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INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

A Chat With Ian Joel, Return To  
WinterGrass, Practice tips  
and more...



*Oregon Bluegrass Association*  
www.oregonbluegrass.org

# Bluegrass *Express*

## A Chat With Long-Time Oregon Bluegrasser Ian Joel

By Joe Ross

**L**ong-time Oregon bluegrasser Ian Joel arrived in Portland in 1968 and over the decades, he has been involved in the music as a business owner, performer, recording artist, dee-jay, concert producer and OBA Director. His story is one that touches almost all aspects of our music scene, and he was around during the formative years for many of the Northwest's seminal bands and the OBA. He has performed with Skyhook Shoreline Drifters, Muddy Bottom Boys, High Mountain Ramblers, The Wallys, Surefire, and Sleepy-Eyed Johns. In this interview, we'll also shed light on how Ian has been an innovator, collector, historian and has worn many hats to promote bluegrass in Oregon.

Ian grew up in New York in a lovely little town called Croton-on-Hudson. His folks listened to Django Reinhardt and had been to parties with Lead Belly. He remembers hearing Pete Seeger, The Weavers, Lester Flatt, Bill Monroe and really enjoying the banjo picking of Earl Scruggs who "didn't overplay and knew how to play interesting stuff behind the singer."

Ian could get radio station WWVA from Wheeling, West Virginia at night and occasionally he'd hear a little bluegrass. He also hung with people into the folk music scene, around 1957, before The Kingston Trio. One friend in town was playing Scruggs style, and he'd picked up a cheesy old-timey Dobson banjo from about 1900. Being a rather handy, mechanical

person who had built his own go-cart at age 12, Ian picked up a Vega Tubaphone tenor banjo, found some banjo necks in a second-hand store, then made an archtop



*Ian Joel, Weiser 1973*

conversion tone ring. Three banjo players were on his map: Ralph Stanley, Earl Scruggs and Don Reno. After high school and a brief stint at the University of Wisconsin, Ian's wanderlust led him out West.

### ***What drew you out West, and what did you do in Oregon and California?***

I hitchhiked across the country in 1960 and ended up in North Beach. I spent a year in Tangier and a year in Greece in 1962-64. I drove across country many times and got back to San Francisco about 1965 and knew some people from earlier

days there. It was the beginning of the hippie generation. I was doing film work and took footage to the light show people. I ran a little movie theater and did multi-media at the height of the San Francisco rock scene. I attended a lot of concerts, collected posters, got into the shows for free and knew all of the Family Dog people well.

### ***You moved to Portland in 1968?***

Yes, we were getting pretty bored with the hippie scene in the Bay area. I had worked with the PH Phactor Jug Band, and I made a film about them called "Puttin' on the Dog." John Buntz, who became a very good guitarist and also played banjo, was the first person I knew from Oregon. I met Phil and Vivian Williams when I visited Seattle in 1962 for The Century 21 Exposition (Seattle World's Fair).

### ***In the early 1970s, what was the Portland Banjo and Fiddle Society?***

First, I started the Banjo & Fiddle Shop, then in 1972 or '73, I started the Society. We had about 100 members, put on concerts and brought people together for a monthly jam. We had High Country, Tall Timber, Benny Thomasson, Old Hat Band, Strange Creek Singers and others. The Strange Creek Singers were Mike Seeger, Tracy Schwarz, Hazel Dickens, Alice Gerard, and Lamar Grier. At the jams, I met a lot of folks like Paul and Ray Smith, Dave Elliott, Don Broom, Ron Emmons, Sonny Hammond and many others.

*Continued on page 5*

# 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](http://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:

**Linda Leavitt**  
[Expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:Expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org)

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Your Express advertising will reach over 500 households of bluegrass enthusiasts, while helping the OBA to continue publishing this valuable resource. We appreciate your support of the Oregon Bluegrass Association. For information about placing an ad for your music-related business please contact Pat Connell via email at: [obaexpressads@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:obaexpressads@oregonbluegrass.org).

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### AD RATES AND DIMENSIONS

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|----------------------|-------------|----------|------------------|
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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](mailto:nicetunz@gmail.com).

## The OBA Board

[www.oregonbluegrass.org](http://www.oregonbluegrass.org)

Clayton Knight - President  
[president@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:president@oregonbluegrass.org)

Pat Connell - Vice President  
[vicepresident@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:vicepresident@oregonbluegrass.org)

Ron Preston - Secretary  
[secretary@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:secretary@oregonbluegrass.org)

Patrick Seafield - Treasurer  
[treasurer@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:treasurer@oregonbluegrass.org)

Liz Crain  
OBA Roseburg Chapter President  
[lizcrain42@gmail.com](mailto:lizcrain42@gmail.com)

Maggie Jackson  
OBA Central Oregon Chapter President  
[musicmag@yahoo.com](mailto:musicmag@yahoo.com)

Kerry Callahan - Development  
[ocohanahan@yahoo.com](mailto:ocohanahan@yahoo.com)

Eric Herman - Webmaster  
[webmaster@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:webmaster@oregonbluegrass.org)

Dave Hausner - Membership  
[membership@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:membership@oregonbluegrass.org)

Linda Leavitt - OBA Express  
[expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org)

Pat Connell - Ad Sales  
[obaexpressads@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:obaexpressads@oregonbluegrass.org)

You can also find the OBA on Instagram and 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 a chapter in 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.

# Table of Contents

Apr/May/June 2022 Volume 42 / Number 2 Newsletter of the Oregon Bluegrass Association [www.oregonbluegrass.org](http://www.oregonbluegrass.org)

## This Issue Features

### Cover Story

A Chat With Long-Time Bluegrassier Ian Joel..... 1  
*by Joe Ross*

### Articles

Field Trip: Henry Strid at IBMA ..... 10  
*by Henry Strid*

Play it Again Sam: Practice, Practice, Practice ..... 13  
*by Charles M. Holloway*

Welcome OBA Central Oregon Chapter ..... 16

Southern Oregon Voices ..... 18  
*by Joe Ross*

Return To Wintergrass ..... 20  
*Compiled by Linda Leavitt*

OBA Guitar Raffle..... 22

Thank You, Murray Nunn ..... 23

Smokin' Jamgrass ..... 24

Book Review: Wayfaring Stranger ..... 26  
*by Kerry Callahan*

Steeplegrass Reunion..... 35

### Calendars, Lists & Info

OBA Membership and Ad Information ..... 2

President's Message..... 4

What's Playing on the Radio..... 4

Annual Meeting ..... 6

OBA Contributing Business Sponsors..... 30

Festivals and Jam Camps..... 31

OBA Supporting Performer Directory ..... 32

Scheduled Jams ..... 34



OREGON ARTS



## **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.

### **Bluegrass Express Staff**

#### **EDITOR**

Linda Leavitt  
[expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org)

#### **COPY EDITOR**

Nancy Christie  
[nancy.d.christie@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.d.christie@gmail.com)

#### **GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT**

John Nice-Snowdy  
[nicetunz@gmail.com](mailto:nicetunz@gmail.com)  
(541)601-0254

#### **ADVERTISING**

Pat Connell  
[obaexpressads@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:obaexpressads@oregonbluegrass.org)

#### **WEBMASTER & WEB CONTENT**

Eric Herman  
[webmaster@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:webmaster@oregonbluegrass.org)

#### **ONLINE CALENDAR**

Donna Dunaif  
[calendar@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:calendar@oregonbluegrass.org)

# President's Message

**W**ell before spring arrived in the Northwest, all sorts of things were blossoming.

Wintergrass, a centerpiece of the bluegrass calendar for the OBA and for many of us, happened in Bellevue, Washington after a year's hiatus. Wintergrass, as extravagant an indoor festival as you are likely to find west of the Mississippi, is when the OBA gets to reach out to the entire regional bluegrass community and show off some of our best qualities. We made a bunch of new friends and reconnected with lots of old ones.

This year, contrary to how you might imagine a pandemic festival would unfold, our footprint actually got bigger. The festival's organizers, in the interest of personal safety, had the brilliant idea to open the larger-capacity "tree" rooms to the music associations that help support Wintergrass. This relieved the pressure on the "jam street" area in and around the suites, which is historically overcrowded, especially in the evenings.

My hat is off to Linda Leavitt, our fine Bluegrass Express Editor, for being the organizing engine behind every bit of our presence, from the jams and showcases in the Juniper Room to the master classes and workshops in the OBA suite. If you missed the showcases, you can find video on the OBA Facebook and Instagram pages.

On behalf of the OBA, I offer warm thanks, too, to Wintergrass Director Wendy Tyner, who brought us into the planning process early on, and listened to and incorporated our suggestions for a good and safe time for all.

If Wintergrass wasn't razzle-dazzle enough, we are pleased and proud to announce the formation of the OBA's Central Oregon chapter and to introduce its first president, Maggie Jackson, musicmag@yahoo.com. The chapter's first well-attended meeting and jam happened on March 13. Contact Maggie for information about meetings, jams, concerts, and what's happening in the middle of our state.

It has been no secret that our dream has been to extend the OBA beyond Oregon's I-5 corridor, and we greet the new chapter with excitement. Next on our list—the Coast! If you're out there, we want to hear from you!

The Next Big Thing: April 10 we will host the first in-person Annual Members' Meeting since 2019. We'll meet at the Multnomah Grange 71 in Gresham—The doors open at 11:30 a.m. with our meeting at 1:00 p.m.

The Grange is an old friend, having hosted a superb mostly-traditional bluegrass concert series to which we're honored to lend our name. It seems like a natural location choice, and we strongly encourage you to make plans to join us. We'll have jamming, potluck food and drink, elections, a chance to catch up with our OBA family, and we will announce awards for the Steve Waller grant and the Nora Candey Songwriting grant. Plus: Membership and volunteer opportunities and a chance to pick on the extraordinary OBA 40th Anniversary guitar, which we will be offering in a raffle, with tickets to be sold over the next few months.

And one last thought: Seeing many of you at Wintergrass made one thing clear. As an organization, we're only as good as the connections between us. Please be sure to keep in touch. Until we meet again, my wholehearted thanks for your support.

*Chris*  
Chris Knight  
OBA President



Photo By Doug Olmstead

## What's Playing On The Radio

Local Radio Bluegrass and Country Listings

### Everywhere And Free

Oregon Bluegrass Radio

[www.oregonbluegrass.org](http://www.oregonbluegrass.org)

Every day, all day

### Albany/Corvallis - KBOO

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

### Astoria - KMUN 91.9 FM

"Cafe Vaquera" Bluegrass/Old Time Tuesdays 9-11pm, "Shady Grove" Saturdays 7-9 pm.

### Bend - KOOV 88.9 FM

"Juniper Roots" 8-10pm Wednesday

### 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](http://www.krvm.org) 541-687-3370

### Hood River - KZAS

"A New Kind Of Lonesome"

7-9pm Mondays

### Pendleton - KWHT 104.5 FM

"Bushels of Bluegrass" 9 - 11pm Sundays  
contact Phil Hodgen 541-276-2476

### Portland - KBOO 90.7 FM

"Music from the True Vine"

9am - noon Saturdays

### Santiam Canyon - KYAC 94.9 FM

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

Additional Bluegrass Programming

Streaming and Schedule: [www.kyacfm.org](http://www.kyacfm.org)

### Salem - KMUZ 88.5 & 100.7

"Smokin' Jamgrass" 1st & 3rd Sundays,

2-3pm "Ken 'til 10" 6-8am M-F

Simulcast with KYAC.

[kmuz.org](http://kmuz.org), all bluegrass



# A Chat With Oregon Bluegrass **Ian Joel** Cont. from page 1



**Tell me about the Skyhook Shoreline Drifters with Jim Seefeldt, Greg Clarke, Art Lowell, Don Latshaw and yourself.**

I don't know that we did any shows. Later, the band with Paul Chasman, his girlfriend Sue Skinner, Art Lowell and myself began performing. A little later, Jim, Greg and Don formed Dr. Corn's Bluegrass Remedy. After that, Rollie Champe, Ed Dye, Ivan & Lovita Steele, Mike Smith and others joined Skyhook Shoreline Drifters. We went to Eugene for a festival, and they put out an album called "The Second Annual Willamette Valley Folk Festival 1972." It was a small release of about 500 copies. Skyhook Shoreline Drifters had "New River Train" and "Monroe's Hornpipe" on it with Paul Chasman, Art Lowell, Sue Skinner and myself. Sawtooth Mountain Boys were on there playing "Pike Country Breakdown" [sic] and "Truck Drivin' Man."

**How long did you have the Banjo & Fiddle Shop on Milwaukie Ave. in the Westmoreland neighborhood?**

I had that from 1972-80 and frankly, just got bored with it, and was ready to do other things.

**You went to Weiser regularly about then, right?**

I went about every year in the 1970s and still occasionally go.

**When did The Muddy Bottom Boys start up?**

When I had the Banjo & Fiddle Shop, I started the band around 1973 with Don Broom and Larry White. Don and Larry

were really great singers. At our earliest gig, fiddler Barbara Lamb came down from Seattle on the Greyhound bus to rehearse and play fiddle. She was only 14 or 15, and I don't think we ever did a gig with her in a bar. Ron Emmons joined, and then Tom Curry a little later on fiddle. We had a couple different bass players, and then Dan Presley joined. At one point, we were doing three shows a week. After a festival in Roseburg, about 1976, I'd gotten bored and dropped out of the band.

**What evolution did that band take in later years?**

Don Broom kept the band going with several others until he passed in 2008. Besides Don, other Muddy Bottom Boys were Jeff Miller, Lex Browning, Dave Quentin, Hol-



lis Taylor, John Van Brocklin, Jim Ryan, James Mason, Mark Simons, Stacey Phillips, Peter Schwimmer and others.

**How did you come up with the name, Muddy Bottom Boys?**

It was a play on the Foggy Mountain Boys.

**What kind of bluegrass groove did the Muddy Bottom Boys create?**

I tried not to do parking lot favorites. We formed in 1973 with the intention of doing material unique to bands performing in the Northwest. After a short period of dismal commercial success [laughter], we discovered that audiences wanted to hear familiar tunes. Ron Emmons started in the fall of '73, Tom Curry in the fall of '74, and a few months later Dan Presley joined on bass. Don Broom didn't have a classic bluegrass voice so we were doing fairly eclectic material. He'd been in an early rock band. His voice was more like Doc Wat-

son's so we were doing material more like that. No artistic direction was leading us in a certain way. It was a little more folk, and we stayed away from popular stuff. We weren't hard-core bluegrass. We were never trying to replicate other groups or religiously follow one type of sound.

**I've seen some of Don's set lists that were about twenty years old.**

Peter Schwimmer and I did some shows together where we would alternate sets playing banjo and mandolin. One time, at the Produce Row Cafe, somebody spilled beer on the set list which was, by the way, the only list of all the tunes the band played. Peter called it the "Dead Sea Scrolls." The band was just hysterical about it. But Don Broom somehow managed to restore the list the following week. It was a very funny moment.

**You left The Muddy Bottom Boys about 1976 after the festival in Roseburg?**

Yes, that band evolved with a commercial bluegrass sound that went over with a wide variety of audiences. Jeff Miller once said the audiences were from rock and country orientations. So the Muddy Bottom Boys experimented with sounds, not gimmicks to become successful. But they kept their focus on the music's integrity.

**Wasn't it one of the first full bands to play in a Portland club?**

Until that time, regulations only allowed for small combos, like two instrumentalists and a singer.

**Tell me about playing at Peter's Habit (forerunner to Peter's Inn, owned by the infamous Frank Peters)?**

For an initiation to become a member of The Habitat Club, you had to drink a shot of whiskey and pint of beer within two

*Continued on page 7*





# **ANNUAL MEETING**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 10**

**11:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

**MULTNOMAH GRANGE #71**

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**30639 SE BLUFF RD, GRESHAM, OREGON**

**JOIN US FOR**

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**A BRIEF GENERAL MEETING**

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**~POTLUCK~**

---

**~JAMMING~**



# A Chat With Oregon Bluegrass Ian Joel

cont. from page 5

minutes. Larry White didn't really want to do it, but Don Broom did it in about 30 seconds. We were playing three nights a week at places like Rock Creek Tavern, Peter's Habit and a bunch of others.

**The band set a lot of records, like most beer sold in one night at Rock Creek Tavern, right?**

Yes, I think Rock Creek Tavern's capacity was 145, and we had about 200 people packed in there. Also, they set the record for most beer sold in one night in the State of Oregon, about 15 kegs. There was more consumed that night than any other place in Oregon.



**Weren't you guys included on Michael O'Rourke's first album on his Grassroots label, the 1974 "Oregon Territory: Northwest Bluegrass" album?**

Mike was into electronics and so was I. The band went to a high-end audio store that had a very nice tape recorder, and we played several songs. We're featured playing "Blackberry Blossom," "Free Again," and "Are You Lost in Sin?" on that album. Other bands included were Tall Timber, Puddle City, Dr. Corn's Bluegrass Remedy, and Sawtooth Mountain Boys.

**How did the "Slaughter on the Highway" album come about?**

That album came out on Michael O'Rourke's Grassroots label in 1976 with Don Broom, Tom Curry, Ron Emmons, Dan Presley and myself.

**I enjoyed hearing some of your originals on that album, like Cattle Call Reel, Hook**

**Line and Drifter, Slaughter on the Highway, and Young Boy of Time.** I haven't done too much songwriting. Two of those were instrumentals. I spent time thinking about how the songs would flow on the record. We also played tunes like The Restless Wind (with just Don and Ron singing), Little Annie, Tennessee Waltz, I Just Got Wise, Don't You Call My Name, Sittin' Alone in the Moonlight, Trial of Life's Journey, Hitchhiker Blues.

Dave Friesen came in and recorded cello on Slaughter on the Highway and Tennessee Waltz.

**I recently saw a used copy of the album on Amazon for \$50.**

Yeah, that album has gone as high as \$75 on EBay. And after I left the band, The Muddy Bottom Boys released "Howdy Neighbor."

**What's the story about that "Roadhog" motorcycle on the back of the cover?**

I was into motorcycling and all kinds of cars. I was at a swap meet, saw that picture, and bought it for a buck or so. I think the guy's name is Wild Bill Gelbke from Wisconsin. By the way, my wife Julie took the front photo on the album.

*Author's Note: At 17 feet long and weighing 3280 pounds, "Roadhog" is the largest motorcycle ever produced. Wild Bill Gelbke made it with a 4-cylinder 152" Chevy engine, a power glide Chevy differential and Corvette disc brakes.*

**Ron Emmons told me a story once about you guys at a gig where you played in a drift boat on the Deschutes River, before being treated to a barbecue by scantily clad waitresses.**

Yeah, we started in Bend and were paid to serenade people from the boat. There were many memorable gigs.

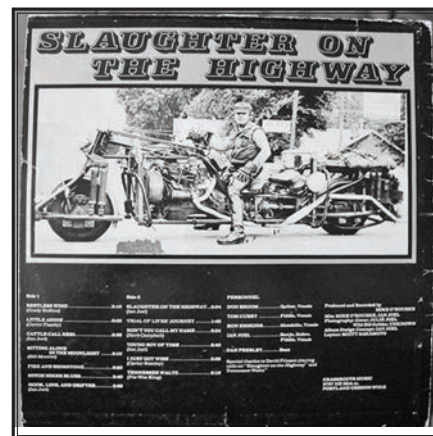


Muddy Bottom Boys, from left clockwise, Don, Ian, Dan Presley, Tom Curry and Ron Emmons

**One of Don Broom's stories was about a place you played where the owner started drinking and got into a fight.**

I had told the guys that if there was ever a fight, just start playing "Chicken Reel." First some guy and his wife got into an argument. The man punched her so hard she nearly passed out. Then the tavern owner came up and tried to take the husband out by bashing him with a captain's chair. Meanwhile, the band was on stage playing "Chicken Reel." It was almost like a silent-era movie track. Finally, the wife took over by jumping on the owner and hitting him on the head with something heavy in her hand. The owner didn't know what hit him and started staggering around the room.

Continued on page 8



# A Chat With Oregon Bluegrass Ian Joel

*From about 1978-81, you were a High Mountain Rambler, and we performed at some unique places.*

I remember some of those gigs. I especially liked playing in the Brass Rail, East Avenue Tavern and Shingle Mill where you'd get people lined up and doing a Virginia Reel or square dancing. It was pretty cool with Dave Moffitt fiddling away, and Lonnie Feiner on electric bass. I remember we played bluegrass from the back of a pickup truck in a parade in Goldendale and at the Port of Portland's Dry Dock. Performing for the Farmers for Bluegrass in Merrill, Oregon was fun. High Mountain Ramblers played for the



For some people, bluegrass is their religion, and they want to stay on that edge of the music. In some ways, Doctor Corn's was even more eclectic. For the most part, I prefer older bluegrass than the newer stuff today.

*The Oregonian once called the High Mountain Ramblers "a spirited bluegrass ensemble with tightly controlled music and soaring harmonies."*

Yeah, it was an entertaining band that played a lot of fun gigs. You did a great job with booking and promotion.

*How did you know Lonnie Feiner?*

Lonnie had come up to Portland with High Country to do some shows. He had played bass on one of Kenny Baker's albums, "Dry and Dusty." It was great when he moved to Portland. We also both had an interest in electronics.

*When did KBOO's "Music from the True Vine" get started? How long have you been one of the DJs?*

Jim Seafeldt started that show on KBOO about 1971. Then, Mike O'Rourke took over the show and named it "Music from the True Vine" (a name from a Mike Seeger album). Dave Elliott and Gareth Jenkins started as DJs there before me. I started about 1982 and put in not quite about 40 years volunteering there.

*How would you define the bluegrass that you program for that 3-hour radio show?*

We had a lot of independence when I was first doing the show. It was on Wednesday nights from 9 p.m. until midnight. KBOO was really laid back. I'd go in with Michael O'Rourke, and we'd be hanging around,

putting records on, and drinking beer in the control room. I could get away with a lot of stuff, like shows about drugs in bluegrass music. When it moved to peak listening hours on Saturdays, I'd get calls from little old ladies who didn't quite catch my sense of humor. We ended up having a larger audience, but it was more conservative. So I cleaned up my act and moderated it a bit. It's now gotten more regulated. "Music from the True Vine" is actually now the longest-running bluegrass show west of the Mississippi.

*That's certainly one thing that has resulted in Portland being at the center of bluegrass (and old-time) music activity in Oregon. Any other sense for why Portland is a center for bluegrass?*

We have a much higher population density. A million and a half people in this area. And bluegrass music does attract people from all walks of life, from student to doctors and lawyers. Yes, but there are few places to play now. The pandemic has been extremely hard on musicians. There were more gigs for local bands in the 1970s, and they paid fairly well.

*In the early '90s, how did The Wallys get started?*

That band was guitarist Doug Bond and Steve Bond on bass who both were part owners of Wally's Music in Oregon City. Billy Parker on mandolin, and me. I started jamming with them at Wally's Music, and Doug Bond was an incredibly good singer. We auditioned several different mandolin players. John Sullivan had told me about Billy Parker who had moved here from Montana so we invited him over. We had pretty good turnouts at our shows. I think Jim Hancock said we should just call the band The Wallys.

*The Wallys released an album, right?*

I was very good friends with Phil and Vivian Williams. In 1990, we went up to Seattle and recorded the album in two days. That was only released as a cassette tape.



Benedictine Monks at Mt. Angel Seminary when Bob Paulsen and Dave Elliott were also in the band. We were basically a bar band, but we dressed nicely and did a couple gospel sets for the monks up there on a Sunday afternoon. We also helped the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon raise over \$3000 in 1979.

*High Mountain Ramblers did some pretty offbeat material. How would you describe their groove?*

It was a very broad, eclectic band. There were other newbie bands forming then. High Mountain Ramblers was a significantly more eclectic mix, especially with Lonnie on electric bass. I'm okay with that.



# A Chat With Oregon Bluegrass Ian Joel

## *Any memorable gigs with The Wallys?*

We opened for Allison Krauss which was her first show in Oregon, and it was sold out with about 750 people at the Northwest Service Center. Michael Beglan produced that show. A lot of the repertoire was Doug Bond and Billy Parker. Doug could really sing. He had a lot of vibrato in his voice. Some songs we did were Six White Horses, I Know What it Means to be Lonesome, Colleen Malone, Rovin' Gambler, Children are a-Cryin', Dream of a Miner's Child, Trouble in the Fields, Rain and Snow, Me and My Uncle, Thirsty in the Rain, Doin' My Time, Workin' on a Building, Dig a Hole in the Meadow. The Wallys ran from about 1990-1995, and after Doug left, we added a few different players.

## *After Doug Bond moved away, didn't Surefire re-form with Dave Elliott (mandolin), Randy Oman (guitar), Paul Smith (bass) and you on banjo?*

We recorded a Surefire album at my shop in three sessions in 1999. Davey Trainer and John Melnichuk played fiddle on a couple cuts. Crawdad Song, I'm Blue I'm Lonesome, Journey's End, Old Friends, One Tear, Philadelphia Lawyer, Today's Been a Lonesome Day, I'm Waitin' to Hear You Call Me Darlin', Were You There?, What Would You Give in Exchange?, White Dove, You Changed Your Mind About Me, You Go To Your Church, You'll Be Sorry Someday. It was all pretty traditional stuff.

## *Did you still have a shop then?*

At that point, I had the Coffeestop Trading Post that mainly featured tube audio, electronics and photography stuff. I started The Oregon Triode Society that still exists. At one point, we had over 100 members.

## *From about 1990-94 and later, didn't you serve on the OBA's Board of Directors?*

I tried to help out by giving historical perspective and advice about what had occurred. I always think about things as a



business professional like Warren Buffet. I probably voted against things that I thought would lose or waste money. At one point, they had \$10,000 in the kitty, and it went down almost to zero. When they went to doing the board meetings online, I don't feel that you can really communicate as well with everyone while doing that. Serving on the Board should always be fun



and enjoyable.

## *How did the Oregon Banjo Head Company get started?*

I played around with different prototypes and made some pretty damn good banjo heads for bluegrass musicians playing with 11-inch heads. I still sell a few and have given them to several incredible players like Noam Pikelný, Bela Fleck, Jens Krüger and my friend Bill Keith who I go way back with.

## *The weekly jam at the Alberta Street Pub led to formation of The Sleepy Eyed Johns,*

## *didn't it?*

After the East Avenue Tavern, Michael Beglan bought a new bar that became the Alberta Street Pub. He wanted to have an invitational only bluegrass jam session. So Monte Green and I started a jam. John Melnichuk, Chuck Davidshofer, Dee Ann Davidshofer, Billy Wyatt all showed up. I started booking the band called The Sleepy Eyed Johns and played quite a bit and had a pretty good run with that band. We played every other Thursday at the Muddy Rudder. Peter Rowan stopped by the Muddy Rudder and sat in with us for a set. Also,

John Kael and Annie Staninec would sit in frequently.

We'd have a set list for some larger gigs. But, for the most part, each member of the band would call what they wanted to do, and we'd do it. The crowd kinda liked that approach. There was a broad selection of

music being played within the greater confines of bluegrass. We always had a nice crowd, and it was reasonably successful. Chuck passed away, there have been no gigs, and I'm not booking the band. Mark Klassen, our guitar player, has been jamming with other people. So has John Melnichuk. Some folks are super paranoid about COVID-19.

## *Have you done much other recording?*

I'm the banjo player on "The Ballad of D.B. Cooper" by The Beaver Trail Boys and have done some Jeep commercials and stuff like that. I went in and played one tune with the Mt. Hood Jazz Band. They wanted a Scruggs-style 3-finger picker to give the song a different kind of feeling.

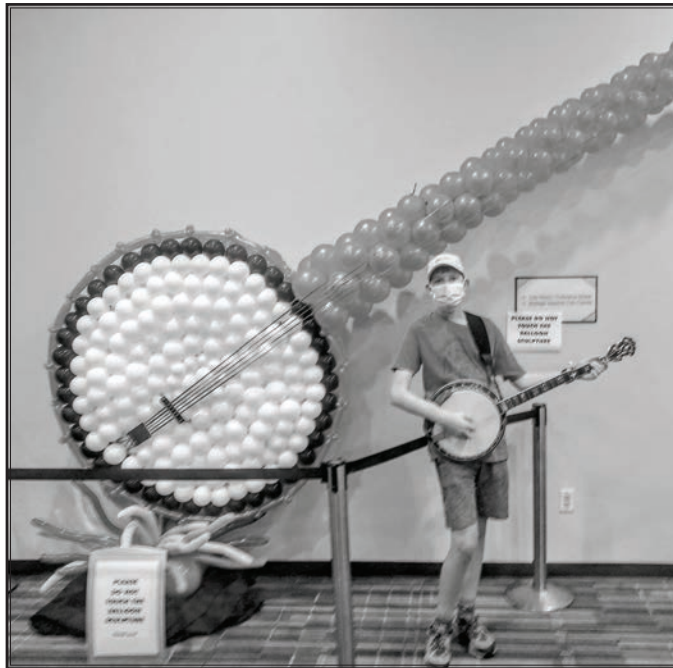
## *Do you play all the bluegrass instruments?*

I mainly play banjo. I also play guitar and mandolin. With the Muddy Bottom Boys, I did some twin mandolin tunes with Ron Emmons. On the Slaughter on the Highway album, I play second fiddle on one cut, and I also play Dobro on one tune,

*Continued on page 12*

# Field Trip: Henry Strid at IBMA

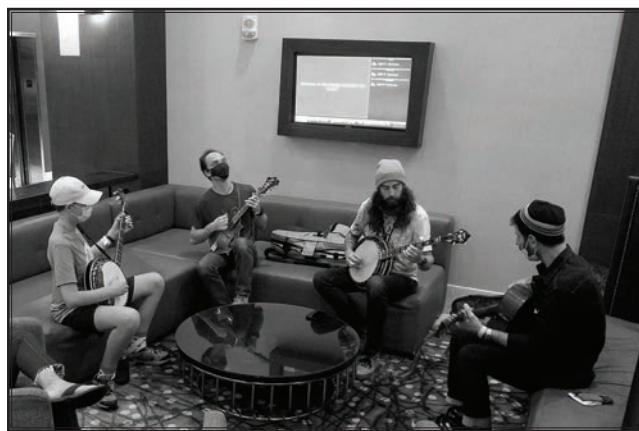
**H**ello, fellow musicians and bluegrass fans! My name is Henry, and I am a 12-year-old banjo player in Eugene, Oregon. I have been playing banjo for almost five years now, and this past year I submitted an application to the IBMA Kids on Bluegrass (KOB) and was accepted to the program. We got our travel plans arranged, only to find that the in-person portion of the KOB program was cancelled. The COVID-19 restrictions were quite limiting to anyone under 12, since they couldn't be vaccinated at the time. Fortunately I turned 12 just in time to get fully vaccinated, and we decided to go ahead with our in-person travel plans.



The COVID-19 protocols were pretty simple. People had to show proof of vaccination to get a wristband that would be checked at all of the entrances. Masks were also required indoors. The protocols seemed to be followed for most of the festival, but for the last day and a half some people were following them a little more loosely. I wish I knew how much the pandemic affected the overall feel of the festival, but since this was my first IBMA, I didn't have anything to compare it to. Many people mentioned that it felt significantly smaller than previous years, and that there were fewer vendors and less jamming going on.

One of the highlights of the whole festival for me had to be the jamming. Going from room to room and floor to floor until the wee hours was so much fun. I never went to sleep before two in the morning, but thankfully my dad is a night owl and was happy to be up that late as well. One of the best jams of my life happened in the lobby with the band members of Never Come Down. The energy of the jam was amazing! I was also able to find some kids who were just a little older than me to play with. It felt great

to finally be able to pick with some young players. It was also fun to just wander around and find jams to watch. One of the best jams included Jason Carter, Bronwyn Keith-Hines, Mike Munford, Greg Blake and James Kee. I loved watching Mike Munford playing banjo and seeing how he approached different songs.



*Henry Strid jamming with the band Never Come Down*

The festival had a variety of venues, indoor and outdoor. The largest was the Red Hat Amphitheater where I got to see some of the best-established bluegrass artists today. The Red Hat holds almost 6000 people, so I

was surprised to find that my seat was right next to my friend Nikolai, a 14-year-old incredible banjo player from New Jersey. It was so much fun to be able to watch Béla Fleck and My Bluegrass Heart and The Del McCoury Band together. I couldn't believe the intensity that Bela Fleck's all-star lineup brought to the stage! I also got to see Mile Twelve, the Po' Ramblin' Boys, and Jerry Douglas with Edgar Meyer. The level of performance at the whole festival was amazing, and all the bands were fantastic.

Besides the Red Hat Amphitheater, there were performances at different street stages and an event called the Ramble. The Ramble was a little crazy, as there were five venues with bands

playing shorter sets, with everything in constant rotation. There was lots of running around, trying to figure out who we wanted to see next and where they were. Some of my favorite bands from the Ramble were Never Come Down, Special Consensus, and Seth Mulder & Midnight Run. I also really enjoyed the street performances, and got to see Crying Uncle a few times. They are a group of younger musicians from the San Francisco Bay Area, and they're all super nice and amazing pickers. I also got to see Chris Jones & The Night Drivers which was incredible. I really like their banjo player, Grace van't Hof.

I was able to attend the main bluegrass banjo workshop, led by Kristin Scott Benson, Greg Cahill, and Ned Luberecki. All three are such virtuosos on the banjo—they make everything look so easy. Ned was definitely the funniest of the three, and he had plenty of hilarious banjo-related jokes and tricks.

One of my favorite parts was watching them play Dixie Breakdown, and it was interesting to see how they each played it in their own style and complemented each other's playing so well.



# Field Trip: Henry Strid at IBMA

Despite the in-person part of the Kids on Bluegrass being canceled, the program directors still made sure that it was a part of the IBMA experience. The students (including myself) had to learn new songs, record them remotely with a scratch track while listening along through headphones, and then upload the individual videos. One of the projects was a medley featuring songs from famous bluegrass musicians who passed away recently. The songs included Gold Rush (Byron Berline), In the Early Morning Rain (Tony Rice), I Love (Tom T. Hall) and Paradise (John Prine). The student videos were then edited and spliced together, and the final edit was played during the main IBMA awards show.

We also were able to record a song of our own choice, along with any chosen musicians, that was then uploaded to the main IBMA social media site. I met a great mandolin player named Daniel Ullom at the Bluegrass in the Forest festival in Shelton, Washington. He was gracious enough to record «Bill Cheatham» with me, and that was what I used for my submission.

One of the most important things I learned at IBMA was not about music. There were so many amazing things happening at the festival that I often didn't know which thing to do. Luckily Tom Nechville sent me a message to "Get beyond the FOMO." FOMO is

an acronym for Fear Of Missing Out. This was great advice, and helped me to stop worrying about what I was missing and to just enjoy the moment. I guess this is also great advice for life in general. Thanks, Tom!

To be honest, so many cool and unexpected things happened during the festival that made it feel like a dream. For example, we found out the members from Never Come Down were staying right across the hall from us, which led to some hanging out and super fun jamming. How could I forget having Grace van't Hof introduce me to Lynn Morris after the Chris Jones & The Night Drivers show?



Henry Strid with Greg Cahill.



Kristin Scott Benson, Greg Cahill, and Ned Luberecki.

It was cool getting to meet and pick with Keith Billick, the creator of my favorite music podcast Picky Fingers. Getting to spend some time picking and chatting



with Greg Cahill in the exhibition hall was another highlight for me. Getting to meet Colton Powers, and pick his banjo "Twister" backstage after watching him perform with Seth Mulder & Midnight Run was pretty cool. I could go on and on!

I am definitely excited to experience a post-COVID IBMA, but regardless, I am looking forward to the festival next year. As part of the Kids on Bluegrass program, my invitation carries over to next year because the in-person portion was canceled this year. I hope to see a lot more kids there and actually have the kids' room active. It will be nice to have a better idea of how to pace myself as well, and I will have some idea of what to expect. If you get the opportunity, I would highly recommend attending the IBMA and experiencing it all for yourself. I hope to see more familiar faces next time, and especially from Oregon. Now I just gotta keep practicing!



# A Chat With Oregon Bluegrass Ian Joel cont. from page 9

“Sitting Alone in the Moonlight.”

**Where do you think bluegrass music is headed in the next 10-50 years?**


Technically, it's almost at the highest level it's ever been. There's incredible speed and dexterity. You could argue that some of the singing isn't as evocative or invoking as it once was. For example, Billy Strings is an incredible player and a very good singer, and his band is interesting. And Sierra Hull is great. It could just be me, but few compare to the singing of The Stanley Brothers or Lester Flatt. With the Bill Monroe on Austin City Limits in 1981 on You Tube. Or check out when Paul Williams and J. D. Crowe had a reunion with Jimmy Martin.

**How would you say the OBA**

**is doing?** Linda Leavitt does an incredible job with The Bluegrass Express. OBA could do more with their website, and ask bands to list their gigs there. They've started insisting formally that every member of the Board have a responsibility, and that made it more like work than fun and enjoyable. This is all volunteer stuff. There should be a little free-flow of ideas, and you can have some fun working through the business. I mainly just

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Lewis & Clark College Chapel

gave them perspectives, advice and background on how things had been handled. I suggested having a newer band each year at the Gospel shows. The old-timey community is very active. I sense much more excitement there, and every week I'm getting real nice stuff from them.

**Any wisdom or advice for up-and-coming pickers and bands?**

The two things that are absolutely critical to all music are: (1) pitch, and (2) timing. And in bluegrass, the timing really revolves around a syncopated beat. It has to have a bounce to it, and it should have a snap in the drive. As an example, I love the way Sammy Bush chops the mandolin. Or you can do it slow, like Hank Williams had good drive. I want a bass player who holds the rhythm, knows the changes without a lot of fancy notes, and who doesn't speed up. And try to get into the habit of playing daily for your

own amusement and enjoyment. You may not think you're improving but you are. It has to do with philosophy of living and how to enjoy music by playing every day. Try to do things slowly first to get the melody line into your playing.

**Any parting thoughts?**

I encourage people to enjoy the process. You don't have to be a performer or go up to a certain standard. You can still derive enjoyment from what you do. A lot of people get discouraged, give up the instrument and stop playing. Derive pleasure from it on a somewhat regular basis, and then you'll be having a good time.

*Joe Ross, from Roseburg, Oregon, is an OBA charter member who currently plays with The Sunny Sky Boys and Tidewater Twang. He can be reached at rossjoe@hotmail.com.*



# Play It Again Sam: *Practice, Practice, Practice*

By Charles M. Holloway

**I**xpect you've heard it a million times, "Practice makes perfect!" Has anyone ever brought to your awareness that only PERFECT practice makes perfect? Sure, you practice your rear-end off, only to find not much improvement. Trust me, others will notice before you do. Having said that, if you really want to achieve a higher degree of proficiency, there are a few things to keep in mind.

Every time you pick up your instrument and strum a chord, practice a scale, or take a lead break, you're doing something amazing to your body. Your brain is sending axons (electric signals) through your nerves to parts of your body to attain your goals. These electrical signals travel through a myelin sheath (think of it as insulation for an electrical wire). Hours and hours of practice (it's estimated at 10,000 hours) build the myelin sheath (electrical super highway) so that the axon can travel faster without interruptions. These signals (axons) travel to your fingertips or parts of the body where you want the energy directed more efficiently. That's why when you observe a professional musician, it appears that they are performing effortlessly. With repetition, eventually you won't have to think about what you are doing, which allows you to free up brain space to focus on other facets of the music, such as singing lead or harmony.

## **I told you that so I can tell you this:**

One of the really important aspects when you practice is repetition, Repetition, repetition. Did I mention REPETITION? You

DON'T have to practice an hour a day. For beginners, practicing for a straight 60 minutes can cause pain, discomfort, fatigue and eventually frustration; they hit a wall, so to speak, which is a waste of time (not to mention the possible loss of your spousal unit). For many folks it is hard to set aside a big block of practice time; life

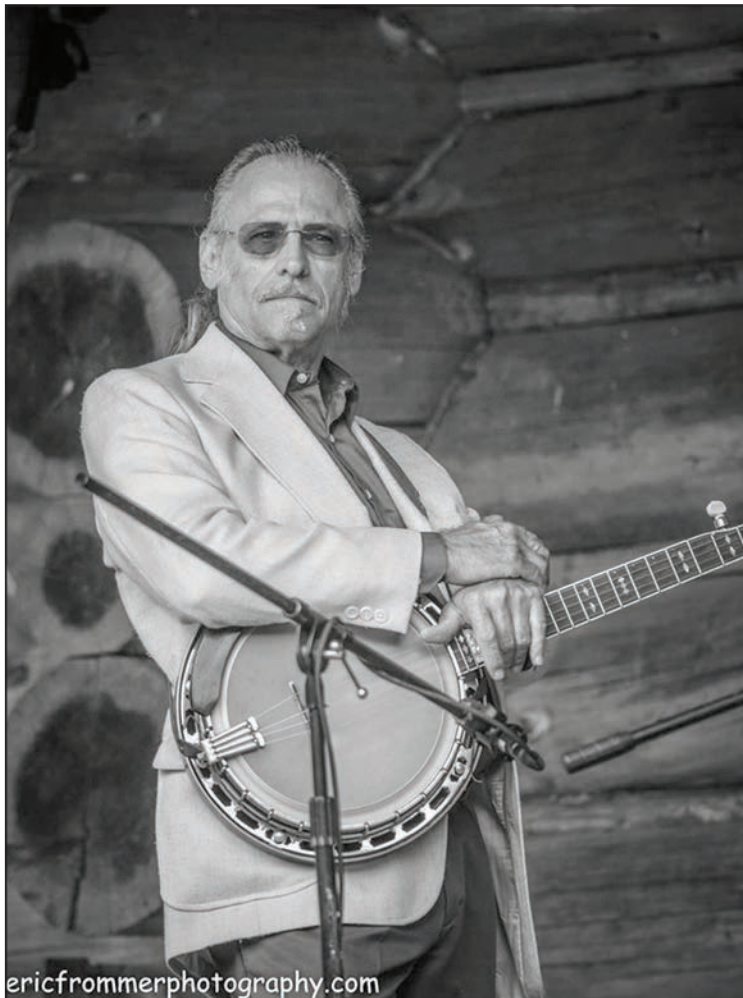
you will advance. If you wait too long to repeat the skills you practiced, you may find yourself starting over. That's frustrating, making you feel as though you're not improving. Actually, you probably aren't improving.

**I HIGHLY** recommend practicing for at least 15 minutes a couple times a day. It doesn't take much, other than a deep desire to improve. When you're not playing your instrument, think about playing your instrument. That's important. Why? Because just thinking about playing your instrument can inspire you to grow. The hope is that it will motivate you to get that instrument out and pick it.

You can find inspiration listening to the music you want to learn. I recommend TOTAL immersion into the genre of music you're seeking to play— live performances, CDs, etc. That way, you'll learn the intricacies of the music. One of those intricacies is timing. Timing is of the utmost importance. Timing can also be considered "phrasing" in vocals and instrumental passages.

There are different levels of practice depending on your skills. Beginners should work on remembering chord shapes until they become automatic. How? Practice! Work on changing from chord to chord to chord. Don't try to learn anything too difficult; keep it simple: three or four chords at

the most. Work on the three chords in each key... (E: E-A-B7; A: A-D-E; G: G-C-D; C: C-F-G, etc.). Work on getting a clear tone from each fretted string, being careful not to mute open strings. How? Practice! More advanced players should practice chord patterns, chord shapes, and chord progressions for any particular



*Charles Holloway at Darrington with Ragged Union.*

gets in the way. The important thing is making an effort to get your instrument out every chance you get. Just playing your instrument once a day for 15 minutes can make a big difference in your playing. If you can do that twice a day, even better! Why? Because you're building a foundation on top of the skills you gathered during your last practice session. The closer you keep your practice sessions, the faster

*Continued on page 14*



# Play It Again Sam: *Practice, Practice, Practice*

song/tune. For a banjo, practicing scales in three different keys (G-C-D) is a good way to work and build your lead skills with the use of a capo. For a guitar, you want to practice your E-G-C-D-A scales (you can always use a capo for B and B $\flat$ ). For a mandolin and fiddle, practice your E-F-G-A-C-D-B $\flat$ -B scales. Banjos, guitars, mandolins, and fiddles all have two functions in playing bluegrass music: (1) a lead instrument, and (2) a rhythm instrument, and vice-versa. As a rhythm player, your job is that of an accompanist. If you can't hear the lead instrument, there's a chance no one else can either.

Practicing along with CDs is a GREAT way to practice. It really helps your timing. It also builds your repertoire while helping you get your "chops" up to speed. A metronome is a good way to practice as well, but I find listening to and playing along with CDs works just as well. You gain two things working with CDs: (1) Further imbed the melody into your head, and (2) gaining the practice you need to get up to speed. Windows Media Player has a great utility that allows you to slow down recordings on your computer to make them a little easier to learn. YouTube is a GREAT tool for learning new material too! YouTube also has capabilities to be slowed down to a fathomable level while staying true to the key of the song/tune. My mentors just slowed down 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  RPM records to accomplish the same thing (of course they had to retune). Also, connecting with a real instructor can augment what you're trying to learn with some personal interaction with regard to correcting bad habits. An instructor can help shed light on what you're trying to accomplish if that is evading you. Getting pointers from a skilled player can really help a lot.

Don't give up!! When you're first learning a song/tune, expect to spend around 20-30 hours, maybe 40 hours, polishing it to an acceptable level! Learn it in little chunks at a time (that's where multiple 15-minute sessions a day can be valuable). Learning small portions at a time is equivalent to reading the phonebook and remembering its contents; learn ten names at a time and remember them before moving on; you can't learn the whole thing at once. Don't

move forward until you have the first passage committed to memory (or close to it), then add the second part, and so on; stay after it. Learn what you're trying to do at a ridiculously slow speed. Believe it or not, it's harder to play slow than fast. Learn it S-L-O-W — one chord/one note at a time. As you become proficient, then and only then, start building speed. If you learn things at an extremely slow tempo, it's more deeply engrained in your psyche. You'll find it easier to speed up as your skills increase.

I suggest that you stay away from habitual tablature/sheet music use. It can be a good tool to get started, but put it away as soon as possible; you can't take it out jamming with you. LEARN BY EAR. Learn by committing the melody to memory. I learned by committing six tunes to memory from tab. After that, I discovered that I had an ear, and didn't need the crutch of tablature. Granted, learning by ear takes a little longer, but the training will stay with you longer. Reading tablature or music utilizes and develops the visual cortex of your brain. That's what great symphony players do. Their visual cortex is highly developed, but sadly, their audio cortex is left behind. That's where learning music by ear is invaluable, and will take you further on the musical journey. Learning by ear allows you more freedom to jam and improvise outside the confines of what someone regurgitated on a piece of paper. Your audio cortex is located in the center of your brain, not the surface of your brain, making learning by ear a more cerebral experience. The cerebral experience takes the music deeper into your inner self. REMEMBER: "The right hand is who you are; the left hand is what you know." (Of course it's vice-versa for left-handed players.)

To fully recognize the fruits of your labor, I HIGHLY recommend getting out and jamming with others. You're not going to grow much practicing in the "closet." The routine of getting out puts your skills to the test. I ALWAYS encourage folks to get out and play with people who hold a higher level of proficiency on their instrument. For the most part, the better players are generally welcoming, especially when

they see how hard you're working at it. Playing with other people is an excellent way to see where you're at, compared to where you want to be.

In closing, I've been playing 6 decades. I don't do a lot of practicing these days unless I'm trying to learn something new. Then again, I expect to spend a good 10-15 hours to learn and remember new songs/tunes. If you're not spending that kind of time, don't expect miracles out of yourself. When I first started flatpicking the guitar, I was obsessed. I'd practice a little before work, think about it all day, and practice when I got home from work. It didn't take me long to reach my goals. Within a short period of time, I was with a band performing three nights a week. Jam sessions helped immensely, allowing me to network with like-minded folks.

*Chuck Holloway started playing bluegrass in Southern California. He was inspired to learn and perform bluegrass music in the 1950s after hearing Bill Monroe over WSM radio while living in Kansas as a child. Started playing guitar in the 1960s. Focused on learning and performing bluegrass in the early 1970s. His primary instrument is the banjo, but he also plays guitar, bass, and mandolin. He has performed and played with numerous people around the West. He taught Continuing Education classes at Lane Community College, as well as the John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts, in Eugene, Oregon. He's been teaching stringed instruments over 20 years, and is available for lessons in the greater Portland, Oregon metro area.*



**Saturday June 11 10am to 6pm**



# Bluegrass Open House

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**See Schedule of Events at [WWW.banjoswest.com](http://WWW.banjoswest.com)**

# Welcome OBA Central Oregon Chapter!

## *The Oregon Bluegrass Association Welcomes the Central Oregon Chapter!*

Join the Oregon Bluegrass Association board to welcome the new Central Oregon Chapter of the OBA, led by Maggie Jackson. Maggie is a long-time resident of Central Oregon. She is a multi-instrumentalist, band leader, MC, concert producer and an all-around mover and shaker in the Bend-area music scene. She is a member of the High Desert Music Collective, and she serves on the board of the Cascade School of Music.

You may have met Maggie at Wintergrass when she introduced two Central Oregon bands who played in the OBA showcase.

On March 13th, Maggie hosted a well-attended inaugural chapter meeting and jam. Maggie focused the meeting on how to connect local musicians and to establish monthly jams in Central Oregon communities - ideally at least once a month in each region/town.

Dave Ehle and Maggie will track jams and post about them on the Central Oregon Bluegrass page on Facebook. Maggie will develop a current Central Oregon Bluegrass email list with your help! Maggie asks that if you know someone who would like to be on the list, have them contact her.

The OBA Central Oregon Chapter meets next on Sunday, April 10, 2:30-3:30 meeting, jam at 3:30. For more information, contact Maggie at [musicmag@yahoo.com](mailto:musicmag@yahoo.com).



*Inaugural OBA Central Oregon Chapter Meeting & Jam*



*Maggie Jackson introduces Bend-area band, Honey Don't, at the Wintergrass OBA Showcase.*



*Maggie Jackson & her Nechville banjo*





# Wheeler County Jam Camp

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Activities include  
instrument instruction,  
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Workshop leaders and  
schedule details to be  
announced soon.

**JULY 1-3, 2022  
FOSSIL, OREGON**



Organized activities start  
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<https://www.facebook.com/Fossilbluegrass>  
<http://www.wheelercountybluegrass.org/>



## *There's a Whole Lotta Pickin' Happening Down Yonder!*

The **OBA's Roseburg Chapter** hosts a **Third Sunday Bluegrass Jam** every month at Sutherlin Senior Center, (202 East Central Ave., Sutherlin, OR) from 1–4:30 p.m. It's open to listeners and pickers. All levels are encouraged. Refreshments include cookies and coffee. Donations are kindly accepted. There's plenty of parking, and the venue is handicapped accessible. Contact Liz Crain at 541-679-0553 or [lizcrain42@gmail.com](mailto:lizcrain42@gmail.com), or see the Facebook page called **Umpqua Valley Bluegrass Band**.

**Oregon Old Time Fiddlers Association (OOTFA)** offers regular monthly jams and gigs. For example, OOTFA's District 10 (Roseburg, Canyonville, Sutherlin Area) has weekly Friday jams in Sutherlin at Pineview Mobile Home Estates club house from 3-5 p.m., as well as one on the 4th Saturday each month from 12-3 p.m. at Sutherlin Senior Center, 202 E. Central Ave., Sutherlin. Contact Jude Stensland at 541-430-2080. If you live in one of OOTFA's other nine Oregon Districts, you should just join the organization, get their monthly *Hoedowner* newsletter, attend your local jams with acoustic instruments and bluegrass songs in tow, if you don't mind also playing old-time fiddle music. OOTFA has some great folks, very knowledgeable and welcoming. The OOTFA web site: <http://www.ootfa.org/>

In Douglas County, **The Sunny Sky Boys**, **Tidewater Twang**, **Shindig Mountain String Band** and **Twisted Pick** occasionally include bluegrass in their shows that also have old-time fiddling, Celtic, folk, jazz, western swing or country. They play at Umpqua Valley Farmers Market, Kantu Brewing Co., JosephJane Winery, Backside Brewing Co., Two Shy Brewing and Canyonville Farmers Market, and other area venues. Contact Joe Ross at 541-673-9759 or [rossjoe@hotmail.com](mailto:rossjoe@hotmail.com).

Further south, in the Grants Pass, Medford and Ashland areas, there are quite a few bands. Some are more active than others, and most have their own Facebook pages. We'll try to feature some of them in future issues of the *OBA Bluegrass Express*:

**33String Drive**: Jeff Jones 541-773-7487, [JefferyJonesMusic.com](http://JefferyJonesMusic.com)

**Antonucci Collective**: Debra Antonucci, [hugoants@msn.com](mailto:hugoants@msn.com)

**Blades of Grass**: Jef Ramsey / Kathryn Casternovia, 541-821-4446, [elementaldesigns@me.com](mailto:elementaldesigns@me.com), [bladesofgrass.wix.com/bladesofgrass](http://bladesofgrass.wix.com/bladesofgrass)

**Dangerous Lee and the Rattlin' Three**: Facebook page with the band name.

**Eight Dollar Mountain**: [eightdollarmountain.net](http://eightdollarmountain.net)

**Hot Copper Kettle**: Ceridwyn Doucette, 541-779-2393

**John Dough Boys**: [thejohndoughboys@gmail.com](mailto:thejohndoughboys@gmail.com)

**Long Mountain Revival**: Jon Clement, 541-292-6907 [jonmando@charter.net](mailto:jonmando@charter.net)

**Sequoia**: Al and Deb Brinkerhoff, 541-471-2206 [abrinkerhoff@hughes.net](mailto:abrinkerhoff@hughes.net)

**Waking Hazel**: Bekkah McAlvage, 541-951-0903 [wakinghazel@gmail.com](mailto:wakinghazel@gmail.com), [wakinghazel.com](http://wakinghazel.com)

On Saturday, May 7 at Dunbar Farms in Medford, an album release party will be held to celebrate **Madrona**, Bekkah McAlvage's first solo album. The party will include an opening set with McAlvage's old-time trio, **The Dusty Rubies**. Then, the band will take the stage with the album set with fiddle, banjo, and pedal steel. Contact [bekkahmcavage@gmail.com](mailto:bekkahmcavage@gmail.com)



We'd welcome some reporters from other areas in southern Oregon (Drain, Elkton, Grants Pass, Medford, Ashland, Klamath Falls, Merrill, etc.) to keep folks informed of happenings, jams, festivals and bands in those areas. Check the Facebook group titled **R.A.P. "Rogue Area Pickers"** for updates. Deb Brinkerhoff at 541-471-2206 is the group's manager and administrator.

**Brews, Bluegrass, and BBQ** (known as BBB) will be Saturday, June 4 from 4 - 8 p.m. at RoxyAnn Winery in Medford. They missed the 2020 and 2021 events due to COVID-19 and are so excited for an extra-special 2022 BBB featuring **Hot Buttered Rum** and **33 String Drive**. This fundraising event will also feature local food carts, beer, and educational booths from Rogue Valley Food System Network and other organizations. [rvfoodsystem.org/bbb](http://rvfoodsystem.org/bbb)

# Southern Oregon Voices

The Rotary Club of the Illinois Valley will present the *Siskiyou Folk & Bluegrass Festival* at Lake Selmac (near Cave Junction) on Saturday, June 25 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, family and friends. Enjoy music of *33 String Drive, Hot Copper Kettle, The Muddy Souls, Miller Twins and Syco Billys String Band*. You might also get a chance to hear *Eight Dollar Mountain, Waking Hazel, Dangerous Lee and the Rattlin' Three*, and *John Dough Boys*. Gate opens at 10 a.m., and the music runs from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please, no dogs or outside alcohol. Food and beer are available for purchase. Camping available. [siskiyoubluegrassfestival.com](http://siskiyoubluegrassfestival.com)

Organizers of the *Lost River Bluegrass Festival* in Merrill, Oregon are staging another big, fun event from July 8-11, 2022. [www.lostriverfestival.com](http://www.lostriverfestival.com), [lostriverfestival@gmail.com](mailto:lostriverfestival@gmail.com), or call Greg Matthews, 541-891-3178, or Joyce Furlong, 775-722-9877.

Down in the Grants Pass area, a *Third Thursday Acoustic Jam* is held at Wild River Pub, 533 N.E. F Street, Grants Pass. I'm told that it operates more like an open mic. While it's not all bluegrass, the music starts at 6 p.m. Bring your instrument and voice, or just come to listen, eat, drink and dance. Contact Debra Antonucci at [hugoants@msn.com](mailto:hugoants@msn.com), or the Wild River Pub at 541-474-4456.

John Nice-Snowdy relocated from Hillsboro to Medford a few years back and hosts a **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday Bluegrass Jam** at the home of a group member. Contact John at 541-601-0254 or email [nicetunz@gmail.com](mailto:nicetunz@gmail.com) to confirm location and time.



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[www.SistersFolkFestival.org](http://www.SistersFolkFestival.org)



# Return to Wintergrass!

Compiled by Linda Leavitt

*Editor's Note: Wintergrass 2022 was a blast! The Oregon Bluegrass Association hosted masterclasses in the hospitality suite, and in the Juniper Room, we hosted workshops, jams and band showcases. We checked in with several OBA members about their experience.*

**Dan and Sara Fish (Portland):** It was so great to be back at Wintergrass again this year. We headed up to Seattle on Friday afternoon and arrived just as the evening jams were getting started at the Hyatt. It took a while for us to make our way to the OBA headquarters in the Juniper Room as we navigated the various elevators and towers and stopped to chat with old friends we seemed to meet around every corner. We were pleased to see the health measures in place throughout the hotel and were impressed with the attention to safety shown by the event volunteers and all the fans and pickers in attendance.

Since we only had a jam pass, the showcases were the main attraction for us and we spent most of the night watching the great performances in the Juniper room. The atmosphere was refreshing and warm—and we stayed until early the next morning watching the bands and visiting with old and new friends.

We had to leave on Saturday, but had time for breakfast at the hotel, a visit to the instrument showroom, and a sweet jam with some friends on the 13th floor before we left. It was so nice to see old friends again and to be surrounded by the special kind of music and energy that you can only find at a bluegrass festival.

**Tom Nechville (Sisters):** It was fantastic to return to all my old friends at Wintergrass 2022. My perspective is that of a vendor who tends the booth for long hours all day, and doesn't generally see shows. I had some good sales, and for sure a couple good jams in the booth. Thanks to Al Price, Ron Clark and Henry Strid for helping me. It would be tough to do it without you. Congratulations to customers Randy Pasley, Bob Hamilton and Rick Veatch with their new Nechville banjos.

From the few showcases and performances I saw, everyone was delighted to be back

together in a live venue. Each performer I saw delivered awesome, heartfelt performances. I was happy to catch Never Come Down playing some new material. The OBA activities in the Juniper room were a



*Never Come Down*

huge success with impressive performances from everyone. Tall Poppies String Band and Virginia Rail blew me away, and I particularly enjoyed the guitar workshop with Grant Gordy teaming up with some of our finest Oregon players. I'll be back for more in 2023.

**Marlene Smith (Milwaukie):** Wintergrass is a "Love Festival" that brings so many folks together to share music, friendship and entertainment. Bluegrass music always gathers folks who appreciate this historical American music. The kindness and smiles that were shared at Wintergrass 2022 will never be forgotten. Wintergrass 2022 was

so energizing and joyful after two years of our pandemic worries.

The endless jamming, with most players always encouraging and appreciative of others, made Wintergrass spectacular this year! The opportunity to mingle with the artists was unbelievable. My heartfelt gratitude to the Wintergrass staff and volunteers who worked incredibly hard to make this event happen! Fortunately, as a Volunteer, I had a front-row seat to observe the hard work that goes into hosting Wintergrass. I was able to welcome many friends while working in registration. My life has been changed by music and the many opportunities I have had to play with others. Thank you to all!

**Henry Strid (Eugene):** I wasn't sure what to expect at Wintergrass this year, being that this was the first one to be held since the pandemic began, but I was still really excited to go. Wintergrass always brings in amazing bands, and that was still the case this year. All of the shows I saw were incredible, especially The Travelin' McCourys, Sister Sadie, Never Come Down, Laurie Lewis & the Right Hands, and Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper. Laurie Lewis' band played Farewell Blues, and Patrick Sauber's banjo breaks had such sassy tone and were perfectly executed. The Travelin' McCourys' encore



*Al Price & Tom Nechville*

# Return to Wintergrass!

included a blazing Cumberland Gap, and they played it with so much energy. Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper's Northern White Clouds was the best version I have ever heard.

Even though it was a pandemic year, it was still a ton of fun to wander around. There were fewer people and vendors, but the jamming was still great and I tried to get in as much as I could. I am hoping that next year there will be more younger pickers around again. I was excited to meet some of my bluegrass heroes. Ronnie and Rob McCoury were in the lobby one evening and it was so cool to be able to chat with them. I also got to meet Danny Barnes and I couldn't believe how friendly and easy to talk to he was. I am looking forward to going back to Wintergrass next year!

**JD Kleinke (Portland and Port Townsend):** You could see it happen about three or four songs into a band's first set of Wintergrass. They look up from their guitar or setlist, see that first real live audience in two years, and let out a full-body exhale of surprise, relief, and pure gratitude. Everyone we saw on stage during the festival tried to express, in those first few minutes of that first set, what so many of us were feeling during our long-awaited First Festival Back: An immense, palpable, physical release from the grueling and occasionally infuriating low-grade terror-grind of the pandemic. And what was right behind that onstage release, that blessed moment of finally breathing out, after the first couple songs, the rust off the band, the eruption of applause from an actual, in-person audience? Pure delight, a look of awe, and maybe even a little shock that yes, the bluegrass community is right there where we all left it.



*The Miller Twins*



*Thunder Ridge*



*Missy Raines & Allegheny*

You could see it in everyone's body language, the bright eyes and arms extended as if to embrace the audience, the head shake and joyful smile that said: Look at that, a real live audience again, how I missed this, all of you, all of it. Many of those performers, some with decades of experience on festival and concert stages,

were actually choking up. (I'm not naming names because I don't want to embarrass them.) You could also see it in everyone's body language in the hallways and jam rooms all around Wintergrass: a tentative physical joy, an excitement to see old friends after two years of fear and isolation and spotty zoom connections, a confusion about how to be again, in the musical presence of others, a provisional sort of wow, are we really here? Is this really happening?

Two years ago, when the collective nightmare of the pandemic started and all my regular gigs and jams came to a screeching halt, I remember experiencing the physical symptoms of actual withdrawal from making music with others. There was a sudden heaviness and sadness in my body that no amount of playing solo, or playing along with recorded music, or playing at others on Zoom could chase away. It was like being an athlete, sidelined with an injury that precluded exercise. All those exquisite musical muscles involved in trading breaks, playing back-up, finding and singing harmony—developed and maintained and flexed every few days—were suddenly stilled, atrophying within days, their edge long gone in a few weeks. And as an athlete does not come back from a two-year sidelining injury all at once, the jamming at Wintergrass was bittersweet proof that playing in a bluegrass jam really is an athletic endeavor that requires intense physical presence, timing, exertion, and reflexes. Because a large number of us—the jams I was in with old friends and the jams I witnessed—were just a little bit off: Slow to come in here, struggling to harmonize over there, a little late on the break over there. How could we not be? The masks didn't help of course; trying to sing through a mask and be heard, let alone make harmony, is nearly impossible.



# Return to Wintergrass!

But the same inexpressible relief and joy of every performer—back on stage, after two years of trying to force the musical magic for their fans through a computer connection—infused all of those same jams. The timing may have been less than bluegrass-perfect, and there were those masks, but you could see the wide-eyed grins through them all.

Working close is the ethos of our beloved music; social distancing is the opposite of working close, and the bluegrass community, like the rest of the world, will be coming back slowly, awkwardly, in baby steps. But it will come back, because it never went away. For me at least, that's what I will remember most from this year's Wintergrass: The baby steps. It was a festi-

val of gratitude, of getting our feet wet and chops back, and in the end, a joyous and resounding answer to the eternal question about the music from the true vine: The circle is unbroken.



*Patrick Connell holding down a hallway jam.*



*Dan & Sara Fish*

## OBA 40th Anniversary Commemorative Guitar Raffle



Jayson Bowerman and Tom Nechville with their collaboration, the Oregon Bluegrass Association 40th Anniversary Commemorative Breedlove guitar.

This beautiful guitar will be introduced at the OBA annual meeting, where you can buy a raffle ticket. Raffle tickets will be available at OBA events until the guitar is awarded to a lucky winner in 2023!

Ron Preston donated the guitar, designed by Jayson years ago when he worked for Breedlove. Ron also created the inlay design.

Tom cut the inlay pieces and Jayson installed the inlay. Many thanks to Ron, Tom and Jayson for their generosity to the Oregon Bluegrass Association!

# Thank You, Murray Nunn

Many thanks to Murray Nunn, for your successful efforts to keep the Portland Sunday Jam alive through thick and thin!

You have been directly responsible for hundreds of hours of good times and treasured memories for dozens of us in the past several years, not only showing up and playing great bass, but also arranging substitutes when you couldn't be present. You have been the central communicator and the person who found new places to play when we needed them. You have always been a friendly and welcoming presence for new jammers and listeners alike.

To quote Pete Wernick, you are a true "Jam Hero" and will be truly missed! At the next meeting of the OBA I will propose the the creation of the "Murray Nunn Award" to be given annually to the person who best exemplifies your dedication to keeping the jam going in Portland! All the best to you and your family!

Kerry Callahan,  
Director, Oregon Bluegrass Association



*Murray Nunn: Have bass, will travel*

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**OREGON BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION**



# Smokin' Jamgrass

**A**ttention progressive bluegrass lovers! Every first and third Sunday from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM PST, Jolie and Brian Aune bring you Smokin' Jamgrass, a podcast and radio show devoted to progressive bluegrass and its roots, broadcast on KMUZ Community Radio, 100.7 & 88.5 FM, livestreamed at [kmuz.org](http://kmuz.org), in the heart of the Willamette Valley.

Jolie and Brian believe "progressive bluegrass music and its roots have the the power to make the world a better place," by bringing people together. Their shows are a labor of love!

In addition to listening to their shows on KMUZ-FM, you can hear their episodes on their YouTube channel. Podcasts include artist interviews and music segments with various themes: trains, animals, cold weather, songs for working folks, Billy Strings' birthday, mountain songs and so forth.

Jolie, a professional voice-over artist, guitarist and songwriter, recently brought home a Preston Thompson Billy Strings Signature Guitar (#22, for you Thompson geeks), and is excited about making music. Brian loves to research and learn about the music. With their entertaining repartee, facts and history about the musicians whose music they play, interesting musician interviews and their solid, well-curated playlists, this radio show has a lot to offer.

In their recent Episode #19: SHEgrass, I enjoyed hearing a recording of Shake Sugaree by Elizabeth Cotton, sung by Brenda Evans. This is just one example of how Jolie and Brian trace progressive bluegrass music to its roots and turn listeners on to the musicians who have inspired progressive bluegrass players.

Thank you to Jolie and Brian for your bluegrass "labor of love!"



*Brian Aune & Jolie Aune with her Preston Thompson Billy Strings Signature Model #22*

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*Fern Hill at Cooper Mountain Alehouse*

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## *A Musical Journey in the American South, by Emma John*

**E**ver daydream about exploring the hills and hollers of Appalachia and playing bluegrass music with your musical heroes? I have. *Wayfaring Stranger* is a delightful, autobiographical travelogue written by Emma John, a 30-ish British journalist and author, about her unlikely quest to become a bluegrass fiddler. Her background as a classically trained violinist did not give her the leg up she'd hoped for, despite her mastery of the instrument and "a good ear." But her charm and determination (as well as courage!) allowed her not only to enter the "parallel universe" of the bluegrass jam, but to meet and trade licks with the likes of Michael Cleveland, Aubrey Haynie, the Kruger Brothers, Wayne Henderson and other notables of the genre.

As a Londoner, her initial exposure to bluegrass music came not from the picking of Bill Monroe or Earl Scruggs, but from the banjo styling of Marcus Mumford, of Mumford and Sons. When the movie soundtrack of *Oh Brother Where Art Thou?* swept the UK, as it did the US, the deal was done. She packed up her 300-year-old German violin and flew to North Carolina, on a reconnaissance mission. On the plane she met a woman whose "late husband had a friend who played bluegrass" and Emma ended up spending her entire 2-week recon trip with 83-year-old Fred and his wife Doris on the outskirts of Charlotte. In addition

to Southern hospitality, Fred gave her a taste of bluegrass history and some classic songs.

I met Emma John in 2016 when she returned to the States to pursue her quest. We were both attending Pete Wernick's Jam Camp in Boomer, North Carolina during the last week of April, just before MerleFest. It was her first time at the camp, but my 15th. (I'll admit I'm a slow learner, but those of you who have made the transition from closet-picker to jam-

mer will know that you tend to bond with the people who accompany you on the journey. Each year about 40% of Wernick's camp attendees are return customers.) After MerleFest, I went home to Port-

land, but Emma stayed around the area for months, couch-surfing with jam friends and visiting the hallowed sites of bluegrass song and story, and practicing the fiddle. And apparently, gathering the remarkable experiences that make up this book.



Kerry Callahan

Emma writes with self-deprecating humor and a pace that keeps you turning pages. Her personal storyline is interspersed with "Brief and Incomplete Histories of Bluegrass, parts 1-7." She has the literary chops to communicate the frustration of failure and the pure joy of a successfully improvised solo. Her depiction of the Carolinas in cultural and geographical terms rings as true as the achingly beautiful string music she describes. As soon as I finished reading the book I wanted more of her writing, and I wanted to give a copy of this book to all my bluegrass friends. You are welcome to borrow mine, but better yet, order your own copy.

*Kerry Callahan says he's just a retired country doctor with a banjo.*

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# 2022 Festivals And Jam Camps

*Due to the coronavirus, many festival organizers await more information to determine whether to cancel, reschedule or go forward with festivals this summer. Please check festival websites for more information.*

## **April 29 - May 1**

Preston Thompson  
Northwest Flatpick Camp  
Sisters, Oregon  
christine@pktguitars.com

## **May 15, 9 am-6 pm**

Steeplegrass Reunion Picnic  
Lewisville Park, \$10 donation  
26411 NE Lewisville Hwy,  
Battle Ground, Washington  
Rich Powell, powellr1041@q.com

## **June 3-5**

Goldendale Pickers Festival  
Ekone Park  
Goldendale, Washington  
\$10/weekend  
clairell2002@yahoo.com

## **June 9-12**

Sacajawea Bluegrass Camp & Jam  
Sacajawea State Park  
Pasco, Washington  
Check their Facebook site.  
mctama@gmail.com

## **June 12-15**

California Bluegrass Association  
Summer Music Camp  
MusicCamp@CaliforniaBluegrass.net

## **June 16-19**

California Bluegrass Association  
Father's Day Festival  
Nevada County Fairgrounds  
Grass Valley, California  
californiablugrass.org

## **June 17-19**

Wenatchee River Bluegrass Festival  
Cashmere, Washington  
cashmerecoffeehouse.com

## **June 21-25**

National Old-Time Fiddlers  
Contest and Festival  
Weiser, Idaho  
fiddlecontest.org

## **June 23-26**

Sisters Folk Festival  
Bluegrass Jam Camp  
Sisters, Oregon  
sistersfolkfestival.org/bluegrass-jam-camp/

## **June 25, 10 am-6 pm**

Siskiyou Folk and Bluegrass Festival,  
Lake Selmac,  
24 mi. SW of Grants Pass, Oregon  
Check their Facebook site.  
ivrotary@cavenet.com

## **June 29-July 3**

Wheeler County Jam Camp  
Fossil, Oregon  
Free; nominal camping fee  
wheelercountybluegrass.org

## **July 7-10**

Lost River Bluegrass Festival  
Merrill, Oregon  
lostriverfestival.com

## **July 13-17**

Darrington Bluegrass Festival  
Darrington Washington  
darringtonbluegrass.com

## **July 21-24**

Northwest String Summit  
(Final Year!)  
Horning's Hideout  
North Plains, Oregon  
stringsummit.com

## **July 21-24**

Columbia Gorge Bluegrass Festival  
Skamania County Fairgrounds  
Stevenson, Washington  
new.columbiagorgebluegrass.net

## **July 22-24**

Hardtimes Bluegrass Festival  
Hamilton, Montana  
Hardtimesbluegrass.com

## **July 29-31**

Bluegrass From the Forest  
Shelton, Washington  
bluegrassfromtheforest.com

## **August 5-7**

Winlock Pickers Fest  
Winolequa Park  
Winlock, Washington  
winlockpickersfest.com

## **August 12-14**

Mount St. Helens Bluegrass Festival  
Toledo High School  
Toledo, Washington  
washingtonbluegrassassociation.org

## **August 12-14**

Blue Waters Bluegrass Festival  
Waterfront Park  
Medical Lake, Washington  
bluwatersbluegrass.org

## **August 13-21**

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Centralia, Washington  
centraliacampout.com

## **August 25-28**

Rainier Pickin' Party  
Wilkowski Park  
Rainier, Washington  
rainierpickinparty.com

## **September 2-4**

North Cascades Bluegrass Festival  
Deming Log Show Showgrounds  
Bellingham, Washington  
ncbf.fun

## **September 8-11**

American Banjo Camp  
Port Orchard, Washington  
americanbanjocamp.com

## **September 23-25**

Tygh Valley Bluegrass Jamboree  
Tygh Valley Fairgrounds  
Tygh Valley, Oregon  
tyghvalleybluegrass.com

## **September 30-October 2**

Sisters Folk Festival  
Sisters, Oregon  
sistersfolkfestival.org



# OBA Supporting Performer Directory

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

## 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

## Corral Creek

The Corral Creek band has been showing its audience a good time since 2003 through performing music and storytelling. They share tunes of Oregon (including originals), gospel and bluegrass standards. Their performances have been enjoyed at city and bluegrass festivals, wineries, house concerts, and more  
Contact Ron Taylor  
(503) 625-7254 or (503)349-6608.  
[corralcreekbluegrass.com](http://corralcreekbluegrass.com)

## The Country Fools

The County Fools' sound and sensibility is deeply rooted in that rich American dirt first filled by the founders - folks like the Stanley Brothers, Flatt and Scruggs, and Bill Monroe - and further shaped by the great second generation of bluegrass musicians. Continuing this tradition with reverence and creativity, and playing this music as it's meant to be played, is the spirit that guides the County Fools each time they step up to the mic. Mark Klassen - Guitar, Darian Santner - Mandolin, Gerrit Vyn - Banjo, John Wyatt - Bass

[www.thecountyfools.com](http://www.thecountyfools.com)  
[thecountyfools@gmail.com](mailto:thecountyfools@gmail.com)

## Dogwood String Band

Contemporary bluegrass-fueled Americana

Woody Wood  
[dogwoodstringband@gmail.com](mailto:dogwoodstringband@gmail.com)  
[dogwoodstringband.com](http://dogwoodstringband.com)

## Fire & Stone

Fire & Stone is a nontraditional bluegrass band playing a diverse blend of traditional and contemporary folk, blues, pop, and bluegrass. F&S delivers a powerful sound of lyrical storytelling, rich harmonies, and expressive instrumental solos

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fire-andstoneband/>  
Email: [victor.reuther@gmail.com](mailto:victor.reuther@gmail.com)  
Telephone: (707) 832-9262

## The Hardly Heard

The Hardly Heard perform music inspired by Second Generation Bluegrass. We offer rich vocal harmonies, memorable instrumentals and we are equipped with a full gospel set for Festival Sundays.

Email: [thehardlyheard@gmail.com](mailto:thehardlyheard@gmail.com)  
[www.facebook.com/thehardlyheard/](http://www.facebook.com/thehardlyheard/)  
[www.reverbnation.com/thehardlyheard](http://www.reverbnation.com/thehardlyheard)

## 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](http://www.jamblers.com)  
[www.facebook.com/jamblers](http://www.facebook.com/jamblers)  
Gene Greer, [info@jamblers.com](mailto:info@jamblers.com)  
503-702-1867

## 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  
[patnellconrick@gmail.com](mailto:patnellconrick@gmail.com)

## 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](http://www.phoenixrisingband.org)  
[KBPR@gmail.com](mailto:KBPR@gmail.com)  
503-936-8480

## The Lois & Clark Expedition

Charming, down home Bluegrass and Americana duo based in Sisters, Oregon, featuring close harmonies and melodic banjo by Linda Leavitt & Tom Nechville

Contact [lleavittmusic@icloud.com](mailto:lleavittmusic@icloud.com) or  
(503) 807-9477.

## Lost Creek Bluegrass Band

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

[www.lostcreekmusic.com](http://www.lostcreekmusic.com)  
[lostcreekmusic@gmail.com](mailto:lostcreekmusic@gmail.com)  
971-678-2337

## The Miller Twins

Based in Oregon with Appalachian roots, the Miller Twins cut their musical teeth over 20 years ago in a local midwest bar scene. Ben and Nat bring guitar, mandolin, tenor banjo, and blood harmony to the stage. Influenced by John Prine, Texas singer songwriters, and acoustic sets of the Grateful Dead, the twins blur the lines between folk and bluegrass music. With the lyricism of folk and the drive of bluegrass, their sound is uniquely their own. They are pure acoustic and purely entertaining!

Website: [www.themillertwinsmusic.com](http://www.themillertwinsmusic.com)

## Misty Mamas

The Misty Mamas serve up home-style bluegrass filled with powerful harmonies, traditional and original songs as well as tasty instrumentals combining the American genres of bluegrass, old time, gospel, folk and country music. Katherine Nitsch (vocals, guitar), April Parker (vocals, mandolin, accordion), Eileen Rocci (vocals, upright bass), Tony Rocci (guitar, mandolin, vocals)  
[mistymamas.com](http://mistymamas.com)  
April Parker 503-780-9770

## Never Come Down

Earnest songwriting, dedication to craft, and genuine care for the music. Joe Suskind: Lead Guitar/Vocals, Crystal Lariza: Rhythm Guitar/Vocals, Kaden Hurst: Mandolin, Lillian Sawyer: Fiddle, Brian Alley: Banjo, Ben Ticknor: Bass

Booking: [nevercomedown.band@gmail.com](mailto:nevercomedown.band@gmail.com)  
Brian Alley 303-330-8414

# OBA Supporting Performer Directory

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## **Rock Ridge**

Rock Ridge specializes in deep groove bluesy driving rhythm, stellar vocals, and stunning instrumentals. Their repertoire includes traditional and contemporary bluegrass, originals, old-time country, and gospel. Reviewers say: "This is good, straight-ahead bluegrass!"

**Contact: Josie Grant at 530-520-6480**  
[rockridgebluegrassband@gmail.com](mailto:rockridgebluegrassband@gmail.com)  
<https://rockridgebluegrass.com/home>

## **Rowdy Mountain**

A throwback to the heyday of bluegrass music, Rowdy Mountain brings the heat with the raw, down from the mountain sound that originally gave bluegrass its wheels back in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Featuring energetic and fresh classics alongside stirring and relevant originals that honor the time-tested tradition, Rowdy Mountain is the real deal. Listen for yourself at [rowdymountain.bandcamp.com](http://rowdymountain.bandcamp.com).

**971-347-6050**  
[rowdymountain@gmail.com](mailto:rowdymountain@gmail.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](mailto:eggers-stephen@gmail.com)

## **Slipshod**

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

[www.SlipshodMusic.net](http://www.SlipshodMusic.net)  
**Steve Blanchard, 503-730-0005**  
[Steve@SteveBlanchardMusic.com](mailto:Steve@SteveBlanchardMusic.com)  
**Matt Snook, 541-805-5133**  
[BohemianBanjo@gmail.com](mailto:BohemianBanjo@gmail.com)

## **Steve Blanchard**

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

[www.SteveBlanchardMusic.com](http://www.SteveBlanchardMusic.com)  
**503-730-0005**  
[Steve@SteveBlanchardMusic.com](mailto:Steve@SteveBlanchardMusic.com)

## **Sunfish Duo**

Sunfish Duo will take you back in time with traditional harmonies and simple melodies from the roots of Bluegrass, Country, and Old-time music.

**bandcamp:** <https://sunfishduo.bandcamp.com/>. **Contact info (throu**

## **Sunny South**

Sunny South is a quartet of veteran bluegrass musicians. they bring a fun family show of vocal quartets, trio, and duo's along with some of the finest instrumentalists around. Mike Stahlman, banjo, Dee Johnson, bass, Steve Reischman, guitar, Aaron Stocck, guitar, and Dave Elliott on mandolin.

**contact Dave at [davescapos@yahoo.com](mailto:davescapos@yahoo.com)**  
**gh FB):** <https://www.facebook.com/fishandells>

## **Thunder Ridge**

Thunder Ridge features hard driving bluegrass music performed in the traditional manner. Tight two-part and three-part harmonies featuring John Montgomery on guitar & vocals, Drew Tucker on mandolin & vocals, Chuck Holloway on banjo & vocals, and Casey Davidson on bass & vocals

**Contacts for Thunder Ridge:**  
**John Montgomery: 479.653.5687**  
**Drew Tucker: 971.300.2455**  
**Chuck Holloway: 651.461.4867**

## **Timothy Jenkins Band**

**Timothy Jenkins**  
[tjenkins@uoregon.edu](mailto:tjenkins@uoregon.edu)  
**Booking: [themillertwinsmusic@gmail.com](mailto:themillertwinsmusic@gmail.com)**

## **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](mailto:truenorthband@comcast.net)  
[www.truenorthband.com](http://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 harmony vocals.

**Contact: 909-913-3668**  
[andspence@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.whistlinrufus.com)  
**Pat Connell**  
[whistlinrufus@comcast.net](mailto:whistlinrufus@comcast.net)  
**971-207-5933**



# Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

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

## Sunday

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

**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*

**PORTLAND: Turn Key Bluegrass Jam - Sunday 2 to 5 pm**  
As of January 1, 2019, O'Neill's Pub (Biddy McGraw's) is closed. New location for this jam starting January 6: The Columbia River Brewing Company, 1728 NE 40th Ave., Portland.  
*Contact Jeff at msglimbaugh@comcast.net or (360) 256-8123*

**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*

## 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  
Please join us down-home guys and gals at 6 pm for an enchilada or at 7 pm to pickalotta. We love encouraging newbies - you need not be a pro to join us. Heck, if a G chord is the only one you've mastered so far, you'll be way ahead of our regular banjo player! Contact Larry at schlott2573@comcast.net to get reminders a couple days ahead of each event.  
*For information: Larry Schlott - schlott2573@comcast.net. (503) 349-4294*  
*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.*

**LINCOLN CITY: Bluegrass & Old Time Music Jam Every Tuesday 6 pm - 9:00 pm**  
Eagles Lodge #2576,  
737 SW 32nd  
All levels and ages welcome.  
*Call Carla for information: 541-418-1779*

**Portland: Tomorrow's Verse Bluegrass Jam Every Tuesday 7 pm**  
Spectators, pickers, grinners, gamblers, rounders, sinners, stompers, whooters and hollersers welcome. No Cover. \$5 suggested donation for our fearless "band leaders"  
4605 NE Fremont St  
Portland, OR, 97213  
*Call Rich Landar and Ray Mann 971-346-2198*

## 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*

## 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. On hiatus until further notice.

**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*

**MEDFORD: Bluegrass Jam - 2nd and 4th Thursday 6:30-9:00 p.m.**  
Private residence, open to all bluegrass pickers.  
*For information: Text John Nice (541)601-0254*  
*nicetunz@gmail.com*

**CENTRAL OREGON:**  
*Hosted by Maggie Jackson*  
*Email Maggie for date and time: musicmag@yahoo.com*

## Friday

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

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

## Saturday

**PORTLAND: Taborggrass Bluegrass Class & Jam - Every Saturday starting October 6th 10 am -1 pm. The Sessions offers two small jams guided by professional musicians every Saturday during Taborggrass. On hiatus due to COVID. Check the web site at taborggrass.com for updated summer information.**  
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.

# Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

**DALLAS: Acoustic Gospel Jam - Every 3rd Saturday 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm**

All levels welcome. Guthrie Park in Dallas.  
*For information: Sally Clark (503) 623-0874 or email jim\_dusterjim@hotmail.com*

**WINLOCK, WA: Slow Jam - 2nd Saturday of the month beginning at 1 pm, October through May. On hiatus until October 2022.**

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](http://oregonbluegrass.org) or email [calendar@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:calendar@oregonbluegrass.org).



## Steeplegrass Reunion

**Steeplegrass Reunion Picnickers! Let's have a picnic! Sunday, May 15 at 9:00 AM.  
Lewisville County Park/ Central Shelter**

**2 miles north of Battle Ground in Clark County, Washington**

**<https://clark.wa.gov/public-works/lewisville-regional-park>**

**Bring if you can: your favorite food dish to share, some firewood,  
folding chairs, rain tarp/canopy.**

**Not sure on the hamburger/ BBQ details, but all of you who used to volunteer for the event,  
please email to confirm your willingness to help again. Helpers can show up around 8:00 a.m.  
and official start time is 9:00 a.m. \$10.00 per person to cover the cost of the picnic site  
reservation and some hamburger/hot dog expenses.**

**I've got a good feeling about our chances for some fun bluegrass music and  
re-connecting with folks we may not have seen in a while.**

**Rich Powell, [powellr1041@q.com](mailto:powellr1041@q.com).**

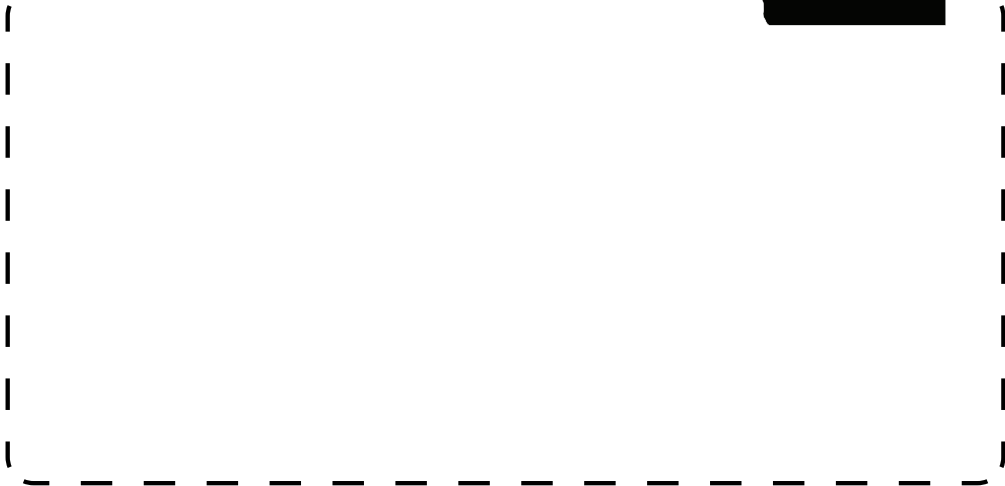


Oregon Bluegrass Association  
P.O. Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207



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# Oregon Bluegrass Association



*A subscribing member of the OBA according to expiration date.  
Cut along dotted line for a handy OBA Membership ID card.*

**Oregon Bluegrass Association**

P.O. Box 1115  
Portland, Oregon 97207  
www.oregonbluegrass.org



**OREGON  
BLUEGRASS**  
ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1115  
Portland, OR 97207

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Visit [www.oregonbluegrass.org](http://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](mailto:volunteers@oregonbluegrass.org) or contact any board member.

- \$30 Individual Membership
- \$75 Individual Three-Year Membership
- \$50 Supporting Performer Membership
- \$125 Contributing Business Sponsor  
The Oregon Bluegrass Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit

Rec'd date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount: \_\_\_\_\_  
Check/Cash/CC: \_\_\_\_\_  
Received by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Event: \_\_\_\_\_