and the long ago sidekick Bob Cumberland. Each vignette is as faded and sharp as an old photograph and Cliff lets us see his friends through eyes filled with love, deep emotion and appreciation. The twenty-nine dollar guitar, the magical Martin guitar, the dobros and banjos that make up our world are all embroidered in the choicest of words. Cliff humbly writes, "I could have been a violin, but I was born an accordion," but his joy in the sharing of the old songs and festival just makes you want to grab a guitar and set a spell. Cliff hasn't written a poem about me, but these lines from Old Friends 2 just fit me at this point in time:

*So I'm taking pictures
And seeking out my old friends
And making new ones
Because I don't want to miss
nothing
I want them living in my heart
Long after they leave this mortal
plain
--Cliff Compton*

**The ToneWay Project:
Core Songs
Abbott Family Music**
www.Toneway.com

The Abbott Family has been

actively enjoying and sharing music since Kyle and Luke Abbott were toddlers. "Mountain Music For Everyone" started with the Abbotts' first songbook with over 360 songs to sing and play and the family has continued to make music accessible for everyone. Carl, Leslie, Kyle and Luke have presented their workshops at festivals across the country and "Playing by Ear" has expanded into a full-fledged enterprise on the Toneway web site. The original book with songs is still available, but the web site now has instructional materials and videos to view and the new books and CDs feature "Core Songs" that every aspiring bluegrass musician should know. The web site also has opportunities to join JamShops and gatherings and find other players.

The "Core Songs Complete Collection" features all 100 songs from the original 5 CD series. While it is only in MP3 format, they can be easily changed into CD format recordings if desired. The full-length songs are performed with full instrumentation including fiddle, dobro, bass, mandolin and guitar. Listeners can enjoy the music as a performance, follow along on their own instrument by noting the musical key of the song or start analyzing the kick-offs, leads and harmony vocals that are part of each song. The Abbotts have included bluegrass standards such as Old Joe Clark, Banks of the Ohio and I Am A Pilgrim as well as gospel songs Palms of Victory and Where The Soul of Man Never Dies. The popular Man of Constant Sorrow is included as well as some lesser known songs such as When The Bees Are in the Hive and Bring Back to Me My Wandering Boy. If you are an aspiring bluegrass musician, a closet picker or a band wishing to find new songs, the Core Songs series will be an excellent resource and inspiration to make "mountain music for everyone!"

**Alhambra Valley Band
At The San Francisco
Bluegrass and Old-
Time Festival (DVD)**
www.alhambraValleyband.com
©2009

Song list: Willow Pass Road, Pigeon's Roost, Love Is Never Easy, Before This Mountain, Southland, Nobody But You, Highway of Pain, Righteous Road, Thunder Clouds of Love.

Since 1986, the Alhambra Valley Band has been entertaining fans all over Northern California. The band did the opening show for Peter Rowan at the San Francisco Bluegrass and Old Time Festival, and this nine-song selection is a visual and audio treat as the band performs to an enthusiastic audience.

Band leader Lynn Quinones is also an accomplished songwriter and her songs can provide commentary on the changes to the countryside, "Willow Pass Road," or offer hope and joy in the gospel "Righteous Road" and "Before This Mountain." "Righteous Road" offers a full four-part harmony with Jill and Lynn singing with banjo player Mitch Polzak and mandolin player Dan Large.

Dan's mandolin playing is top-notch with fluid melodic passages balanced with rhythmic flourishes to keep the beat going in the songs. His prowess is apparent as the band plays David Grisman's instrumental; "Pigeon's Roost," which also features Mitch's banjo playing and Jill's fiddle playing. Bassist Bruce Campbell completes the band line-up and it's true to say that his steady playing is the foundation for the band's sound. Lynn's rhythm guitar also drives the sound so that the other instruments can add the flourishes. The video lets the viewer see the intricate movements of the singers around the microphone and the careful timing of the instrumental breaks. Lynn's wonderful songs are the frosting on a very traditional cake — the band pulls shows it can do the wonderful duo sound with Dan and Lynn singing the Jim and Jesse classic, "Nobody But You" and the encore is Hylo Brown's "Thunder Clouds of Love." If you can't see the band at one of their many performances, just add this CD to your collection!

Val Rosing: Try A Little Tenderness

Radio Rhythm Records
www.valrosing.com

Sometimes a life can turn around at a crossroads and a past is left behind and discovered many years later by a chance encounter. Claudia Russell is a folk singer in Berkeley, California and while she knew her father as an accomplished vocal coach for Hollywood films and the San Francisco Opera, she only recently found out that her father had spent many years as a popular vocalist in England in the 1930s. He recorded more than 100 songs with dance orchestras and he was dubbed the "English Bing Crosby." He received an acting contract at the MGM studios and they changed his name to Gilbert Russell but his film career never achieved fame. A fan found the family and helped them discover Gilbert's past and early recordings.

Claudia and her mother June Russell have selected and remastered many of Val's recordings and the 24 songs represent the best of the "sentimental songs" of the 1930s. It's a journey worth taking with the gentle rhythms of the time and the very vibrant voice of Val Rosing soaring and swinging with the intense emotion of another

contemporary singer Nelson Eddy.

Song highlights (there are a total of 24 songs on the CD): Try A Little Tenderness, Teddy Bear's Picnic, You Are My Lucky Star, Sweet Sue, I Just Want To Sing About You, In A Gypsy Tea Room, A Street in Old Seville, Wonderful You, You Are Driving Me Crazy, Turning of the Tide, East of the Sun.

Dr. Elmo: Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer

Laughing Stock Records
2521 Laguna Vista Drive
Novato, CA 94945-1562
www.drelmo.com
©2002

Song list: Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer, Grandpa's Gonna Sue The Pants Offa' Santa, Send Me A Wife For Christmas, Texas Chainsaw Christmas, Uncle Johnny's Glass Eye, Feels Like Christmas, Here's to the Lonely, Don't Make Me Play That Grandma Song Again, Grandma's Killer Fruitcake, Jingle Bells.

Dr. Elmo Shropshire is a Marin county veterinarian most of the year, but at Christmas and other select times of the year, he pulls out his banjo and gathers the band to celebrate and play one of the most popular Christmas novelty songs of the last few decades — "Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer." Despite its rather gruesome title, the song is bouncy, and full of silly fun that delights children of all ages. Band members on this recording include Dr. Elmo, Gary Potterton on guitars, mandolin, drums and harmonica, Larry Carlin on bass, Rita Abrams on keyboards, Carol Joy Harris on vocals and Gregg Lagardo on drums. The band's bouncy, happy rhythms are a great backdrop to Elmo's character vignettes that might be the artistic equivalent of Norman Rockwell meets Jackson Pollack.

Elmo's quirky sense of humor has spawned three related songs: "Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer," "Grandpa's Gonna Sue The Pants Offa' Santa" and "Send Me A Wife For Christmas." The tale of Grandma's fatal encounter with Santa's reindeer is laced with egg nog, unopened gifts, a goose, and pudding. The prospect of suing Santa over the accident is given a swinging Latin beat and the song is gleefully sung with snippets of popular holiday songs. More holiday traditions are spoofed in "Grandma's Killer Fruitcake." "Texas Chainsaw Christmas" is a tongue-in-cheek look at a gift gone wild. While the all the humor may be most appealing to the younger set, one song stands out as a true season reminder: "Feels Like Christmas" is a gentle look at the forgotten people and "Christmas is what's in our hearts and not what's beneath the tree."



Brenda Hough

DIX BRUCE
Musix
PO Box 231005
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Bay Area musician Dix Bruce is the author of over 50 books, recordings and videos, for Mel Bay Publications. His Parking Lot Picker's Songbook series has special editions for guitar, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, bass and dobro. His You Can Teach Yourself Mandolin and Country Guitar books come with DVD instructional videos as well as detailed books filled with songs and tablature. Dix has also produced Gypsy Swing and Hot Club Rhythm books for guitar and mandolin. All of Dix's instructional materials are listed on his own web site, www.musixnow.com. Dix also has downloadable materials and a compilation of his recordings with Jim Nunally and swing band arrangements on "Tuxedo Blues."

Dix Bruce's Swing & Jazz Mandolin: Chords, Rhythms & Songs DVD

©2008
www.musixnow.com

Songs taught: Corrine Corrina, Avalon, Swing in Minor, Blues in Bb, The Sheik of Araby, After You've Gone, Sweet Georgia Brown, Honeysuckle Rose.

Swing and Jazz music have chord progressions and rhythms that are different than those used in bluegrass songs, but this Dix Bruce instructional video takes some of the mystery out of all those "diminished" and alternate chord forms. The video includes chord charts on the screen as the song is played, and Dix takes the time to explain how the chart represents finger placements on the fingerboard. He also explains some of the relationships between the string intervals and the use of moveable chords on the mandolin. Close-up photography allows the learner to see the left hand finger placements and movements on the fingerboard.

Each of the songs is played slowly and then up-to-speed with Dix's mandolin playing the rhythm and a second mandolin playing the melody line. "Swing in Minor" is a song based on Django Reinhardt's Minor Swing that was adapted for mandolin by David Grisman.

BRENDA and the Reviews

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Dix's books, Gypsy Swing and Hot Club Rhythm will further develop the learner's skills and knowledge of this fascinating mandolin style.

Dix Bruce: Christmas Favorites For Solo Guitar (book with CD)

Mel Bay Publications
#4 Industrial Drive
Pacific, MO 63069
ISBN #7 96279-109734
©2009

Dix selected 30 of the most popular Christmas and holiday tunes and arranged them so that one guitarist could easily lead a group of singers. The songs are arranged with a Carter-style melody/strum combination that allows the melody line to lead the song while the rhythm strums keep the beat. There are several arpeggio strums in the songs that let the song stand alone as a guitar solo arrangement.

Each of the songs also has suggestions for vocal keys, guitar capo placements and the lyrics for the first verse written under the musical notation/tablature. Songs include the First Noel, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, O Come All Ye Faithful, Jolly Old St. Nicholas, Joy to the World, Deck the Halls, O Christmas Tree and God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen. Holiday folk songs include Children Go Where I Send Thee, Rise Up Shepherds and Follow, What Child Is This and Auld Lang Syne. Each song is played slowly and up to speed on the accompanying CD.

Gerald Jones and Dix Bruce: Parking Lot Picker's Songbook – Fiddle Edition (book with CD)

Mel Bay Publications
#4 Industrial Drive
Pacific, MO 63069
ISBN #7 96279-109734
©2009

Dix Bruce has been busy compiling a series of inclusive song books with the same selection of over 200 songs with an emphasis on lyrics, melody leads and playing hints on transposing songs and finding musical keys for different vocal ranges. Other books in the series focus on guitar, mandolin, banjo, dobro and bass.

With 200 songs to choose from, any player will be kept busy learning them all. Some highlights include words to songs usually played as instrumentals – Angeline the Baker, Arkansas Traveler, and Sally Goodin. Jam favorites Columbus Stockade Blues, Blue Ridge Mountains, Old Joe Clark, I'll Fly Away, Jimmie Brown, John Henry, John Hardy, and a collection of Katies – Cline, Daley and Dear. The "Little" songs include Little Liza Jane, Little Annie, Bes-

sie, Birdie, Maggie, Sadie, Willie, and there's Little Log Cabins and caskets. Also included are Christmas songs: Away in a Manger, Star of Bethlehem, and Children Go Where I Send Thee. The accompanying CDs have a verse and chorus of the song and a sampling of instrumental accompaniment. The books are a great resource for anyone starting to learn bluegrass songs.

New Lost City Ramblers: 50 Years Where Do You Come From, Where Do You Go?

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings
Smithsonian Institution Center
For Folklife and Cultural Heritage
MRC520
Washington, DC 20560-0520
www.folkways.si.edu

The recent passing of Mike Seeger came after the New Lost City Ramblers celebrated the 50th anniversary of their first record album issued in 1958. While the group praised, preserved and performed the music of America's small towns and hills, all three of the musicians were urban scholars. Mike Seeger was the son of music scholars Ruth Crawford and Charles Seeger and brother of folk musician Pete Seeger and his interest in the traditional Southern music led to his making many recording field trips and discovery of Dock Boggs, Roscoe Holcomb, Tom Ashley, Maybelle Carter, Elizabeth Cotton, Eck Robertson and Reverend Gary Davis. John Cohen's skills as a documentary film maker and photographer also document the early music styles. His "High Lonesome" is considered one of the premier films of its kind. Tom Paley left the group to pursue a career in teaching and was replaced by Tracy Schwarz.

This three-CD box set is an encyclopedic collection of 79 songs spanning the career of the band but it is also a fascinating chronicle of the hardships and trials of the American south. There are rambling dialogs including "Automobile Trip Through Alabama" a deadpan dialog delivered by John Cohen with rattlesnakes, bears and exploding rifles with tall tale overtones. Tracy's fine fiddling runs through many of the songs and the rollicking dance beat he produces with Mike Seeger's banjo is one of the appealing aspects of the Rambler sound. "John Brown's Dream" features Tracy playing twin fiddles with Tommy Jarrell. Multi-instrumentalist Mike Seeger played autoharp on several of the songs and harmonica on "My Wife Died On Saturday Night." "Black Bottom Strut" has John on guitar, Tracy on spoons and Mike on a mandolin while "Smoketown Strut" features Mike on solo guitar. Humorous touches are added with "The Cat's Got The Measles, The Dog's Got

The Whooping Cough" and "Sales Tax On Women." The band in later years performed with Sara Carter in Grass Valley and the collection includes the Carter's commentary on hard times, "No Depression" and a field recording of Sara singing "I'm Leaving You." More of Mike's field recordings feature Elizabeth Cotton's "Freight Train" and Clarence Ashley's "Walking Boss." It can be said that without the New Lost City Ramblers much of the early Southern mountain music would never have been preserved or performed today.

HOMESPUN TAPES
Box 340
Woodstock, NY 12498
1-800-338-2737
www.homespun.com

Happy and Jane Traum started the business in 1967 to provide taped lessons to Happy's students while he was touring. Since then, they have produced hundreds of lessons on tapes, CDs and DVDs. Every acoustic instrument from harmonica, accordion to flutes, whistles and drums has lessons to be viewed at home. Some of the instructors are famous musicians in their own right and have series of videos to teach nuances of their style.

Jim Wood: Fiddle For The Absolute Beginner – Getting Started The Right Way

Jim Wood:
20 East Tunes for the Beginning Fiddler – Learn To Play Jam Session Favorites

Jim Wood has been teaching fiddle for over 30 years and his experience with students have given him a lot of insight into learning to play the fiddle. Jim begins the first DVD with a very detailed discussion of body posture and alignment and how this effects playing. With the assistance of his wife Inge, Jim discusses bowing, making the first notes on the fiddle and the notes on the A scale. Open string exercises and shuffle bowing in time are covered next and then Jim presents easy versions of Old Joe Clark, Cripple Creek and Cotton-Eyed Joe. "Pads," or chord notes are shown so that a fiddler can play in jams even if they do not know the melody. The video shows close-ups of both hands and also includes the guitarist's chord names so the fiddler can cue in on a song's structure. Jim also explains the "potatoes" extra notes to connect passages or open songs. The DVD also includes music files that can be viewed on-screen or printed out separately.

The second DVD, 20 East Tunes for the Beginning Fiddler, continues with more commonly

played jam session songs. Jim reviews bowing and discusses timing, noting, double stops and other techniques that will make learning the songs easier and more musical. Several musical keys are used and the learner can play along with Jim with Inge playing the guitar. The songs included in the instruction and available on-screen or for printing on the computer are Soldier's Joy, Sweet Betsy From Pike, Turkey in the Straw, Sally Goodin in both G and A keys, Bile Em Cabbage Down, Little Liza Jane, Buffalo Gals, Sally Ann, Redwing, Sweet Hour of Prayer, Rubber Dolly, Fire on the Mountain, Arkansas Traveler, Southwind, Angeline the Baker, Sail Away Ladies, Down Yonder, Shady Grove and Cotton-Eyed Joe. It's a full almost 3 hours of instruction and has plenty of material to keep the learner progressing through many stages of fiddle competence.

Pete Wernick: Make Up Your Own Banjo Solos – What to Play When It's Your Turn to "Take It!"

Pete Wernick has produced other banjo instructional videos for Homespun, but he has also produced a series of jam session DVDs that would be useful for any instrumentalist wanting to know what to do in a bluegrass jam. Pete also leads Jam and Banjo camps across the country. He is also a member of Hot Rize, Country Cooking, Flexigrass and other top bands.

Pete introduces the video with the advice that learning to take a break is similar to learning a language and memorizing tablature will not help a player be spontaneous in a jam. Three solo techniques are discussed progressing from using rolls with chord changes (placeholder solo) to finding the melody notes and simple phrases on the fingerboard. He presents the interesting fact that your Adam's apple moves up if the melody notes moves up in pitch and he suggests using "Three Blind Mice" as a test.

Pete uses standard bluegrass tunes – "Handsome Molly," "Long Journey Home," and "Man of Constant Sorrow" to build arrangements with additional licks, lead-ins and tags. The close-ups of both hands will aid learning and a printable book is also on the DVD.

Steve Kaufman: Beyond Basic Bluegrass Rhythm Guitar

Songs taught: Little Rock Getaway, Wayfaring Stranger, St. Anne's Reel, Kentucky Waltz, Sweet Georgia Brown, Alabama Jubilee, Sally Goodin.

Steve Kaufman has not only won the prestigious Winfield Flatpicking Guitar Championship three

times, he has also been the instructor on many of Homespun Tapes' guitar lessons. His earlier Basic Bluegrass Rhythm Guitar instructional video focused on the rhythm playing and bass walks necessary to keep the time in a bluegrass band. This video focuses on walking bass lines, chord progressions, substitutions, and a variety of accompaniment ideas.

Steve explains how he visualizes tone colors in the different musical notes. He calls minor notes "dark tones" and he demonstrates the patterns in different kinds of songs – ragtime, blues. A "1625" progression is a professional way of giving a chord progression that will work in any key. The "diminished chords" and how they are derived from simpler chords also give new sounds to the songs. The use of a twin screen lets the viewer see the intricate changes on the fingerboard as Steve demonstrates each song. Doc Watson once answered the question, "What chords do you learn for bluegrass?" with the comment, "Learn all the chords in Blackberry Blossom." Steve uses "Little Rock Getaway" as his example of a song that can be played simply or with embellishments. Tab files for the songs are also available for printing from the DVD.

"Wayfaring Stranger" is used as an example for using minor chords. It's a very full arrangement and one that guitarists could easily play to back up a powerful vocal. Steve then plays the song again and adds additional chords and bass runs. "Kentucky Waltz" is used to teach waltz accompaniment and Steve adds augmented chords and bass runs to fill out his version. Vamps, different chords and rhythms are combined in "Sweet Georgia Brown." For guitarists wanting to go beyond the basic three chords but hesitant to learn complicated single note solos, this instructional video is an important "missing link" between merely playing chords and complex soloing. Thank you, Steve!

Steve Kaufman Teaches Crowd Pleasers and Show Stoppers – Steve's Favorite Flatpicking Guitar Instrumentals

Songs taught: Interstate Rag, First Century Reel, Maid Behind The Bar, Sligo Girl, The Rising Sun, Beaumont Rag, Black Mountain Rag, Calgary Polka, Last Thing On My Mind.

Intermediate flatpickers will be delighted with this new video from the prolific Steve Kaufman. Steve focuses on popular jam tunes and carefully details segments to learn in each tune with each note and its position on the fingerboard shown and marked. He also dis-

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cusses changes in the sound when the pick is moved closer or further away from the soundhole.

He mentions Willy Hunter's influence on his playing and the source of musical ideas on Celtic songs. Other songs focus on crosspicking rolls and patterns, licks, bass lines, arpeggios and double stops. Steve is always careful to point out movements of the right and left hand and the finger placements that make the melody notes of a song. Completing all of the Steve Kaufman lessons would greatly improve your playing and with Steve's comments on contest playing, you would be ready to win that top prize!

MEL BAY PUBLICATIONS

Mel Bay Publications
#4 Industrial Drive
Pacific, MO 63069

Mel Bay's company started with just his own guitar lessons and books in 1947, but now the company publishes and distributes music books, videos and recordings for every acoustic, electric and band instrument.

Jeanne Page: Bluegrass on Hammered Dulcimer (book)

ISBN #7 96279-09027
©2009

While hammered dulcimers have not been the most common instrument in a bluegrass jam, opportunities await the bold player who picks up a copy of this book and learns the songs. Actually, any instrumentalist will find the collection of songs worthwhile. Jeanne Page has chosen several Bill Monroe instrumental songs and her melody lines duplicate the lead solos of Monroe classics Big Mon, Bluegrass Stomp, Jerusalem Ridge, Lonesome Moonlight Waltz, and Rawhide. Also in the 25-song collection are traditional favorites Man of Constant Sorrow, Cherokee Shuffle, Flop Eared Mule, Red Haired Boy, Shady Grove and Whiskey Before Breakfast.

Joe Carr: School of Country Guitar Chords, Accompaniment Styles and Basic Leads (book)

ISBN #7 96279-10623
©2009

Joe Carr has written many instructional books for guitar players and this basic book would be good for a beginning guitar player. The accompanying CD features basic chords and patterns and then uses them in standard folk songs: Down in the Valley, C.C. Rider and Aunt Rhoady. Joe develops pull off and hammer-on techniques with Aunt Rhoady and then morphs the tune into a crosspicking lesson and a

guitar lead played up the neck.

Cripple Creek, Redwing, Devil's Dream and Under the Double Eagle have also been given developed guitar breaks. The book also explains harmonies in thirds and bass lead patterns. The accompanying CD has all the songs played at a moderate, easy to follow, tempo.

Joe Carr: Western Lead Guitar Styles (book)

©2009
ISBN #7 96279-087650

Joe Carr has now been in over 20 instructional guitar videos and he has even done videos on fiddle, banjo, mandolin and ukulele. As an instructor at South Plains College in Texas, he and colleague Alan Munde are involved in the unique commercial music program at the college.

Western Swing music features a swinging beat blended with instrumental solos that originally featured fiddle but evolved to include electric guitar. Jazz and swing guitar have a common background in the music of the 1930s and 1940s and a series of improvised riffs and a foundation of musical theory help the learner understand some of the basic concepts of swing guitar.

Scales and chordal patterns are discussed in the beginning of the book and progressions and the designation of "numbers" in a chord system leads to diagrams of chords and the tonal changes as the finger patterns are moved up the guitar neck.

Many of the solo passages were adapted from the playing of popular guitarists or string players. Tiny Moore was the mandolin player in Bob Wills' band, and Sleepy Johnson was the guitar player. Eldon's Rag is adapted from Eldon Shamblin's playing, and Jimmy's Blues was developed from the playing of Jimmy Wyble. Other solo passages owe their stylistic progressions to Cotton Wittington and Junior Bernard. The 48-page book has an accompanying CD that demonstrates all of the riffs and solos written out in the book.

Alan Munde: Banjo For The Young Beginner (book)

©2009
ISBN #7 96279-10740

Alan Munde has performed with Jimmy Martin, Country Gazette, and other bands and he has also produced banjo instructional materials while also teaching in the Commercial Music program at South Plains College in Texas. While the book was written with the young banjo learner in mind, the clear photos and direct instructional information will appear to any learner who wants a no-frills approach to learning the banjo.

The first few songs feature chord playing and the student is taught using banjo tablature where numbers of the frets on the different strings show the notes instead of using standard musical notation. Starter songs include Good Night Ladies, Boil Them Cabbage and Tom Dooley. Different "rolls" or picking patterns are taught with chord patterns and the learner learns the melodies for 500 Miles, Wildwood Flower, and Grandfather's Clock.

Lee Andrews: First Jams Dobro (book)

©2009
ISBN #7 96279-10673

The Mel Bay First Jam series was created to give beginning instrumentalists a common set of songs to play in groups. The tunes are written in both standard and dobro tablature so that other instrumentalists can play along and alternate chord and melody patterns. The songs are played in a slow tempo on the accompanying CD with both a melody version and a back-up version to help the learner develop facility in switching between the two performance sequences. In alphabetical order, the songs are Aura Lee, Blackberry Blossom, Careless Love, Cindy, Cripple Creek, Cumberland Gap, Hand Me Down My Walking Cane, Irish Washerwoman, Lil' Liza Jane, Man of Constant Sorrow, Oh Sinner Man, Old Dan Tucker, Old Joe Clark, Plaxty Irwin, Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms, Shady Grove, Sourwood Mountain, The Wabash Cannonball, Wildwood Flower and Will The Circle Be Unbroken.

Murphy Henry: Vamping Beginning Banjo Backup DVD

Mel Bay Publications
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Songs taught: Cripple Creek, Banjo in the Hollow, Cumberland Gap, Foggy Mountain Breakdown, John Hardy, Lonesome Road Blues, Fireball Mail, Old Joe Clark, Salt Creek.

Murphy Henry has produced many banjo instructional videos and this session focuses on background banjo playing while another instrument or vocal is taking the lead. Vamping is simply playing full chords as a rhythm background. For banjo players, the notes are plucked with the picks at the same time on the offbeat. Murphy carefully shows the placement of fingers on the neck since vamping chords are played up the neck and not in the first position close to the banjo nut.

Murphy emphasizes learning the chord changes to the songs and not relying on either tablature

or paper. The learner should play along with the video and learn the song as a set piece so that "Jamming" with the song will be easily done. Murphy calls out and plays all the chords while daughter Casey plays the lead banjo. Ending and lead-off licks are also inserted in the songs so that they learner will be playing the entire song. Each song is played several times with Murphy switching between guitar, vocals and banjo.

Murphy Henry: Soldier's Joy and Other Banjo Favorites DVD

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Songs taught: Liberty, Soldier's Joy, Farewell Blues, Old Spinning Wheel, Home Sweet Home.

Murphy's video focuses on playing the banjo in the C tuning and the first segment helps the learner change the banjo from the common G tuning to the C tuning. The change in the 4th string gives the banjo a lower note to play fiddle tunes. Murphy systematically breaks the song into small manageable parts with care taken to mention the timing and sequence of the notes in each roll. The songs are based on the C, F and G7 chords in the key of C.

The two-hour long video is carefully constructed so that the learner can repeat sequences over and over for mastery. More details on Murphy's banjo lessons can be found on her company web site, www.murphymethod.com

Casey Henry: Easy Songs For Banjo DVD

Mel Bay Publications
#4 Industrial Drive
Pacific, MO 63069
www.melbay.com
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Songs taught: Old Home Place, Nine-pound Hammer, Salty Dog, Amazing Grace, Ballad of Jed Clampett.

Casey Henry, daughter of Murphy and Red Henry, is following in her parents' footsteps and is teaching bluegrass instrumentation on a series of videos available from Mel Bay Publications. Murphy is also a participant in the video and she contributes the chording patterns on the guitar to start the video.

The leads to the songs are played up to speed and then Casey breaks down each segment while naming the notes and patterns so the learner can see and hear the sections. This is particularly important in songs like "Old Home Place" which does not follow a three-chord pattern. The banjo rolls are named with string numbers

and "lick" names and the learner is reminded to learn these patterns by "ear" and by "feel" so that there is no dependence on printed materials. Each song is presented in several segments so that the learner can cue on different parts of the break to learn. There are also video close-ups of the left hand showing finger placements and Casey does mention the fret numbers to help with finger placements.

Patterns using chords C-G-D are introduced for "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes," and "Blue Ridge Cabin Home." The video ends with the "Ballad of Jed Clampett" which also introduces off-chords A minor and the C# chord. The presentation should be helpful for banjo players making the transition to lead playing with different rolls and licks.

Jim Heffernan: Resophonic Guitar DVD

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Jim Heffernan is a Nashville session player, producer and resophonic guitar instructor. He also presents workshops for Beard Guitars all over the country and his instructor skills and awareness of the instrument are clearly demonstrated on the video.

Jim begins with the simplest dobro conversion on a cheaper guitar: using a threaded bolt to replace the nut and a spark plug wrench socket as a slide. Of course, you wouldn't want to do this to your Martin guitar, but the desire to play the dobro shouldn't mean a purchase of an all new instrument.

Jim also spends time discussing picks and bars and common errors beginners make with the use of each. Tuning the instrument and the first chords in the key of G - G, C and D are presented next. Jim then carefully demonstrates a series of warm-up exercises and simple 8-note rolls and the additional use of hammer-ons, pulloffs and slides. The forward and forward reverse rolls adapted from Earl Scruggs banjo rolls are then incorporated into professional level arrangements of I'll Be All Smiles Tonight, Cripple Creek and Nine Pound Hammer. Each song is taught in a series of examples that are shown in a downloadable internet booklet. The two disc set has 2 hours of instructional material easily accessed in small chapter segments that feature the separate licks and rolls.

To be reviewed

Send your materials to:

Brenda Hough
PO Box 20370
San Jose CA 95160

or contact Brenda at:
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 "Bluegrass 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

The Luthier's Corner - Roger Siminoff

From page A-11

question in this month's column about scraping). The Duco you mentioned is an excellent choice for binding because it bonds to celluloid very well (assuming that's what you are using for binding), and it bonds to the wood equally well.

I know of folks who have masked off the wood near the binding notch with the hope of catching excess glue. The problem is that there is a good possibility that the tape will lift some of the wood fibers - especially on spruce soundboards. Several years back, I was consulting for a guitar maker in Japan who was putting their binding on with contact cement. They had folks who carefully painted a thin bead of contact cement into the notch, and they had a small machine they fed the binding through that rolled some contact cement onto the back and onto one side of the binding. When they were ready to apply the binding, the builder just stuck one end of the binding in place and pushed it all the way around with a thumb. It was amazing to watch, was very fast to apply the binding, required little or no clean up, and appeared to be very secure. The company did a study and found it was less time consuming and less expensive to use the front-end labor to carefully apply the contact cement than a lot of back-end labor for wrapping the instrument with binding tape and doing all the clean up.

I'm a creature of habit, and I've been using the "let it ooze out and clean it up later" method, but the choice is up to you.

Thanks to all of you for your great questions. Sorry I don't get to answer them all in the Breakdown, but as you know, I do answer back to you personally.

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, published by Hal Leonard Publishing, is available from better book stores, 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, Siminoff's Luthierie Camp, Gibson, and Lloyd Loar history, visit his web site at: www.siminoff.net or write him at siminoff@siminoff.net.

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Our first fiddle contest - a mother's perspective

By Gail Miles

A few weeks ago my husband, Bob, said "I'd like to enter Tessa (our 6 year old daughter) in her 1st fiddle contest." At first, I wondered if it wasn't too soon. She's been taking lessons for 6 months and has been doing well. However, a fiddle contest seemed premature. But my

husband is a very, very persuasive guy. (He has me playing bass and singing in our family bluegrass band. He had to be very persuasive to make that happen.)

So last Sunday our family drove an hour away to Santa Clara Valley Fiddler's Association's annual fiddle contest. I wasn't sure this

was the right thing to do, but I had convinced myself that this would be a tiny event with no more than 5 or 6 kids squeaking out some tunes.

We found the middle school where the contest was being held, entered the school courtyard, and my heart started pounding. This

was not a tiny event.

There were people everywhere. That courtyard was hopping and loud with young fiddlers and all kinds of people were there to jam. I said, "Bob, this is a big deal." He said (with a big smile), "Yeah", and left me standing there worried and sweating while he grabbed Tessa's

hand and marched off to check in. I followed and got even more nervous. There were a lot more people inside the auditorium. Then I looked up and saw the stage--professional mics, monitors, a sound board. I squeaked, "She's playing up there???" Bob said (with a huge smile this time), "Yeah!"

As it turns out there were 27 contestants who were divided into 3 divisions by age. Tessa was in Division I--8 and under. The oldest fiddler was 17. Tessa and Bob spent the next 45 minutes warming up and getting acclimated. Tessa seemed very calm and oblivious to what was going on. I milled around trying to calm my nerves but mostly thinking of reasons why this was not a good idea and why we should leave.

At 1:45 the competitors were called into the auditorium to start the contest. By that time there was no turning back and my thoughts had moved on to how we were going to deal with last minute stage fright or Tessa's disappointment at not winning. After the first four (very good) fiddlers finished, Tessa's name was called and up on the stage she went with her accompanists--Bob and her brother Max. I choked back tears -- big surprise -- as I watched my little girl bound up onto that big stage.

She did great. She never looked up and launched into her 2 tunes--Angeline the Baker and Tennessee Waltz. She finished, got her applause, bowed (after Max whispered to her that she should--I did say we were rookies) and walked off stage. Although she hadn't smiled or looked up while she was onstage, she was clearly happy about her performance and was very proud. Off stage she ran immediately to play with her new found friend and fellow Div I competitor, 6 year old Khushi.

Finally, the contest was all over. As the judges were finalizing the scores and getting the certificates printed, our family band was invited on stage to perform a few songs. At first I thought 'no way'--my nerves were all jangly by then. But then I thought 'if my 6 year old daughter can get on that stage and compete in a fiddle contest, I can get up there and play a few songs with my family.' So we did and it was great.

When the judges were ready, the winners were announced. The top 5 in each division were given awards, ribbons and cash prizes. When the announcer called out Tessa's name for 4th place, she jumped up and hollered "Oh Yeah!!" and ran on stage next to her friend Khushi (who had just won 5th place) to collect her certificate, her ribbon -- and her \$15 check! She was very proud and so were we. We may not be quite ready to enter the fiddle contest world with both feet -- but I have a feeling there will be more contests in our future.

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Please send me the following tickets for the Sonoma County Folk & Bluegrass Festival:

____ General Admission @\$27 each
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Tickets are also available online at www.cbaontheweb.org with a major credit card.

Info: 707-829-8012 or 707-542-3798 www.socofoso.com

Sponsored by the California Bluegrass Association and the Sonoma County Folk Society

Frank's Kids at Hobbs Grove 2009

By Sandra Hall

Harmony once again prevailed for the Kids on Bluegrass program at Hobbs Grove for 2009. It was a wonderful show filled with sweet music, fine guitar and mandolin picking, fast fiddling and the steady beat of the bass. Just hearing them all play you might be convinced they have been together for years. In reality they had formed their band in just 36 hours! This in itself is a feat many could not believe possible! Really, it did happen! For as the crowd cheered and an encore was demanded the children looked around, almost stunned by the response. I saw their eyes wide open and their larger than life smiles. I saw mothers with tears in their eyes (I was one of them) and I heard fathers cheering in their loud voices. Not only did this young group do well, they sounded absolutely awesome. I guess you could say 'I saw magic.' In a crazy world full of crazy things that leave us feeling de-

Most of you see the end product, or as we call it 'the magic', when KOB takes the stage. But what does it take to get to that point? What does Frank teach behind the scene? Well my friends, you are in luck, for I, Sandra Hall, was allowed to sit by the maestro all day Saturday and Sunday. I was able to observe and help in the making of this young and talented band.

To start, Frank has a natural charisma with kids. He treats them with respect, mixed with love and then he fortifies it with confidence. He really believes in our kids. It all begins with a handshake that lasts one or two minutes. He looks into their eyes and asks, "Are you a kid?" They usually respond with a yes! Then he asks, "Well, what type of kid are you?" Smiles and laughter immediately follow. Then he tells them to audition. So, with various instruments come various songs. All auditions are positive and non-

enjoyed themselves even after seven hours of practicing outside in all the elements. This says a lot about our kids and a lot for Frank.

Sunday morning was rehearsal. All the kids gathered at exactly 9:00 AM. No complaints from the kids, who could have slept in or had 'kid' time. But they were there, destined to make a show. Frank went over stage protocol on how to use the mic, how to balance a stage and a million other important things. Then the song list became law and each song was timed. The songs were fortified with breaks from the fiddle to guitar. Emphasis continued on how to stay together,

how to focus and how to help each other. A leader named Nick Geye was picked to be in charge of the entire song list. His main responsibility was to make sure everyone was on the same page of music. Thank you, Nick, for a job well done. All of these tools will help these kids throughout their lives. Sunday at 12:00 p.m. was show time. All the kids were nervous but excited. Frank smiled at each kid in a quiet, confident fashion. Then they walked on stage and the show began. The Kids on Bluegrass Band of 2009 were as follows: Orion Cicoletti on mandolin, Evy Cicoletti on vocals, Christopher Cogdill on

bass, Stephen Garcia on guitar, Nick Geye on guitar, Jack Kenney on fiddle, Josh Martin on guitar, Sarah Mueller on fiddle, Erik Walker on fiddle, Forest Walker on fiddle, Ella Campbell on fiddle and Shannon Hall on fiddle and vocals.

The song list included : Arkansas Traveler, Blackberry Blossom, Cabbage, Devil's Dream, Handsome Molly, I'll Fly Away, One Rain Drop, Tennessee Waltz, Wayfaring Stranger and an original instrumental called 'Orion's Son', written and performed by Orion Cicoletti.

As my daughter Shannon sang Tennessee Waltz accompanied by Jack, Josh, Nick and Christopher, I started to cry. Slightly stunned, I looked over and Frank. He said, "That's how I feel every time I hear my son play on stage". Folks, it was surreal. It was a moment of pure goodness and confirmation that maybe I was an OK parent and Shannon was going to be a productive citizen of our great nation. I



From right to left : Orion Cicoletti, Sarah Mueller, Steve Garcia, Forest Walker, Josh Martin, Jack Kenney, Ella Campbell, Shannon Hall, Sandy Hall, Bryon Hall, Christopher Cogdill, Nick Geye, Erik Walker, and Frank Solivan

Photo: Sandra Hall



The Hobbs Gove 2009 KOB take the stage.

Photo: Sandra Hall

tached from ourselves, family and neighbors, I actually saw harmony. Who would have expected it to come from the youngest of our society? It was the 7-15 year olds that really taught us a lesson on a hot sunny afternoon, and that lesson was: teamwork. I guess you could say all things can harmonize with good teamwork.

The extraordinary person behind all of this hard work is Frank Solivan. Thank goodness for this very wise and patient man. Frank is the founder of Kids on Bluegrass (KOB). He believes that our kids should be exposed to playing on the large stage in at least four major Bluegrass festivals in California each year. He is in a group with a handful of others who believe and work hard to keep KOB alive and tangible for the kids. He states, "Bluegrass is the first American Music. Every child should be exposed to it." This is Frank's passion, and with this strong conviction, the program should be alive for years to come.

judgmental. This is central for confidence building.

As the list of children grew, twelve in all, so did the list of songs. Frank acknowledged their strengths in every song. In vocal strengths, solos were revealed. In instrumental strengths, breaks and rhythms surfaced. They learned how to listen to each other and how to stay together. What an experience! A band was forming right before my eyes, all with minimal experience and practice.

Frank is really amazing. He sees what needs to be done and works around it. In other words, he makes it fun for them and keeps them interested. He's honest with critiques and always offers help. Direction comes in the changing of key signatures of a song, to playing rhythm so they understand the importance of all playing and jamming together. He puts his time and effort in each song. Some songs were easier than others, but his main goal is to stay together and harmonize. Our kids really

know I felt it. I know all the parents of these fine kids felt it, too! A pure joy at hearing our kids play together and perform at our Bluegrass Festival at Hobbs Grove. It was an experience that could only happen under the guidance of our friend, our teacher, our fellow mu-

sician, Frank Solivan. I would like to thank all of the Kids on Bluegrass for a job well done. Another big thank you to Frank for all of your hard work. Our kids have learned a lot because of you. We are all grateful!

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

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Call now for room reservations: 800-222-8733
\$89/night (Rate good until 12/27/2010) Reference "BLUEGRASS JAM"
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at kelvin@gregspetro.com.

Newcomer Nell Robinson's CD Release Show at the Freight in Berkeley



Nell Robinson

By Larry Carlin

When she and her band Red Level burst onto the Bay Area bluegrass scene two years ago, bluegrass and country singer Nell Robinson hadn't sung in public since elementary school. She has now played many of the best regional festivals,

sold out the Freight & Salvage in Berkeley twice, won the Bluegrass 'In The Foothills' "Emerging Artist Award," founded a very popular bluegrass band performance workshop called Take the Stage, and produced and performed a veterans benefit show called Soldier Stories. Now she is about to add another feather to her cap — her debut album Nell Robinson in Loango, and she will be celebrating its release with a party at the new Freight & Salvage in Berkeley at 8 p.m. on December 10th.

Nell Robinson in Loango is a trip back home with her to the little towns and farmhouses filled with kinfolk in southern Alabama. Nell has traveled a long way from her close-knit family home near Loango (the town referred to in the album title), Alabama. Sweet memories of a childhood visiting

the local store that sold bottled cokes and boiled peanuts, picking blueberries and shelling peas with her grandmothers are reflected in the album liner notes, photographs and artwork. And the first song is a fitting one: "In My Dear Old Southern Home," a rambunctious yodeling duet of an old Jimmie Rodgers' song.

The CD — also being released on vinyl for those who can dust off their old turntables — was produced by Grammy-Award winners Laurie Lewis and Jim Nunally, and features a who's-who of bluegrass musicians, including John Reischman & The Jaybirds, Tom Rozum, Keith Little, Todd Phillips, Patrick Sauber, Chad Manning and Kathy Kallick.

Nell offers some of her own originals on the album, "Butch" and "If Tears Could Heal." The song list also features new music by Bay Area musician and writer Richard Brandenburg, a hymn from the mid-18th century, a Johnny Cash favorite, and several other fresh takes on bluegrass favorites, such as "When My Blue Moon Turns to Gold Again." And Nell's duo singing with Cary Sheldon — they call themselves The Henriettas — takes you back to the 1930s for a reprise

of The DeZurik Sisters novelty yodeling act, with Tony Marcus as the radio announcer.

Nell lives in Berkeley with her husband Skip and daughter, Cass, a high school senior, and their greyhound Willie. But how did this late-blooming chanteuse get started?

"I wanted to sing a song to my husband for our wedding anniversary a few years ago. He and I love to sing along to the radio and I decided to surprise him and he just loved it. But I also ended up surprising myself — I had dreamed about singing all my life. I had a pickup truck without a radio, and I just used to sing all alone driving up and down the state for work. Something just turned on in me — a light, maybe, when I sang to my husband and friends."

And it didn't end there. She was bitten by the musical muse, and has been busy ever since.

"I took some singing lessons and a band workshop at Sweetwater in Marin County. I then met Laurie Lewis and one thing lead to another."

While good fortune surely played a role in her recent successes, Nell is a bit of an indefatigable workhorse too. "I sing every day,

starting with vocal exercises, scales and intervals. I'll work on one phrase all afternoon. Good thing I love repetition!"

Her album is getting good reviews for her distinctive renditions and vocal style, warm and sexy voice, and the world-class band backing her. For the release show at the Freight Nell will be bringing together many of the Loango musicians who worked with her on the recording of the CD. She has also quickly developed a reputation for a "sunny charisma" and her onstage live performances are very engaging and entertaining. She is currently working on new music, some of which will be previewed at the Freight show.

In closing, the effervescent Nell says, "I'll be the first to admit how lucky I am! I am so grateful to the great musicians I've been able to sing with and to the music community for embracing me."

To get your copy of Nell Robinson in Loango, don't miss seeing Nell Robinson in Berkeley on December 10th.

For more info about the CD release show, go to www.thefreight.org and www.nellrobinsonmusic.com.

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.

To Make a Tax Deductible Donation, please send check or money order payable to:
Kids Instrument Lending Library
c/o Ed Alston CBA Treasurer
P.O. Box 6954
Santa Maria, CA 93456

California Bluegrass Association Music Camp Scholarship Fund

From mandolincafe.com

Can we count on you to support a good cause?

Once a year the Mandolin Cafe selects a mandolin related program that can benefit from our collective community generosity.

This year we're supporting the California Bluegrass Association's first ever Winter Music Camp in support of a much needed scholarship fund that allows children under the ages of 18 whose parents cannot fund the full cost to attend with CBA's support.

But there's more. Camps like CBA's winter event not only provide valuable opportunities for tomorrow's talent, but they also help employ the artists we know and love. It's all good. For this first winter camp, the mandolin instructors will include:

Roland White - level 1
Dix Bruce - early bluegrass/oldtime, level 2
John Reischman - bluegrass, level 3

Our Money Where Our Mouth Is! Our goal of raising \$1,500 for the scholarship fund begins with a \$300 donation from the Mandolin Cafe. Join us with your donation!

Mandolins for Kids Tax Deductible Donations

Contributions to the California Bluegrass Association are tax-deductible due to their non-profit status, but contributions must be made directly to them by check to qualify.

Make check payable to: California Bluegrass Association CBA Winter Camp Scholarship Fund. Then mail your check to:

Ed Alston
 CBA Treasurer
 P.O. Box 6954
 Santa Maria, CA 93456

Actual Applicant Letter:

Dear Ingrid (Noyes) - CBA Scholarship Coordinator

My name is David, I'm 14 years old, and I love bluegrass. I've been playing music for nine years and playing bluegrass for three years. I started off playing the piano but my taste changed so I switched to playing mandolin. Most of the people I know that play music have to be told by their parents to practice, but I sit down and practice for fun and I do have lots of fun playing.

My first teacher was Chip Dunbar who got me started and taught me the basics. After he died I thought that no one could teach me better so I decided to write David Grisman a letter and ask him to give me a les-

son. I knew that it was likely that he wouldn't respond, but one morning I woke up to hear that he was on the phone wanting to talk to me. My excitement was overwhelming! Later, I was fortunate enough to have a lesson with him. After, we asked how much we should pay him for the lesson and he said he would do it for free, for Chip. Now I have Ed Neff as a teacher, teaching me Bill Monroe's style of playing. I love bluegrass and I love the feeling of learning something that sounds great and sounds like something the professionals play.

Every day I enjoy listening to bluegrass. I love going to festivals and jamming with other musicians. I've been to Grass Valley Festival two times and I loved it. Last time I came up early and I couldn't help but notice the music camp happening—I really wanted to go because it looked really fun. This year I really want to go but my parents are in construction and with the difficulties right now they don't have any income and can't afford to pay for the camp. I feel that if I went to the camp I would learn a lot and have lots of fun. That's why I am asking if it is possible for me to get a scholarship. Please. I am dedicated enough that I am paying for lessons with my own money, and it would mean so much to me if I could get a scholarship. Thank you so much.

David in Sebastopol, California

The Darrell Johnston Kids Instrument Lending Library gets a new director

By Sharon and Steven Elliott

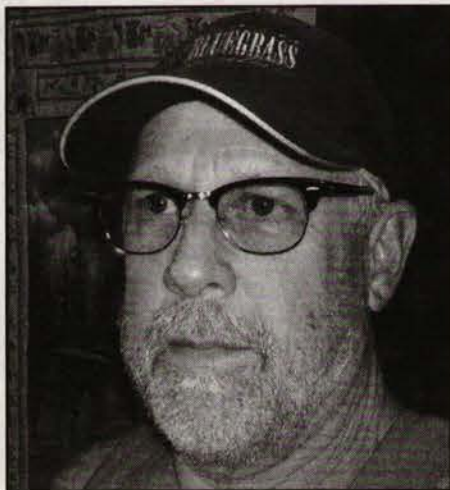
Bruce M. Long, a CBA member and longtime enthusiast of Bluegrass music will begin taking over as the new manager of The Darrell Johnston Kids Instrument Lending Library beginning November 2, 2009. Bruce lives in Roseville, Calif. and his e-mail address for the kids instrument lending library will be kidslendinglibrary@gmail.com. This is a little different as it used to be yahoo.com. Please e-mail him if you want to donate instruments or know of any children that need any instruments or just to offer your support.

Steven and I would like to welcome Bruce to this position and we are both very pleased with this choice. We feel that Bruce really has the enthusiasm and excitement to take this program to another level and he has some great ideas to make that happen. Please help support Bruce

so that this incredible program will continue to grow and make many more children happy!

Over the past year, I have found that I have been able to spend less and less time on this program and when Bruce came to me one day and told me how much he thinks about this program and why, he asked if there was anything that he could help with in any way. He told me that when he was a kid, he too could not have an instrument and this kind of program would have made such a difference for him. So as we talked we decided that he could become my liaison in the Central Valley, take some of the instruments and house them at his house so that when I had children in that direction it would be much easier for him to take care of those areas. An agreement was made that we both liked. By October of this year however, I asked him if he would like to take over altogether with maybe my being his assistant and he eagerly agreed. On November 2, 2009 Bruce came to my house and we spoke for a long time about the program, the instruments, the luthiers, the donors and about the kids and families that receive these instruments and the very touching stories behind the need of some of these families for these instruments. During this afternoon with Bruce I really began to believe that I had chosen someone with a real passion for this program, one that had great ideas that would make it grow. By the end of the afternoon we loaded up the instruments and I watched, with tears in my eyes as he drove away. I really had mixed feelings of letting go of

something that Steven and I had a passion for and started in Darrell's name, but also at peace that the right person with the right excitement and dreams for the lending library has taken this program under his wings. I will continue to accept instruments that happen to be in the Bay Area and then forward



New Lending Library poobah, Bruce Long

them on to Bruce. I will continue to have the kidslendinglibrary@yahoo.com for a while and forward any e-mail that comes to me on to Bruce.

This has been an incredible experience for us and we are very proud of what we have accomplished and think that Darrell Johnston would be very pleased, indeed, to see that his dream not only came true but has also gone so far to help so many!

We would like to thank EVERYONE that has been so supportive of this program and us. We couldn't have done it without all of you generous people, from the donors of instruments and financial help as well as the wonderful luthiers that gave their time and sometimes instruments and parts and to all the friends that encouraged and helped in other ways and to the CBA Board of Directors that was always supportive and gave us the O.K. to create this program. Special thanks to Jim Hyatt of the 5th String in Berkeley who was such a HUGE part of this too. Jim gave so much in instruments, bows, cases strings and so much more plus always a big bear hug and lots of support. You are awesome Jim! What a ride it has been! Please continue your support of Bruce so he can take it to new heights! Jim Hyatt of the 5th String in Berkeley, Bruce Sexauer, Michael Lewis, Steve Joynes, Monte Hendricks of Hendricks Banjos have all given to the Instrument Lending library so please support them with music needs.

Thanks to all for your support and your gifts for the kids.

CBA instrument raffle



Dear Larry Kuhn,

I'm the guy that won the Martin D18V guitar from the Grass Valley Festival of 2009. It is a truly beautiful guitar and so happy to have won it. It's beyond my wildest expectations.

I plan to turn this guitar into a "Family Heirloom" and pass it on to a younger member of our family so they will have an opportunity to play music on a quality instrument and when they can afford to purchase an instrument of their own, they will pass the "CBA" guitar on to another younger member of the family. This should guaranty that over the years, many people will get to experience this fine guitar.

Sincerely & Be Happy,
John Jennings

Larry Kuhn bestows Collings mandolin winner Carol Barra with her fine instrument.

Thanks to all the entrants in our yearly CBA instrument raffle. Your ticket purchases make it possible for our association to have a national stature. Raffle funds support the CBA's presence at the IBMA World of Bluegrass convention in Nashville. Among other things this allows the association to book the biggest names in bluegrass and old time music, pioneering veteran artists, and hot up-and-comers for our Father's Day Bluegrass Festival. Thank you!



Dear Greg and Janet
Deering Banjo Co.

My name is Marty Shellhammer. I won the Sierra Banjo that you so kindly donated to the California Bluegrass Association IBMA Fund Raiser Drawing. The banjo is beautiful and has a great tone. I just want to let you all know how much I appreciate your generous donation. By the way, this is the second Deering banjo I now own; the first being a Goodtime I purchased almost 4 years ago.

Thanks again,
Marty



Hooked on Bluegrass

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

J.D. Rhynes

I guess you could say that it was preordained for me to love and play Bluegrass music. All of my father's brothers as well as my Dad could play one or more instruments. Also, they were born and raised in Tennessee/ Arkansas, a part of our country that was and still is, rich in acoustic music. My fathers oldest brother William Oscar Rhynes was one of the best fiddlers in northwest Arkansas, and he played it left handed, over the G string. [Left hand fiddles were practically nonexistent in the late 1800's, early 1900's.] I can still remember the first time I heard Bluegrass music on the radio. It was during the war years of WW2. The year was 1943 or 1944. Back then, every radio station in the central valley of Calif. had either live or "canned" country music to cater to the "Okies" that had come to the Golden State in large numbers as a result of the "dust bowl days", or to work in the war effort in the ship yards/ aircraft factories. It was around 4:30 in the morning, my mom was cooking breakfast and as always I was right in front of the

big console radio listening to some REAL country music. The disc jockey announced; Folks, here's the latest record from Bill Monroe! A hot fiddle kicked it off, and needless to say, I was absolutely hooked for life! For the next month I was right there every morning listening to that same disc jockey until he played that Bill Monroe record again! Even then, before Bill had Earl Scruggs in his band, his music stood out from all the rest, when it came to that driving, rhythm and stellar musicianship that was a hallmark of Bill's music! From that time on I was determined to learn to play the music of my soul! I pestered my parents to get me a fiddle for 3 or 4 years until my dad spent \$25.00 for one, from a co-worker. In the 1940's, that was half his weekly pay check and he assured me that I WOULD learn to play that fiddle! Learn to play it I did, which led me to learn how to play the guitar, and also the Bass. How could I possibly know the Consequences of hearing that first Bill Monroe record in the years to come? I was fortunate to play music with some

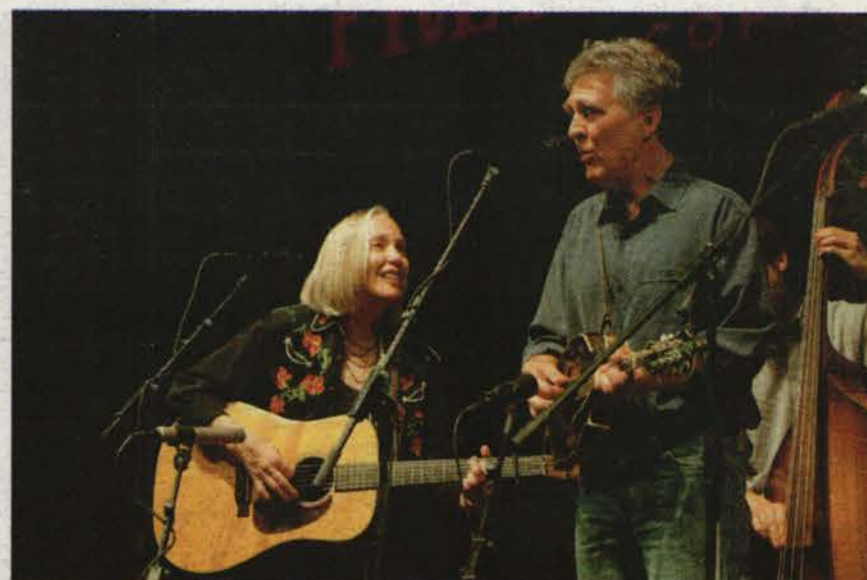
of the finest Bluegrass Musicians ever to come out of the Golden State! The band "the San Joaquin Valley Boys", Vern and Ray, The Vern Williams Band, and of course the one and only Rose Maddox. Who would've known that a young boy from Arkansas would one day be able to call Bill Monroe the father of Bluegrass Music a personal friend? I've often wondered how many years down the road it would've been for me to discover Bluegrass Music had I not got up to have breakfast with my Dad that morning. I think my dear friend Vern Williams Put it best when we compared the first time we heard Bill. Vern said; I heard Bill the first time he was on the Grand Ol Opry in 1939. All I can say is, I ain't been the same since! There's not a thing I can add to that, because I know my life changed forever too when I heard that first Bluegrass record, and I'd like to think it has been for the good. For if I'd never heard this music we all love I would have never met all of my Bluegrass Family. The music is wonderful, but the people are the real treasure!



Opening week concert at the New Freight and Salvage

California bluegrass greats perform in the new Berkeley venue

all photos: Mike Melnyk



Right: Tom Bekeny, Butch Waller, Tom Rozum. Above: Laurie Lewis and Tom Rozum. Below: Patrick Sauber takes a banjo break.

Below: Bill Amatneek, Keith Little, and Jim Nunally.



Above: The Waller Brothers.
Below: Suzy Thompson and Alan Senuake.



MC Peter Thompson.