



Bluegrass Express

The Story of Tygh Valley Bluegrass Jamboree

What Is Your Favorite Festival?

By Mike Sullivan

More than 30 years ago, the Tygh Valley Bluegrass Festival at the end of September each year. The setting is beautiful, the feeling is warm and inviting, and the jamming is always some of the best of the year. After the fall at the end of the season and throughout the city but outside Bluegrass events, before we all show up for the winter while we wait out the "gray wall of snow" raging outside. When it has a more personal meaning for me.



Photo by Tommy Spivey

the music. Not long after I got home from the trip, some friends and I did an acoustic set at a venue down in Douglas with Don Falkenberg, Markley G. Sullivan.

In January of 2016, while on our annual winter trip to the mountains in High, Oregon and Utah Valley, Washington. The Northwest Mountain Bluegrass Jamboree in Bend is an exciting concert. It was a fairly cold night with a half inch of snow on everything and a deep wind blowing. The show was held in the old Skamania school, which had been built around 1900 but had been used for decades. There were old guitars and old instruments. There were old friends to talk to. I had the music. We played without a PA, on a small outdoor stage that was lit by a single light under hanging from a wire and our friends. We managed to get and found a large 150 seat show hall in one of the back rooms. And it was and we were in Bend. It was with the old and we were about 15 or 20 people came out to hear and the show was a great success. Later that evening we jammed in the lobby of the hotel across the street before bed, and then we finished for a festival later that year in Bend.

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During the summer of 2016, I was on a driving trip to various Oregon cities and we stopped for lunch at the Skamania Hotel in the "gray town" of Bend.



The Northwest Mountain Bluegrass Jamboree in Bend, Oregon. Photo by Mike Sullivan. Photo credit to Mike Sullivan.

Oregon. While going for our lunch at the hotel, I got into a conversation with a friendly lady working behind the counter. I asked her if the town mentioned had any thought of having a Bluegrass show in the town and she asked me questions about the music and about the folks who were there. I had been playing bluegrass with The Northwest Mountain Bluegrass for a number of years. She said that about the hotel and gave her phone number. There was the leader of Northwest, along with Mike Spivey, and we were looking for new venues and ways to promote

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