



Oregon Bluegrass Association
www.oregonbluegrass.org

Bluegrass Express

Duane Boyer: By Matt Snook Part One of Two

An Interview With Eastern Oregon's Professor Of Bluegrass

Duane Boyer has spent his life working the family ranch and playing bluegrass music. I guess it's not a bad life, because he doesn't seem to be looking for a change anytime soon. Born to a rancher and a schoolteacher in the house he still calls home, Duane learned music from the local radio stations and from his mother, a well-known fiddler at local dances. He began playing guitar and his favorite, the banjo, performing with bands through his high school and college years.

After graduation from Eastern Oregon College he took a part-time job there as a music instructor, and has been active in playing, teaching and promoting bluegrass music in Eastern Oregon ever since. Over the years he has shown hundreds of students how to make bluegrass a way of life, inspired and worked to promote music festivals and workshops, brought bluegrass and traditional music to the curriculum of a regional college, and generally made sure that his part of the world knew about the five-string banjo.

Recently Duane played at the Fourth-



Above: Duane playing bass as a Clinch Mountain Boy. Left to right: Curly Ray Cline, Duane Boyer, Ralph Stanley and Larry Sparks.

of-July celebration in Haines Oregon, a small town in Baker County near the Boyer Ranch at Muddy Creek. He and his daughter Holly and son Jason Brandt won the talent show and treated the audience to some bluegrass music. A few days later they came up to La Grande and we helped them celebrate Holly's birthday. Over a dinner of barbecued chicken, beans and salad, with strawberries and homemade shortcake for desert, I interviewed Duane to learn his view of bluegrass from the Elkhorn Mountains.

Matt Snook for the Bluegrass Express: First things first - since this is for an official Bluegrass magazine - did you ever meet Bill Monroe?

Duane Boyer: Yes. We shook-and-howdy'd several times; when they played in Pendleton, and then another time down in Portland.

BE: What year was that?

DB: The first time was in the seventies when he was in Pendleton, and then, oh that was probably

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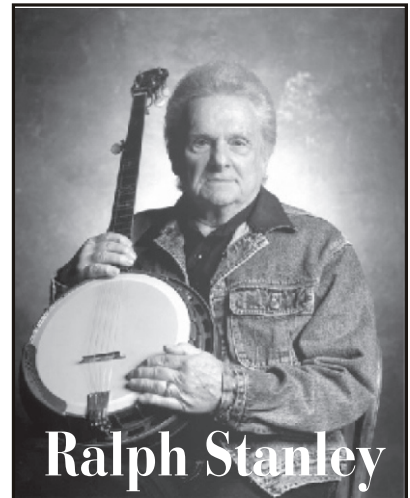
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Oregon Bluegrass Association
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Bluegrass Express

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

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The Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA) PO Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207 is a 503(c)(3) non-profit corporation founded in 1982. It's purpose is to promote, encourage, foster and cultivate the preservation, appreciation, understanding, enjoyment, support and performance of bluegrass and other closely related music.

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Oregon Bluegrass Association Board



The OBA Board

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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 bi-monthly Bluegrass Express, frequent mailings about events, and ticket discounts to Northwest bluegrass events. Annual membership dues are \$20 for a General Member, \$50 for Supporting Performers and \$100 for a Contributing Business Sponsor (see page 7), 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.*

Web Site

Features include a calendar, excerpts from the current issue of the Express, and links for local bands. Come visit us online! Visit the OBA web page today! www.oregonbluegrass.org.

Sponsored Jams

The OBA sponsors jam sessions in Portland, Coburg, Roseburg, as well as Pendleton. Check the Scheduled Jams section of this issue for a complete listing of these and other jams throughout Oregon. If you are interested in organizing an OBA-sponsored jam, contact any of the Board members or Express Staff at the phone numbers or e-mail addresses listed on this page and on page 3.

Articles & Editorial Deadlines

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. Deadlines for all art and copy: December 1st for the January and February issue; February 1st, for the March and April issue; April 1st for the May and June issue; June 1st for the July and August issue; August 1st for the September and October issue; and October 1st for the November and December issue.

Advertising

Your Express advertising will directly reach over 600 households of bluegrass enthusiasts while helping OBA to keep publishing this valuable resource. Tear sheets or extra copies of the Express are available. We appreciate your support of the Oregon Bluegrass Association.

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The OBA holds board elections each April as individual terms expire. The Board of Directors invites you to join our monthly meetings. We welcome your visit and ideas, opinions and proposals. Or, just come to see what we're doing! We generally meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The location is subject to change. Call us or email any board member for time, location and directions.



From the President

Howdy All,

This issue of the Express finds us all moving into the “liquid sunshine” part of our year. Do you have all of the summer festival gear packed away, waiting anxiously for next year? I sure hope that you all had fun and were able to get out to some of the great local festivals. But don't forget that the music that we love doesn't stop for the winter. In fact, we've got two great OBA fundraising shows lined up before the holidays. On November 20th, at the Bagdad Theater in Portland, we've a dual benefit show – the Willamette Riverkeepers and the OBA present an evening with Mary Flower, Misty Mamas, and Larry Wilder & the Stumptown Stars. Proceeds benefit the environment via the Willamette Riverkeepers and the OBA – two great causes in one night (see the ad on p.15). On December 20th, at the Alberta Street Pub in Portland, we'll be doing a pre-holiday OBA fundraising show, as well (watch our website for more details www.oregonbluegrass.org). Not to mention, we are blessed with one of the great West Coast bluegrass festivals right here in Oregon; The River City Bluegrass Festival. The second weekend of January will find Dr. Ralph Stanley, J.D. Crowe and the New South, and many, many others coming to the Oregon Convention Center. You can find more info right here in this issue.

And, if you are more into old-time stringband music, don't forget the Portland Old-Time Music Gathering the 3rd weekend in January. Our home has become known all over the country for the diversity of the acoustic music scene, and Bill Martin, Caroline Oakley, and the whole old-time community are a big reason why. Check out this festival at www.bubbaguitar.com/festival.

And certainly don't forget the Annual Sonny Hammond Memorial Gospel Show will be held in January again in 2009 (see our ad on p. 8). This year's lineup will include Corral Creek Connection, Dewgrass, and Small Town. The venerable Bill Jolliff will be there to emcee, and keep the rest of us out of trouble. You won't want to miss this show! More details are on page 8 of this issue.

Here's wishing you all a happy holiday season. And, please, get out and support your local bluegrass musicians this winter when they will be moving back into the local clubs to keep out of the rain.

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Local Radio Bluegrass and Country Listings.

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

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Tuesdays 9-11pm, Bluegrass/Old Timey Western/ Folk with Calamity Jane.

CafeVaquera@hotmail.com.

“Shady Grove,”

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Columbia Gorge-KBOO,

broadcast from Portland, can be heard at 92.7 FM. See under Portland, below.
503 231-8187.

Corvallis-KOAC, 550 AM,

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541 737-4311.

Eugene-KLCC, 89.7 FM,

Local broadcast. 541 726-2224.

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Saturdays 11am - Noon

and “The Backporch”,

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Eugene-KRVM, 91.9 FM,

“Routes & Branches” 3 - 5pm,

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plays bluegrass along w/ other acoustic music.

“Miles of Bluegrass” is 7 - 9pm, Mondays.

www.krvm.org 541 687-3370.

Pendleton-KWHT, 103.5 FM,

“Bushels of Bluegrass”, Sundays 9 - 11pm.

contact Phil Hodgen 541 276-2476.

Portland-KBOO, 90.7 FM,

“Music from the True Vine,”

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Other folk programs also include bluegrass.

503 231-8187.

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Duane Boyer: An Interview With Eastern Oregon's Professor Of Bluegrass

the early eighties when he was in Portland. He was at Wintergrass the last time I saw him. I actually thought he was better then than he had been at the show in Portland in the eighties because he had finally relented and they had lowered the keys...

BE: So that he could reach the notes?

DB: Mm-hmm. They had lowered them to Bb and A...

BE: But that wasn't until the seventies. So obviously it wasn't seeing him that got you started in bluegrass.

DB: No. Actually the local radio station – KBKR which is now part of the KBKR/KLBM – they used to play the original recording with Arthur Smith and Don Reno, I think they called it “Feudin’ Banjos.” They really played it fairly regularly for years.

BE: That was back in the sixties?

DB: No, that was back in the fifties when it first came out or not too long after. That was on regular airplay or regular rotation, and then there was a plectrum banjo player that played Silver Bells that they played regularly. And I liked the sound of the banjo, so I was always listening for that.

BE: That's the Silver Bells...

DB: The old traditional fiddle tune, not the (singing) “Silver Bells, Silver Bells, it's Christmas time”. And it was done on banjo – I heard that a lot and I really liked that.

BE: Your folks didn't play bluegrass, but they played?

DB: My Mom played old-time. She played fiddle. She and her brothers had a band – fiddle, banjo and guitar – and they used to play for dances around Union County when they were teenagers. She just did a standard fiddle

tune repertoire. So I heard a lot of that as I was growing up. Not her brothers, because the brother who played banjo had moved away by the time I was old enough to really remember or appreciate that. So I didn't really ever hear him.

BE: So who was the first banjo player you did see play?

DB: Live? Oh, I'd seen two or three local or regional people... There was a fellow from Idaho, they came over and played in Baker one time, and he was the first person I'd heard live. But I had seen the Dillard's on the Andy Griffith show, and then I saw Flatt & Scruggs in Portland – so he (Scruggs) would have been the first person I saw that anybody had actually heard of. That would have been in the mid-sixties. They did a concert with Homer & Jethro. Homer & Jethro were incredibly good and Flatt & Scruggs looked incredibly bored... It was not too long before they broke up. That was '66 when I saw them, and I think they broke up the next year.

BE: What banjo are you playing today?

Holly Boyer: A 1934 Gibson Flathead PB-3 converted...

DB: It was originally a PB-3.

BE: Who made the neck on it?

HB: Joe Spence.

BE: When was that?

DB: I had made a neck for it that had ‘Hearts and Flowers’ and an ebony board - sort of a pseudo-upgrade. But I decided here about three or four years ago that I'd convert it back to the way it had been only with a fifth string – same inlays with a Brazilian Rosewood board. It was a “First

Quality” board and neck, and Joe Spence finished putting it all together. That was in 2006. So it has the same inlay pattern and everything as it did then.

BE: Did you ever sell an instrument and wish you hadn't?

DB: Actually you wouldn't have to add the last part of that - I've never sold one (laughs)!

HB: I thought you did and you got it back!

DB: I sold my first guitar, and later traded for it and got it back. I did sell a cheap mandolin one time – well, I traded it in on a guitar. So (laughs) I've not sold one and regretted it (laughs)!

BE: So you saw the Dillard's and folks like that on the TV, Flatt & Scruggs live. How did you learn Scruggs style? That's hard to get just watching a TV!

BE: By slowing the albums down to 16 2/3, over and over and over again. They were 33's so they were slowed down to half, and then I even taped some of them onto a reel-to-reel and then I'd slow them down again. They were getting pretty growly, but I could sort out some things, and once you've sorted out some licks then you start recognizing “aha, he's doing this.”

BE: But there were no books, since the Scruggs book didn't come out until '68...

DB: No.

BE: How about the Pete Seeger book, when was that?

DB: It was earlier... I had a copy of it, but I actually never learned anything out of it. I looked at two or three of the things, and I think I even had the record, but I didn't like the songs. They weren't songs that I wanted to



Duane Boyer: *Continued*

learn, so I didn't bother (laughs).

BE: So do you have a slow-downer or anything on your PC that you like to use?

DB: Yeah, actually not too long ago... There was a Sonny Osborne lick that he used back in the mid-sixties on a song or two, and we did those songs in that group that the college used to sponsor - the Ambassadors - anyway we did a couple of Osborne Brothers tunes and there was this one lick that he did that I always thought was really neat. So here not long ago I thought 'gee I ought to learn that,' so I used the slow-downer - (laughs) forty years later! - and "ah, that's what he did!"

BE: How long was it before you began playing 'out of the back room'?

DB: Oh, probably like a year and a half or so, I had figured out a few tunes. Well I got to watch the Dillards play some of those songs, and I taped them on audio tape and I learned those songs - those were some of the first songs I learned. They wanted me to come down and play for a freshman orientation picnic here at the college. We were out at Riverside Park, and there was this kid sitting across from me and he asked what I was doing there. I told him and he said "Oh man, I really like that stuff!" I said "Well, I don't have anybody to play guitar for me." He said he played guitar, and I asked if he wanted to play guitar for me. Well that was Ron (Emmons). So we went back behind the building and worked out the three or so songs I was going to play, then we went out and played them - that was the fall of '66. So we started playing all the time. He lived in La Grande, and I'd come down to his house and we'd sit and figure out tunes.

BE: So was he part of your first band?

DB: Well, more or less. He and I did a duo for a year, and then that next year we added a bass player and did some as a trio. We ended up with a five-piece band eventually. It was Lynn and Terry Prohaska; she played bass, Terry played guitar and then Bob Peacock was going to school up there. He was playing violin and had done some fiddling so he played fiddle, and Ron was playing mandolin.

BE: What was that band called?

DB: That was the Blue Mountain Crested Wheatgrass Boys (laughs). Ron's dad came up with that name. His dad worked with the timber industry and they would go in and reseed after they had logged - with grass seed - and the Blue Mountain Crested Wheatgrass was one of the grasses they used a lot of so... (laughs).

BE: Were you in school at that time?

DB: Yeah. I had played with Rick Winter prior to that. He played banjo and I played guitar and then Tony Marks played bass. We did a few things here, I don't know, for a couple of terms; then he went into the Navy.

BE: So it was mostly after you had started college?

DB: Yeah. I had folk groups in high school. I just played guitar and we did Kingston Trio and Peter, Paul and Mary songs. It was usually just a guitar or two and a bass. The orchestra director there at school was very encouraging of anybody wanting to do any kind of music, so he'd let us use the bass. I had figured out how to play bass, so I taught two or three people how to play bass there in high school. We would

play for various events: school talent shows, entertainment for luncheons and things like that.

BE: So you were in the BMCWB and at the same time part of the Ambassadors?

DB: Yeah. Actually most everybody who was in the bluegrass band was also in the Ambassadors. We did high school assemblies basically, and when we did a show we would do probably 12-15 minutes of bluegrass.

BE: And the Ambassadors was an official ensemble of the college?

DB: Yeah. It was sponsored by the college foundation and its goal was to recruit students.

BE: So your entire band was part of the Ambassadors, how big was that ensemble?

DB: There were usually 10-12 people, and we just did more or less a musical variety show. We would do tunes like Killing Me Softly and Proud Mary. I played guitar, played electric bass on some things, played the flute on a tune or two.

BE: Didn't the pedal steel come in around then?

DB: No, that was later because the country band we formed also had a bunch of people who had been Ambassadors at some point. It was (Jimmy) Lloyd Rea and a guy named Jerry Bannon and I and Stan Pynch who had drummed with the Ambassadors and he drummed with us. After he left another kid who had drummed with the Ambassadors, Andy Gilbert, played drums. We had two or three guitar players, but it ended up Hugh McClellan played guitar, and he had been in the Ambassadors.

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OBA Gospel Show

Featuring

Corral Creek Connection

Dewgrass

Small Town

Bill Jolliff, emcee

Saturday, Jan. 31st, 2009 • Central Bible Church

Members: \$12. Non-members \$15.

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Being Colby Buswell *By Claire Levine*

Colby Buswell is the Vice President of the Oregon Bluegrass Association and a Managing Editor of the Express. He spends countless hours staffing OBA booths at events and festivals to promote the organization. Read Colby's eloquent words about his dedication to the cause

Tell us a little about yourself.

Most of my youth was spent in Herndon, VA, part of the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington DC. I went to James Madison University and graduated with an English degree with a Creative Writing concentration and a Psychology minor.

My summers were spent with both sets of grandparents here in Oregon. They had farms, raised sheep, and large plentiful gardens. The time spent exploring their acreage surrounded by trees, enjoying the dry (sans humidity, not sans rain) air, and just literally greener landscape seemed to cinch Oregon as my eventual home.

I am a strong proponent of following one's heart, and Oregon captured mine at an early age. It took me thirty years to get here by way of Florida and California, but Portland, OR is where I landed.

My paid living comes from managing a large corporate retail bookstore in Vancouver, WA. The books and the people I work with are the saving grace.

What drew you to bluegrass?

Growing up in Virginia, you couldn't help but know a little about bluegrass. That is not to say that I grew up listening, learning, and only enjoying bluegrass. My music appreciation has always been vast and encompasses a truly wide range of artists.

My emphasis and love has always been lyrics and trying to interpret what the artist has to say. I listened to the typical rock and roll bands growing up, finding classic rock (Led Zeppelin and Fleetwood Mac were strong favorites in that day) to be the first niche of choice. I had little interest in the pop music scene.

All the while, my stepfather was listening to country, which I at first detested, but when Jim Croce, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan and Harry Chapin crept into the mix it instantly expanded my horizons and appreciation. I became an avid fan of more acoustic bands, albeit plugged in.

Mainstream bands that chose to incorporate classic acoustic instruments drew me in. Early Dave Matthews Band started the heavy leanings toward where my tastes lie today. David Gray led me toward a deeper delve into Dylan, leading me to Woody Guthrie, then Smithsonian Folkways recordings.

There was also the Grateful Dead, Garcia/Grisman, Old and in the Way influence. Somewhere in there, I started pursuing Alt Country bands and Americana finding Wilco and more importantly its predecessor Uncle Tupelo who covered tunes by the Carter Family, Leadbelly, and many traditionals. In fact, Uncle Tupelo's 'March 16-20, 1992' pretty much did it for me.

We all have a yearning, have explored some sense of the 'depths', and in some way seek out the redemption (whatever your definition) that weaves its way throughout most of bluegrass. From there, bluegrass became inevitable.

My path speaks strongly toward the merit of contemporary bands and what they can do for bluegrass even if they are electric, but might have a mandolin, violin player, or even pull out a banjo for a few songs or tracks. It bends the ear, sparks the attraction, and causes folks to chase more songs involving those classic bluegrass instruments and leads them toward their roots and eventually bluegrass itself.

How/why did you get involved in the OBA?

I stumbled into the Portland bluegrass scene, quite literally, in 2006. While turning channels on the radio, I stopped on some live bluegrass. Turns out it was

KBOO promoting its Pickathon weekend. I was thrilled that something like this was happening locally and literally drove right to the festival, spent the day/night - much to the dismay of my dog's bladder - absorbing a bunch of bands, many of them local and some of them bluegrass, too.

From there it progressed to seeking out the local bluegrass shows at venues like Alberta Street Pub, Laurelhurst and more. Catching bands like the Josh Cole Band, Flat Mountain Girls, Cross-Eyed Rosie and Chickweed became part of my monthly routine.

In the fall of 2007, I found myself at the White Eagle for an Oregon Bluegrass Association fundraiser featuring Chickweed and the Josh Cole Band. I just went up to the front table and told them I was interested in volunteering. Chip and Holly said the first opportunity would be RiverCity in January. So, I bought a ticket and put my name in the hat to help at the OBA booth. From there I was invited to attend the next board meeting with a strong nudge from Chip.

Josh Cole and all the folks involved were great people. I had spent a year going to local bluegrass shows, witnessing the community and people that were involved, and the obvious camaraderie therein and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. I wanted to give back and help grow the bluegrass community.

What motivates you to volunteer so much time with the organization?

I see the OBA as a community and enjoy how welcome it has made me and makes others feel. The pickin' and jammin' mentality of "come on in and play a few songs" says a great deal about those involved. It is the instruments, the sharing of songs, and the teaching of tradition that I enjoy most and that is such a strong part of the bluegrass culture.

What I see is tremendous potential. I see the OBA becoming an even larger channel
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Being Colby Buswell *Continued*



Colby Buswell at one of the many bluegrass events he attends. Here in Telluride, Colorado.

for local bluegrass, kind of a promoting reverse funnel, pushing bands and events forward while broadening the bluegrass community through the involvement and benefit of the local communities.

What would you like to see the organization do, and what do you think you and other members can do to make that happen?

Bigger events that involve local communities, benefit local communities, but also happen to be bluegrass laden and help foster and grow bluegrass throughout Oregon while bringing us all together. The events would move to different areas of the state, highlight local bands from those areas and maybe have a national band, too. We would partner with the local community in that area of the state and the event would benefit them as much as the OBA, if not raise funds for a community chosen cause – even several. Our times are leaning toward more local community involvement and local choices which I think plays hand in hand with the bluegrass process and the “come on out and jam” mentality.

Making that happen: A non-profit lives only through its volunteer base, membership and donations. We have no shortage of ideas provided by members, let alone board members, but without member involvement they can only be taken so far. So, if we could take the strong energy of the current board, bring on a few

more board members with the same drive, then instill that into our membership and drum up some volunteering that will make concepts a reality, we'll have a tremendous organization on our hands that's as influential and interactive as the California Bluegrass Association and more.

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Recipes from the Cookie Lady

Macaroons by Fern Anderson

This cookie is just about the most favorite at bluegrass festivals.

Of all the cookies I make, it is also about the most expensive per cookie to manufacture, so be aware of that.

Line cookie sheets with foil; spray generously with Pam. Assemble ingredients in the order given. The amount of vanilla needed will vary some with the dryness of the coconut. Drop by teaspoonfuls on Pam'd foil cookie sheets; no need to leave space between cookies - they don't expand.

Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes; bake 12 minutes if mini-morsels are added. Let cookies cool completely (about 1/2 hour) before removing from pan. Makes about 3 dozen, depending on how big the teaspoonfuls are.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

5 C. flaked coconut

1/4 t. salt

2/3 C. flour

1 can sweetened condensed milk
(I always use Eagle Brand)

2 t. vanilla
(I use Watkins white vanilla)

1 C. chocolate mini-morsels
(optional)



Chip Russel swoops in on The Cookie Lady, Fern Anderson, at this years Stevenson Festival.

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Chickweed: A New Tradition *by Claire Levine*

Chickweed: A low, inconspicuous, European annual 3 to 8 inches tall. Tiny white flowers 1/8 inch across, with 5 petals so deeply cleft they look like 10, distinguish chickweed from other plants

If the medicinal herb Chickweed is inconspicuous, it's possible that the Chickweed band might have named itself after the wrong plant.

There's nothing inconspicuous about them. And they're not your typical bluegrass band, either.

First, there are no guys in it.

Second, they've got attitude.

But -- they are passionate about bluegrass and about music. And they proudly announce that Bill Monroe is their primary influence.

Chickweed is Abby Downs, Finn Fox and Holly Wyman (who's also an OBA board member and volunteer coordinator).

Abby is the lead vocalist who writes a lot of the band's music and, until recently, was known for her red guitar. (Has she sold out? She now has a traditional Martin.)

Holly provides the solid bass rhythm, and Finn plays mandolin and sings tenor.

This group of young women is making its mark across the Northwest, and they may be one of the busiest bands around. They hit the festival circuit this summer and fall, closing out the season with Birdfest in Ridgefield, Wash. on Oct. 11. They're booked throughout the end of 2008 in Portland area venues ranging from the Rock Creek Tavern to the White Eagle and Mississippi Pizza.

How did this happen?

Blame it on Finn. Her grandfather called square dances. Her dad played guitar and her brother played fiddle. And like many who grow up in a family with a particular calling, she tried to ignore it. But when she moved to Portland from Buffalo, N.Y. KBOO's Music from the True Vine sent her subliminal messages. She started



Not your typical bluegrass band: Chickweed is Finn Fox, Holly Wyman, & Abby Downs. photo: Aaron Hewitt

getting hooked on bluegrass.

The next step was a visit to Georgia, where she fell in love with a friend's mandolin. When she returned to Portland, she was obsessed.

Once she acquired her own instrument, she was hooked. She took lessons for about six months from Portland monster musician Lex Browning, who, she said, "taught me how to make music." Then -- now doesn't this sound like the bluegrass way -- Finn built a cabin in the rainforest specifically to dedicate herself to practice. "I would sit down for hours and hours listening to and rewinding Bill Monroe tapes."

Abby had moved to Oregon from Ohio, and she got interested in bluegrass by listening to local bands. "That's what turned me on to it, and then I got educated about the originals." Finn introduced her to Bill Monroe, and Abby also credits Del McCoury and Old & In the Way for her inspiration.

It happened one night -- at Wintergrass

Finn and Abby knew each other from Portland. (We started meeting up at the Happy Hour at the Laurelhurst when Jackstraw was playing, and we'd end up jamming all night.) Then, in February of

2006, they were jamming at Wintergrass and met Holly Wyman playing the bass. Something clicked.

Returning to Portland, they started playing together, and within six months, they were performing as Chickweed.

While they love the traditional stuff, they are able to add original and contemporary music to their repertoire. In college, Abby had been in an eclectic musical ensemble and had written her own music. She now applies her songwriting talent to bluegrass.

"Putting a concept to a bluegrass melody really helps define a song," Abby said. In a way, the formal structure makes it easier than writing in a more freewheeling style of music.

The Chickweed clan has boundless enthusiasm, not only when it comes to music, but about the bluegrass community, as well. "Everyone's so welcoming, humorous, adventurous. I've learned so much just in the last two years. I can't wait to see how much more I'll know in another 10."

You can learn more about Chickweed by visiting their MySpace page (myspace.com/chickweedmusic) and contact the band at chickweedmusic@yahoo.com.



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UPCOMING BLUEGRASS CONCERTS & FESTIVALS

NOVEMBER
BLUEGRASS MUSIC

SATURDAY, NOV. 1ST

Whiskey Puppy
Coney Island Cartel

Alberta Street Public House
1036 NE Alberta St. Portland, OR, 9 PM
www.whiskeypuppy.com
www.myspace.com/albertastreetpub

Chickweed

Kay's Bar
6903 SE Milwaukie Blvd
Portland, OR 97202
www.myspace.com/chickweedmusic

TUESDAY, NOV. 4TH

Lost Creek

Lucky Lab Pub
1945 NW Quimby, Portland, OR, 6-9 PM Free
www.lostcreekmusic.com
www.luckylab.com

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 5TH

Emmons Sisters

Canyonville Christian Academy
Canyonville, OR, 10:20 AM
www.theemmonssisters.com

FRIDAY, NOV. 7TH

Green Mountain Bluegrass

Harlequin Beads & Jewelry
1027 Willamette Street, Eugene, OR, 5:00 PM
www.greenmountainbluegrassband.com

Fiddlegrass

Hood River Hotel
Hood River, OR, 5:30 PM
www.fiddlegrass.net
www.hoodriverhotel.com

Conjugal Visitors

John Henry's
77 W. Broadway, Eugene, OR, 9:00 PM, \$5
www.myspace.com/conjugalvisitors
www.johnhenryclub.com

SATURDAY, NOV. 8TH

Ida Viper

Rock Creek Tavern
10000 N.W. Old Cornelius Pass Rd, Hillsboro, OR
9:00 PM, FREE www.idaviper.com
www.mcmenamins.com/

SUNDAY, NOV. 9TH

Ida Viper

Green Dragon Bistro
909 SE Yamhill St, Portland, OR, 3 PM
www.idaviper.com
www.pdxgreendragonbistro.com

SATURDAY, NOV. 15TH

Misty Mamas

Gresham Little Theater
30639 SE Bluff Road, Gresham, OR,
7:00 PM, \$6
www.mistymamas.com
www.greshamlittletheater.org

Whiskey Puppy
Chickweed

Mississippi Pizza Pub
3552 N. Mississippi Ave. Portland, OR,
9:00 PM, \$5
www.whiskeypuppy.com

Conjugal Visitors

Alberta Street Public House
1036 NE Alberta St., Portland, OR, 9:00 PM
www.myspace.com/conjugalvisitors
www.myspace.com/albertastreetpub

SUNDAY, NOV. 16TH

Chickweed

Green Dragon Brewpub
928 SE 9th, Portland, Oregon
www.myspace.com/chickweedmusic

THURSDAY, NOV. 20TH

Misty Mamas

Mary Flowers

Larry Wilder & The Stumptown Stars

And more... Willamette River Keepers
and OBA Benefit at The Bagdad Theater
3702 SE Hawthorne, Portland, OR, 6:00 PM
\$20 at door. www.mcmenamins.com/

Whiskey Puppy

Cannon Beach History Center
Cannon Beach, OR, 7:30 PM
www.whiskeypuppy.com

Conjugal Visitors

Café Mundo
711 NW 2nd Court, Newport, OR, 8:00 PM
www.myspace.com/conjugalvisitors

FRIDAY, NOV. 21ST

Green Mountain Bluegrass

Drain Performing Arts Center, Drain OR, 7:30 PM
www.greenmountainbluegrassband.com

SATURDAY, NOV. 22ND

Misty Mamas

St. John's Christian Church
8044 N. Richmond Avenue, Portland, OR,
7:00 PM, Free.
www.mistymamas.com

SUNDAY, NOV. 23RD

Lee Highway

Sam Bond's Garage -
407 Blair Blvd, Eugene, OR, 8:30 PM
www.leehighway.net
www.sambonds.com

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 26TH

Jackstraw

Goodfoot Lounge -
2845 SE Stark Street, Portland, OR, 9:30 PM, \$5
www.jackstraw.net
www.thegoodfoot.com

FRIDAY, NOV. 28TH

Kathleen & Joe Ross

Henry Estate Winery
Hubbard Creek Road, Umpqua, OR, 12-5 PM
For more info, email: Rossjoe@hotmail.com

Conjugal Visitors

Axe & Fiddle
657 East Main Street, Cottage Grove, OR, 8:00 PM
www.myspace.com/conjugalvisitors
www.axeandfiddle.com



UPCOMING BLUEGRASS CONCERTS & FESTIVALS

SATURDAY, NOV. 29TH

Pagan Jug Band

Skyway Bar and Grill
71545 E Hwy 26, Zigzag, OR, 9:00 PM, \$5
www.paganjugband.com
www.skywaybarandgrill.com

Clampitt Family

Mississippi Pizza Pub
3552 N. Mississippi Ave, Portland, OR 9:00 PM, \$5
www.myspace.com/clampittfamily

Conjugal Visitors

Chickweed

White Eagle Saloon
836 N. Russell Street, Portland, OR 9:00 PM
www.myspace.com/conjugalvisitors
www.myspace.com/chickweedmusic

DECEMBER
BLUEGRASS MUSIC

FRIDAY, DEC. 5TH

Green Mountain Bluegrass

Harlequin Beads & Jewelry
1027 Willamette Street, Eugene, OR, 5:00 PM
www.greenmountainbluegrassband.com

Emmons Sisters

First Friday Art Night
Evangel Book Store, Grants Pass, OR, 6:00 PM
www.theemmonssisters.com

Jackstraw

Bombs Away Cafe
2527 NW Monroe Avenue, Corvallis, OR
10:00 PM
www.jackstraw.net

Chickweed

Rock Creek Tavern
10000 N.W. Old Cornelius Pass Rd, Hillsboro, OR
9:00 PM, FREE
www.myspace.com/chickweedmusic

FRIDAY, DEC. 12TH

Ida Viper

Chickweed

Mississippi Pizza Pub
3552 N. Mississippi Ave, Portland, OR 9:00 PM
www.idaviper.com

Clampitt Family

White Eagle Saloon
836 N. Russell Street, Portland, OR 9:30 PM
www.myspace.com/clampittfamily

SATURDAY, DEC. 13TH

Jackstraw

Skyway Bar and Grill
71545 E Hwy 26, Zigzag, OR, 8 PM
www.jackstraw.net
www.skywaybarandgrill.com

Whiskey Puppy

Alberta Street Pub
1036 NE Alberta St., Portland, OR 9:30PM, \$5
www.whiskeypuppy.com

Conjugal Visitors

White Eagle Saloon
836 N. Russell Street, Portland, OR 9:00 PM
www.myspace.com/conjugalvisitors

SATURDAY, DEC. 20TH

OBA Fundraiser presenting...

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Alberta Street Pub
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www.oregonbluegrass.org
www.myspace.com/clampittfamily
www.myspace.com/chickweedmusic
www.myspace.com/albertastreetpub

UPCOMING
BLUEGRASS MUSIC

JANUARY 9TH - 11TH, 2009

RiverCity Bluegrass Festival

Oregon Convention Center
Dr. Ralph Stanley & The Clinch Mtn. Boys, Sierra Hull & Hwy. 111, Dailey & Vincent, Fairfield Four, Darol Anger, Tony Furtado, The Dan Tyminski Band, Linda & Robin Williams, The Whites featuring Jerry Douglas, J.D. Crowe & The New South, Longview, Jim Kveskin featuring Bill Keith and The Barbeque Orchestra, The Kruger Brothers, Psychograss with Tony Trishka plus regional acts, jamming, workshops, and more.
www.rivercitybluegrass.com (503)282-0877

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31ST

OBA Gospel Show Benefit

Central Bible Church
8825 SE Glisan St., Portland, OR 97220, 7 PM
Featuring Corral Creek Connection, Dewgrass, Small Town. Members \$12, Non-Members \$15
Pre-order online at www.oregonbluegrass.org

FEBRUARY 19TH - 22ND, 2009

Wintergrass Bluegrass Festival

Hotel Murano, Tacoma, WA
Mike Marshall & Big Trio, Laurie Lewis and the Right Hands, Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper, The SteelDrivers, Alison Brown & Joe Craven, Tony Trishka Territory, Adrienne Young, Blue Highway, Missy Raines, 3 Ring Circle, The McCoury Boys, Hot Buttered Rum, Scythian, The Isaacs, Bearfoot Bluegrass, Monroe Crossing, New Old Stock, Choro Famoso. www.acousticsound.org (253) 428-8056



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(see page 4)

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(see page 8)



Oregon Jams: *Jam Listing Updated October 2008 - Always Call First!*

Sundays

EUGENE AREA (Coburg):

Coburg Bluegrass Jam - 2nd Sunday of each month (November 12th next) Willakenzie Grange, 3055 Willakenzie Road Eugene, OR Take the Beltline Exit off of I-5. Go West 1 mile to Coburg Road. Turn South for a 1/2 mile and turn left onto Willakenzie. The grange is down 2 blocks. For more info call Joe Cannaday at 541-344-3966

PORTLAND: First Sunday of every month October- April: Portland Area OBA jam, 12:30-4:30PM, Portland Audubon Center, 5151 NW Cornell Road, Portland. Info: Audubon 503 292-6855 or powellR5923@msn.com.

PORTLAND: Every Monday at 7pm. Fire On The Mountain Bluegrass Jam. 1708 E. Burnside Ave. Contact: jordanbusch@hotmail.com.

PORTLAND: Every Sunday Year Round - 2pm - 5pm at Nine Muses Acoustic Pub 2715 S.E. Belmont Ave, Portland, OR 97214 503/ 236.3848 Portland. All Acoustic, All levels, plenty of room for multiple jams!

PORTLAND: Offkey Easy Bluegrass Jam - Second and Fourth Sunday of every Month - 2 p.m. at Nine Muses Acoustic Pub 2715 S.E. Belmont Ave, Portland, OR 97214 503/ 236.3848 Portland. Held in conjunction with the regular jam at 9Muses, Slower pace, music stands OK, we have a 40 song book of standard tunes we can refer to! Hosted by Randy: offkeylompoc@yahoo.com and Tony: banjo@notebene.net

OAK GROVE: 2nd Sunday of every month, all-year round from 2:00 to 6:00pm. All-acoustic jam. The jam location is at the Grange hall across the street from the church in Oak Grove, OR. From Hwy 22 between Salem and Rickreall, Take Oak Grove Road, or From Hwy 99 W between Rickreall and Amity Take Farmer Road. Farmer Road and Oak Grove meet at an intersection near 2000 Oak Grove Road. The Grange Hall, Oak Grove Church, and Oak Grove School just a few feet from this intersection. P. O. Box 155, Rickreall, Or 97371-0155, 503-623-2410, jrckreal@aol.com

ROSEBURG: 3rd Sunday, Oct.-May, 12 - 5 pm at Evergreen Grange, 5361 Grange, Rd. Take Exit 119 off I-5. Just past the 2nd stop light, turn left on Grange Rd. The Grange is down 1/2 mile on the left. Call 541-679-0553 or liz@cmspan.net .

TILLAMOOK: first Sunday of every month. We have a great classroom space with a view of the river. When the weather gets nice, we can take it out onto the deck. Lots of visitors love to hear the music too. Hope you can add this to your list of goodies. Thanks much! Here is our little write-up about it: Bluegrass music is a way of celebrating the settlers who composed music about day to day life experiences. It reflected life of those living in the hills or mountains. The Tillamook Forest has had its share of settlers and homesteaders and we certainly have our share of mountains. Bring your mandolins, fiddles, guitars and banjos and join in the fun. All ages and abilities are welcome. For directions, check us out at the website below. Click on "plan a visit". Directions will be in the top left corner. Kristin Babbs Education and Interpretation Program Coordinator Tillamook Forest Center 503.815.6804 kbbabs@odf.state.or.us www.tillamookforestcenter.org.

Mondays

PORTLAND: Rambling Bluegrass Jam every Monday night all year. See www.ramblingbluegrass.org/ for information on location, time, contact, etc.

LA GRANDE: Slow jam, first Monday of the month, hosted by Richard and Karen Rubicam, 207 Aquarius Way, La Grande, OR 97850. 541-963-7193. Go to <http://mysite.verizon.net/res8aypu/jams> for details.

LA GRANDE: Pickin' Party, third Monday of the month, hosted by Richard and Karen Rubicam, 207 Aquarius Way, La Grande, OR 97850. 541-963-7193. Go to <http://mysite.verizon.net/res8aypu/jams> for details.

Tuesdays

PORTLAND: Established, open intermediate and advanced Bluegrass only jam at McMenamin's Rock Creek Tavern on Tuesday. Starts 7:00 PM and runs to 9. The jam is located in Washington County off Germantown Road and Cornelius Pass Road. Google 10000 N.W. Old Cornelius Pass Rd. Hillsboro, OR 97124. Contact jam host Tim at crosspicker1@yahoo.com for info or directions. Easy Access from Hwy 26 or Hwy 30. We're closer than you'd think.

EUGENE: Bluegrass jam at Sam Bond's Garage, 407 Blair Blvd, Eugene. Every first and third Tuesday 9:00 pm - 1:00 am. Established in 1995, the venue of this year round jam offers good food and good micro brews. If you're passing through Eugene on a Tuesday evening, come on by and pick some tunes. Hosted by Chuck Holloway & Gary Dunbar. Call 541-431-6603.

ASHLAND: 2nd Tuesday, Siskiyou Micropub, 31 Water Street, Ashland. 7-11 PM. Call 541 535 7001. justapicker@charter.net

Wednesdays

BEAVERTON, OR: Beaverton: First and third Wednesday of every Month - 6:30-9:30 p.m. Round Table Pizza, 10150 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy Beaverton, OR (just east of 217), janeromfo@yahoo.com

SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE VALLEY: The jam is at the "Axe & Fiddle" (www.axeandfiddle.com) and is located at 641 East Main Street, Cottage Grove, OR. The jam is EVERY Wednesday night from 7:30 10:30. It is an acoustic bluegrass jam open to all levels of musicianship. It's hosted by Chuck Holloway. Contact charlesmholloway@yahoo.com for more info.

EUGENE: New Wednesday jam in Eugene at Cosmic Pizza 7 to 10 P.M. every Wed eve till further notice hosted by Ramblin Robert of KRVM. All ages welcome.

Thursdays

BEND: 2nd and 4th Thursday from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Bend River Mall, Highway 97. Becky Brown and Verda Hinkle 541-318-7341 hinklebrown@coinet.com.

OREGON CITY: Third Thursday of the month, Oct.-June: Wally's Music, 7:30 p.m., 607 Washington Street, Oregon City. Call (503) 656-5323 for information.

Fridays

DALLAS: Guthrie Park acoustic music jam, 7:00 p.m. Call Sally Clark (503) 623-0874

SCIO: 4th Friday of every month, year 'round at the ZCJB Hall in downtown Scio. Kids and listeners are encouraged to attend this community sponsored event. Activities and beginners' jam starts at 7pm, with more advanced jamming beginning at 8:30pm. All acoustic. All ages welcome! Bring a munchie to share if you can, but not required. Donations accepted to help with the Hall rent and the cost of activities. Contact Starla Becker 503-394-3811

LEBANON, OR: A new, acoustic jam session, emphasizing Folk, Bluegrass, and Gospel music will be held on the second Friday of the month from 7 to 10 pm, beginning May 11th, at the Lebanon Senior Center. Everyone is invited. Bring your instruments, music, and stands, or just come to listen to the music. Bring the whole family and some snacks to share. All skill levels are welcome, from beginners to experts. The Senior Center is the large, red brick building at N. Second and Morton St. (now Tangent St.) near where Hwy 20 and 34 meet. Call 541.451.5716 for information or email LebanonJam@yahoo.com.

Saturdays

SNOHOMISH, WA: First Saturday of the month: Maltby Bluegrass Jam, 2:00 p.m. to midnight at Maltby Community Club, 206th St. S.E. & 87th Ave. S.E., Snohomish. Jamming, potluck dinner, stage show and more jamming. Call Jan (360) 568-3685, JLJ35@juno.com

STAYTON, OR: Second Saturday of the month: Cartwright's Music and Repair Shop, 429 N. 3rd. Ave. Stayton, OR 97383 503-769-2778 October through May mando-medic@wvi.com

WINLOCK, WA: Second Saturday of the month: Slow Jam, great for all levels and especially good for total beginners. Jams start at 1PM and are held at the Hope Grange in Winlock, Washington. Contact Marv Sobolesky at 360-785-4932 October through May marv@marvsmusic.com

DALLAS: Every third Saturday of the month: All gospel, all acoustic jam, 7:00-10:00 p.m. at Guthrie Park in Dallas. Call (503) 623-0874 or e-mail dusterjim@hotmail.com

TACOMA, WA: Fourth Saturday, noon-5:30 pm jam, Carpenters Hall, 1322 S. Fawcett. Contact James Swanson (253) 472-3729

CHEHALIS, WA: Chehalis Senior Center next to the fairgrounds in Chehalis, Washington. First Saturday of each month during the winter, 2 - 9:00 p.m. For information contact Frances Cramer (360) 736-1595

*If you have jam updates or additions, please contact the OBA at PO Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207, or contact Webmaster below
Webmaster @ Oregon Bluegrass Association*



Wintergrass 2009

February 19-22, 2009

Tacoma, Washington

The Steeldrivers • Darrell Scott

Laurie Lewis and the Right Hands

Tony Trischka Territory

Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper

Mike Marshall & Big Trio w/Alex Hargreaves & Paul Kowert

Blue Highway • Adrienne Young

Alison Brown Quartet w/Joe Craven

Missy Raines & the New Hip

Three Ring Circle • The Isaacs

The McCoury Boys • Choro Famoso

The Paperboys

Bearfoot • New Old Stock

Hot Buttered Rum

Scythian • Monroe Crossing

Cody Bryant and the Riders of the Purple Sage

Widow Maker • Dewgrass • Urban Monroes

Belle Monroe and Her Brewglass Boys

Molly & Tenbrooks • The Tallboys

Martin Stevens & Molly Adkins

D'Addario/Wintergrass

Youth Academy

Feb. 19-20, 2009

w/ Joe Craven, Beth Fortune & more

Wintergrass Academy

Feb. 18-19, 2009

w/ Ronnie McCoury

Robbie McCoury • Jason Carter

Rob Ickes • Tim Stafford



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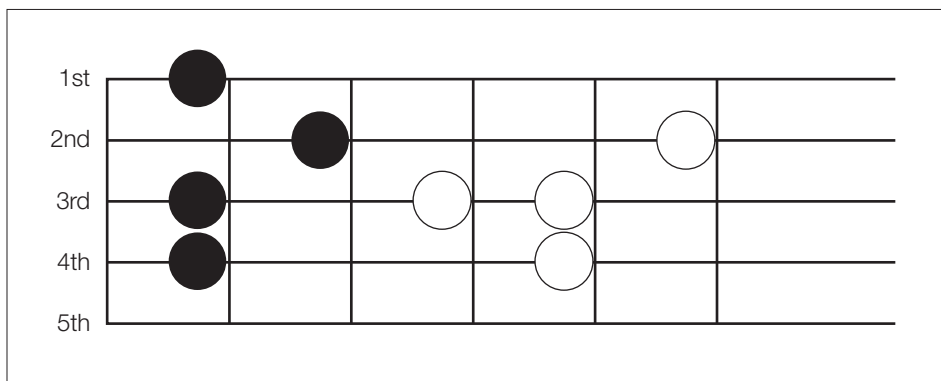
www.wintergrass.com

The Theory of Bluegrass: Modal Minor Messup *by Matt Snook*

Some time ago, I was watching the band Donner Mountain rip through a lickety-split version of Lonesome Fiddle Blues as only a group of teenagers can. It was up tempo, driving, and a definite show stopper - the way bluegrass is supposed to be!

Frankie Nagle did a fine job of turning this fiddle tune into a bona-fide banjo showpiece, but what caught my eye as well as my ear was her use of a particular fingering position on the fretboard. Instead of retuning to D minor, or even playing in a standard minor chord position, she had barred at the seventh fret and was using her middle finger to raise the second string up to G. 'Well, that's a different approach,' I thought. She was playing what we banjo players call the 'modal' tuning, with the open 3rd raised to the 4th note in the scale.

Figure 1. Frankie Nagle's base position. The black dots indicate a barred seventh fret with the 2nd string fretted on the 8th. The open dots indicate the locations of the other melody notes.



I was intrigued, because minor keys are often assumed to be difficult to manage on a banjo. Many players retune so that they don't have that pesky major 3rd on an open string where a mistake blares out for all to hear. Well, Frankie's playing position doesn't offer the open minor 3rd like retuning would, but it does remove the open major 3rd, and it offers a useful position for playing minor key melodies. Here is one way to use Frankie's idea on Lonesome Fiddle Blues.

Not long after that, I was rewriting my own version of David Grisman's Opus 57 in Gm. I had worked out a nice break but had used an open minor tuning with the B string tuned down to Bb. It worked well in providing a smooth melodic line, but absolutely messed me up for any kind of improvisation. Because of the retuning, I couldn't break away from my well rehearsed and now rather tired-sounding solo. It was very frustrating, and banjo is supposed to be fun. In order to

Lonesome Fiddle Blues - Part A

by Vassar Clements

regain my improvisation skills, I worked out a way to play it without retuning, and guess what! I ended up using the same base position Frankie had used with Dm on her tune, only for Gm it is 'barred' at the nut and I used my index finger to fret the 2nd string at the 1st fret.

Shown on next page in Figure 2.

With this fingering position,

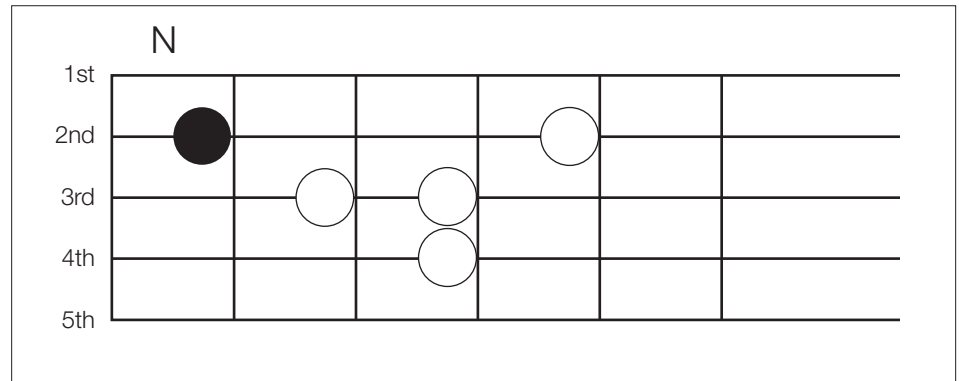


The Theory of Bluegrass: *Continued*

the tune lays out easily with a combination of melodic and Scrugg's style rolls. (You can find one way to do part A of Opus 57 and Jerusalem Ridge, below, online at oregonbluegrass.org.)

After that I started looking at ways to use this handy fingering position for other tunes in minor keys. Here is one example, part A of Jerusalem Ridge. Just capo at the 2nd fret and use the Gm fingering position. Since you haven't retuned, the sections of the tune played over major chords are no longer a frustrating mystery! It is very handy, lends itself to improvisation, and I'll bet you can find several other ways to

Figure 2. The modal fingering position located at the nut. The black dot indicates permanent fretting of the 2nd string at the first fret. The open dots indicate the same melodic locations as in the Dm position.



use it before lunch break is over. Go ahead and try it, you'll thank me later.

There isn't room in this column to publish a complete tab for these

tunes, but you can find them on the OBA website. Happy picking, and next time I'll get back to some theory of bluegrass that the non-banjo folks can appreciate as well.

-- Matthew Snook

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RiverCity Festival Gets Set For Year Number Five By Chris Palmer

It's hard to believe that the Festival is turning five this year. It seems like not that long ago that Chuck and I were working many all nighters to give birth to our first one, not having a clue as to what we'd gotten ourselves into. Flash forward to 2008 as we get ready for the 2009 event and we're still working those hours, but it's not quite as painful as the first. This year RiverCity was one of three festivals nominated for the IBMA's prestigious Bluegrass Event of the Year award. Despite not taking home the prize, we were quite stunned to even be considered; given our competition was the esteemed Grey Fox Festival in New York, which, thanks to A Bluegrass Journey, was our model all those years ago. The winner, which was the Thomas Point Beach Festival in Brunswick, Maine, was well deserved, this being their 30th and final, year.

Because of our nomination, we had the opportunity to attend IBMA at the end of September, which if you're into bluegrass, is not only a very valuable way to connect with artists, agents, managers and other producers, but unbelievably fun experience. We were able to hear some of the bands that are on the bill at RiverCity in a live environment, always a good gauge of audience satisfaction. Young Sierra Hull as an example, who recently recorded her first album after years of working with the likes of Alison Krauss, offered a showcase late one night that was a great preview of the set she's bringing to Portland. This 16 year old prodigy can make that mandolin absolutely smoke. And

surprisingly, given her young age, she's a gifted writer.

A quick side note about IBMA: I first met Sierra in the elevator at the hotel in Nashville. She saw my RiverCity shirt and said 'Oh, I'm playing in Portland next year'. To which I replied 'Are you Sierra Hull?'

That's a typical IBMA experience. Everybody immediately looks down at your name tag, then explodes into conversation; 'You're from RiverCity? I've sent you promo packs or I've heard you're doing good things out there or I'm from Bainbridge Island and have come to the festival for the last four years'. The IBMA experience is truly bonding if you love bluegrass music. The only minor negative is not getting enough sleep for a solid week.

The Dan Tyminski Band also showcased at IBMA. This band has done nothing but improve since last January, if that's possible. Dan's voice has that unique quality that has settled into his own identifiable brand. Since Union Station will be going back to work for Alison next spring, this may be one of the last tours that Dan's band, which includes Adam Steffey, Justin Moses, Barry Bales and Ron Stewart, will make.

The group that really swept the board at IBMA was Dailey & Vincent who took home six awards including Entertainer of the Year, Vocal Group of the Year, Album of the Year and Emerging Artist of the Year. All of which made us really glad that we jumped on the Dailey & Vincent bandwagon a year ago. If you haven't

had a chance to hear them, you're in for a real treat at RiverCity.

This is in addition to Ralph Stanley & The Clinch Mountain Boys, Psychograss, which includes Tony Trischka, Darol Anger, Mike Marshall, Todd Phillips & David Grier, The New Jim Kweskin Jug Band featuring Bill Keith, Geoff Muldaur and the Barbeque Orchestra, Robin & Linda Williams and Their Fine Group (which I also had the pleasure of hearing at IBMA), The Fairfield Four, J.D. Crowe & The New South, Longview, The Whites featuring Jerry Douglas, Cadillac Sky, Hot Club of Cowtown and Bill Evans. Plus 12 additional bands from the west coast, which at press time had yet to be named. If you'd like to be informed as those bands are being booked, please send an email to info@rivercitybluegrass.com and we'll add you to our e-list.

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Yodeling - The Other High Lonesome Sound *By Larry B. Wilder*

When asked to write about yodeling, I was pleased to offer a few exploratory thoughts on an art form that has been so rewarding for me. I do not intend this piece to be exhaustive nor in any way the final word on yodeling. It is in the spirit of beginning dialogues about yodeling and will hopefully spark new interests in the strange, wonderful sound.

Let's take a look at the first three of six questions in this two part article:

1-What in the world is yodeling and where is it done?

Yodeling can be accomplished by simply breaking the voice from the regular chest voice to the "head" voice, or falsetto. Roy Rogers told Johnny Carson that one just needs to think of Tarzan's yell to get the idea. I happened to be tuning in that night as Roy yodeled with the Sons of the Pioneers, a band he had co-founded forty years before.

The word yodel is derived from the German "jo" which is an expression of delight. In Switzerland, yodeling can augur up a broader range of emotion and meaning. When the Swiss hear a person yodel or a group yodel in harmony, they might become quiet or reverent. We in America are delighted at the acrobatics and seeming goofiness of yodeling; to people of the majestic Alps Mountain Range, yodeling might mean communication in the old days or a reverence to nature.

I have been high in the Alps. They gave me a feeling like no other place. The film "Heimatlange" depicts three yodelers who run "against type."

Christian Zehnder, Erika Stuky and Noldi Alder are riveting artists whose yodeling can be nature driven, rather serious and often contemplative.

Yodeling has been done nearly everywhere. While we most commonly associate yodeling with Switzerland, Germany, Austria and in various genres of music Americana - most notably cowboy songs - yodeling has been an indigenous art all over the world: from Africa to Asia, from Hawaii to Scandanavia and beyond. If you have not experienced the wonderful sound of Polynesian falsetto singing, for example, you are in for a treat.

2-Why would anyone attempt it?

We cannot know the motivations of our brothers and sisters around the world, but here in America, we feel the challenge to pass on the tradition as we add our own twists and "licks" to falsetto fun. I began to yodel in the late 1970's after I sat transfixed in the front row at Knott's Berry Farm as Roy Rogers and the Pioneers did "Texas Plains." As with my first encounter with Earl Scruggs's banjo, I knew I HAD to do it. I would strongly encourage anyone to take up whatever musical challenge captivates her or him.

3-How does one learn to yodel?

I began by listening to simpler country-western and cowboy yodels. "Way Out There" is an interesting tune. Bob Nolan, one of the three founding Sons of the Pioneers along with Tim Spencer and Len Slye (Roy Rogers), wrote this beautiful poem for

his high school newspaper in Arizona. In the Original Pioneer Trio, Bob's buddy Len had the idea of yodeling in three part harmony on this song. The impact was immediate on Los Angeles radio and live shows.

"Way Out There" can be found on many recordings including our own "Americana Music--Heart of the People." This famous yodel goes something like this:

“wee—ooo—wee-dul-dee-dee-
OH-ooo-WAY—dee-dee-dee

Weee-ooooo-wee--dul—dee--
OH---ooo--WAY--dee--dee--dee”

[The ALL-CAPS syllables denote the full chest voice; the rest are falsetto.]

In our recording, I yodel the lead part in the middle and the lower baritone part. Nolan Bronson handles the high or tenor yodel. The parts are simple to notate and teach.

Take a listen to Eddy Arnold's "Cattle Call." His solo yodel is easy to follow. Remember to get the song in your key, and don't be afraid to break your voice like Tarzan!

There are online yodeling courses, teachers, clubs, Swiss yodeling conventions and a host of opportunities to become familiar with the musical primal scream. I practice in the car and at my home. My early yodeling attempts were spurred on by a misstep over an electric fence working on a cattle ranch. I reckon a yodeling cowboy has to be lucky.

continued on page 25



Sound Advice: *Hints and tips on sounding your best, with Mark Gensman, Ground Zero Sound*

Howdy everyone, I hope your summer was filled with bluegrass and great music and here's hoping you get the opportunity to attend our two great northwest bluegrass festivals, RiverCity and Wintergrass. Both world class bluegrass events.

As I write this, I am packing for the Tygh Valley Bluegrass Festival and looking forward to a great end of summer event in the pristine environs of Eastern Oregon. This little festival is always lots of fun and

requirements listed and mic positions shown. Knowing ahead of time that the bass needs a mic or has a pickup or uses an amp can save a lot of time when setting up the band.

I have worked with acoustic bands that have five members but need multiple microphones, instrument DI boxes and up to fifteen instrument and vocal inputs. I have also had bands show up without power cords for their amps, and even

One of the best stage plots I have seen shows each mic position and each instrument position and then lists the microphone needs under the graphic of the stage. Calling for specific types of microphones the band prefers is helpful. Also if the band carries their own mics or DI boxes, that information is important.

After all, the main goal is to make the band sound their best. The very little effort it takes to contact the sound contractor and

“So the best advice I can offer is for someone in the band to be responsible for creating a stage plot...”

a great way to end the year.

I have said this in the past but it deserves repeating for all the band members who may be reading this. It is extremely important to contact the sound contractor prior to appearing at an event to discuss your sound reinforcement requirements. Showing up for the gig and finding out that your sound needs cannot be met can be a disaster waiting to happen.

There have been festivals where the only available equipment is a large diaphragm condenser mic and all the bands are expected to use it. This can be quite a shock to groups who use multiple microphones, a monitor system, etc. and don't have a clue how to use a single mic. So, it is always best to check in ahead of time.

From the viewpoint of a sound guy, it is really helpful to know ahead of time what each band will need. In the case of Tygh Valley, I already know and have worked with some of the groups, but there are a couple that I am not familiar with and they have not taken the time to contact me with their needs. All I can do is take lots of gear, plenty of mics and stands and hope for the best. That can be frustrating.

So the best advice I can offer is for someone in the band to be responsible for creating a stage plot with sound

forget to bring instrument cords if their guitar or bass uses a pickup. That means I better have enough equipment to take care of their needs at the last minute.

Stage plots can be as simple as hand drawn or created in a graphics program showing where microphones are to be placed, what instruments and vocalists are involved and how to set the band up. These are very helpful to have before the band takes the stage so I can be ready in the short time allowed between bands.

make sure he has an accurate stage plot and instrument list can save precious time at the event. In the meantime I will continue to bring massive amounts of equipment, cords, microphones, etc. because some bands can't make the extra effort and I need to be ready for anything.

If you have any questions about anything involving recording, mastering, audio software, duplicating, mics, speakers or sound reinforcement, please feel free to contact me at : GZsound@hotmail.com.

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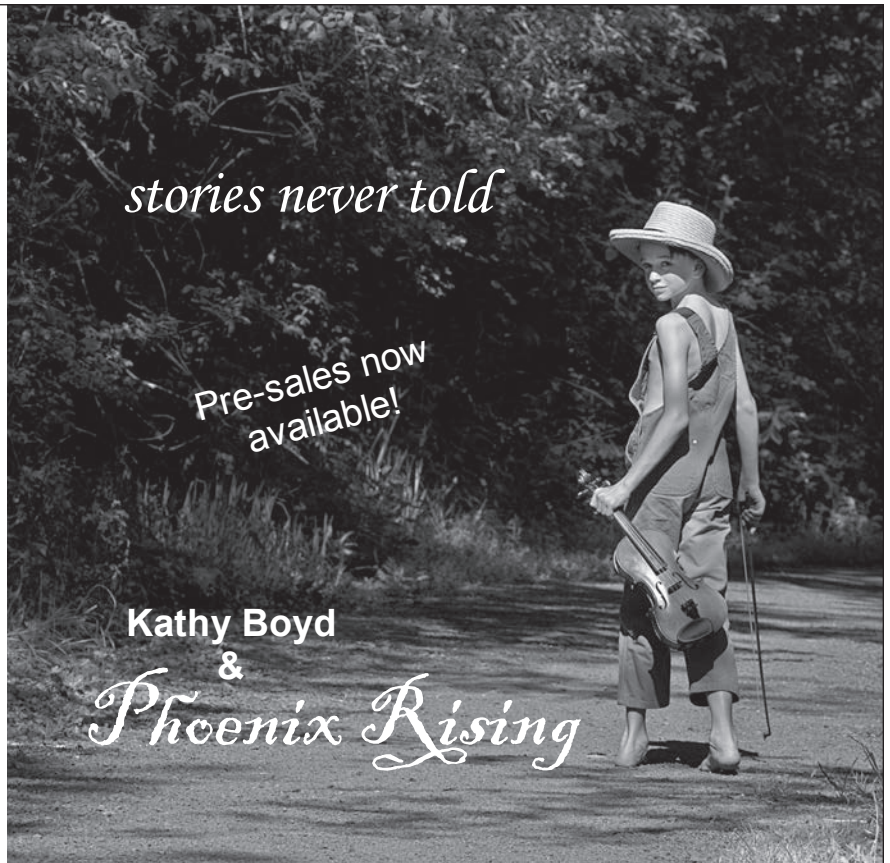
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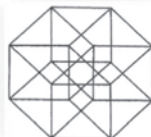
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When the early settlers of this country began socializing with their neighbors, they often shared music as well as conversation. These get-togethers were the first American jam sessions, though they did not get named until the early twentieth century. These early jams grew in size as communities grew. Soon these social musicians began playing for the entertainment of larger and larger rural and urban crowds until monetary rewards, sheet music, recording techniques and radio combined to create modern

It was late and there was a break in the jamming at Boss Tilly's campsite. In anticipation of the months that lay between tonight and the next festival season, the discussion turned to the various jams that were held during the year back in our local areas.

Uncle Roy said, "Most of the jams around where I live are held in people's homes."

"I run a jam in a local pub twice a month. I call a few good pickers and we play for 2-3 hours," added Eugene Potter.

"And that's why I will never go to your jam. A jam in a public place ought to be open to everyone." John countered.

Eugene lectured, "I just want the people listenin' to hear real bluegrass, so they know what it is supposed to sound like. I don't let no amateurs or jazz-grassers or folkies play - invitation only!"

John answered, "Why don't you just get put together a band and do a show? A jam is supposed to be an open social gathering. Being together and enjoying the music is the point. If you want to show everyone

"Commercial music has continued to grow with new technology and the recording and performing opportunities for musicians of all levels has increased exponentially. However, through it all, the need to socialize and play music with friends has never been extinguished."

commercial music. Commercial music has continued to grow with new technology and the recording and performing opportunities for musicians of all levels has increased exponentially. However, through it all, the need to socialize and play music with friends has never been extinguished. Where once community and family jam sessions were the primary way people in remote areas learned to play music, we now have e-lists, websites and "myspaces" dedicated to spreading the word about jam sessions, workshops and classes. Local venues in cities and small towns open their doors to jam groups. The number of jam sessions at a festival often determines the success and reputation of a festival - sometimes to a greater extent than the paid acts. Jam size, type, location, and frequency are all topics of discussion and even disagreement. There is even something called "jam etiquette"! But one thing has never changed; when the talking stops, the music starts and when the music stops the talking starts all over again.

I jumped in, "We have a lot of jams in the Portland/Vancouver area, and classes on how to jam, too!"

Natchie Dobbs drawled, "They gotta jam over at this bar outside of Tucson that starts with a lesson for beginners. It lasts durn near an hour before the real jammin' starts."

John Murphy asked, "Can anyone join in that jam, Natchie?"

"Sure. Ain't none of us that good; we're always glad to have new folks" Natchie answered.

"Not me, I only let the invited musicians join my jam." Eugene exclaimed.

what bluegrass is, why don't you write a book or make a CD?"

I could see that it was going to be another one of John and Eugene's famous arguments, so I jumped in again, "Hey, I've got one more tune in me before I go to bed, are you boys all talk or are you gutsy enough to try Jerusalem Ridge this late at night?"

"I can play it in my sleep, it's Eugene that gets all confused and forgets the D minor part," John stated.

Before Eugene could respond, Cody Pike kicked the tune off with his fiddle. I silently mouthed "Thank You!" and Cody gave a big wide grin.

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Duane Boyer *By Matt Snook*

BE: Did you continue with them after you were out of school, or was that over...?

DB: No, I played with them after I was out of school, and then I worked with them kind of overseeing operations, I guess, after I was out. Then I started teaching at the college four years later, but I had helped with the Ambassadors in the meantime, working with them as musical advisor in that capacity for a while.

BE: How long did the Ambassadors last?

DB: They lasted into the early 80's. They had a group similar to that back in the 50's, so the Foundation approached some of the powers that be at the college about starting it up again. The Dean of Women talked to several students about it and put the first one together. It was all hand selected at first, then they started having auditions later on. But it went on for 15 or so years, and then basically MTV and that sort of thing made it less of a good thing, simply because when we were doing it live entertainment was pretty rare, and by the time they were done kids could sit there and watch all these choreographed things with smoke and all that, so live music was having to compete with that in the theater of television. I think it died at an appropriate time.

DB: During that time was when we had the first festival here, actually the festival, during the time of BMCWB and the Ambassadors. In '69, one of the campus service clubs sponsored it, and we had Poor Richard's Almanac, with Sam (Bush) and Alan (Munde) and Wayne Stewart and they drove out from Kentucky and then Phil and Vivian Williams came down and met them and Phil played bass and Vivian played fiddle, so they were a five piece band. Vivian and Sam did a few twin fiddle things, but mostly he played mandolin. We actually had two shows up at the high

school for that first festival - that was in March. We had close to fourteen hundred people in two shows for that first festival. And we played on the fact that Weiser and the National Old Time Fiddle Contest was close enough to this area that enough people knew about it. Both Sam and Vivian were Weiser champions and we had Loyd Wanzer who had won the Open Championship and he came over and played. Then we had several local players, and then of course we played.

DB: It was such a success that another service club thought "Oh, wow, that's cool, let's cash in on that," so about two months later we had Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys. That's when I was a Clinch Mountain Boy. I had to play bass, because their bass player had health problems just before they left so they came as a trio. It was just Curly Ray Cline, Larry Sparks, and Ralph. Wherever they played they would just use a local bass player.

BE: So what was it like being a Clinch Mountain Boy?

DB: I really don't remember, other than just being up there playing! They did an awful lot of things I didn't know, but most of them were pretty easy to follow.

Part 2 will appear in the January/February edition of the Bluegrass Express

Yodeling *By Larry B. Wilder*

Folks will sometimes differentiate between blue yodels, cowboy yodels Alpine and other yodels. As with musical genres, the lines are not always clear and fusions occur. We have heard bluegrass "defined." Pete Seeger about went bonkers when self-styled experts would impart what a real folk song was. As you become yodeling-immersed, maybe you'll develop your sensibilities into yodeling genre-polemics.

Time to hit the yodeling trail, pals. Lo-ooo-lay—ee-doo!

Thanks for your kind attention. Write me your ideas in a Pony Express letter.

Next time we'll look at:

4-Some great yodelers.

5-Connection to bluegrass.

6-The most heard American yodeler and the story of his famous tune that has become our most beloved yodeling song.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch library, some good reading is Yodel-ay-ee-oo: The Secret History of Yodeling Around the World.

Involved in acoustic music as a band member and solo artist since 1971, Larry Wilder has worked in Pain in the Grass, Gold Rush, Foxfire, Deja Blue, Columbia Cutups and currently the Stumptown Stars bluegrass band and the Americana Trio.

Larry may be contacted at:
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Brian is a singing, songwriting, multi-instrumentalist (guitar and tenor banjo). He teaches private lessons, workshops, and mandolin camps, focusing on many types of musical genres, including swing and bluegrass. As a solo act, Brian lights up the stage with originals and covers that swing, stomp, waltz, and ease into his personal style. He is also the mandolinist for the band Ida Viper. Phone: 503-686-8673. Email: brian@mandoberlin.com
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A compelling folk rock/ gospel/ celtic/ bluegrass blend, the KWB's original songs will resonate with your own life and send your spirit soaring. Stunning vocals, an extensive instrumental repertoire and a powerful yet fun-loving stage presence make the KWB a great choice for festivals, churches, concerts and private events. Kate White (vocals, violin), Glenn Farley (vocals, guitar), Scott Minter (mandolin, banjo, whistles), Robert Wayne (djembe, percussion). Contact: (360) 904-4062
katewhiteband@comcast.net
www.katewhitemusic.com
www.myspace.com/katewhiteband

The Kindreds

Rooted in Americana music, acoustic country flavored folk with a dash of bluegrass and mixed-with original compositions and rich three part vocals. Email: info@the-kindreds.com or visit www.the-kindreds.com, 541 929-7021.

Larry Wilder and the Stumptown Stars

Hot, solid bluegrass, a guaranteed success for your private, corporate, wedding or concert occasion! Top-notch picking, bluegrass, cowboy, gospel, folk, hundreds of Americana tunes & amazing yodeling. Members: Garrett Maass, mandolin; Gretchen Amann, bass; Andy Emert, fiddle; Nolan Bronson – Guitar and Larry Wilder – banjo/ guitar Nolan Bronson-guitar; Larry Wilder-banjo-guitar. 503 407-8676 info@stumptownstars.com.

Lee Highway

Mike Stahlman (banjo), Mike Eisler (fiddle), John Averill (mandolin), Sue Averill (bass) and Rich Hogle (guitar). All members share vocals.
For bookings: call Mike Eisler 541 745-7122
Crazyfiddle@comcast.net, www.leehighway.net.

The Loafers

An acoustic quartet specializing in bluegrass, jazz and old time instrumentals, with a few good classic vocals thrown in for good measure. Mike Stahlman: banjo, Dave Elliot: mandolin, Aaron Stocck: guitar, Holly Johnson: bass 503 663-3548.

Lost Creek Bluegrass Band

Lost Creek delivers driving bluegrass and old time standards with outstanding vocal harmonies and tasteful instrumentation. For years they've delighted audiences at bluegrass festivals, pubs, parks, weddings, and markets in both Oregon and Washington. Email: theband@lostcreekmusic.com 503-442-2832.

Lucky Gap

Good Old-time Traditional Americana and bluegrass on the Oregon Coast. Guitar, Banjo, Fiddle, Mandolin, Dobro, Bass. Weddings, Parties, Dances, Special Occasions. Contact: Chaz Malarkey at 541.265.2677, malarkey@charter.net, or Bob Llewellyn at 541.444.2069, pusspud@yahoo.com.

Matt Gray and Jeff Shippy

Matt, a past Oregon State bluegrass banjo champ, and Jeff, a past Oregon State bluegrass fiddle champ, have played together for years as members of the bands True North and Mollybloom.
Contact Phone number: 503-659-6274,
Mailing Address: 3912 SE Olsen, Milwaukie, OR, 97222, email: banjomatt@hotmail.com,
Website: www.banjomatt.com/.

Misty Mamas

Misty Mamas serve up powerful harmonies and tasteful instrumentals combining the American genres of bluegrass, gospel, folk and country music. Carol Harley (vocals, guitar, banjo, mandolin), Katherine Nitsch (vocals & guitar), April Parker (vocals & mandolin) and Eilee Rocci (vocals & upright bass).

Go To www.oregonbluegrass.org For More Info & Links

Please contact Lisa Remmer, (OBA Database & Membership Manager) at lisarem@comcast.net if you are interested in receiving a Supporting Performer Membership form.

Mollybloom

Original contemporary bluegrass quintet. David Dahl, guitar; Ron Relaford, mandolin; Clark Blanchard, bass; Bob Rindy, fiddle; and Rand White.
Contact: www.mollybloombluegrass.com
or Anita Blanchard at blanchardca@comcast.net
503 399-1965.

Mud Springs Gospel Band

Gospel Bluegrass/Country band plays originals and classics. George Klos: banjo, guitar, whistle, harmonica; Don Mobley: bass; Darrell Glaspie: mandolin, guitar; Alan Smoke: fiddle. 541 475-6483 or donmobley@madras.net, www.mudspringsgospel.com.

New Old Friends

New Old Friends is a "real deal" traditional bluegrass band that gets its inspiration from the major bluegrass bands from the 1940s through the 1960s, and performs its material (including some original tunes) in a way that keeps the essence of "classic" bluegrass intact. Though all play several different instruments, in New Old Friends, they have settled on the following line-up: Rollie Champe – mandolin and vocals; Chuck Davidshofer – acoustic bass and vocals - (503) 288-4191; Randy Oman – guitar and vocals; Peter Schwimmer – banjo and vocals - (503) 282-0344, schwimbo@pacifier.com.

Prairie Flyer

Prairie Flyer is Jim Faddis (guitar), Andre Vachon (mandolin/dobro), Jason Stewart, (banjo), Steve Blanchard (guitar) and Dave Hackwith (bass). Prairie Flyer moves flawlessly from songs by Steve Earle to original compositions, from Townes Van Zandt to Bill Monroe, from Jackson Browne to solid traditional bluegrass. 541 466-7018 www.prairieflyer.com.

Rogue Bluegrass Band

Music the way music should be: Bluegrass style, Ed Hershberger, banjo technician; Don Tolan, professor of mandolin; Ben Trump, fiddlin'; Paul Hirschman, flat pickin'; Deb Smith-Hirschman, bass thumpin'.
Contact Ed 503 245-4158
www.geocities.com/roguebluegrassband
or email: roguebluegrassband@yahoo.com.

Rose City Bluegrass Band

Pure entertainment for young and old! Bluegrass, Irish, Americana and more. Contact us for your wedding, picnic, party or club. Charlie Williamson 503 248-1854 (days) or 503 892-2641 (evenings). charliew3@nwlink.com www.rosecitybluegrass.com.

Roundhouse

Founded in 1994, members are 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. Website: <http://www.roundhouse-band.com/>, Email: roundhouseband@qwest-office.net

Runs Real Good

Runs Real Good is Clayton Knight, Tom Marshall, Kelli Plummer, and Bill Marshall. We Play not-too-traditional bluegrass, respectful of our roots, but willing to roam a little now and then
Contact Clayton Knight, 503-358-0658
or claytonknight@comcast.net

Sidekicks Bluegrass and Nostalgia Band

Perfect for weddings/anniversaries, conventions, community events and cruises. Bluegrass, Country, Swing, and Ragtime. CD's available. 2105 NW 12th Street, Redmond, OR 97756.
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www.leroynewportsband.com.

Siskiyou Summit

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541 488-0178,
www.siskiyousummit.com.

Whiskey Puppy

Dedicated to preserving americana roots music, while exploring early & contemporary bluegrass.
503 227-0647,
email:rgold@myvw.net
www.whiskeypuppy.com

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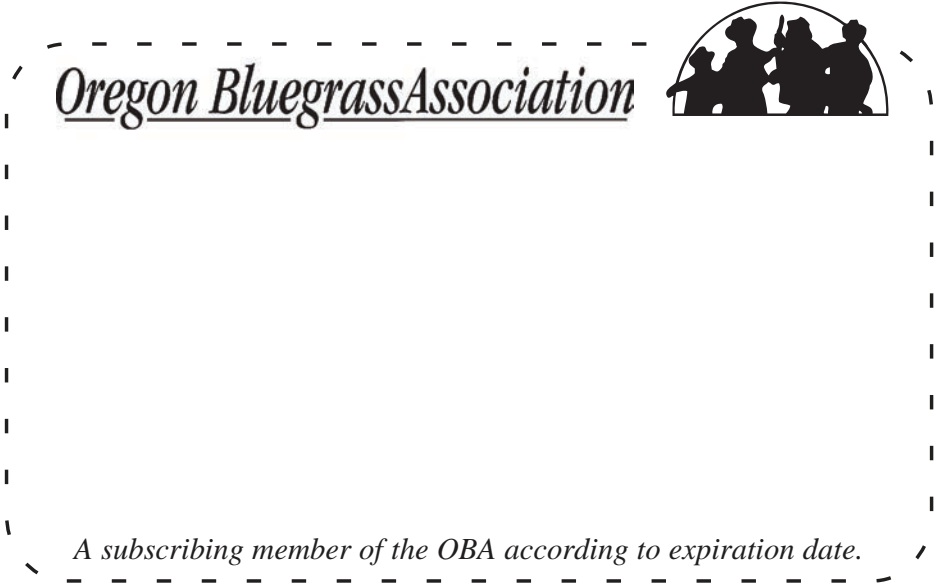
The Mississippi

pizza pub

- Saturday, November 1st
Caroline and Maggie's Old-Time Play Party 4:00pm
- Wednesday, November 12th
Blair St. Mugwumps 9:00pm
- Friday, November 14th
Ebenezer 6:00pm
- Saturday, November 15th
Professor Banjo's Old-Time Play Party 4:00pm
Chickweed 9:00pm
- Tuesday, November 18th 6:00pm
Nann Alleman (from The Flat Mountain Girls) and friends
- Saturday, November 29th
Paul Silveria's Fireside Lounge 9:00pm
- Saturday, December 6th
Professor Banjo's Old-Time Play Party 4:00pm
- Friday, December 12th
Chickweed 9:00pm
- Saturday, December 13th
Paul Silveria's Fireside Lounge 9:00pm
- Friday, December 19th
Ebenezer 6:00pm

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Oregon Bluegrass Association Membership

The Board of Directors of the Oregon Bluegrass Association cordially invites you to join the organization. Benefits include a subscription to the Bluegrass Express and discounts to OBA sanctioned events. The Oregon Bluegrass Association is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation founded in 1982.

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Oregon Bluegrass Association 
Check out our website at:
www.oregonbluegrass.org

Membership

Check all that apply

- New Member Renewal
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- Supporting Performer\$50 (1 yr.)
- Angel Sponsor\$60 (1 yr.)
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- Contributing Business Sponsor\$100 (1 yr.) / \$275 (3 yrs.)

Volunteering

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