

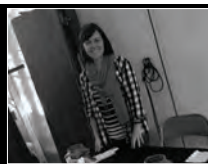
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July, Aug., Sept.
2019

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

Introducing Mimi Dobler, Banjo
Dynamics, What's Cookin',
and more ...



Oregon Bluegrass Association
www.oregonbluegrass.org

Bluegrass *Express*

Introducing Mimi Dobler: **OBA VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

By Clayton Knight

When I asked Mimi why she joined the OBA, she said, "I don't like sitting on the sidelines."

As the OBA's newest Director and Volunteer Coordinator, her place at the center of the action is assured. There isn't much in a volunteer-driven organization that happens without people stepping up and pitching in. Mimi is the kind of person who inspires people to do just that. "I get there early and stay late," she says.

Like an increasing number of members, Mimi came to the OBA through Taborgrass, but she has been around music her whole life. Her grandfather played the fiddle and mandolin, and she grew up in a family band, playing a mix of country, rock, and gospel music in and around Vancouver, Washington.

Along the way, she says, she "accidentally joined" a glam-punk band called the *Fabulous Downey Brothers*. "I loved the performative aspect of it, but the musical side was lacking," and she eventually moved on.

Later, she found a job in an old-time portrait studio in Seattle, a place in which customers pose in period dress for sepia-toned photos. The background music was bluegrass and old time, and she listened and absorbed what she heard—"music

that's just music," as she describes it.

About five years ago, with her first paycheck from a new job, she bought a mandolin. She doesn't remember why she

"Playing with family is a big part of what music is; it's deeply important," Mimi said. For her, the family connection is treasured and magical.

Since then, she began attending area bluegrass festivals and joined the OBA. "I appreciate that it is active and growing." She would like to see the Association find new ways to support artists and festivals, to welcome new musicians into the community, to showcase talented musicians, and to connect people.

Asked about her musical influences, she mentioned the Stanley Brothers, Flatt and Scruggs, Foghorn String-band (they were a favorite at the portrait studio), and... "Weird Al" Yankovic. When you see Mimi at a festival OBA table this summer, you can ask her about that one. It fits, though, with the twinkle in her eyes.

When she's not picking a mandolin, she is passionate about the outdoors. An avid hiker, she has summited Mt. St. Helens three times. And that fits, too.

We're thrilled to welcome the intrepid Mimi Dobler to our Board, and invite her to come early and stay as long as she likes.



chose the mandolin—perhaps something to do with her grandfather—but playing it, she said, "made music make sense." And it gave her a chance to make music with her dad.



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 \$30 for a General Member, \$50 for Supporting Performers, and \$125 for Contributing Business Sponsors, as well as other options. You can join online or complete the application on the back cover and mail 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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Expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org

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AD RATES AND DIMENSIONS

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Eighth Page	3.75 x 2.25	\$40.00	\$30.00

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Size	Dimension	Cost	With Print Ad
Leaderboard	728 x 90 px	\$50.00	\$30.00
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The OBA prefers to receive advertising payment in advance. For one-year contracts, we request payment six months in advance and we will bill for the next six months. Payment may be made online via PayPal at www.oregonbluegrass.org/bgexpress.php or you may mail a check payable to The Oregon Bluegrass Association, PO Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207.

When submitting an advertisement to the OBA, please be sure the ad is accurate and 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.

You can also find the OBA on Facebook! "Like" our page and keep up to date with bluegrass events.

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



Mimi's confirmation at the OBA annual meeting



Bridgetown Festival



Bluegrass In The Gorge



Lost River Festival



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

I didn't have much time for observation during our April annual membership meeting, but I remember thinking at one point, "Man, these people are up to something!" It's gratifying to see how dynamic our Association is becoming.

My thanks go out to all of you who suited up and showed up, and I offer special thanks to those of you who helped make us stronger through your comments and ideas. We're keeping track of our progress on your suggestions for improving how we do business, and we'll report back a little later in the year.

In particular, the first e-mail membership renewal reminder went out in June in response to your feedback, and if you check our web site, you'll see that the Bluegrass Express and Board Meeting Minutes have been brought up to date.

We are delighted to welcome a new Director to the leadership team, Mimi Dobler. Please see her profile in this issue. Mimi's portfolio includes managing our volunteers, so if you've got a talent and time, she's eager to hear from you. Drop her a line at volunteers@oregonbluegrass.org.

As of this writing, we're already three events into the festival season—Bridgetown, Bluegrass from the Forest, and Goldendale Pickers' Fest. Please see our web site for info on all the upcoming festivals. There are some great ones just around the corner, as well as some not-so-well-known gems.

The weekend of June 15-16, we proudly supported Bluegrass Pride at the Portland Pride Festival, with abundant thanks to our own Donna Dunaif and Patrick Seafield.

My personal pick for July is the Lost River Bluegrass Festival, put on by the wonderful folks in Merrill, Oregon. It's a great place to get to know the Southern Oregon bluegrass community, along with many of our Californian compadres.

The OBA will have a presence at many area festivals. Please stop by our table and visit, pick a few, and if you're able, consider taking a shift at the table to help us connect people with the OBA. Contact—you guessed it—Mimi Dobler for details.

In other news: We're making big strides toward our primary 2019 goal, creating a stable and sustainable financial process. Big thanks to our Vice President Pat Connell and Treasurer Patrick Seafield for moving us forward.

Now, there are two things I would like to ask of you, dear members:

First, we are committed to being in touch with you. It's an absolutely essential element in our other 2019 goal, achieving an engaged membership.

And we depend on you for an important piece of being in touch. Every quarter we receive a stack of Bluegrass Express issues that are returned by the postal service as undeliverable. And when we send e-mails, like the aforementioned renewal reminders, we find a significant number of members for whom we don't have current e-mail addresses.

Please take a moment to update your contact information with our Membership Chair, Dave Hausner, at membership@oregonbluegrass.org. Unless, of course, you're sure you're up to date because you're receiving both the Bluegrass Express and our e-blasts.

And last, we're happy to say that our membership rolls are again on the increase, after a spell of decline. We've been able to reverse the trend, in part by focusing on timely renewals. And, yes, if you're reading this, chances are your membership is current.

But next time you renew, please consider doing so at our web site, and I encourage you to save your time and ours by selecting the auto-renewal option, so you're always current. It will make a difference.

As always, please accept my humble thanks for your membership and support.

Chris
OBA President



Photo By Doug Olmstead

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 Hodgson 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 - KМУZ 88.5 & 100.7

"Ken 'til 10" 6-8am M-F
Simulcast with KYAC.
kmuz.org, all bluegrass



Banjo Dynamics: Evaluating Your Banjo #2 in a series

By Tom Nechville

If you already have a banjo, or you are shopping for one, you'll want to evaluate the quality of the instrument and diagnose any problems that it may have.

First Impression

When you pick up a banjo, what is the first thought that pops into your head? Are you inspired to play by the mere feel and look of it? What about the sound? If it's an expensive banjo, there's a better chance that it has been well set-up by the maker or other luthier. Your banjo should draw you in to want to play it. It need not be an expensive instrument to have this quality, but it will likely require a bit more effort to produce that inspirational "play-me" allure if it is your typical garage sale special. Let's evaluate several aspects of your banjo, starting with its appearance, feel, weight, balance, sound and playability.

Appearance

Is your banjo shiny and new or rusty and old? Does the instrument have any eye-catching elements that are unique? Visual character contributes to the inspirational quality of your banjo. If it's dusty and dirty, take some time to polish it up. Use some 409 cleaner on the head, or use a pencil eraser to get the marks off. Take some 0000 steel wool to polish the frets. Use some "mirror glaze" or similar polish to buff out the scratches.

Feel

When you grab the neck of your instrument, you should take note of the thickness and width of the neck. Slim, low-profile necks are a little easier to play and feel better in the hand. It is possible to re-shape chunky necks by sanding them down to size and then refinishing them. But this kind of work is drastic and usually not a practical option. If you are curious what desirable dimensions would be, I offer the following dimensions used in Nech-

ville necks: Thickness from the top of the fingerboard surface (not including a fret itself) to the back side of the neck at the 1st



fret is .78". Width at the first fret is about 1 1/4". Thickness at the 12th fret is about .84", and the width there is about 1 3/4".

Another critical aspect of feel is having smooth fret ends. Do you feel the sharp edges of the frets sticking out the side of the fingerboard? That happens if a neck is made during high humidity conditions but dries out during dry winter months. You can use a fine flat file or flat diamond stone used for sharpening knives to bevel the ends of the frets so they feel comfortable to the hands. Hold the file lengthwise at a 45-degree angle and use careful firm strokes until the file barely touches the top corner of the fingerboard. Of course the methods suggested in this book require a steady hand and some skill with tools to avoid scratches and dings. So if you lack confidence with any of my suggestions, seek help from us or another qualified luthier.

To enhance the feel even more, you can round the corners of each fret end with a small file or emery board. If you work on fretted instruments as a hobby or profes-

sionally it may be worthwhile to acquire or make special tools for this purpose. I like to use a small file that has had the corners dulled so as to avoid gouges adjacent to the frets. Finish up by polishing the frets with some 400 to 1000 grit sandpaper. You may use ultra fine (0000) steel wool with a few drops of lemon oil right over the frets and finger board to clean and rejuvenate the appearance and feel of the fret board. Afterwards you can wipe the neck clean with a dry cloth. Perfectly level frets are a

critical part of good sound and playability so please stay tuned for additional tips in coming articles.

Another feel factor is how your right arm contacts the banjo body, or pot. Usually there is a metal armrest in place that buffers the sharp edge of the banjo's top tension hoop and prevents your right arm from dampening the vibrating head. Many armrests can still be irritating to the forearm, restricting circulation - sometimes to the point of numbness, especially after extended play. Nechville has developed a replacement beveled wooden armrest adaptable to most banjos which allows for more comfortable play without the constant stress of a hard metal edge against the arm. See www.nechville.com for availability information.

Weight

While weight is often a sign of good quality in banjos, heaviness can also present problems, especially taking its toll on the shoulders and back over long periods of

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Banjo Dynamics: Evaluating Your Banjo #2 in a series

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play. Solidly-built and tightly-assembled instruments need not be overly heavy to produce a bright and lovely sound, but the majority of professional bluegrass banjos have a heavy-duty body made of a thick wooden rim, capped with a dense metal tone ring which the head is stretched over. Heavy weight is your first clue about the sound potential of the instrument. If set up properly this type of banjo can produce the brilliance and volume often preferred by bluegrassers. If you are like me and play a lot standing up, you'd appreciate the lightest weight possible without sacrificing great, inspiring tone. With a wider range of tone rings available from Nechville and others, players today can choose lighter combinations of tone components without sacrificing any quality of sound. Old-time or mountain style clawhammer players are almost united in their preference for lighter weight banjo rims as the accepted standard for their genre.

Balance

Another important factor to consider when evaluating your instrument is how it balances in your lap, and how it hangs from the strap that you may be using. If the peghead falls down and you must expend energy just to hold the neck up, your left arm will quickly tire, leading to curtailed practice sessions. In order to get the most out of your practice, you should spend as much time as possible at each sitting. Invest in a good strap and take the time to adjust it so the neck remains at a comfortable playing angle unaided.

Sound

Beginners need only a clear note and easy playability through the early stages of learning. The benefit of high quality can not be overstated, however. Good musical tone and easy playability will vastly facilitate the speed of your learning and

make the process more enjoyable. A simple brush over the tuned strings is enough to tell if the tone will be acceptable to you. Since banjo bridges can be moved around on the head of the banjo, it is very common for banjo bridges to be misplaced, therefore causing poorer pitch intonation the further you fret the strings up the neck. While the fine positioning of the bridge is covered in



detail in later articles, it will suffice for now to understand that the 12th fret should be the halfway point to the bridge.

Use a long ruler or tape measure to make sure the bridge is the same distance from the 12th fret as the 12th fret is to the zero fret, or "nut" as it is called. Great sound has an intoxicating effect upon the player, and if played well, also upon the listener. The purpose of this article is to educate every player about the design of the instrument so that he or she will understand the instrument entirely, thereby being able to make the appropriate adjustments or changes that lead to optimal and inspiring tone.

If you are facing a problem with an unwanted buzzing sound, the problem can always be corrected either through securing

a loose component, or more commonly, through correcting the cause of fret buzzing. The cause of fret buzz is either overly low action, or an overly high level of one or more frets. A higher bridge is often a quick fix, while leveling the frets requires a little more investment of time or money. If you are facing a dull, lifeless tone, perhaps the strings are too old, the head is too loose, and/or the bridge is mismatched to the banjo. All of these modifications are covered in detail in coming articles.

Playability

Playability entails having the strings close to the frets so they are easy to press down and the banjo plays in tune. The distance from the top of the 12th fret to the bottom of the 3rd string is called the "string action" of your instrument. Ideal action should be under 1/8". As you know, if action is too low, strings will buzz on the frets, making the instrument unplayable. Low action, however, is much better than high action because it is easy to fix low action. High action is cause for serious concern and is

a major reason for seeking out a better banjo. Much will be said in following articles about the importance of the bridge upon sound and playability. Bridge height on each string is important for ease of play in combination with perfect sound. Don't worry, we'll get there. Just remember that if strings are too low to the frets, the problem is generally easy to fix, but not so if strings are already too high and the bridge is 3/8" or lower.

Stay tuned for more Dynamics From Nechville next time



12th
Annual

OREGON
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ASSOCIATION



2019

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August 23-25

Friday afternoon-Sunday noon

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Sat/Sun and
Dinner Fri/Sat
available for purchase

ZigZag Mountain Farm
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Rhododendron,
Oregon 97049

Accommodations:
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Open Mic Saturday night!



The Parking Lot Vernacular

By Ira Gitlin

[paper delivered at the Bluegrass Music Symposium, Western Kentucky University, September 10, 2005]

The discussion that follows is based chiefly on my own observations and speculations. I have been involved with bluegrass music since 1973, when I began to teach myself to play the banjo. I have worked as a professional or semi-professional musician since 1984, the year I first attended a bluegrass festival, and since 1994 I have earned my living solely from performing, teaching, and writing about music. Although I make no pretense of adhering to the canons of scholarship, I have tried throughout this paper to identify sources I have used. Any assertion of fact that is not accompanied by a reference to a written or recorded source may be understood to come from my own experience, personal communications, or something that I may have read somewhere that I can't quite recall. (Perhaps if I had known, years ago, that I would someday write this paper, I might have taken better notes.) I would like to thank everyone who has helped me, notably Sharon Watts and the staff of Bluegrass Unlimited magazine, the staff of the International Bluegrass Music Association, Neil V. Rosenberg, Dana Ward, and George Welling. Special thanks must go to Lee Michael Demsey of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings for invaluable last-minute discographic assistance.

In this paper I am introducing the term "parking lot vernacular" (PLV) to denote the complex of repertoire, arrangements, and procedures that a bluegrass musician can expect to encounter in a jam session. This body of expectations, which exercises a normative influence on amateur and professional musicians alike, has its origins in the classic recordings of the bluegrass so-called "golden era," but it has evolved over the years, and has come to encompass regional variations as well. I intend to outline some of the parameters

that shape the ever-changing PLV; explore some of the musical, social, historical, and technological factors that have caused it to vary with time and place; and speculate on how, once established, the PLV can influence subsequent recordings. A look at several specific instances in which PLV song versions deviate from the original or classic recorded versions will shed light on the forces that cause it to evolve.



The musicians who flocked to bluegrass in its early years were drawn to it in part because it was fascinatingly different from what they had heard their families, friends, and neighbors playing while they were growing up. Despite the clear bluegrass links to the old-time music with which they were familiar, they knew that it had been deliberately created by professionals who were seeking to establish their own identities in the musical marketplace.

Today's fledgling musicians have a different relationship to the music. We know that devotees were holding casual jam sessions within a few years of 1945's bluegrass big bang (Neil V. Rosenberg, *Bluegrass: A History*, p. 102). In the decades since then—and especially since the advent of bluegrass festivals in the mid-1960s—bluegrass has developed a participatory culture that envelops performers and fans alike, and often elicits admiring comments from outside observers. Young pickers now are as likely to learn the rudiments of their craft from family, friends, and neighbors as they are from recordings and Grand Ole Opry broadcasts. So it may not be too much of a stretch to suggest that bluegrass has become the old-time music of a large part of its audience.

With two generations or more of professional musicians having emerged from the ranks of recreational jammers, it seems only natural that some of the commercial recordings of the past few decades would reflect these amateur roots. And since—as I shall discuss presently—newer commercial recordings continue to shape the PLV, we may envision an endless cycle in which the PLV informs the playing of a cohort of young musicians, whose subsequent recordings then enrich the ever-evolving PLV, influencing successive cohorts of jammers, and so on.

The foundation, and indeed much of the superstructure, of the PLV consists of songs and instrumental pieces from the early recordings (roughly 1946 to 1965) of the most prominent first-generation bluegrass acts, especially Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt and Earl

Scruggs, and the Stanley Brothers, but also Don Reno and Red Smiley, Jimmy Martin, Jim and Jesse McReynolds, Bobby and Sonny Osborne, and a few others. The exact mix of songs and sources will vary with the tastes and experiences of the participants at any particular jam session, but it is safe to say that any pickers seeking common ground can find it somewhere within this

Continued on page 10



There's a lot happening in southern Oregon. OBA's Roseburg Chapter continues to host its monthly Third Sunday jam at the Sutherlin Senior Center, 202 E Central Ave, Sutherlin from 1 – 4:30 pm. It's been going for about 12 years now. Contact Liz Crain at 541-679-0553 or lizcrain42@gmail.com for more info.

Grants Pass has a monthly Third Thursday jam at the Wild River Pub, 533 NE F Street, Grants Pass. Music starts at 6. Bring your instrument and your voice. Contact Debra Antonucci at hugoants@msn.com or the pub at 541-474-4456.

John Nice-Snowdy, a graphic designer who moved from Hillsboro to Medford, does layout for the OBA's Bluegrass Express. He hosts a regular Medford Bluegrass Jam on the Second and Fourth Wednesdays each month at 7 pm at Wild River Pizza, 2684 North Pacific Hwy., Medford. He says they're "Too much fun!!" They've worked out a few kinks and everyone has a good time. He plans to keep hosting them "for as long as they will put up with us." Contact John at nicetunz@gmail.com or 805-748-6648.

In Klamath Falls, Fran and Ben Coker organize a monthly First Sunday jam from 1-5 pm at Mia's & Pia's Pizzeria, 3545 Summers Lane. She says, "The jam is still going strong. The musicians who have a good time keep coming back, the audience continues to enjoy it, and Mia's & Pia's are wonderful supporters for us being there. All in all - a great way to spend the First Sunday afternoon of the month." Contact benfcoker@gmail.com, or call 541-783-3478.

**KNOWN FOR HIS
"HIGH LONESOME"
SOUND,
DEL MCCOURY
WAS A LEADER
IN THIS "COLORFUL"
MUSIC GENRE**

Joyce Furlong, organizer of the Lost River Bluegrass Festival in Merrill, Oregon, has another great event planned from July 12-14, 2019. This will be their festival's second year. This year's lineup includes the Central Valley Boys, Blue Js, Hossettes, Keith Little & the LittleBand, Rainy & the

Rattlesnakes, Crying Uncle, Waking Hazel, and Stukel Mountain Stranglers. Info is online at www.lostriverfestival.com

Do you know that Del McCoury once made an appearance on the TV show, Jeopardy? He wasn't a contestant but was mentioned in a clue (see photo). *Bluegrass Today* caught up with him to see what he thought about that. McCoury said, "Jeopardy is one of those shows that everyone knows and watches from

time to time. I would have never guessed they would use me to help identify bluegrass music to their audience...but I'm glad they did, it's an honor. No matter what Jean says now, everybody will know I have a clue—at least on Jeopardy."

If you got them all correct, you just won a two-dollar bill to use on your long journey home from a festival this summer!

Joe Ross, from Roseburg, Oregon, picks mandolin with the Umpqua Valley Bluegrass Band. He can be reached at rossjoe@hotmail.com.

How many of you watched James Holzhauer recently win about \$2.5 million on the Jeopardy show? He was recently defeated by Emma Boettcher, a librarian. I wonder if either one of them would've been able to correctly give answers to these clues in a "Bluegrass Music" category:

CLUES:

1. He said, "Spill your guts on the stage and then walk in them."
2. Brand of mandolin Jimmy Gadreau endorses and plays
3. A.P. stands for this in A.P. Carter's name
4. David Grisman said, "He's the only person who can sing Bill Monroe with an Italian Yankee accent and get away with it."
5. The McReynolds Brothers
6. Number of strings on a banjolin
7. Former owner of Tony Rice's "most famous guitar in bluegrass."
8. Bill Monroe's brothers
9. A Kay bought for only \$16 in New York
10. He said, "Let him get over!"
11. Banjo player for Kentucky Thunder
12. First banjo player with The Country Gentlemen in 1957
13. Bill Monroe's song about a horse race in Louisville, Ky. on July 4, 1878
14. This group released "Flaming Banjos" and "Wild Oats" on the Alshire label
15. He left the Sunny Mountain Boys to work in an auto parts store
16. This band appeared on the syndicated national TV show "Playboy After Dark" in 1971
17. Bill Monroe's Tennessee walking horse
18. Zeke Morris got the idea for this song in a little honky tonk by this name just outside of Canton, North Carolina
19. He said, "'If you sing too high, people'll say, 'now that man's used bad judgment.'"
20. Purchased for \$150 from a Florida barbershop in October, 1943

See page 35 for answers



The Parking Lot Vernacular

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body of material, even when they can find it nowhere else.

Newer songs are continually added to the parking lot repertoire, as year after year fans imitate the latest work of their musical heroes. It is not unusual to hear jammers play songs that were introduced to bluegrass by the Country Gentlemen, the New Grass Revival, the Seldom Scene, the Bluegrass Cardinals, J.D. Crowe and the New South, Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, Hot Rize, the Nashville Bluegrass Band, Laurie Lewis, Del McCoury, Alison Krauss, Ricky Skaggs, Rhonda Vincent—indeed, by any prominent artist. Neil Rosenberg offers us a snapshot of this process in his description (*Bluegrass: A History*, p. 291) of Bill Monroe's 1971 festival at Bean Blossom, Indiana: "All the parking lot pickers were doing [the Bluegrass Alliance's] arrangement of 'One Tin Soldier.'" Now, in three decades of jamming from Maine to Georgia and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Plains, I have never encountered that song in a jam session, so I feel confident in saying that however popular it may have been in its day, it failed to gain a permanent foothold in the PLV repertoire. Other songs have fared better, though, such as Alan Mills' "Love of the Mountains," first released by the Lost and Found in 1975 and covered by Larry Sparks in 1980, or Pete Wernick's "Just Like You," which Hot Rize released in 1987; both songs are still heard in jam sessions today.

New material poised to enter the PLV repertoire must compete for jammers' attention with the older, more established tunes, and also with all the other likely new tunes. That competition gets fiercer each year as the number of new bluegrass releases continues to increase. Therefore, it seems unlikely that newer material will ever completely eclipse the old classics.

Several factors must be present if a new song is to gain widespread and permanent acceptance into the PLV. First, the song must be known to large numbers of pickers; that is, it must come from the repertoire of a band that travels and performs nationally, and enjoys frequent and widespread radio play. (The material of lower-profile and regional bands may show up in jam ses-

sions, but will not be as widely recognized or frequently heard as the work of the top national acts.) Simply put, jammers will not play a song if they do not get the opportunity to hear it in the first place.

In addition, the song must be easily learned and played by amateur musicians of average ability. Well over half of all bluegrass songs—some estimates run as high as 80 percent—can be accompanied using nothing more than the I, IV, and V chords (tonic, subdominant, and dominant). This enables a large number of musicians of modest harmonic sophistication to participate competently in jam sessions. In fact, bluegrass players often refer to any chords other than the I, IV, and V as "off-chords." The most commonly encountered off-chords are the vi (minor), the bVII (major, sometimes called the "drop chord"), and the II (major or dominant seventh, usually as a secondary dominant to the V). Much less frequently encountered are the ii (minor), iii (minor), bIII (major), III (major or dominant seventh), iv (minor), v (minor; very rare), VI (major or dominant seventh, often in a VI-II-V-I progression, as in "Salty Dog Blues"), and VII (major; very rare). Many experienced jammers, and even some professionals, cannot reliably and accurately recognize the less common chords, so pieces that use these harmonies are less likely to be learned, and therefore less likely to be played in jam sessions.

I witnessed this myself on several occasions in the early 1990s. At that time, Alison Brown's banjo tune "Leaving Cottdale" was enjoying considerable radio play (in August 1991 it reached number five on Bluegrass Unlimited's top-30 chart, a remarkable feat for an instrumental selection), and Brown often performed the piece in her live shows with Alison Krauss and Union Station, then as now one of the most admired and talked-about bands in bluegrass. With its distinctive and appealing melody and its nationwide exposure, "Leaving Cottdale" was bound to be attempted in jam sessions. But in every instance that I observed, most of the participants were unable to negotiate the chord changes in the first section of the tune: I-VI-ii-V-VII-iii-V. This tune was, as we say, a "jam buster." (For

a concise yet nuanced discussion of this topic, see "Jam-Busters"—How to Avoid Them" by guitarist and singer Yvonne Walbroehl, originally published in the Santa Cruz Bluegrass Society's newsletter *Bluegrass by the Bay*.) Norman Blake's "Ginseng Sullivan," which Tony Rice recorded in 1979, is another much-admired song that is doomed by its chord progression to skulk around the fringes of the PLV. Its verse uses a vi and a iii chord, and its chorus includes a bVII and a ii in a very unusual sequence.

First-generation recordings endow the PLV not only with its core content, but also with its formal structures. Like the grammar of a spoken or written language, or automobile drivers' rules of the road, a shared set of formal conventions allows jammers to proceed directly to playing their music, without the need to negotiate explicitly all the details of each song's arrangement. Many of these conventions mirror the standard arrangement practices heard on early bluegrass recordings. (These practices are not unique to bluegrass; they are shared with other country music of the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, and have counterparts in jazz and pop music of the same period.) For example, there is usually a regular alternation of verses, choruses, and instrumental solos ("breaks") that generally follow the chords of the verse; after an instrumental solo, the instrumentalists may vamp indefinitely on the tonic chord while the singer prepares to begin the next verse; and if a chorus follows immediately after a break, it is understood that there are no more verses and the song is about to end. Musician and teacher Pete Wernick has listed many of these "traditional unspoken ground rules" on his web site, www.drbanjo.com (Click on "Instructional," then on "Jamming tips").

But jam session song arrangements often exhibit features not commonly heard in classic bluegrass recordings. Such features can usually be interpreted as responses to the special requirements of impromptu performance. For example, in recordings, a single break after each chorus (except the last chorus) is the norm, but in jam sessions

continued



extra breaks are often inserted in an effort to allow every willing instrumentalist an opportunity to play a solo. Walbroehl describes this practice: “Give all of the pickers a chance to take a break, if possible. Sometimes in larger jams this is not practical, but I recall a jam where at least 12 pickers took breaks between the two verses of the song! It may have been the longest version of that song ever.” (“Jam Etiquette,” originally published in *Bluegrass by the Bay*)

In a similar vein, when jammers play an instrumental piece, it is not uncommon for every soloist to take a turn—typically proceeding in order around the circle in which they stand—before the first soloist gets a second turn. This contrasts with the approach heard on old recordings, in which the starting soloist usually alternates with the other soloists—for example, banjo-fiddle-banjo-dobro-banjo on several Flatt & Scruggs recordings from the 1950s—to create a rondo-like or a club-sandwich effect. But professional and semiprofessional musicians performing in ad hoc “pick-up” bands often resort to the familiar PLV default habit to flesh out their tunes. (Veteran Baltimore dobroist Dave Giegerich has seconded my opinion that this has its roots in jam-session conventions.) It has shown up in commercial bluegrass recordings, too. For example, in “Slipstream,” the second piece on Béla Fleck’s 1988 album *Drive*, the solos are taken, in order, by the banjo, fiddle, dobro, mandolin, guitar, and banjo, followed by a final statement of the theme by the banjo, fiddle, and dobro playing in harmony, in an arrangement that could have come straight out of a jam session. In fact, seven of the eleven tunes on *Drive* follow similar arrangements. (In a recent e-mail exchange, Fleck explained to me that the musicians on *Drive* “used the jam session as a starting point and altered it from there to make it interesting.”)

The instrumentalist who plays the initial solo of a song usually starts it with a pickup-note phrase, or “lead-in.” In classic bluegrass recordings lead-ins may be of various lengths; a band that rehearses together regularly has the luxury of crafting distinctive and individualized arrangements for its songs. PLV lead-ins, however, for pieces

in duple meter—by far the most common bluegrass meter—almost invariably fill the last beat and a half (sometimes the last beat and three-quarters) of a measure, using a variety of standard rhythmic patterns. Such standardized lead-ins give the other jammers enough time to recognize the tempo of a song, enabling them to enter on the downbeat. Anything shorter is likely to result in rhythmic confusion. Musicians sometimes call these lead-ins by jocular names that mimic their rhythms, such as “nick-nick-nick new” or “son-of-a-bitch I’m tired.”

There is evidence to suggest that fans and musicians recognize regional variants within bluegrass, like dialects of a language. For example, I have heard the term “Carolina slam” used to denote the focused, hard-hitting rhythm style favored by followers of contemporary mainstream bands like the Lonesome River Band and IIIrd Tyme Out. Some of the older fans in Baltimore have been known to refer to melodic, or Keith-style, banjo playing as “Yankee double-picking,” reflecting a general belief that northern players often favor less traditional styles of bluegrass, and a Baltimore traditionalist once told me, when the topic of California bands came up, “You know, they don’t play our kind of bluegrass out there.” Some regional differences lie more in the subtleties of timing and emphasis, as New York State banjoist Tony Trischka described in a 1984 interview: “[D]own at the Berryville festival in 1967 or ’68...I was jamming with some guys from the South, and...[t]here was a different feel in my right hand that I never had before. Then it faded because the guys I was playing with [in New York] didn’t have it and I didn’t either. ... I think you really do have to play with the people that have it, and that’s...the southern bands where the music came out of.” (Tony Trischka and Pete Wernick, *Masters Of The 5-String Banjo In Their Own Words And Music*, p. 345)

The material of locally and regionally active figures may be frequently heard in the PLV repertoire in one area of the country and seldom if ever heard elsewhere. The songs of Vern Williams and Ray Park, for example, are best known in northern California, while those of Bob Paisley (“Vern East,”

as I once heard him described) are more likely to show up in mid-Atlantic jam sessions. Even nationally known artists like the Seldom Scene or Country Gazette are often more influential on their home turf.

The individual tastes and repertoires of locally prominent amateur or semiprofessional players—especially singers, since it is they who often choose the songs to be played—can impart a distinctive flavor to jam sessions in a particular geographic area. The songs of Peter Rowan, for example, are heard more often around Washington and Baltimore than they might be in many other areas, simply because of the presence of several local singer-guitarists who like his material (aided, at times, by the presence of several sidemen in the area who have performed with Rowan and are familiar with his work).

Reverence for, and reference to, the past is fundamental to the culture of bluegrass. Bill Monroe used to describe his choices of repertoire, style, and instrumentation by citing the music he had heard in his youth, and it is still often possible to settle arguments with an authoritative “That’s the way Bill”—or Earl, or Ralph, or whoever—“did it.” (A succinct statement of this ethos can be found in a letter from Red Henry, a very knowledgeable musician, to the editor of *Banjo NewsLetter*, published in the September 1997 issue. After correcting a small error in a previously published tablature of Earl Scruggs’ “Foggy Mountain Chimes,” Henry comments, “Why is all this important? It’s Earl, that’s why.”) Bill Monroe himself once said, “[T]he man that wrote the number wrote it right and he wanted it kept that way. Put the notes in there right. Then you say that you’ve played the number right and you have done a good job for the man that’s wrote the number.” (*Masters of the 5-String Banjo*, p.12)

In light of this widespread spirit of musical conservatism and respect for precedent, it is worth noting that jam session performances of songs often deviate in significant ways—melodically, harmonically, lyrically,

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The Parking Lot Vernacular

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or in details of their arrangements—from the original recorded sources. I believe that an examination of several examples can shed light on the forces that shape the PLV, forces that often operate below the level of conscious decision.

(It is important to bear in mind that in the examples that follow, I am discussing how variant song versions might enter the PLV in the first place. I am not, of course, suggesting that every jammer who performs those versions has learned them directly from recordings, or generated them inadvertently through the processes about which I speculate below. But once a song version is introduced into jam sessions, other jammers will learn it from their friends, often without knowing or caring where it came from, or what its original form may have been. Furthermore, even when the first attested example of a song version is a commercial recording, it is still possible that the artist may have learned it through the folk processes of the PLV.)

First of all, professional musicians do not merely introduce listeners to new material, as discussed above; they also introduce their own versions of older material. If a performer is especially influential, his or her version of a song may partially supplant the original version, and may introduce the song to pickers who have never heard it before. Knowledgeable fans may recognize that “Another Night” is an old Stanley Brothers song, but there can be no doubt that its popularity in recent years is attributable to the 1992 recording by Alison Krauss and Union Station. Some songs may even become familiar from non-bluegrass sources. Many people first learned “Roll In My Sweet Baby’s Arms” from Buck Owens’ 1971 recording, which may explain why so many singers start the melody of the chorus on the first degree of the scale, as Owens did. (Flatt and Scruggs, in their 1950 version, started it on the third.) The Grateful Dead have introduced many of their listeners to songs

that we think of as bluegrass material, such as “Lonesome Road Blues,” “Shady Grove,” and “Dark Hollow.”

A well-informed listener can sometimes identify the ultimate source from which a PLV version of a song is derived, if the arrangement is especially distinctive. For example, if—as was common in the mid-1990s—a jam session arrangement of “I’ll Take The Blame” is slow but hard-driving, with an unusual stop in the middle of a banjo solo, it must have been patterned after the Lonesome River Band’s 1994 recording, not Flatt and Scruggs’ 1957 original. Versions of “Wild Bill Jones” that have been derived from the 1989 recording by Alison Krauss and Union Station can be identified by the use of vocal harmony in the second verse (“He said, ‘My age is twenty-one...’”) and a yodel in the last verse, as well as by some lyrical peculiarities.

From the late 1970s through the mid-1990s

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The Parking Lot Vernacular

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Tony Rice was one of the most copied artists in bluegrass. His recordings, especially Rounder Records' Bluegrass Album series, introduced or reintroduced many songs to the PLV repertoire. On his 1984 album *Cold On The Shoulder*, he recorded a version of "John Hardy." Although this old ballad is a traditional song with no single classic bluegrass version, it has long been a jam session favorite—but always as an instrumental. Rice, recording it with vocals, acknowledged this departure from standard bluegrass practice in his liner notes to the album: "I didn't even know that there were lyrics to this tune until I heard Jerry Reed do it on an album about ten years ago. This is one I previously recorded as an instrumental." So influential was he, that soon vocal renditions of "John Hardy" were being performed regularly by jammers, and also by professional and semiprofessional musicians. (Dobroist Fred Travers recently told me that his 1992 recording of the song was directly influenced by Rice's version.)

When considering song versions that have long been standard within the PLV, it is

important to remember a few historical facts about the bluegrass industry. Bluegrass experienced a growth spurt in the late 1960s and 1970s. New fans flocked to the music—and its jamming culture—as bluegrass festivals proliferated and attracted mainstream publicity (*Bluegrass: A History*, pp. 272-304). The soundtracks of the movies *Bonnie And Clyde* (1967) and *Deliverance* (1972) yielded hit recordings of "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" and "Dueling Banjos," respectively (*Bluegrass: A History*, pp. 263-269). In addition, some folk- and country-rock artists proudly celebrated their bluegrass roots, most notably Grateful Dead front man Jerry Garcia, whose 1975 side project *Old And In The Way* presented bluegrass material with a countercultural sensibility, and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, whose 1972 triple album *Will The Circle Be Unbroken* introduced many listeners to the music of Earl Scruggs, Jimmy Martin, and Doc Watson.

The neophytes who swelled the ranks of jammers in the '60s and '70s—a sort of musical baby boom—would naturally have

learned whatever song versions were prevalent in the PLV at that time. These newcomers' great numbers would have ensured that those versions continued to be widely heard in the years since then, as successive cohorts of jammers learned from them, and so on. But that rise in the popularity of bluegrass was occurring at a time when many of the original classic recordings were out of print or difficult to obtain, making then-recent recorded versions all the more influential. (This was, of course, decades before Amazon.com or Bear Family box sets.) Therefore, I believe that recordings from the '60s and '70s may prove to constitute an especially significant influence within the PLV even today, perhaps nearly as significant as those from the earlier bluegrass period.

Another likely source for song versions that deviate from classic recorded sources is simple error. Singers often misunderstand the lyrics on recordings. In popular

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music this phenomenon has been commemorated in humorous books like *‘Scuse Me While I Kiss This Guy* by Gavin Edwards; bluegrass can also boast a few such comic misunderstandings, like “two meatballs in the sand” for “to me, boys, it was sad,” from “Goodbye Old Pal,” and “with feta cheese and hair” for “with faded cheeks and hair,” from “Out In The Cold World.” (See the text accompanying the tablature to Janne Viksten’s banjo tune “Feta Cheese and Meatballs,” published in the August 1997 issue of *Banjo Newsletter*.)

Most lyrical misunderstandings, though, result in entirely plausible variants which, once established, may be perpetuated through oral transmission, in published songbooks (usually unauthorized), and on the Internet. For example, the last line of the chorus of Bill Monroe’s “I’m On My Way Back To The Old Home” is “that shined long ago where I lived,” but a recent Google search for the lyrics showed nearly as many sites that gave that line as “that shines [or “shined”] on the road where I lived,” a variant which I have often heard in jam sessions, and which, in fact, was sung by Tony Rice and Doyle Lawson on *The Bluegrass Album* in 1981. In Emma Smith’s 1984 recording of Merle Travis’ “Dark As A Dungeon,” the singer (or her source) appears to have learned the lyric from a written text. In the second verse, Smith sings “Like a friend with his dope” instead of “Like a fiend with his dope,” a mistake unlikely to have resulted from a mishearing but easy to understand as a misreading. Although I have not heard this variant in jam sessions, it does illustrate how printed sources might give rise to distinctive song versions.

As I have discussed above, songs that use “off-chords”—especially the less common ones—are less likely to take root in the PLV repertoire. When such songs are played, the off-chords may sometimes be changed to chords with which the players are more familiar. (Earl Scruggs himself did this in his adaptation of the jazz instrumental “Farewell Blues.” Where the original version has the chords VI-ii-#II dim., Scruggs plays VI-II-#II.) For example, a iii chord may be changed to a vi (as I have heard done in the chorus of Ian Tyson’s “Summer Wages,”

best known to bluegrass fans from the 1975 version by J.D. Crowe and the New South); a ii may be changed to a IV or a II, as the melody permits. In the Seldom Scene’s recordings of “Rider,” one of their signature songs, the last line follows the chords bIII-bVII-bIII-bVII-I. More than once, however, I have heard jammers render it as bVII-IV-bVII-IV-I, which is a more commonly heard progression in general, though it entails a change in the song’s melody.

Melodies, in fact, are malleable in the PLV. Vocal harmony parts above the lead part can make it difficult for many listeners to pick out the melody accurately; they may mistake a prominent harmony for the less prominent melody, or have to guess at the melody when it is overpowered by a tenor (and sometimes even a high baritone) part. I have, for example, seldom if ever heard the melody to the chorus of “The Lonesome River” sung in jam sessions as the Stanley Brothers recorded it in 1950, though the high baritone part is usually reproduced with tolerable accuracy. Singers often change melodies to fit their vocal ranges, or simply out of a desire for artistic expression. They may also unconsciously change an uncommon turn of melody so that it conforms to a more common pattern, as when the first line of “Rank Strangers To Me” is sung to the melody of “The Hills Of Roane County” or “The Precious Jewel.”

This last point is especially worth noting. I believe that in many instances where PLV song-versions deviate from the classic recordings, we may posit some analogy operating unconsciously or subliminally in the minds of the originators of those versions, whoever they may have been. In general, there is a drift away from the anomalous and exceptional, and toward the common, consistent, and typical.

In PLV renditions of Bill Monroe’s song “It’s Mighty Dark To Travel,” the verses and choruses are almost invariably sung to the same melody. However, in the 1947 original, the second lines of the verse and chorus differ slightly in both melody and chords, while the first, third, and fourth lines are identical. This is very unusual. Countless songs have musically identical verses and

choruses; countless songs have choruses that differ from the verses in ways that are obvious from the very first line. But I can think of no other songs that share the subtle verse-chorus difference of “It’s Mighty Dark To Travel,” as originally composed. There is little wonder, then, that the song has been transformed to fit into a widely recognized category by changing the melody and chords of the verse to match those of the chorus.

This process of change by analogy is well known in the field of linguistics. The unusual sound combination at the end of the word “nuclear,” for example, is often unwittingly changed to the more common “-ular”; a tricky construction like the present subjunctive (“I wish I were in Dixie”) might slip into the superficially similar past indicative (“I wish I was in Dixie”). When discussing the PLV, we may invoke the drift from the exceptional toward the typical to explain melodic and chordal changes, as discussed above, as well as variations in lyrics and arrangements.

Lyrical drift can be observed in performances of the unusually complex chorus of “I’d Rather Be Alone.” As originally recorded by Flatt and Scruggs in 1953, it states, “I’d rather be alone and have you dream of me only, and to have you say you’re sorry that we are apart; I’d rather be alone and have you dream of me only, than to be in your arms, but never in your heart” (emphasis added). This elaborate parallelism, repetition, and delaying of the antithesis is so unlikely to occur in normal speech that many singers alter the chorus to, “I’d rather be alone and have you dream of me only, than to have you say you’re sorry that we are apart...” (emphasis added). Although this wording makes the chorus self-contradictory, its superficially more straightforward syntax has ensured its adoption not merely by anonymous jammers, but also by professional singers like Larry Sparks and Tony Rice.

To see how analogy can alter a tune’s arrangement, let us look at Earl Scruggs’ instrumental “Ground Speed.” In PLV

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performances of this tune, rhythm players will almost always stop in the middle of the tune's second part (the "B-part"), allowing the lead instrumentalist to play unaccompanied for four beats. Indeed, the tune is so frequently done this way that several professional musicians I know were unaware that in the original 1959 recording, the backup musicians played straight through without stopping. I would suggest that the PLV practice here arose by analogy with other, similar instrumentals, such as "Daybreak In Dixie" and "Beaumont Rag," that regularly include such a stop. Both of these well-known tunes share the "Ground Speed" ragtimey feel, and, like "Ground Speed," have B-parts whose chords alternate between the V and the I. (The dramatic rhythm stop can also be heard in other tunes that have less-similar chord progressions, like Flatt and Scruggs' "Dear Old Dixie" and Monroe's "Rawhide.") In the mid-1990s I observed a jam session in which some professional musicians were playing "Ground Speed." The first time the B-part came up, the banjo player, Kristin Scott Benson, glanced around apprehensively; then, when no one stopped, she broke into a big smile. Clearly, she preferred the tune to be played as originally recorded, but had not expected that to happen.

The preceding example illustrates a deviation that stems from an analogy with other tunes. Jammers' desire for internal consistency within a single tune is another likely cause of deviations. On the original 1947 recording of Bill Monroe's "Blue Grass Breakdown," the breaks run as follows: mandolin, AAB; banjo, AB; mandolin, AAB; fiddle, AA; mandolin, AB. In an alternate take from the same session that was not released until 1992, the breaks are mandolin, AAB; fiddle, AA; mandolin, AAB; banjo, AA; mandolin, AAB. Present-day impromptu performances, however, generally regularize the form to AAB for all soloists. Today's jammers expect formal consistency, which enables a jam session to run more smoothly. It appears not to have been one of Monroe's major concerns.

This is abundantly clear in the original recordings of two other popular Monroe instrumentals. "Big Mon" and "Wheel

Hoss" are both generally played today with an AABB structure for each break. But the breaks in the 1958 recording of "Big Mon" are as follows: fiddle, AABBA; banjo, ABB; fiddle BBAA; mandolin, BBAA; fiddle BBAA. "Wheel Hoss," as originally recorded in 1954, is almost chaotic: fiddle, AABB; mandolin, A (1/2A)BB; fiddle, AABB; banjo, ABBA; fiddle BB. Furthermore, the B-parts range in length from 16 to 19 beats, and—most surprising to PLV-trained listeners—five of the ten B-parts omit the guitar "G-run" that is usually regarded as the signature lick of the tune.

Two factors may have operated to produce the PLV version of "Wheel Hoss." First, the desire for formal consistency has regularized the structure to AABB for all breaks. (We might also interpret this as the result of an analogy with the countless other AABB fiddle tunes.) In addition, the distinctive G-run is so striking that musicians have chosen to insert it at the end of every B-part, forcing them to standardize the length of the B-part at 19 beats.

Any catchy element, like the G-run in "Wheel Hoss," that musicians find appealing may proliferate throughout a song or tune until it comes to occupy every available ecological niche, so to speak. In the B-part of the final break of the original 1967 recording of Monroe's "The Gold Rush," the banjo (and possibly the mandolin) matches the fiddle's rhythm by executing a little syncopated riff on each IV chord. This flourish can often be heard in PLV performances of the tune, but in every B-part, and performed by all the accompanying instruments. What began as a subtle, localized accent has come to be thought of as an integral feature of the tune, to be played whenever possible. Similarly, in PLV performances of Don Reno's banjo tune "Dixie Breakdown," every B-part is accompanied in "stop time": the rhythm instruments play a single staccato chord on the beat of each chord change. The original 1954 recording uses stop-time during only two of the five breaks, but in this matter jammers seem to agree with Homer Simpson: "Why eat hamburger when you can have steak?" (In this case, the PLV version may have been

influenced by the Dillards' 1964 version of "Dixie Breakdown" or an analogy may have been drawn between this tune and other instrumentals, like Scruggs' "Randy Lynn Rag" and Bill Emerson's "Theme Time," that use stop time on every B-part.)

The discussion I have presented here is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, I have tried to touch on the main aspects of my topic, in an effort to provide a starting point for any further scholarly work. Perhaps in the future some energetic musicologist could research these issues more thoroughly, with rigorous comparative methodology akin to that used in textual criticism, historical linguistics, or evolutionary biology. Such research might begin with fieldwork to document prevalent song versions and their geographic spread, and to describe regional variations in repertoire and jam session practices. Discographic research could establish the earliest dates when specific song versions have appeared in recordings. Interviews with professional and amateur musicians could then be conducted in an effort to ascertain (if possible) whether particular variant song versions arose from the deliberate innovation of professional musicians, or from the less self-conscious folk processes I have outlined above. Finally, while specific repertoire, arrangements, and practices may vary, I believe that an analysis similar to the one I offer here will go a long way toward explaining the content of jam sessions and impromptu performances, not just within the bluegrass genre, but in any style of music—including jazz, blues, and rock—whose players take recorded repertoire as a point of departure, but rely at least in part on improvisation.



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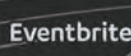


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I Draw Slow

The Sweet Lowdown

North Country

The Blue J's

Whiskey Deaf

Farmstrong

Sunny South

Gerle Haggard Band

The Barndoor Slammers

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www.stevensongorgegrassfestival.com



Summer Gatherings

BLUEGRASS IN THE GORGE



OBA ANNUAL MEETING



Festival Scenes

BLUEGRASS PRIDE



BRIDGETOWN FESTIVAL



Festival Scenes

WHEELER COUNTY

Photo Credit: Clyde Clevenger & Mimi Dobler



Whiskey Deaf



Mountain Honey



Song Contest



Old Growth Quartet



Suzanne and Dale Adkins



Pickers in the Fossil parade



The Portland Radio Ponies



Dale Adkins and Patrick Connell



Jam Tent

Chick's Kids

Photos by Clyde Clevenger



New mandolins created for Chick's Kids by Ken Cartwright and Clyde Clevenger



Continued On page 24



Festival Scenes

cont. from page 23

LOST RIVER

photos by Gary Hilbers



Keith Little and the LittleBand



Central Valley Boys



The Blue J's.



Crying Uncle



Lonely At The Top



The Hossettes



Rainy and the Rattlesnakes



Waking Hazel



Wyatt Troxel - Opens Sat. with National Anthem



Stukel Mountain Stranglers Band



Ask Aunt Pearl: Minding Your Bluegrass Manners

by Linda Leavitt

Dear Aunt Pearl,
I host a well-attended weekly public jam at local pub. Most of the jammers are beginner or intermediate players, but every once in a while, a hotshot player will wander in, sit down and launch into a tune like a bat out of hell, and I wonder, "really, dude?? Who do you think you are? Michael Cleveland?"

None of the regular jammers can possibly keep up with such a hot tamale.

What can I do when that happens?

Signed,
Ms. Lentie Mae Tortue

Dear Miss Tortue,
Well, how awkward! Bless your heart!

First of all, thank you for organizing and hosting a weekly public jam. We need more of those jams! You are doing a great service for our community, and I appreciate you.

That said, when you host a public jam, it should be open to everyone, regardless of ability, gender, political affiliation, cleanliness, hairstyle, beer preference, and so on, unless you've clearly stated otherwise.

For instance, you could host a public jam that is only open to folks who drink IPA. What would you do when someone wanders in who only drinks stout? Would you confiscate their beer and tell them to go home until they learn to enjoy IPA?

If you would like to prevent unsuspecting newcomers from pouring kerosene on the tempo, you might consider posting a sign that your jam is geared toward folks who prefer to play at a slower speed. You could also provide printed guidelines for newcomers. When you list your jam in the Oregon Bluegrass Association's online calendar, you could indicate in big bold font that your jam does not welcome speed demons.

Now if you've let folks know your expectations from the get-go and some hot-rod Tony Rice wannabe plops down and kicks

off Rebecca at 120, I do believe you are within your rights to take them aside and kindly advise them about the parameters of your jam. If they still insist on playing a hundred miles an hour, you might buy them a pitcher of IPA. That might slow them down, but you'll need to make sure to get their address beforehand so you can give them a ride home.

Finally, you can always resort to the tried and true hairy eyeball.

Yours Truly,
Aunt Pearl

Hey Aunt Pearl,
I'm wondering why people get upset when I bring my dog Marmaduke to festival jams. Marmaduke loves music and likes to sing along. He also loves people and is very affectionate with his kisses. He even cleans up any leftover food he finds laying around.

At Stevenson last year, several folks told me I should have left Marmaduke at home. One person even yelled "at least get that dog on a leash!" (I suspect they are all cat people.)

Now when I wander into a jam with sweet Marmaduke, I get the hairy eyeball and everyone suddenly has to pee. I just don't get it. He's such a good dog-child.

Sincerely,
Phil Winslow

Dear Mr. Winslow,
First off, your dog is not your child. Your dog is your dog. When your dog signs a contract, pitches a fit because you took away their cell phone, learns to drive a car or figures out how to play your banjo better than you, then come on back and we'll talk.

Second, I am a dog person. I adore my dog, Fluffy. She likes to sing with the music, too.

I don't bring her to jams for two reasons. Number one, I wouldn't be able to follow the jam because I'd be taking care of my dog. Number two, I don't want my jam



mates to be bothered by her, because at age 15, she still jumps up on people to beg for food. That's not her fault, of course. It's mine.

I've seen well-behaved dogs at jams, and I have experienced the other kind. Please use good sense when bringing your dog to a jam. Do they like people? (By that I am not asking whether your dog thinks people taste good.) Do they sing loud enough to drown out the banjo? Do they growl at other dogs? Do they help themselves to the hors d'oeuvres? Are they just shameless food beggars like poor old Fluffy? Can they sing tenor?

Finally, I suggest speaking with the jam host. Ask them how they feel about Marmaduke joining the jam.

I wonder if Miss Tortue's jam is open to canines?

Ruff, ruff,
Aunt Pearl

Linda Leavitt plays guitar, mandolin and sings with Mountain Honey. She is the vocal instructor at Taborgrass and loves to teach folks to sing.



OCTOBER 6TH



Bluegrass performances
and Picker's Festival in
downtown Ridgefield!

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Reed Stutz at Party in the Pines

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 llevitt@comcast.net before the 1st of the month of the issue to be printed.



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See back cover for more information



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What's Cookin' - Shows and Events in the Northwest

Always check the venue's web site, Facebook page, or phone to confirm. Dates, times, and cover charges may change. We try to list the bluegrass-related shows we know about within our printing deadline. Bands—get us your show information!

Tuesdays: Bluegrass at The Ranger Station, 4260 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland. Free. 503-894-8455, rangerstationpdx.com/events/ or The Ranger Station on Facebook.

Wednesdays: Bluegrass at Gastronomania Annex, 7-9 p.m., \$7-\$8 cash at the door, 7850 SW Capitol Highway, Portland. 503-764-9873, gastronomiapdx.com/events/July 17 Filthy Skillets

July 24 JT and Rowdy Mountain

July 31 The Horsenecks

August 7 Mountain Honey

August 14 Slipshod

August 21 Whiskey Deaf

August 28 John Montgomery Band

Sept 4 To be announced

Sept 11 Ash Creek

Sept 18 Whiskey Deaf

Sept 25 John Montgomery Band

Oct 2 Fiddle Night with James Mason, Luke Price, Ben Blechman and possibly Ellie Hakansson

(Some) Thursdays: Bluegrass at The Muddy Rudder, 8105 SE 7th Avenue, Portland. Free. usually 8-10:30 p.m. 503-233-4410, muddyrudderpdx.com/music-schedule/

July 11 Whiskey Deaf

July 12 (Friday, 8-11 p.m.) The Old Yellers

July 18 Fern Hill

August 1 Sam Hill Trio

Every Thursday: The Floating Glass Balls band with Spud Siegel, Bill's Tavern & Brewhouse, 188 N. Hemlock, Cannon Beach, Oregon. 503-436-2202. <http://www.floatingglassballs.com>

Saturdays: Taborgrass, beginning bluegrass classes and slow jam every Saturday, October – April. Waverly UCC, 3300 SE Woodward St., Portland. \$15. Greg Stone, 971-207-3195, taborgrass.com

continued



Other venues often hosting bluegrass:

Alberta Street Pub, 1036 NE Alberta St, Portland, OR 97211. 503-284-7665, albertastreetpub.com/music

July 12 (Friday, 6-7:45 p.m.) Sam Hill
July 18 (Thursday, 6-8 p.m., \$5) The Old Yellers

Bit House Saloon, 727 SE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97214. 503-954-3913, bithousesaloon.com/new-events

Butteville General Store, 10767 Butte St NE, Aurora, OR 97002. 503-678-1605, Butteville General Store on Facebook.

July 20 (Saturday, 6 p.m.) Castletown (Celtic and Americana)

Landmark Saloon, 4847 SE Division St, Portland, OR 97206. 503-894-8132, Landmark Saloon on Facebook.

LaurelThirst Public House, 2958 NE Glisan, Portland, OR 97232. 503-232-1504. laurelthirst.com/events/

July 19 (Friday, 9 p.m.) Gerle Haggard (all women--Merle Haggard tribute band)

Mississippi Pizza, 3552 N. Mississippi Ave, Portland, OR 97227. 503-288-3231, mississippipizza.com/events/

July 5 (Friday, 7 p.m.) Train River Bluegrass
July 13 (Saturday, 7 p.m.) Julie and the WayVes
July 27 (Saturday, 7 p.m.) Chuck Masi Bluegrass

Strum (pub and guitar store), 1415 SE Stark St #C, Portland, OR 97214. 971-229-0161, strumpdx.com/

July 28 (Sunday, 12-2 p.m.) JT's Rhythm Guitar Workout/Clinic (\$10), bluegrass/swing

Willamette Ale & Cider House, 1720 Willamette Falls Drive, West Linn, OR 97068. 503-305-6273, aleandcider.com/events.html



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- \$35 Weekend Event Pass
- \$20 Friday *only*
- \$25 Saturday *all day*
- \$20 Saturday *after 4 p.m.*
- \$25 Dry Camping (3 nights: Th/F/S)
- FREE Friday: Open Mic from 12 to 2 p.m.
- FREE Saturday: workshops - 9:30 a.m.
- FREE Saturday: band scrambles - 11:00 a.m.
- FREE Sunday: gospel concert - 9:30 a.m.

No campers before 9 a.m. Thursday
Free showers in the school
Pets must be on a leash at all times.
Pets are only allowed in the **BACK** of the audience area.
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generalandbetty7@msn.com

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www.WashingtonBluegrassAssociation.org



Little Roy and Lizzy



Phil Steinmetz
and His Sunny Tennesseans



Cascade Mountain Boys





2019 FESTIVAL CALENDAR



July 5-7

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

July 18-21

18th Annual Northwest String Summit
Horning's Hideout
North Plains, OR
www.stringsummit.com

July 19-21

43rd Annual Darrington Bluegrass Festival
Darrington, WA
The Northwest's oldest running bluegrass festival.
Diana Morgan 360-436-1179
www.darringtonbluegrass.com

July 12-14

Lost River Bluegrass Festival
Merrill, OR
www.lostriverfestival.com
Greg Matthews 541-891-3178

July 25-28

GorgeGrass
Skamania County Fairgrounds
Stevenson, WA
www.new.columbiagorgebluegrass.net

August 2-4

19th Annual Winlock Pickersfest
Winolequa Park
Winlock, WA
info@wamamusic.com
www.winlockpickersfest.com

August 9-11

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

August 9-11

Mount St. Helens Bluegrass Festival
Toledo High School
Toledo, WA
General 360-520-4524
Generalandbetty7@msn.com
washingtonbluegrassassociation.org

August 22-25

27th Annual Rainier Lions Bluegrass Festival
(Rainier Pickin' Party)
Wilkowski Park
Rainier, WA
davidwuller@gmx.com
360-832-8320
www.rainierpickinparty.com

August 23-25

Oregon Bluegrass Association's 12th Annual Pickers' Fest
ZigZag Mountain Farm
ZigZag, OR
www.oregonbluegrass.org

August 30-Sept. 1

Tumbleweed Music Festival
Howard Amon Park
Richland, WA
Three Rivers Folklife Society
509-528-2215
mail@3rfs.org
www.3rfs.org/tmf

August 29-September 3

(Labor Day Weekend)
North Cascades Bluegrass Festival
(formerly Hovander Homestead Bluegrass Festival)
Deming Logging Show Grounds
Bellingham, WA
www.ncfb.fun

September 2 (Labor Day)

12 noon – sunset (~6:30 pm)
Timberline Labor Day Mountain Music Festival
2019: Grateful Dead Tribute
www.timberlinelodge.com/events/
503-272-3134

September 6-8

Sisters Folk Festival
Sisters, OR
American roots music from blues to bluegrass.
www.sistersfolkfestival.org

September 27-29

Tygh Valley Bluegrass Jamboree
Wasco County Fairgrounds
Tygh Valley, OR
Debra Holbrook 541-489-3434

October 6

Birdfest and Bluegrass
Ridgefield, WA
ridgefieldfriends.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 Sunnyside 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 benfcoker@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. 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 powellR1041@q.com

PORTLAND: Sunday Bluegrass Jam - 2 to 5 pm
Ladd Taphouse, 2239 SE 11th Ave., Portland OR 97214.
Open bluegrass jam for all acoustic instruments and skill levels.
Contact Murray Nunn at mnunn7515@gmail.com

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, Oregon (east of Hwy. 217)
For information: Jane, janeromfo5@gmail.com

MEDFORD: Bluegrass Jam - 2nd and 4th Wednesday 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Wild River Pizza & Brewery, 2684 North Pacific Hwy, Medford, OR
For information: John Nice (805)748-6648 nicetunz@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

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

Continued on page 42



Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

cont. from page 41

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, Oregon.

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 October through April. The Sessions offers two small jams guided by professional musicians every Saturday during Taborgrass.

Waverly Heights Congregational United Church of Christ, 3300 SE Woodward Street. Portland, OR 97202. For all instruments. No registration required. Drop-ins welcome. 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, Oregon.

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.

ANSWERS:

1. Who was Vern Williams?
2. What is Rigel?
3. What is Alvin Pleasant?
4. Who is Joe Val?
5. Who are Jim and Jesse?
6. What are eight?
7. Who was Clarence White? (even though it was purchased from Roland White)
8. Who are Birch and Charlie?
9. What is David Grisman's first "real crummy" mandolin? (Mandolin was so alien to Grisman that he worked out Woody's Rag from a Weavers record using only one string. I think it was Ralph Rinzler who eventually showed him how to use some of the other strings.)
10. Who was Bill Monroe? (said after being warned that an oncoming vehicle was drifting into his lane, subsequently causing a near-fatal accident on January 16, 1953)
11. Who is Russ Carson?
12. Who is Bill Emerson?
13. What is "Molly and Tenbrooks"? (Kentucky thoroughbred Ten Broeck defeated a mare from California named Molly McCarthy.)
14. Who are Homer and the Barnstormers? (It's still a mystery as to who definitively was in this group although the Internet, if you believe it, says Bill Cunningham, Mel Durham, and Ron Legrand were members)
15. Who was J. D. Crowe?
16. What was the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band?
17. Who was King Wilkie?
18. What is "Let Me Be Your Salty Dog"?
19. Who was Bill Monroe?
20. What is Monroe's Gibson F-5 mandolin? (serial #73987)



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.

Ash Creek

Ash Creek explores the frontiers between bluegrass, folk, and traditional country music. Gene Alger plays banjo; Larry Ullman plays bass; Tim Howell plays guitar; Clayton Knight plays mandolin and fiddle. We all share lead and harmony vocals.

Booking@eclecticacoustica.com

<https://eclecticacoustica.squarespace.com/>

Facebook: @ashcreekbluegrass ash-creek-bluegrass

Clayton 503-358-0658

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

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

pywaterfalls@yahoo.com

corralcreekbluegrass.com

For bookings please call 503-319-5672

Steve Blanchard Music

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

Dogwood String Band

Contemporary bluegrass-fueled Americana

Woody Wood

dogwoodstringband@gmail.com

dogwoodstringband.com

The Jamblers

The Jamblers play a blend of bluegrass, folk, classic rock, alt-indie and more, and jumble 'em all into our stringband style. We feature tight, bold harmonies and tons o' fun! Some call it "Americana." We call it "Music," the kind everyone enjoys. www.jamblers.com

Gene Greer, info@jamblers.com

503-702-1867

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, Kaden Hurst, and Rob Wright.

Patrick Connell

patnellconnell@gmail.com



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

Pickled Okra

Bluegrass, quirky originals, harmony-laden traditionals, and bluegrass-influenced covers. Todd Gray (mandolin & drums) and Paisley Gray (guitar & upright bass)

Paisley Gray

pickledokraband@gmail.com

Rose City Bluegrass Band

Bluegrass, Country and Americana. Peter Schwimmer, Spud Siegel, Gretchen Amann & Charlie Williamson

Charlie Williamson

charliew3@nwlink.com

Scratchdog Stringband

The Scratchdog Stringband is creating a name for themselves as the vanguard of a high-energy, innovative brand of bluegrass that satisfies old-school traditionalists of the genre while enchanting modern audiences with a style of music they didn't yet know they loved. Some of the hardest-working young musicians in the Pacific Northwest.

Steve Eggers

eggers-stephen@gmail.com

Sunfish Duo

With Sarah Ells on guitar and Daniel Fish on mandolin, you'll go back in time to hear traditional harmonies and simple melodies from the roots of Bluegrass, Country, and Old-time music.

Daniel Fish

djoefish@gmail.com

Timothy Jenkins Band

Timothy Jenkins

tjenkins@uoregon.edu

True North

True North is a powerhouse of award-winning original songs, with the crazy-good picking and harmonies of a band deeply rooted in folk and bluegrass genres. Members: Kristen Grainger, Dan Wetzel, Josh Adkins and Martin Stevens.

truenorthband@comcast.net

www.truenorthband.com

Wailing Willows

Traditional Bluegrass. Andrew Spence, Banjo, Guitar, primary lead vocal, Hal Spence, Guitar and Tenor, Andrew's Dad, bringing family blend harmonies, Kim Jones, Bass fiddle, lead and harmony vocals, Dave Elliott, Mandolin and lead and harmony vocals.

Contact: 909-913-3668

andspence@gmail.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



Ragtime Annie For Guitar

Arr. By George Chudacoff

C

G

1. C 2. C C

F G

C

F C

G C

Many thanks to Greg Stone and Taborgrass for allowing the Bluegrass Express to publish George Chudacoff's arrangement of Ragtime Annie for Guitar

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Ragtime Annie For Fiddle

D

A

1. D || 2. D

G A

D

G D

A D

D

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Visit www.oregonbluegrass.org
for information on OBA activities,
local jams, festivals, concerts,
Chick's Kids and more

THANK YOU
FOR JOINING
THE OBA!

THE OBA NEEDS YOU!

We are always seeking members for various tasks, ranging from open director positions to taking a shift at the merch booth at a festival. It's fun and you'll meet some truly nice people. Tell us a little about yourself in an email to volunteers@oregonbluegrass.org or contact any board member.

- \$30 Individual Membership
- \$75 Individual Three-Year Membership
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