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INSIDE THIS ISSUE! Portland joins The Handsome Ladies, Taborgrass Kids, 2018 Festivals and more...



Oregon Bluegrass Association
www.oregonbluegrass.org

Bluegrass *Express*

PORTLAND JOINS

The Handsome Ladies

By Claire Levine

When Christine Weinmeister came to bluegrass, she almost immediately found herself in a weekend-long jam among some of the Northwest's most traditional bluegrass players. It made an impression that probably has guided her musical tastes – and led her directly to coordinating the Portland chapter of The Handsome Ladies.

Christine's dad "was crazy about music," and introduced Christine to a range of musicians, including Doc Watson, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and David Grisman. As a camp counselor, she learned the obligatory camp songs on the guitar.

In 2010, her soon-to-be partner, John Prunty, taught her how to play "one-five-one" on the upright bass and introduced her to the Northwest's bluegrass scene. Then he went fishing for most of the summer and left Christine to schlep the bass across vast expanses of fairgrounds and parks.

One evening at the festival in Stevenson, Washington, she wandered into Chainsaw Chuck Holloway's camp, where Chuck and Dennis Berck invited her to sing and play. She stayed for hours – getting total immersion in the foundations of bluegrass music. Christine has been singing and playing the standards ever since. Years of

keeping the tempo at a loud, upbeat mostly all-male weekly jam has not only helped her with her bass chops but also has taught her how to project her voice above raucous banjo and mandolin players.



Christine Weinmeister

Christine, a nurse midwife with a challenging work schedule, has also served as an OBA board member and co-edited *The Bluegrass Express* with John for six years.

What's all this about Handsome Ladies?

But when she met members of The Handsome Ladies at festivals last summer and read about the group's goals

and their commitment to traditional music and teaching jam etiquette, she was willing to add a new project to her busy life. She joined The Handsome Ladies and eagerly offered to coordinate the non-profit organization's Portland chapter.

Portland has a variety of opportunities for beginning bluegrass musicians – from Taborgrass to the myriad smaller jams throughout the community. "But," she said, "The Handsome Ladies is something different."

For her, it's a good answer to the question, "What happens to women who improve beyond the beginner stage? Where can they go to step it up? The jams organized by The Handsome Ladies are the time and place for that."

She echoes the sentiments of The Handsome Ladies founders (see the Corey Edmonds article) by saying, "If you only jam with the same people at the same level, you'll get stuck." She sees The Handsome Ladies jams as a place for women to push themselves and challenge their abilities.

There are rules?

As Corey's article explains, The Handsome Ladies set some explicit expectations for jam settings. There's a heavy emphasis on jam etiquette, so women

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OBA Membership & Ad Information

Membership Information

The OBA Board of Directors invites you to join the OBA and to participate in its many activities. Our membership benefits include a subscription to the quarterly Bluegrass Express, frequent mailings about events, and ticket discounts to northwest bluegrass events. Annual membership dues are \$25 for a General Member, \$50 for Supporting Performers, and \$125 for Contributing Business Sponsors, as well as other options. To join, complete the application on the back cover and mail with your check to:

Oregon Bluegrass Association
P.O. Box 1115
Portland, OR 97207

Website

Features include an interactive calendar that allows you to post your own events, excerpts from past issues of the Bluegrass Express, and links for local bands. Come visit us online! Visit the OBA web page today!

www.oregonbluegrass.org

Article and Editorial Submissions

The OBA Board invites you to submit letters, stories, photos and articles to The Bluegrass Express. Published files remain in our archives and art is returned upon request. Please send submissions to:

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WEBSITE RATES AND DIMENSIONS

Size	Dimension	Cost	With Print Ad
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When submitting an advertisement to the OBA, please be sure the file is black and white, 300 dpi and in either PDF, TIFF, or JPEG format. If you have questions about your file please email John Nice-Snowdy at nicetunz@gmail.com.

Founded in 1982, the Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA) is a volunteer-run, 501(c) (3), non-profit arts organization consisting of individual and band memberships. Based in Portland, Oregon, the OBA has chapters in Salem and Roseburg, and is the umbrella organization for the Chick Rose School of Bluegrass.

The OBA is led by an elected Board of Directors who volunteer for two-year terms. Monthly meetings are open to all members and an Annual Meeting is held for the state-wide and regional members. Financial support for the OBA comes from membership dues, fundraising events, tax-deductible donations, merchandise sales and advertising revenue from the Bluegrass Express, the award-winning member newsletter.



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OREGON ARTS
COMMISSION



Jessica Furui and Gina Astesana



Chick's Kids Instructor



JT Trawick at O'Connor's



Vol. 38 No. 2

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Bluegrass Express

Bluegrass Express is a quarterly newsletter dedicated to informing members of the Oregon Bluegrass Association about local, regional and national bluegrass issues, events and opportunities.

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President's Message

Hello Bluegrassers!

Wintergrass has come and gone and the OBA suite was a blast as usual. Thanks to all of you who managed the room when Randy and I needed breaks – we could not do it alone. Thanks to all the folks who donated to the suite fund. We raised about \$1100 which covered about half the room cost, so it helped a lot. Thanks to Lagunitas for donating 22 cases of great beer and having their own jamming suite right next door! Any ideas on sponsors who might be willing to cover the rest would be fabulous – just drop me a line!

The annual OBA Membership meeting is coming fast: April 15th at the Ford Gallery, in the Ford Building at 2505 SE 11th Ave, Portland, OR 97202. Lots of jamming space! The slate of officers will be confirmed at this meeting. You must be an OBA member to attend, but you can join at the meeting. Membership information is on the back of this newsletter or go to www.oregonbluegrass.org/wordpress/join-oba/ to join online.

We are looking for a few new members to volunteer their help with OBA management by joining the board or becoming part of one of the committees (events, merchandise, fundraising, etc.). We are looking for a Membership Coordinator to join the board. I've decided to stay on as President (if you'll have me) and try to keep this boat moving forward.

As I hope you have noticed, we are continuing to ramp up our promotion of bluegrass shows, including OBA member bands and traveling national bands. One of our new venues for many of these will be the Alberta Street Pub. If you are in the parts of Oregon that are not Portland (and I know many of you are) we would love to support venues in your neck of the woods too!

Don't forget that we have a 24/7 streaming bluegrass radio station on the internet now. You can find it at www.oregonbluegrass.org – just look for the big "OREGON BLUEGRASS RADIO" button! If you are an OBA member band, please send your CDs or MP3s to us and we'll get you on the air.

Festival season is coming fast, hope to see you soon!

Tony McCormick
President, OBA



© Clyde Cleveland

What's Playing On The Radio

Local Radio Bluegrass and Country Listings

Albany/Corvallis - KBOO

Broadcast from Portland, can be heard at 100.7 FM. See under Portland, below

Astoria - KMUN 91.9 FM

Some syndicated programming

503-325-0010

"Cafe Vaquera"

Tuesdays 9-11pm, Bluegrass/Old Timey

Western/Folk with Calamity Jane

CafeVaquera@hotmail.com

"Shady Grove" Saturdays 7-9pm

Regular folk program

Monday thru Friday 10am - noon

with bluegrass included

Columbia Gorge - KBOO

Broadcast from Portland. Can be heard at 92.7 FM. See under Portland below

Corvallis - KOAC 550 AM

Syndicated public radio with some

bluegrass included in regular

programming

541-737-4311

Eugene - KLCC 89.7 FM

Local broadcast 541-726-2224

Mixed format "Saturday Cafe"

Saturdays 11am - noon

"The Backporch"

9 - 10pm Saturdays

Eugene - KRVM 91.9 FM

"Routes & Branches" 3 - 5pm Saturdays

"Acoustic Junction" 5 - 7pm Saturdays

"Miles of Bluegrass" 7 - 9pm Mondays

www.krvm.org 541-687-3370

Pendleton - KWHT 104.5 FM

"Bushels of Bluegrass" 9 - 11pm Sundays

contact Phil Hodgen 541-276-2476

Portland - KBOO 90.7 FM

"Music from the True Vine"

9am - noon Saturdays

Santiam Canyon - KYAC 94.9 FM

"Ken 'til 10" 6-10am M-F

Additional Bluegrass Programming

Streaming and Schedule: www.kyacfm.org

Salem - KMUZ 88.5 & 100.7

"Ken 'til 10" 6-8am M-F

Simulcast with KYAC.

Wednesday am, all bluegrass



Portland Joins The Handsome Ladies

cont. from page 1

eventually will be prepared for and welcomed at faster-paced jams. She draws on her own experience of making a major etiquette error, which she didn't realize until much later.

"I was living in Silverton, and John was living in St. Helens. The Rock Creek Tavern jam (in Hillsboro) was a great place for us to meet. That jam has always had a very able bass player – Nancy Christie.

"I showed up and started playing at the same time as Nancy. And Nancy was totally gracious about it. Now I look back on that time and I am appalled! And Nancy has my undying gratitude for not telling me to go away."

Christine said if there had been something like The Handsome Ladies at the time, she would not have barged in and assumed a second bass player was welcome – under any circumstances. And she would be spared mortifying memories that she carries with her many years later.*

Christine encourages readers to visit the website for The Handsome Ladies and understand the goals and guidelines.

For example, the founders ask that musicians bring only traditional bluegrass instruments. That means some instruments welcomed at other song circles and jams won't be welcome.



To some, that sounds harsh. But Christine feels it's important for women to understand and appreciate the fundamentals of bluegrass. It's what creates common ground between relatively new players and the established bluegrass community.

"These basics are what make bluegrass so awesome. We all can sit down and play together, knowing a common body of songs and knowing what to expect of each other," Christine said.

Learning the fundamental communication tools is also helpful. "With the Nashville Numbering System, you can teach somebody a new song in under 60 seconds."

make jamming more fun for everyone. Carrying the right instrument, knowing when to come in on breaks, knowing when it's appropriate to add a harmony part – these are all keys to acceptance in traditional jams, regardless of the gender mix. It also can make a jam more musical.

Participants in The Handsome Ladies sessions eventually may prefer to play in jams with a wider variety of song styles or with different conventions, such as everyone joining in on the chorus or singing along with the verse. But the intention of jams organized by The Handsome Ladies is that every participant should know what the fundamental rules are to start with.

**Editor's Note: It is generally agreed that there should be only one bass at a time in a bluegrass jam. Two bassists who are not playing precisely together will ruin the rhythm. A frequently heard comment is "It sounds muddy." Or "It's a train wreck." Don't send us letters about symphony orchestras, jazz, band rehearsals, or 99-bass performances. The one-bass rule applies to your average bluegrass jam. What to do if more than one bass player shows up? Take turns—each person plays during one or more songs, then switch. Some bassists play other instruments and may be happy to switch. If there are enough jammers and separated spaces, start a second jam. Be nice—you may need those other bass players when you can't attend your regular jam.*



© Clyde Clevenger

The intention of The Handsome Ladies is not to dictate what sounds best. Rather, it's to make sure new pickers know the guidelines so they don't inadvertently break with protocol – and make themselves unwelcome at jams they might want to join. It's also to

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Velocult and beyond

In typical Portland fashion, the first jam held by The Handsome Ladies took place at Velocult – a bike shop that serves microbrews. About 20 women showed up on Jan. 14 to see what this “Handsome Ladies” thing was all about. After a few introductory songs, about eight women moved across the street to The Moon and Sixpence.

Christine was pleased with the skill level and intentions of everyone in attendance. “We managed to make it all the way around the circle on Red Haired Boy!”

Ladies?

The term “ladies” has been subject to debate over the years. To some, it implies gentility, class consciousness, primness – and, well, wimpiness.

But in Christine’s eyes, ladies is a perfectly appropriate word to apply to the women who gather in the name of traditional bluegrass. “Anybody who wants to can be a lady.”

She feels the use of the term reflects a growing embrace of inclusion on the part of all Americans. “The West Coast is leading that movement,” she said, as reflected by activities of the California Bluegrass Association and the Bluegrass Pride movement, celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in bluegrass.

How’s it Working For You?

The feedback from Portland’s first jam for The Handsome Ladies was resoundingly positive. Those in attendance liked the atmosphere, the performing level and for many, their first chance to play in an all-female group.

Jen Dynes received a dobro as a gift years ago. (“I didn’t know what it was. I just thought it was a really loud guitar with a hubcap.”) About four years ago, she started attending Taborgrass classes where she learned the basics of her instrument as well as basic jam etiquette and got a good exposure to bluegrass music. Jen is fearless about whatever she takes on, and she hasn’t been at all shy about participating in jams at all levels. “It’s often me and a bunch of guys – or at most one or two other women. So the jam with The Handsome Ladies was a big shift, and a welcome one.

“I want to be a dobro player, not a female dobro player.” And, she said, in the regular jams, her gender makes her somewhat separate from all the other players. So the word she used when joining a roomful of other women was “normalized.” “I appreciate playing with the guys. It’s men who have taught me most of what I know. But I like to look around and see myself in a jam.”

Nora Candey studied the banjo as a very young woman. Then she got distracted by punk rock. So it’s only recently that she returned to bluegrass. Since starting Taborgrass last fall, Nora has been building her repertoire (her first teacher 20-some years ago had her learn the entire iconic Foggy Mountain Banjo album) and realized she needed to start playing with other people.

“Jamming is definitely my weak point when it comes to being a musician. So I was nervous” about attending the jam with The Handsome Ladies and playing with people beyond the beginner’s level. “But as soon as I got there I knew it was going to be OK because I felt really welcome,” she said. “I see that I have a ton to learn, and it gave me a good gauge on where I need to focus my time: specifically, playing in the key of C,” a common key for female singers and many banjo players’ least favorite.

About eight years ago, Donna Dunaif said, “Out of the blue, I was taken with the notion of learning the banjo.” She has a musical background, and she took to the instrument quickly, as well as to bluegrass music. Over the years, she has become a fixture at many local bluegrass jams.

Of The Handsome Ladies, she said, “I’m not sure what my expectations were, other than to meet and play with more women interested in bluegrass. “She was also looking for players who could match her skills and challenge her musically. “It’s always a pleasure to meet people who create music in a spontaneous way,” moving beyond memorized breaks and solos that are often the first step in learning to play an instrument. And the first outing met her goals. “I have seen some great musicians at The Handsome Ladies.”

“I was really impressed by the turnout. I think that’s wonderful. I would love to see some smaller workshops, perhaps to focus on vocal harmonies or on jam etiquette or to help beginners get more accustomed to jamming. I hope I could be useful in that regard.”

Donna said, “I’m just happy to see so many women getting involved in bluegrass and working to become better players and singers and having fun in the process.”



Handsome Ladies Are Uniting

By Corey Edmonds

As a young woman relatively new to bluegrass, I was thrilled to hear about the Handsome Ladies: Creating a space where I could develop my musicianship in the sisterhood of bluegrass. The Handsome Ladies hosts monthly jams and workshops in each of its chapter cities, manages a thriving Facebook page, and actively participates in local bluegrass festivals, radio shows and music camps.

I had an opportunity to interview the founders of this awesome organization to learn their history and vision of the future. Their love of bluegrass music and community was evident as they told me about the formation of The Handsome Ladies.

Two summers ago, Jessica Furui and Gina Astesana went to the Father's Day Festival, the California Bluegrass Association's annual festival in Grass Valley.

The two San Francisco locals had only recently started playing music and were still feeling their way through the music and culture of bluegrass. Gina had recently gone through what she called "a little midlife crisis," so she started playing guitar and attended a local music camp at the recommendation of a friend.

"I had a really profound experience there and felt like, 'Okay, great, I'm home.'" When Gina returned to San Francisco, she gave Jessica an ultimatum of sorts. Gina told her friend, "I think you have to start playing music or our friendship is gonna suffer greatly."

And Jessica promptly picked up a mandolin. Yes, that is friendship!

While at Grass Valley, they happened to meet a few gals of the same age who also lived in San Francisco. All of them were roughly at the same level musically and lamented the lack of younger women in bluegrass. As Jessica recalled, it was a magic combination.

"We got a bunch of cool ladies, we

have similar interests, we're all around the same skill level, we all like wine and cheese. Let's have these ladies' jams, and we can make as many mistakes as we want and not feel weird about it."

The jam was amazing, and thus The Handsome Ladies was formed.

The original group of seven members created a private Facebook page where they could post videos, practice tunes, and encourage each other in a supportive space. The group grew quickly as the founders crossed paths with other bluegrass ladies.

The page had 80 members within a year, and grew quickly to 150 members. As the ladies' jams continued, they drew a mix of women with various levels of experience. Beginners and more advanced musicians alike seemed to naturally gravitate toward an experience where they can let their guard down.

One of the founding members, a graphic artist, designed a website that served as inspiration to develop and refine The Handsome Ladies' mission and vision. The progression of the Handsome Ladies from informal group to thriving non-profit took shape from there.

The first members of The Handsome Ladies found teaching and reinforcing jam etiquette to be at the core of facilitating a



*Handsome Ladies Founders
Jessica Furui and Gina Astesana*

supportive community of women bluegrassers. Gina recalled, "In our age group, all the other people we were picking with were hot pickers. We found ourselves recognizing that as long as we had good jam etiquette, we could be in these jams with them and not step on anybody's feet.

"We could be totally flailing, and it didn't matter as long as we knew how to pass out breaks and how to end the song on time."

Realizing that solid jam etiquette was foundational and the key into the bluegrass world, the original members of The Handsome Ladies found themselves preaching it to other women. As Gina said, "You want to be playing with musicians who are better than you to get better. But to do that, you need to up your jam etiquette so you're welcome in the jams."

I asked about the connection between The Handsome Ladies and the broader bluegrass community. "The common denominator is the music," Jessica said. "Perpetuating that music and connecting with the broader community is paramount."



*Handsome Ladies Founders Yennie Brecheisen,
Jessica Furui and Gina Astesana*

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Handsome Ladies Are Uniting

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The Handsome Ladies have enabled more people to get into music by hosting jams with supportive vibes, where people can express themselves and not feel intimidated, and by reaching out to a different demographic of young people through branding and marketing.

Gina added that they have observed a true cultural shift in parts of the bluegrass community as a result of The Handsome Ladies. The structure and vibe of a Handsome Ladies' jam leaves participants feeling great about the experience.

She said, "Everyone walks away from a well-structured jam feeling really good about things because it was easy to get through a song. Everybody feels really good about the song they just sang because it went really well, jam etiquette-wise. And I think as time has gone on, The Handsome Ladies' name has gained respect, because of that experience people are having in jams.

"And with that recognition and respect, I think we, ladies in general, have experienced a different response when we've been in jams. That in itself has been a really cool, actual cultural shift that we've experienced in The Handsome Ladies."



Gina Astesana and Jessica Furui making things happen!

When I asked Gina and Jessica to tell me how The Handsome Ladies has changed their lives, I instantly related to their responses. They both talked about the vulnerability of being adult beginner musicians and of making connections with others through music. Jessica said, "Bonding later in life with an incredible community of women has made me so joyful and grateful. It's really wonderful. Bluegrass has cracked open my own heart, to be vulnerable to life and to be sensitive to subtle things and emotions that I wasn't really seeing as all that important before. It's like we went to the church of bluegrass." Gina added, "We're born-again bluegrassers!"



Linda Leavitt with Gina Astesana and Jessica Furui at the Father's Day Festival in Grass Valley

The supportive vibes and sweet sounds of The Handsome Ladies moved north and southeast in summer of 2016, when Gina and another Handsome Ladies board member relocated from San Francisco to Seattle and Nashville, respectively. They each found that there was desire and community enthusiasm for The Handsome Ladies, and by summer of 2017 the first official Handsome Ladies' jams were held in Seattle and Nashville.

At the time of this interview, The Handsome Ladies' jams were looking to expand and potentially start chapters in several cities. Gina and Jessica talked about the importance of making sure the right vibe and the right focus on jam etiquette is maintained as The Handsome Ladies expands to new cities. The supportive vibe must be maintained to protect the integrity of brand. More than just hosting a jam,



Jessica Furui and Gina Astesana

they want to reinforce jam etiquette.

"We've been keeping the little baby bird in the nest this whole time, and now we're going to have to send it out of the nest and make sure it still flies," Gina said.

The Portland chapter of The Handsome Ladies held its first session in January 2018 and will meet every second Sunday from 3 to 5 p.m. at Velocult in NE Portland. Find more information at TheHandsomeLadies.org or the Facebook page for Handsome Ladies.

Corey Edmonds is a human resources professional by day; dancer, singer and drag queen by night. She has loved country and bluegrass music for many years, but came out only recently. She is grateful to live in Portland, amidst a vibrant and supportive bluegrass community.



Southern Oregon Voices: *Find Your Inner Muse: Write Songs!*

By Joe Ross

When I attend a jam or concert, I certainly enjoy hearing traditional and contemporary bluegrass songs recorded by others. However, it's always hard to present a song as well as the recorded version. It's also nice to hear songs from one's own heart. That's why I'd like to encourage OBA members to write more originals, and more about our neck of the woods. Don't expect to get rich and famous, and don't expect others to line up to record them. Your reward will mainly come from the personal satisfaction of knowing you've captured "true" heartfelt feelings in a song.

If a certain place, person or thing moves you, start by writing an instrumental. Jackstraw was inspired to write "Burnside Breakdown," and John Reischman has penned tunes like "Ponies in the Forest," "Deception Falls," and "Nootka Blues." Mike Eisler gave us "Rooster Rock."

The weather is regularly mentioned in Pacific Northwest originals. Some examples are Deadwood Revival's "Rainy Day Blues," Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising's "Oh the Dreadful Wind and Rain," and Rainy Pass' "Cold Rains of Winter."

Songs we like are ones that move us. We all share experiences such as joy, sorrow, jealousy and pain. But bluegrass doesn't always need to be about pain and sorrow. Try writing a song that shows strength, self-confidence and fortitude to face problems. Good bluegrass songs elicit feelings or real emotions that others can relate to. When you listen to a song, what do you want to feel? Everyone likes to feel happy. Are you comforted by knowing that others have shared sad or painful experiences similar to your own? Do you feel sympathetic if someone's hard luck story is worse than yours?

In your bluegrass songs, don't dwell on sadness. Why not provide a glimmer of hope, some optimism, and some insight on how to deal with the pain? If your song tells a story, it'll draw listeners in, get them

involved, and then allow them to find their own way. One of the first Oregon-grown originals I recall hearing in the early 1970s was "Jenny" (written by Steve Waller) and recorded by the Sawtooth Mountain Boys. It needs to make a comeback at our jams.

You've got to admit that we ducks and beavers love our beautiful environment in the Pacific Northwest! Check out "The Oregon

In your bluegrass songs, don't dwell on sadness. Why not provide a glimmer of hope, some optimism, and some insight on how to deal with the pain?

Waltz" (by Marnie Allbritten, recorded by Pacific Flyway), "Deschutes Valley Home" (by Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising), or "The Trees They Do Grow High" (by Misty River). Something as simple as the whispering pines, peaceful hearts and quiet moments you encounter on a walk in the woods might be your inspiration. The title cut on Caught Red Handed's new album is "Path to the River" (penned by Shasta Ray). I tried to capture the thrill and sights of floating on the Umpqua with "The River in Oregon." The river, raindrops and tall fir are mentioned in "Twelve More Miles to Clatskanie" (an award-winning song by Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising). You don't need a catchy hook. Just write from your heart. Bill Monroe once said he preferred "true songs." If you're honest and sincere, you'll succeed.

At the same time, don't get too personal, specific or general either. You've got to

find the right mix of detail and ambiguity so listeners can fill in some blanks with their own experiences and relate to the song. Good songwriters make a song just personal enough to establish what it's about and get listeners to care. If your goal is to tell a story, paint a picture that allows others to see and hear real characters and feel the situation. Want some homework? As you watch an emotional movie, write down thoughts and feelings as you view it. Then, create a song that believably captures the movie's story and emotion. For extra credit, incorporate some of your own experience.

You don't need to be able to sing or play bluegrass to write good bluegrass songs. To start, you simply need an idea. That's a very important part of the song, and you'll find ideas from people you meet, things you observe, items you read, and even your imagination. Songs stand out with unique perspectives, powerful insights, interesting influences, and strong emotional impacts.

Don't think you have to be born with any natural ability or gift to write songs. Songwriting can be learned, but it takes time. Learning the craft won't stifle creativity. Nearly every great artist and composer spent years studying their craft before they achieved greatness. Viewing songwriting as a craft will help you effectively communicate ideas and feelings. Use the tools that allow you to make choices, refine your art, improve your craft, meet goals, get songs recorded, and maybe even find commercial success.

Be straightforward, direct, sincere, honest, conversational, respectful, understood, and memorable. Make your songs fun, interesting, entertaining, and easy to sing along with. While the concept or idea is paramount, a song's melody and lyrics are also key components.

Within bluegrass, simplicity has great

Continued on page 12



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impact. This is true for the song's idea, melody, lyrics and rhythm. Brevity and conciseness are powerful in songs. It doesn't hurt to leave your audience wanting more. Simplicity and heartfelt honesty will make it easier to emotionally impact others in strong, memorable pieces. If your song relates a simple, uncomplicated lifestyle, it's even better.

To get a positive response from others, you need to know bluegrass fans and their likes and dislikes. There is a bluegrass language. Don't write primarily for your own gratification. It's helpful if your song expresses what you want it to say, but that's no guarantee it'll get a positive reaction from others too. Some songs you meant to be bluegrass might actually find a better niche in old-time, folk, country, Celtic, Americana or some other genre. For example, Beatles' songs are so good they could be done in a variety of styles. Preconceived notions stifle genuine creativity. Just write, and then ask yourself: "What have I accomplished?"

It doesn't have to take a long time to write a song. Some might be written in 20 minutes; others could take 20 years. We hear stories about how a great song just came to a person. That's not the norm. Those writers could've had thoughts swirling around in their heads for years prior to actually putting them down on paper. Just keep writing! Practice makes perfect. The more you write, the better you get.

Don't wait for inspiration. It comes in many ways, and it can come unexpectedly. Sometimes, it does just appear. However, many songwriters have a very business-like approach. They gather small snippets of thought, memorable lines, stories or themes they want to explore. They set blocks of time aside to write, and they focus on tapping their creative side. Why wait for inspiration? It may never come. You may feel it's fruitless to write songs without inspiration, but it's also unproductive to feel inspired without getting thoughts down on paper. Just keep on writing and do it regularly.

Study other songs. Try to tell a story. For example, "Timber Town" (by Lost in the Fog) is a ballad about growing up in a small, rural community in Puget Sound. There, "it was take what you could, the season was short, but the money was good. It was beg, steal or borrow, take what you can, and hell with tomorrow." Lester Flatt once said, "I always like the story-type songs that tell you a little something."

Here are a few more suggestions: Speak with successful writers, attend workshops, participate in songwriter circles, read books, solicit feedback, but most importantly believe in yourself and what you're doing.

Joe Ross, from Roseburg, is a founding member of the OBA and plays mandolin with the Umpqua Valley Bluegrass Band.

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Album Review: Gina Clowes, True Colors

By Nora Candey

Many descriptors come to mind when listening to banjoist Gina Clowes' debut solo effort, *True Colors*. Clowes' playing and writing is innovative, versatile, tasteful, and subtle. However, over the course of this listen, her genuineness stands out most of all. The beauty of *True Colors* often lies in how her personality seems to effortlessly shine through. The songs tell stories of real folks in relatable situations, and are played and sung with lovely lightness and ease.

The Virginia native is better known as the banjo player for Chris Jones and the Night Drivers, a role which has garnered her international recognition. *True Colors*, released by Mountain Home Music Company, is a departure from her more traditional playing with the Night Drivers, though she did contribute one track to their most recent release. On the solo record, all but one track are her own compositions, and she explores the outer limits of the 5-string banjo's capabilities.

With female bluegrass players currently gaining worldwide recognition due to the work of groups such as The Handsome Ladies, Gina could have simply given us a record where she proved herself as a hard-driving banjo picker and member of the legendary Furtado family. But *True Colors* is so much more than just that. Yes, this woman can pick. The album's liner notes describe Gina's fascination with banjo from an early age and her training with the legendary Murphy Henry. However, this solid release runs the gamut from ragtime to spiritual to hard-hitting bluegrass instrumental, all the while executed with grace and taste. Gina is wholeheartedly willing to share the limelight, giving her band and guest artists plenty of opportunities to shine.

Clowes has had no trouble filling her album with a noteworthy cast of great players, starting within her own family. Malia Furtado does fiddle duty and lends her

considerable talent to lead and harmony vocals on two tracks. Chris Luquette on guitar, Marshall Wilborn on bass, and Jack Dunlap on mandolin round out the band, and there are also many splendid guest artists. Family members Victor and Thomas Furtado add oomph to *Puppet Show*, the album's opener, on clawhammer banjo and marimba, respectively. Clowes seems chiefly interested in finding the right person for the job on each track, and throughout *True Colors*, the players exhibit a tact and understatement which makes everything flow well and allows Clowes' breaks to

relevant to women continue throughout, in tracks such as *True Colors*, which tells of a much happier domestic relationship, and *For Better or For Worse*, in which the speaker witnesses her mother staying in a domestic violence situation many years. However, even when dealing with heavy topics, *True Colors* manages to keep its pervasive lightness—even these heart-wrenching tracks have surprise happy endings, and Clowes gives Heather Berry Mabe an opportunity to shine on the vocal on *For Better or For Worse*. Scott Brannon sings *Good Old Fashioned Heartbreak*, a fresh take on traditional subject matter.

Instrumental tracks such as *Saylor's Creek*, *Dust Can Wait*, and *La Puerta del Diablo*, are strategically interspersed throughout and showcase Clowes' mastery of the 5-string banjo. *The Wayward Kite*, a whimsical duet with cellist Chris Sexton, is the record's most experimental piece, yet it maintains the album's overall feel. The playing here is innovative without going off the deep end—throughout she honors traditions of bluegrass in general and banjo tunes specifically. Tunes are written and played with a thoughtfulness and genuineness that is apparent.

After a listen to *True Colors*, one feels they know Clowes—the album is brimming with personality. Here obviously is a woman who cares deeply about her craft. This record is solid and does not try to be anything other than just what it is—a heartfelt debut by an extremely talented young woman.

Nora Candey is a music student and banjo enthusiast who lives in Oak Grove, Oregon with her husband and three cats. She is working toward increased proficiency on banjo after a long hiatus, and enjoys attending Taborgrass lessons and local/regional workshops and festivals, in addition to her coursework in the music department at Portland Community College.



really stand out.

There are certain expectations one has of a solo banjo album—it will pay homage to tradition with tracks carefully selected from the bluegrass canon, and may push the envelope a bit with a few original tunes. Clowes turns all expectations on their head by penning all songs on *True Colors* but one (the final track, *Beautiful Land*, which was made famous by jazz great Nina Simone). Throughout, the writing is both adept and enjoyable. A variety of styles and a mix of instrumental and vocal tracks, as well as a wonderful musicality and lightness throughout, make the album a very pleasurable listen.

Opening track *Puppet Show* is an emotionally charged song telling of an escape from domestic abuse. Themes





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OBA Members - \$18.00

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Lost River Festival, New in 2018

By Greg Matthews

Hello folks, I'm Greg Matthews, Public Works Director for the City of Merrill, Oregon.

A couple of months ago a very nice lady named Joyce Furlong came into my office and said she wanted to put on a bluegrass festival and I said, "Me too!!!" and it looks like we are going to have a dandy. So far, we have three top-notch bands: 33 String Drive, The Blue J's and the Central Valley Boys, with more bands to be announced.

I've seen the Blue J's and the Central Valley Boys. Besides being snappy dressers, they are hard-drivin', toe-tappin', hand-clappin'

of-a-kind vendors, food, entertainment and just too much to mention. If you are looking for a country fair do not miss this. Be sure and check out their website: www.countycorkcollectibles.com/farm-fair.

Robin King and Diane McKoen at Tater Patch Quilts are also getting involved. Tater Patch is one of the premier quilt shops on the west coast. People come from all over for their shows and classes. They will be hosting a quilting room for bluegrass quilters. Check them out on the web at www.taterpatchquilts.com.

Wyatt Troxell will be here hosting an instrument petting zoo – if you ever wondered what it would be like to play a bluegrass-type instrument, this will be the place to check it out. Teaching volunteers from the Oregon Old Time Fiddlers Association will help show folks the basics. We will have activities and information from Fish and Wildlife and Lava Beds National Monument. There is talk of the Mayor putting on a horseshoe tournament and I got a feeling that he thinks he's pretty good. Come by and prove him wrong. Don't miss the Merrill History and Modoc War Museum — we're pretty proud of it.



bluegrassers and I can't tell you how lucky we are to have them. Check them out on their websites: www.bluejsbluegrass.com and www.thecentralvalleyboys.com.

Our headliner is a home-grown Oregon bluegrass band, 33 String Drive. The band is made up of some of the best bluegrass pickers and singers in southern Oregon. Check them out on their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sobbluegrass/ and I'm sure you will agree.

Joining these three will be some local boys called the Stukel Mountain Stranglers (it just so happens that it is my band). We live just a couple of blocks from the venue, so it don't get no more local than that. Another local band, Just Friends, will be on the Friday lineup.

The festival is teaming up with the County Cork Annual Farm Fair. Jennifer has one-

Of course, there will be camping, jamming and opportunities to sign up for open mics and band scrambles. We will have jam tents starting on Thursday going through Sunday. Camping starts Wednesday and if you need to camp earlier than that just give me a call and we'll see what we can arrange. Camping will be adjacent to the festival audience area and there are showers available in the Civic Center. Pets are welcome with restrictions — see the website for more information on that: www.lostriverfestival.com.

In other activities, the Tulelake FFA will host a tri-tip BBQ on Saturday night. They are famous for this BBQ — you won't want to miss it! Saturday afternoon will feature homemade pies served à la mode, made by local church groups! And at some point during the festival we will fit in a pancake breakfast hosted by the Lost River FBLA.

Southern Oregon needs a good bluegrass festival, where people can camp and pick and just have a good time, and Merrill is just the place to have it. With all that is going on I guarantee you will love it. Merrill is going to be hoppin'. So get out of the city and see how we do it in the country. All of you people in the Rogue Valley come over the hill and support your Oregon-grown bluegrass band, 33 String Drive. They would love to see you there.

Tickets go on sale on our website on April 15th: www.lostriverfestival.com. And please find and like our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Lost-River-Bluegrass-Festival-121545045339584/ See you there. - Greg





Bands:
33 String
Drive

Blue Js

Central
Valley
Boys

Stukel
Mtn
Stranglers

More Bands
TBA

Camping
Jamming
Quilters'
Room
Craft Fair
Tri-Tip BBQ
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Building Oregon Bluegrass Pride

By Patrick Seafield and Eric Riley

On Sunday, June 17, 2018, the first Oregon Bluegrass Pride contingent will march in Portland's Pride Parade. Several other organizations will be playing music, but we'll be the only ones playing bluegrass!

The pride parade tradition was born out of the painful struggle for recognition and acceptance of LGBT people within society. For decades, same-sex private sexual behavior was criminalized and considered pathological. LGBT bars and meeting places were repeatedly raided, and people's careers could be destroyed if they were outed. That changed in 1969 when transgender women, gay men, and lesbians fought back against a raid of the Stonewall Inn in New York City. After that turning point, members of the LGBT community banded together to begin openly and actively celebrating their lives and pushing back against legal discrimination. The annual pride parade is a commemoration of that pivotal mo-

ment in LGBT civil rights history. Why did we choose the Pride Parade as a place to spread the bluegrass gospel? For one, we already know it works: In June 2017 the California Bluegrass Association put together the first-ever Bluegrass Pride float, and they won best overall parade contingent. The exposure brought in new CBA members and donations came pouring in from around the country. But more importantly we want to show that LGBT people can find a home in bluegrass.

LGBT people often lack important personal support structures. Many have been ostracized by friends, family, and employers. Those of us fortunate to live in more accepting places often moved there from less-welcoming areas, and the fears of negative reactions follow us still. Some older men and women even find themselves going back into the closet during retirement. By participating in the Pride NW parade and festival we are

saying that LGBT folks can find a supportive space to enjoy bluegrass music, that jams can be inclusive, and that they can find new friends to go to shows and festivals.

Mainstream LGBT-positive music tends towards pop and electronica, which doesn't always work for everyone. LGBT listeners are hungry for other kinds of music and musical spaces where they can express themselves openly. Bluegrass, with its multi-part harmonies, traditional songs, lyrics about lonesomeness and longing, and cooperative playing style readily appeals to an LGBT audience.

We'd like to invite you to join us in celebrating Oregon Bluegrass Pride in June! You can find more information at oregonbluegrasspride.org.

Patrick Seafield plays banjo and studies computer science at Oregon State University. Eric Riley is a librarian and guitar player in Portland.



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tickets available at bridgetownbluegrass.com

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2018 FESTIVAL CALENDAR



April 14-15

Shaniko Hoot, Holler & Sing
Shaniko, OR
541-489-3563

May 5

Bridgetown Bluegrass Festival
Cider Riot
807 NE Couch St.
Portland, OR
www.bridgetownbluegrass.com

May 18-20

Bluegrass From The Forest
Shelton High School
Shelton, WA
www.bluegrassfromtheforest.com
(360)898-4581
runawaytrainbluegrassband@hotmail.com

May 26-June 2

River Pickin' on The Kootenai
River Bend Restaurant
Libby, Montana
(406)293-5140
dave@montana-flyfishing.com

June 1-3

The Goldendale Pickers Festival
Ekone Park
Goldendale, WA
"\$10 gets you 10 million stars, and all the old-time, bluegrass, and country you can carry!" Covers all shows and camping.
westcoates@juno.com
Clairell2002@yahoo.com

June 8-10

Sacajawea Bluegrass Festival and Dutch Oven Rendezvous
Sacajawea State Park
Pasco, WA
www.MCTAMA.org (509) 492-1555

June 17-23

Weiser, ID
National Old-Time Fiddle Contest
www.fiddlecontest.com
Weiser Friends of the Fiddle
June 14th -24th
www.stickerville.org

June 14-17

42nd Annual Father's Day Bluegrass Festival
Grass Valley, CA
www.fathersdayfestival.com

June 15-17

Wenatchee River Bluegrass Festival
Chelan County Expo Center (Fairgrounds) Cashmere, WA
Marie Vecchio (509) 548-1230
Chuck Egner (509) 548-8663
www.cashmerecoffeehouse.com/wrbfest.html

July 6- 8

Wheeler County Bluegrass Festival
Wheeler County Courthouse
Fossil, OR
(541) 763-2400
info@wheelercountybluegrass.org
www.wheelercountybluegrass.org

July 19-22

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North Plains, OR
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July 20-22

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www.darringtonbluegrass.com

July 20-22

Lost River Bluegrass Festival
Merrill, OR
www.facebook.com/Lost-River-Bluegrass-Festival-121545045339584/
www.lostriverfestival.com

July 26-29

Gorgegrass (formerly known as Columbia Gorge Bluegrass Festival)
Skamania County Fairgrounds
Stevenson, WA
www.new.columbiagorgebluegrass.net

August 3-5

17th Annual Winlock Picker's Fest
Winolequa Park
Winlock, WA
Marv Sobolesky
Info@wamamusic.com
www.winlockpickersfest.com

August 10-12

Blue Waters Bluegrass Festival
Medical Lake, WA
www.bluewatersbluegrass.org

August 10-12

Mt. St. Helens Bluegrass Festival
Toledo, WA
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General (360) 785-3478
generalandbetty7@msn.com
washingtonbluegrassassociation.org

Continued





2018 FESTIVAL CALENDAR



Cont. from page 20

August 23-26
Rainier Pickin' Party
Wilkowski Park
Rainier, WA
davidwuller@gmx.com
360-832-8320

August 23-26
Oregon Bluegrass Association's 10th Annual Bluegrass and Old Time Picker's Retreat
ZigZag Mountain Farm
ZigZag, OR
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www.oregonbluegrass.org

August 31-September 1-2
Tumbleweed Music Festival
Howard Amon Park
Richland, WA
18th annual festival
Three Rivers Folklife Society
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(509) 528-2215
mail@3rfs.org
www.3rfs.org/tmf

September 1-2
Hovander Homestead Bluegrass Festival
Hovander Homestead Park
Ferndale, WA
www.hhbgf.com
info@hhbgf.com

September 3, 12- 4 pm
Timberline & Labor Day Mountain Music Festival
Timberline Lodge, OR
Mountain Honey kicks off the show at noon. Claire Lynch is the headliner. Back porch pickin' with the Taborggrass Players! Free!
www.timberlinelodge.com/events
(503) 272-3134

September 7-9
Sisters Folk Festival
Sisters, OR
Three day celebration of American Roots music – from blues to Bluegrass.
www.sistersfolkfestival.com

September 8-9
Eagleview Bluegrass and Folk Festival
Eagleview Campground (on the Main Umpqua River)
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Evening shows, potluck, campfire jam. On the beautiful Umpqua River. Fishing and hiking, plenty of camping.
Joe Ross (541) 673-9759
rossjoe@hotmail.com

September 28-30
Tygh Valley Bluegrass Jamboree
Tygh Valley, OR
Held annually at the grounds of the Wasco County Fairgrounds
Debra Holbrook
541-489-3434
Tons of camping... Only need a reservation for hook-ups.



Taborgrass Invades Forest Hills Elementary School

Taborgrass Kids and Mountain Honey provided a bluegrass assembly program and an instrument petting zoo to students at Forest Hills Elementary School in Lake Oswego on March 21st. After-school classes will be available soon. For more information, please contact program director Anna Berry, aberry1460@gmail.com.



Kaden Hurst demonstrates the mandolin



Greg Stone with students



Mountain Honey performs at the bluegrass assembly, with Kaden Hurst and Annie Staninec



Elliot Picciotto with the littlest banjo pickers



Chick's Kids Jam

All photos by Clyde Clevenger



The Handsome Ladies Jam



Michelle Traver



Kristin Melling and Genavie Thomas



Molly West, Peggy Rollo and Michelle Traver



Nora Candey



Cecilia Warner



Jen Dynes



Margaret Wise and Marlene Smith



Claire Levine and Christine Weinmeister



Linda Leavitt and Christine Weinmeister



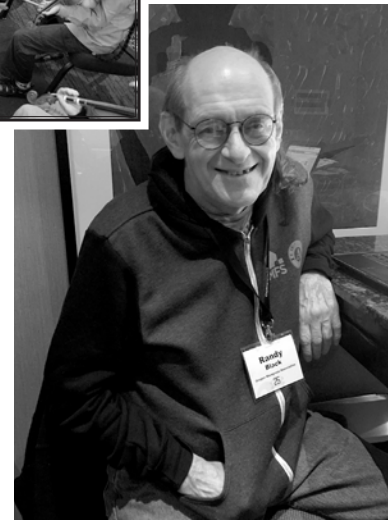
Wintergrass 2018



Clyde and Nikki jamming at Wintergrass



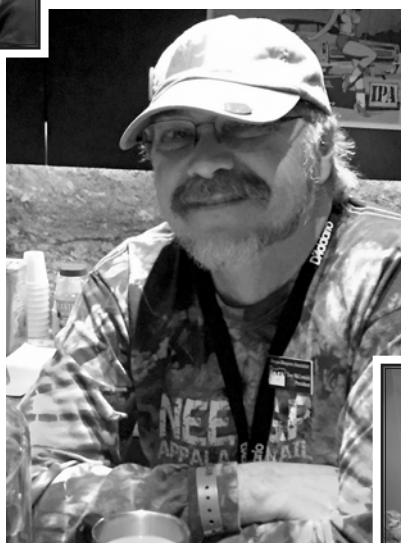
Clyde Clevenger



Randy Black



Christine Weinmeister and Linda Leavitt with Handsome Ladies board members and Seattle ambassadors.



Tony McCormick



Christine Weinmeister leads the Portland Handsome Ladies jam at Wintergrass



Portland Handsome Ladies at Wintergrass



Gina Astesana, Jessica Furui and Donna Dunaif



Wintergrass Handsome Ladies jam



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Sleepy-Eyed Johns at The Muddy Rudder



JT Trawick at O'Connor's



Whiskey Deaf at Wintergrass



Chris Jones and the Night Drivers at the OBA Bluegrass Special concert



Burnin' Moonlight at Eagle Crest Resort



Eocene at the Multnomah Grange



Mountain Honey at O'Connor's

WANTED

The Bluegrass Express is looking for local band photos to insert on the "Local & Live" page. If you want in, just send us your best photo with a brief caption of Who (preferably just the band name), Where (venue) and When (please, no longer than 6 months ago). Submit to lleavitt@comcast.net before the 17th of the month of the issue to be printed.



Jamming With The Birds: OBA Audubon Jam (and Steeplegrass!)

By Rich Powell

I've always loved participating in the OBA bluegrass jam at the Portland Audubon Society's Visitor Center. You never know who's going to show up! It could be a new guitar student from the Taborgrass music classes, hot banjo pickers wanting some good rhythm backup, or local bluegrass band members who sing great harmonies. Many of these folks have been attending for years!

It was about 2005 when the existing jam leader, Dan Howe, asked me if I wanted to take the reins of coordinating the Audubon jam. I had already been attending the event regularly, so I said sure. Since the jam is usually the first Sunday of the month (from October through April), it seemed like a great fit. And what better venue for a jam than the Portland west hills area along winding and scenic Cornell

Road? Jammers sometimes have to look closely for an "along the road" parking spot. Parking patience is rewarded by the jam-friendly many-windowed bird room. We sometimes entertain tethered birds of prey, guest hikers off the trail, or gift shop patrons. And lots of appreciative kids! Who knows how many kids later pick up a guitar to begin a musical journey because they "saw and heard it at Audubon? OBA folks like Dan, Ian Joel, Clayton Knight, and Jim Miernyk have all helped with the past and present jam to keep it going. Thanks!

Are you interested?

With this heritage in mind, I'm exploring the idea of "passing the coordinator torch" to someone new who could add their enthusiasm to this long-running jam. I'd still be there most Sundays trying to play my mandolin chops in the background.

Are you interested?

You could come to the next jam on Sunday, April 8th, or drop me a line, powellr1041@q.com and share your thoughts. The April jam is on the 2nd Sunday, since the 1st Sunday is Easter. We will jam from 12 noon until 4:00 p.m. This will be the last Audubon jam until it starts again on October 7.

Steeplegrass Reunion Picnic

One more thing: The annual Steeplegrass Reunion Picnic has been scheduled for Sunday, May 20th this year. The festivities always start about noon (11 a.m. for setup) at Lewisville Park, Battle Ground, Washington. Picnic Angels (donors and volunteers) are still needed for help with site deposit. But the important thing is: "Come one, come all!"

Now booking for 2018 and beyond!

April 20 ~ PFS Concert Series ~ Portland, OR

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August 24 ~ Dayton Friday Nights Concert Series ~ Dayton, OR

September 28—30 ~ Tygh Valley Bluegrass Jamboree ~ Tygh Valley, OR

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www.phoenixrisingband.org



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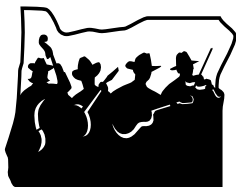
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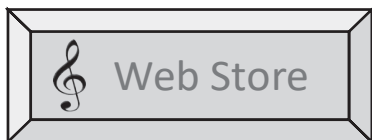
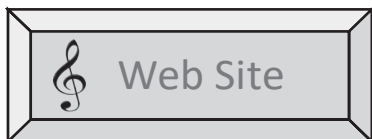
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Oregon Bluegrass Association



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www.daychiropractic.com

Add your business name to this list: If you are a bluegrass-friendly non-music-related business and would like to actively promote your business by being an OBA supporting partner - now you can, as a Contributing Business Sponsor. A non-music-related business cannot advertise with the OBA, but a Contributing Business Sponsor can get the recognition and promotional benefits of underwriter-style sponsorship. For \$125 annually, your OBA supporting business gets all the member benefits - plus a year of promotional print and announcement recognition at OBA sponsored shows and promotions, as well as a prominent listing in the Bluegrass Express. For more information please contact Chip Russell by email at: membership@oregonbluegrass.org.



Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

Though we try to stay up to date, times and locations change - always call first!

Sunday

CLACKAMAS/HAPPY VALLEY: String Along Jam - 2nd and 4th Sundays 2:15 pm to 5 pm
Bluegrass and more. Happy Valley Library Community Room, 13793 SE Sieben Park Way, Happy Valley, OR 97015. Located off Sunny-side Rd. at SE 147th. Look for the signboard on the sidewalk near the Library.
For information: Charlie mels677@aol.com or LeaAnne Idenb@juno.com

CORVALLIS: EZ Jam – Every 1st and 3rd Sunday 2 – 4 pm
A friendly jam for beginning and intermediate players. Meet at a private residence.
For information and directions: Call Christine Robins (541) 738-2610

KLAMATH FALLS: Bluegrass Jam – First Sunday of every month 1 - 5 pm
Mia's and Pia's Pizzeria and Brewhouse, 3545 Summers Lane, Klamath Falls, OR 97603
For information: Ben Coker (541) 783-3478 benfcocker@gmail.com

PORTLAND: OBA Jam - First Sunday of every month October – April 12:00 pm- 4:30 pm
Portland Audubon Center, 5151 NW Cornell Road, Portland. **April 218 2nd Sunday off**
All levels of bluegrass players are welcome. Bring an instrument, your voice, a song, and a friend. Come make music among the birds. Small donation of \$5.00 requested to help cover room rental.
For information: Rich Powell powellR5923@q.com

PORTLAND: Turn Key Bluegrass Jam - Every Sunday 2pm - 5pm
The O'Neill Public House, 6000 N.E. Glisan St. (60th and Glisan)
Ready to go and everyone gets a turn. The Turn Key Jam (formerly the Off Key jam) is a welcoming jam that is attended by an established group of intermediate players. All levels of players are encouraged, including beginners and advanced players. It's a comfortable, safe place for all to play music together.
For information: Contact Jeff at msglimbaugh@comcast.net or (360) 256-8123

PORTLAND: The Handsome Ladies- 2nd Sunday 3pm -5pm
The Velo Cult Bike Shop, 1969 NE 42nd Ave. Ladies only, traditional bluegrass repertoire and instruments.
For information: www.thehandsomeladies.org

ROSEBURG: OBA Roseburg Jam - 3rd Sunday 1-5 pm year round
The Sutherlin Senior Center, 202 E. Central Ave., Sutherlin, OR 97479
Bluegrass Jam - all levels encouraged.
For information: (541) 679-0553 lizcrain42@gmail.com

SISTERS: Strings in Sisters – 3rd Sunday of the month 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Sisters Library, 110 N. Cedar St. 97759 All welcome. No charge.
For Information: Phil Minor 541/719-0497 or Bruce Barnes 541/728-3190

Monday

BEAVERTON: Rambling Bluegrass Jam - Every Monday night all year (except Christmas Day if that falls on a Monday) 6:00 to 9:00 pm
Open jam in semi-private banquet room with lively tempos and jammers eager to try new material. Papa's Pizza Parlor, 15700 Blueridge Dr. Beaverton, OR 97006
For information email: rambling@ramblingbluegrass.org or website http://ramblingbluegrass.org Phone: Pizza Parlor (503) 531-7220

Tuesday

Jon Cooper DUNDEE Bluegrass Jam: 1st and 3rd Tuesday Each Month, 7-9 pm
Held at La Sierra Mexican Grill, 1179 Hwy 99W, Dundee, OR, 97115
Features bluegrass/old country music. All skill levels welcome.
For information: Steve Edward – stephene47@frontier.com, (503) 985-1945, Tracy Hankins – hankinstracy@gmail.com, (503) 720-6629, Ron Taylor – ron@taylorpaintingofportland.com, (503) 625-7254

EUGENE: Bluegrass Jam Every Tuesday 9:00 pm - 1:00 am
Sam Bond's Garage, 407 Blair Blvd, Eugene - Call (541) 431-6603 for information
This year 'round jam offers good food and micro brews.
Jam Hosts: Sunday Sam and Sean Shanahan.

HILLSBORO: Rock Creek Bluegrass Jam Every Tuesday 7 pm - 9pm
McMenamin's Rock Creek Tavern, 10000 N.W. Old Cornelius Pass Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97124.
Established, open intermediate and advanced bluegrass music jam. It is requested that only bluegrass instruments are used and no song-books/tab.
For information: Nancy Christie, 503-348-5374, nancy.d.christie@gmail.com

LINCOLN CITY: Bluegrass & Old Time Music Jam Every Tuesday 6 pm - 9:00 pm
North Lincoln Eagles Lodge, SW 32nd at Hwy 101
All levels and ages welcome.
For information: Carla 541/418-1779

Wednesday

BEAVERTON: Bluegrass Jam - Every Wednesday 6:30-9:30 p.m.
Round Table Pizza, 10150 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy Beaverton, OR (east of Hwy.217)
For information: Jane, janeromfo5@gmail.com

Thursday

BEND: Bluegrass Jam - 2nd and 4th Thursdays year round from 7 pm - 9:00 pm
Held in the board room of the Bend - LaPine School District, downtown Bend, between Wall and Bond Streets, across from the Public Library.
For information: Becky Brown and Verda Hinkle (541) 318-7341 or hinklebrown@bendbroadband.com Call or email to confirm before you head out.

GRANTS PASS: Acoustic Bluegrass Jam - 3rd Thursday 6pm-8:30 pm
Wild River Pub meeting room, 533 N.E. F Street
For information: Gary or Debbie Antonucci hugoants@msn.com

Continued on page 32



Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

Cont. from page 31

VANCOUVER, WA: Bluegrass Slow Jam - Every Thursday 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Barberton Grange, 9400 NE 72nd Ave,
Vancouver WA 98665

Please note this is a slow jam, with the belief that bluegrass is a non-competitive participation sport. All talent levels are invited to participate. No amplified instruments. Listeners welcome. No charge, but there is a donation jar for those who would like to support the Grange for allowing use of their facility.
For information: Chuck Rudkin
pbr@comcast.net

Friday

CENTRALIA, WA: Acoustic Bluegrass Jam - 3rd Friday 6 pm - 9 pm October through April
Sponsored by WAMA (Washington Acoustic Music Association). Informal event with a few small jams taking place at the same time. Location: Oakview Grange, 2715 North Pearl Street, Centralia, WA. Donations for facility costs are encouraged.
For information: Cheryl (360) 870-8447 or
cheryl.terry68@gmail.com

DALLAS: Open Acoustic Jam - Every Friday 7:00 -10:00 pm
Guthrie Park in Dallas.
For information: Sally Clark (503) 623-0874 or email
Jim.dusterjim@hotmail.com

SCIO: Old Country, Folk, Bluegrass and Gospel Jam - Fourth Friday 7:00 pm to Midnight
ZCJB Hall, 38704 N Main St. Scio, OR
www.zhall.org Free event, but donations accepted to support the historic hall. Beginners welcome. Please bring goodies to share.
For information: Starla (541) 223-2343 or email
Starla91262@yahoo.com

Saturday

PORTLAND: Taborgrass Bluegrass Class & Jam - Every Saturday Through May. 10 am -1 pm for the beginning class and jam; 1 pm - 4 pm for the intermediate class. The Sessions offers two small jams guided by professional musicians 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm every Saturday during Taborgrass.
St. David of Wales Episcopal Church 2800 SE Harrison Street, Portland, OR 97214
For all instruments. No registration required. Drop-ins welcome. Cost is \$12 per class participation, \$10 per session participation. Knowledge of basic chords and the ability to execute chord changes is required.

DALLAS: Acoustic Gospel Jam - Every 3rd Saturday 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
All levels welcome. Guthrie Park in Dallas.
For information: Sally Clark (503) 623-0874 or email
Jim.dusterjim@hotmail.com

WINLOCK, WA: Slow Jam - 2nd Saturday of the month beginning at 1 pm, October through May.
Hosted by WAMA (Washington Acoustic Music Association) Held at the Hope Grange in Winlock, Washington. Great for all levels and especially good for total beginners.
For Information: see website -
wamamusic.com or email info@wamamusic.com

VANCOUVER, WA - Old Time Country Jam - Every 2nd and 4th Saturday 6:30-10:00 pm
2500 N.E. 78th Ave., Vancouver, WA. 98665 at the Vancouver Masonic Center
All are welcome to join the fun as a musician, singer, or to just listen and or dance.
Contact info: Dean Roettger (360) 892-0769 or (360) 627-1228 email
vip1x1@yahoo.com

If you have jam updates or additions, you may update your listing via the public calendar at oregonbluegrass.org or email: calendar@oregonbluegrass.org.



OBA Supporting Performer Directory

OBA supporting memberships are \$50 per year. This includes a listing and link on the OBA website and a brief (approx 35 word) band listing in the supporting performer directory.

3 Play Ricochet

3PR features musicians from the four corners of the United States who met in the Northwest and discovered a shared interest in traditional bluegrass, old-time, ragtime, jazz, and country blues music.

www.3playricochet.com
booking@3PlayRicochet.com

A Sudden Tradition

www.ASuddenTradition.com
Dennis Zelmer 503-893-4569
info@ASuddenTradition.com

Ash Creek

Ash Creek plays classic bluegrass, recent vintage & original songs that just sound old. A good song is a good song, and it's better with a banjo or a fiddle. Tim Howell (guitar, vocals), Gene Alger (banjo, vocals), Pam Beaty (bass, vocals) & Clayton Knight (mandolin, fiddle & vocals).

<http://www.ashcreekbluegrass.com>
<https://www.facebook.com/ashcreekbluegrass>
Booking@eclecticacoustica.com

Back Porch Revival

Gene Greer – guitar/harmonica, Tony McCormick – banjo, Dan Anolik – mandolin/harmonica, Aron Racho – guitar and more, Bruce Peterson – bass and guitar. Blues inspired folk, country, blues, honky-tonk and original songs. Back porch music that hits the ball out of the park!

www.backporchrevival.com
Gene Greer 503-641-4946
info@backporchrevival.com

Back Up and Push

Dan Kopecky – mandolin/vocals, Robert Brownscombe – bass, Susie Anderson – fiddle/vocals, Tom Gall – guitar/vocals, Patrick McLaughlin – banjo. 5-piece bluegrass band from Welches, Oregon.

backupandpush.tripod.com
Patrick McLaughlin patrickmw@aol.com

Bethel Mountain Band

Gene Stutzman, Jerry Stutzman, Larry Knox, Tyce Pedersen, Jerry Schrock, Will Barnhart, Craig Ulrich. Hello, bluegrass lovers of the Willamette Valley! Please visit our website to learn more about us, our music, our schedule, and the annual "Bluegrass in the Orchard Grass" event.

bethelmountainband.com
Jerry Stutzman
info@bethelmountainband.com

Bigfoot Mojo

Thigh-slappin' bluegrass characterized by impeccable vocal harmonies and shredding solos. Belinda Underwood - bass and vocals, Josiah Payne - mandolin, violin and vocals, Pete Kartsounes - guitar and vocals (other members include Zack Lovas - fiddle and vocals, Kian Dye - fiddle and vocals, Wilhelmina Frankzerda - fiddle and vocals).

bigfootmojo.com
writeme@belindaunderwood.com

Steve Blanchard

Steve Blanchard is well known as an acoustic flatpicker guitarist, singer and songwriter with a career spanning over four decades. His musical style includes bluegrass, cowboy/western, folk, and Americana. No matter what the style or venue, you're sure to feel Steve's love and passion for his music.

www.SteveBlanchardMusic.com
503-730-0005
Steve@SteveBlanchardMusic.com

Corral Creek

Corral Creek's commitment to showing the audience a good time has worked out O.K. for 13 years. We share tunes of Oregon, Gospel, and Bluegrass standards to city festivals, cultural centers, Bluegrass festivals, house concerts, wineries and more.

Pam Young
1101 S. College Street
Newberg, Or. 97132-3379
pywaterfalls@yahoo.com
corralcreekbluegrass.com
For bookings please call 503-319-5672

Dogwood String Band

Contemporary bluegrass-fueled Americana

Woody Wood
dogwoodstringband@gmail.com
dogwoodstringband.com

Eight Dollar Mountain

Darrin Campbell, Stuart Green, Phil Johnson, Peter Koelsch, Mark Lackey. Eight Dollar Mountain rises from the Cascade-Siskiyou Mountain region of Southern Oregon and brings you fine string music from the long-standing traditions of excellent bluegrass.

www.eightdollarmountain.net
Mark Lackey

Fadin' By 9

With hot pickin', tight harmonies, and a mix of "bluegrassified" rock, folk, bluegrass covers, originals and originals, Fadin' by 9 creates a unique, uplifting, high-energy sound.

www.fadinby9.com
Dave Irwin
dave-irwin@comcast.net
360-903-0131

Free Range

Free Range is two voices (Matt Snook and Claire Levine) with a great harmony blend, accompanied by guitar, banjo and dobro. Drawing from bluegrass, country and folk traditions, they sing and play simple music that makes for great listening.

freerangepickin.net Claire Levine
clairell2002@yahoo.com

The Grass Station

The Grass Station is a Northwest bluegrass band that runs on clean burning natural Grass!! While we don't pump regular grassoline, we will be sure to fill your grass tank with plus and premium! With intricate instrumentals and tight harmony vocals, The Grass Station will always leave our customer satisfied. That is our companywide guarantee! Contact via web site:

www.thegrassstationmusic.com

The Hillwilliams

Brought together initially by admiration for bluegrass masters like Bill Monroe and The Stanley Brothers as well as 1970's bluegrass supergroup Old and in the Way, The Hillwilliams blend three strong vocalists, smoking fiddle, mandolin, guitar, banjo and doghouse bass into a fun high-energy mix that harkens back to classic bluegrass.

Rich Landar
landarmusic@comcast.net
www.facebook.com/TheHillwilliams
503-869-8210

Hardshell Harmony

Based in the beautiful Columbia River Gorge, this high-energy group is full of spirit and comedy. Members include Candie Robarge (bass), Mike Robarge (guitar), Chuck Haynie (banjo), and Clint Miller (freestyle fiddle).

www.HardshellHarmony.com,
Yaya Berry,
rainbowfiddler@yahoo.com

Continued on page 34



Home Grown

Home Grown has presented their music in a variety of settings ranging from bluegrass festivals to concert halls. Their music ranges from intense jug band dance tunes to foot-tapping porch tunes to sweet melodic waltzes.

www.homegrownoldtime.com

Bill Nix
billnix1@msn.com

Hudson Ridge

Mary Luther—lead vocal and bass, Jerene Shaffar—vocal, mandolin and bass, Shelley Freeman—bass and vocal, Kevin Freeman, lead guitar and vocal, Bob Shaffar—fiddle and dobro, Fred Grove—rhythm guitar. Love of harmony and the desire and ability to “Ridgetize” their own blend of Americana, bluegrass, and traditional country music give this band a truly unique sound.

www.hudsonridgeband.com
Mary Luther mluther56@gmail.com
541-404-9281

Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising

IMEA 2015 Bluegrass Group of the Year. Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising is all about the stories, and the stories of everyday America are what you get from these four personable entertainers. With over a dozen years of awards on the shelves, the quartet has longevity in the performance arena and an extended fanbase worldwide! This hard-working group of songwriters is guaranteed to deliver a high-energy family-friendly performance that is a delight for all ages.

www.phoenixrisingband.org
KBPR@gmail.com
503-936-8480

Julie & The Wayves

Julie and The Wayves is a 5-piece progressive bluegrass band, based in Portland, Oregon. Centered around the songwriting of Julie Schmidt, a confluence of hard-driving bluegrass and masterful composition and arrangement sensibilities delivers a powerful and elegant sound. Timeless tones within a modern, artful structure that incorporates genre-bending subtleties without sacrificing what their instrumentation suggests they are: A bluegrass band. Members: Julie Schmidt, Patrick Connell, Jon Meek, Martin DeGroot, and Rob Wright.

Patrick Connell
patnellconrick@gmail.com

The Loafers

Mike Stahlman, Dave Elliot, Aaron Stoczek, Dee Johnson. The Loafers are an acoustic quartet based in the Portland Metro area, playing traditional bluegrass, specializing in exciting instrumentals and familiar vocals of bluegrass standards.

Dave Elliot
503-663-3548

Long Mountain Revival

Long Mountain Revival's emphasis is in sharing the gospel through song. Long Mountain Revival is available for church functions, outreaches, community events, and any other venue where bluegrass gospel music is desired.

www.myspace.com/lmrevival
Jon Clement
jonmando@embarqmail.com
541-292-6907

Lost Creek Bluegrass Band

From Portland, Oregon, Lost Creek delivers a driving blend of bluegrass and old-time standards with terrific vocal harmonies and tasteful instrumentation. For years they've delighted audiences at festivals, pubs, parks, dances, markets, and weddings throughout Oregon and Washington.

www.lostcreekmusic.com
Band@lostcreekmusic.com

Mischief

Based in the Pacific Northwest, Mischief is father/daughter duo Matt and Anna Snook with Jim Brockill. We've 70+ years of experience playing bluegrass and acoustic music. Be amazed: trio harmonies and instrumentals with banjo, Dobro, guitar, mandolin, octave mandolin, and fiddle.

Matt@greenbeard.us
541-805-5133

Misty Mamas

MISTY MAMAS serve up home-style bluegrass filled with powerful harmonies, traditional and original songs as well as tasty instrumentals combining the American genres of bluegrass, old time, gospel, folk and country music. Family friendly, the band can include interactive songs that engage the younger set.

Carol Harley
Carol@mistymamas.com
www.mistymamas.com

Money Creek Mining Co.

LuAnn Price, Michael Johnson, Steve Leming, Dave Toler and Steve Bickle. Money Creek plays stirring mountain ballads and burning banjo tunes. Known for their precise harmonies, rarely do you find a group of singers with their unique blend.

www.moneycreekbluegrass.com
LuAnn Price
moneycreekbluegrass@hotmail.com
425-346-6136

Mountain Honey

Sweet and golden acoustic music inspired by traditional bluegrass, with driving banjo and high lonesome harmonies. Mountain Honey features Linda Leavitt (vocals, guitar, mandolin), Dee Johnson (vocals, bass), Greg Stone (vocals, guitar) and Mike Stahlman (vocals, banjo).

www.mountainhoneyportland.com
www.facebook.com/mountainhoneymusic
Contact Linda at lleavittmusic@icloud.com

Mud Springs Gospel Band

We play all gospel music with about a third of our songs being originals, since 1985. We have recorded five albums, including a Christmas album. We love to share songs and stories about the amazing love our Lord has for all of us perplexing people.

www.mudspringsgospel.com
Don Mobley - donmobley@mac.com
541-815-5079
George Klos - klos@crestviewcable.com
541-475-6377

The Pitchfork Revolution

High Desert Hobo Blackgrass from East of the Cascades. The Pitchfork Revolution mixes politically humorous originals, traditional bluegrass and dark driving instrumentals to bring a smile to your face and your feet to the dance floor.

www.thepitchforkrevolution.com

Continued 



Puddletown Ramblers

Puddletown Ramblers is a regional bluegrass band that performs original songs, good old-time traditional bluegrass, acoustic, old country and Americana music. Our blend of harmonious voices will shake that tender chord in your heart and leave you wanting to hear more. Dave Peterson, Tom Martin, Joe Martin, Walter Jacobson, Fred Schultz.

Dave Peterson
puddletownramblers.com
david@puddletownramblers.com

Roundhouse

Donn Whitten, Kim Jones, Ron Leavitt and Joe Denhof. Roundhouse was formed with the goal of providing a variety of musical genres to diverse audiences: something for everyone. Toward this end Roundhouse performs bluegrass, southern rock, doo-wop, gospel, country, blazing instrumentals and original compositions. Roundhouse instrumentation includes guitar, mandolin, banjo and bass.

www.roundhouse-band.com
Kim Jones
roundhouseband@qwestoffice.net
503-838-2838

Shasta Ray Band

The band's founder and leader is Shasta Ray, born in New England. The band is referred to as a truly community band, a "bring a town together" band. The music played is a real slice of Americana including bluegrass, folk, country, sing-along gospel, and old-time favorites.

Liz Crain
downhomeband@yahoo.com
541-537-1031

Slipshod

Matt Snook (dobro and banjo) and Steve Blanchard (guitar and mandolin) offer listeners a broad and diverse range of music, including originals, familiar melodies and dynamic instrumentals. Check out this dynamic duo on their web site, Facebook and YouTube.

Steve Blanchard, 503-730-0005
Steve@SteveBlanchardMusic.com
Matt Snook, 541-805-5133
BohemianBanjo@gmail.com

Sleepy Eyed Johns

Ian Joel—banjo; Mark Klassen— guitar; John Melnichuk — fiddle; Chuck Davidshofer — bass; Billy Wyat—mandolin. Sleepy Eyed Johns: Stump-pulling bluegrass, from the roots.

Ian Joel
se6bq5@teleport.com
503-281-7666

Steer Crazy

Rick King —Guitar, Glenn Denison —Mandolin, Tim Dawdy—Steel Guitar & Dobro. A new brand of western and American music. Musical fun and close harmonies that require no complicated explanation. Nice guys singing and playing great music.

<http://www.facebook.com/Steercrazyband>
Tim Dawdy
beardvc@pacifier.com
360-904-0347

Sunny South

Sunny South plays traditional bluegrass in the style of Bill Monroe, The Country Gentlemen and Flatt and Scruggs, and features 4 part harmonies and classic instrumentals. The members are Steve Reischman, Dave Elliot, Mike Stahlman, and Tygh Trachsel.

Dave Elliot
503-663-3548

Tried and Blue

Tried and Blue is a three-piece Northwest Bluegrass stringband, featuring Nancy Limbaugh on mandolin, her husband Jeff on upright bass, and guitar flat picker Dennis Zelmer.

Nancy Limbaugh
nancylimbaugh@kw.com

The Wild Wood

The Wild Wood resonates with that part of us which is rooted in a simpler way of life while delighting us with dynamic arrangements, emotional vocal harmonies and virtuosic solos by two national champions. Josiah Payne – Mandolin, Belinda Underwood – Bass, Michael Money – Guitar, Kian Dye – Fiddle

<http://www.thewildwoodmusic.com/>

Whiskey Puppy

Rachel Gold (guitar), Justin Auld (banjo and fiddle) and Gabe Adoff (Bass). Whiskey Puppy plays boot-stomping, mule-slapping traditional bluegrass and old time music. The Portland, Oregon trio brings energy, humor, and skillful musicianship to little-known songs and tunes from the repertoires of the early Southern string bands.

Rachel Gold
rachelgold145@gmail.com
503-227-0647
www.whiskeypuppy.com

Whistlin' Rufus

Pat Connell, Ritchie Wernick, Nat O'Neal, Patrick Connell, Zach Banks. Three- and four-part vocal harmonies, exciting instrumentation and contagious fun are part of the Rufusarian bluegrass experience. A Whistlin' Rufus show guarantees a varied and wonderful mix of blazing bluegrass, original homemade tunes and an Irish fiddle tune or two.

www.whistlinrufus.com
Pat Connell
whistlinrufus@comcast.net
971-207-5933

Betsy and Theron Yochelson

Stand-up bass / mandolin —Lead / harmony vocals. We head up two bluegrass / acoustic-country "all-event" bands in the mid-Willamette Valley.

541-409-8248
Betsybyo@gmail.com
Red Diesel:
www.facebook.com/reddieseloregon
Prairie Dog Backfire:
www.reverbnation.com/prairiedogbackfire

How do I get my band's information listed here?

1. Sign up for a band membership! Go to oregonbluegrass.org, fill out the form on the back page of this issue, or find us at a festival or event! A band membership includes one print subscription per membership.
2. Email your band's listing to webmaster@oregonbluegrass.org. Don't forget to include contact information and a photo (and a link or two if you have it). Once we have verified that your membership is current, your listing will be posted to the website. The Express is updated quarterly from the website. We may have to shorten your listing from the website to fit available print space.

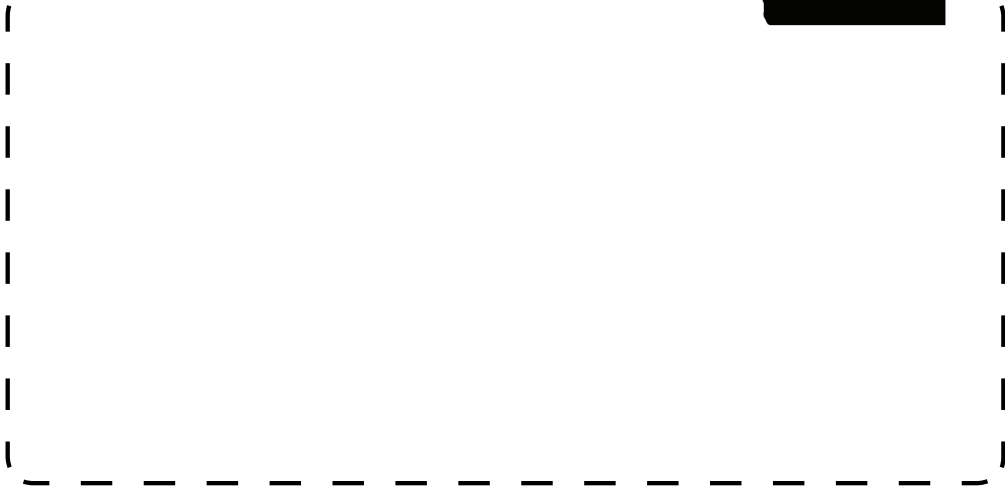


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- Supporting Performer\$50 (1yr.)
- Angel Sponsor\$60 (1yr.)
- Golden Sponsor\$100 (yr.)
- Contributing Business Sponsor....\$125 (1 yr.)/\$350 (3 yrs.)

Volunteering

Yes! I am interested in helping as a volunteer at OBA sanctioned events. Please add me to your list of volunteers.

