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INSIDE THIS ISSUE! Fiddling Around
The Globe, Suggestions For Jamming
Banjos, Album Review: Over The Line
and more ...



Oregon Bluegrass Association
www.oregonbluegrass.org

Bluegrass *Express*

Fiddling Around The Globe

By Claire Levine

Ellie Hakanson has left her hometown to tour with Jeff Scroggins and Colorado

Whether she likes it or not, a large number of Portland bluegrass fans will always remember Ellie Hakanson as a confident, charming little girl playing the heck out of a fiddle in her family band. While still in her teens, she developed a rich singing voice, and she would wow us with her interpretation of Patsy Cline's "Walking after Midnight."

But we also knew her as level-headed and practical, so it was no surprise when she accepted a full scholarship and completed a rigorous academic college degree. And when she came back to Portland, she had a very practical job: auditing workplaces for compliance with asbestos removal practices.

But then, we also weren't surprised when one of the most exciting bluegrass bands to come along in a while whisked Ellie up and invited her to tour with them.

So today, Ellie is fresh out of the

recording studio and on her way to ever bigger and better venues and festivals as a fiddler and singer with Jeff Scroggins and Colorado.

They meet – and trial by fire

Ellie's history has been recounted well on these pages, so we'll skip to her first

encounter with the Scroggins crew. Ellie attended Wintergrass in 2014 and spent time with her old fiddling friend Sam Weiss, who had performed with Tristan Scroggins. Ellie jammed with Tristan and his fellow band members in Jeff Scroggins and Colorado and found they were on the same musical wavelength.

When the band needed a fiddler for the Coombs Bluegrass Festival in British Columbia, they invited Ellie to join them. Ellie remembers two highlights. First, goats on the roof. Coombs is noted for a store with grazing goats on top.

Second, although Ellie had some time to prepare with the band, she didn't have a lot of time to prepare. So when they were on stage and pulled out one of Jeff's original instrumentals



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OBA Membership & Ad Information

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The OBA Board of Directors invites you to join the OBA and to participate in its many activities. Our membership benefits include a subscription to the quarterly Bluegrass Express, frequent mailings about events, and ticket discounts to northwest bluegrass events. Annual membership dues are \$30 for a General Member, \$50 for Supporting Performers, and \$125 for Contributing Business Sponsors, as well as other options. You can join online or complete the application on the back cover and mail your check to:

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

Website

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

www.oregonbluegrass.org

Article and Editorial Submissions

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

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AD RATES AND DIMENSIONS

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Full Page	7.5 x 9.5	\$150.00	\$130.00
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Quarter Page	3.75 x 4.5	\$60.00	\$50.00
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Leaderboard	728 x 90 px	\$50.00	\$30.00
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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.

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

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

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



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Grange #71



Vol. 39 No. 1

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www.oregonbluegrass.org

Bluegrass Express

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

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President's Message

I'm happy to tell you that I have taken the reins as OBA President.

We received word last month that our Webmaster, John Hart, was ready to move on to greener pastures. Tony McCormick, our President, felt that he had a lot to offer if he could move back to his old job as Webmaster. This left a vacancy for which — I'm honored to say — the Directors found me to be a suitable candidate.

First, let me thank Tony on behalf of the Association for his unexpected, uncomplaining, and sometimes difficult service as OBA President. The path, in Chris Palmer's absence, was rocky—we can't count the number of times that the answer to the question, "Why isn't this thing working?" was, "Well, Chris did that."



Photo By Doug Olmstead

Likewise, John Hart made our web site steadily better during his tenure, and kept us on line through what has seemed like a constant stream of bugs and hacks. It seemed like nothing was too hard, and John, I thank you for that. Our web site, along with the Bluegrass Express, is our public face, and good grooming matters.

Second, please allow me to settle a little personal issue. My friends call me by my middle name, Chris. As some of you know, I also go by Clayton, my first name and the one I perform under. I answer to that happily. But please feel free to consider yourself my friend and call me Chris.

You might be wondering where the OBA is headed as this round of musical chairs concludes and we enter the holiday season.

Our goals for 2019 and beyond are a work in progress, but there's one that you can hang your hat on: engaged membership. In the coming months we'll be reaching out to you, hoping you'll choose to be an active part of this wonderful community, whether you love traditional or progressive bluegrass, and whether your favorite place is the concert hall or the jam, or somewhere in between. What can you do? Well, two things: show up and pony up.

If you haven't checked the OBA Calendar in a while, you'll be surprised at the number of bluegrass events that are going on throughout the region, from jams to classes and workshops to performances. The survival and success of many of these depends on how many smiling faces show up, and I hope yours will be one of them.

And membership is how we measure our ability to promote bluegrass music. Joining or renewing your membership in the OBA has never been easier—just visit our web site and click on "Join." Please consider choosing automatic renewal, so you never miss an issue of the Bluegrass Express.

We've got lots of ways to get involved. We're an all-volunteer organization, and I promise you that we've got something on our to-do list that fits your talents perfectly. See the Director list on our web site for contact information. And if you just can't fit the OBA in your schedule, we can always accept good old-fashioned donations.

Continued



What's Playing On The Radio

Local Radio Bluegrass and Country Listings

Albany/Corvallis - KBOO

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

Astoria - KMUN 91.9 FM

Some syndicated programming
503-325-0010
"Cafe Vaquera"
Tuesdays 9-11pm, Bluegrass/Old Timey
Western/Folk with Calamity Jane
CafeVaquera@hotmail.com

"Shady Grove" Saturdays 7-9pm
Regular folk program
Monday thru Friday 10am - noon
with bluegrass included

Columbia Gorge - KBOO

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

Corvallis - KOAC 550 AM

Syndicated public radio with some bluegrass included in regular programming
541-737-4311

Eugene - KLCC 89.7 FM

Local broadcast 541-726-2224
Mixed format "Saturday Cafe"
Saturdays 11am - noon
"The Backporch"
9 - 10pm Saturdays

Eugene - KRVM 91.9 FM

"Routes & Branches" 3 - 5pm Saturdays
"Acoustic Junction" 5 - 7pm Saturdays
"Miles of Bluegrass" 7 - 9pm Mondays
www.krvm.org 541-687-3370

Pendleton - KWHT 104.5 FM

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

Portland - KBOO 90.7 FM

"Music from the True Vine"
9am - noon Saturdays

Santiam Canyon - KYAC 94.9 FM

"Ken 'til 10" 6-10am M-F
Additional Bluegrass Programming
Streaming and Schedule: www.kyacfm.org

Salem - KMUZ 88.5 & 100.7

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



President's Message

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What's going on?

Monthly, Rich Powell hosts the Portland Metro OBA Jam at the Audubon Society on the first Sunday. Every third Saturday, we partner with Dave Elliot to present Bluegrass at Multnomah Grange 71.

On the 26th, we'll pull out all the stops for our big annual fundraiser, the Sonny Hammond Memorial Gospel Show, featuring the Greg Blake Band.

And February in the Pacific Northwest means Wintergrass, with near-nonstop jamming, band showcases, a silent auction and general festival camaraderie.

And just over the horizon, join us for the OBA Annual Meeting the first weekend in April. The planning committee is already at work organizing a splendid time for all, and we'll be electing Directors, which is your opportunity to have a say in the OBA's future. And then we'll cruise into festival season.

I'm delighted and excited—delighted to have such a talented and energetic group of Directors to work with, and excited for the opportunity to explore what is possible for the OBA in the next couple of years—with your help.

Many thanks for your membership and support.



Chris Knight
President, OBA



Fiddling Around The Globe

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that she'd never heard, and Jeff said, "Don't worry, you'll be fine," she wasn't entirely convinced. However, she admits, she did fine. Apparently, she passed some kind of test.

"The next gig I did with them was a showcase at IBMA." Showcases at the International Bluegrass Music Association convention are highly valued. Bands compete for the opportunity to be heard by virtually every bluegrass promoter in the nation.

"I jumped in with both feet there, and then we went directly to Byron Berline's festival, where I taught a fiddle workshop along with Byron Berline!" Berline is a former Bluegrass Boy, a member of other super groups, and one of the icons of his era.



Travel and acknowledgment

Since 2015, Ellie has been traveling the country and the globe with Jeff Scroggins and Colorado. At first, she was the fill-in fiddler, until she graduated to become The Fiddler. Her great voice and exceptional ear for harmonies quickly made her a central part of the already-tight configuration of banjo player Jeff, his son Tristan on mandolin, and lead vocalist and guitar player Greg Blake.

The band came together off stage, as well. "Tristan and I became good friends fairly quickly, probably because we are close to

the same age. Greg and Jeff are easy to get along with. Then they were switching bass players a lot, so even after the first few gigs, I wasn't the newest member of the band. I got to show other people the ropes."

Since Ellie joined the band, the ensemble and its members had added to their national awards and attention. Ellie, already an Arizona State fiddle champion, won the top honors at Rockygrass and has been nominated for International Bluegrass Music Association's Momentum Awards

in two different years, for fiddle and vocals.

Jeff is a two-time national banjo champ. Greg had earned a dozen nominations from the Society for Preservation

of Bluegrass Music's vocalist and guitar player of the year. In 2017, Tristan, who has won a number of state championships, received the 2017 Momentum Award. And in 2018, the band was nominated as Emerging Artist of the Year by the IBMA.

Ellie is optimistic that the new recognition will bring larger



festivals, more high-profile — and better-paying — gigs, reducing the "long-haul day-after-day cross-country slogs."

Between the time of this interview and the publication of the Express, the band toured Australia and Germany. The year 2019 includes a bluegrass cruise and some of the biggest festivals in the west.

"I miss being home, and I still feel connected to Portland, but now I have a community all over the world. I get to see people I know across the country -- especially college friends and people I've met through bluegrass. That outweighs the occasional nights of sleeping on the floor -- which we don't actually do that much anymore."

Ellie goes to the studio

In 2018, Jeff Scroggins and Colorado recorded its fourth CD – the first with Ellie. Her previous recording experience was a two-day session on a live recording. No overdubs, no



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Fiddling Around The Globe

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second takes. What you do the first time is what you get.

So, going into a professional studio with the phenomenal Mark Schatz as producer and bass player was a new – and intimi-

punk rock sort of song that Mark found, and is in some ways my favorite one,” Ellie said.

Ellie on harmony

Ellie grew up listening to Great Northern Planes, an iconic Portland band featuring her dad Rob Hakanson, Steve Bond, and Jim and Doug Hancock. The Planes were noted for their harmony and gospel singing. So great harmony is as central to her as breathing.

“Even at the age of 14, I was bossy about harmony arrangements

in the family band. But working with the Scroggins band took my understanding of harmony to a different level,” Ellie said.

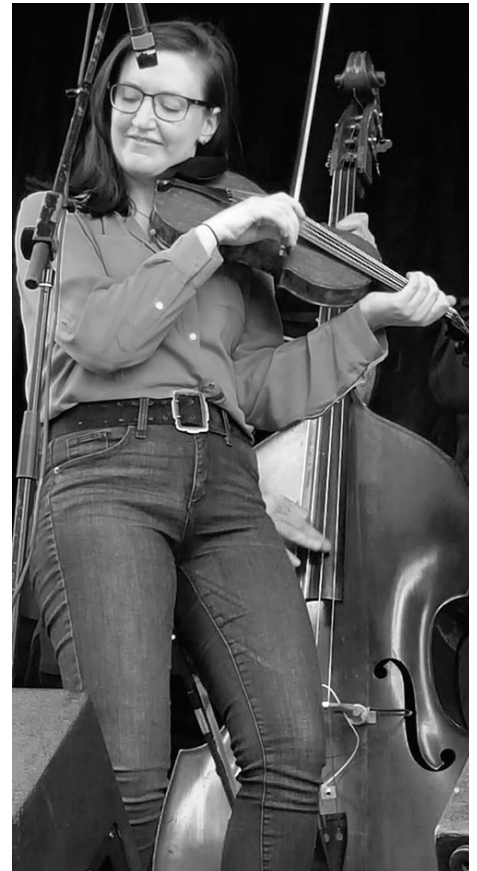
dating – experience. It was a learning experience, as well.

“I had to get used to the idea that it wasn’t necessarily going to be perfect the first time. I had to get over listening to that first take and not liking it and realizing that I had to do it over.”

The band arranged the songs before they hit the studio, but Mark helped a lot, providing insights and advice.

“Sometimes he would advise me on timing or intonation. And it always would be better.”

The CD features Ellie’s first recorded solos, “which was also intimidating.” She sang A Few Old Memories, a favorite Hazel Dickens song; Hide Your Heart, by Canadian songwriter Lynn Miles; and Cursing the Ohio, “a slightly



The most fun job

Ellie finds so many aspects of her new life to be great fun. “Connecting with an audience is something the band is really good at. When we’re all having fun and we’re pretty high energy and there are fields of energy in the room -- it feels really great.”

She also likes the challenge of learning, “...from everyone in the band. I’ve had to step up my playing, my singing and my overall performance to keep up, and that’s been great for me. And there are a lot of people my own age -- the Lonely Heart Street Band, Alex and Tatiana Hargreaves, Molly Tuttle -- who I’m constantly learning from.”

Ellie never expected to be a touring musician. “I figured I’d be playing every weekend and some nights, especially with



“Greg finds really interesting harmony lines, and that’s what I’m experimenting with -- trying to find the less obvious notes and phrasing.

“If you listen, you’ll hear big differences in how Ralph Stanley and Doyle Lawson sing harmonies. And there’s Flatt Lonesome. They all emphasize different things, making the music more interesting.”

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my family. I knew I was going to be playing forever, but I didn't think it was going to be my job.

"It's been a huge surprise for me. In some ways, being nominated for the IBMA Momentum Award has helped with my 'imposter' syndrome, the thought that I was just pretending to be a good musician. It's helped me see that other people think I'm doing ok! Being on the list with others who were nominated feels really good." Other young players are members of groups like Mile Twelve and the Bryan Sutton Band.



Claire Levine is a Portland writer, a bluegrass fan, and half of the duo Free Range.

Tristan talks CDs – and Ellie

Tristan Scroggins is a multi-instrumentalist, songwriter and singer (he plays all the instruments on his CD, *Grana*, wrote all the music and designed the cover) who has been touring with his father's band for eight years. During that time, they have recorded four CDs, the newest of which, on which Ellie performs, is called *Over the Line*. They released the much-acclaimed third CD, *Ramblin' Feels Good*, shortly before Ellie joined the band.

Tristan is enthusiastic about the new product. "I feel it captures the sound of this band, which has been working together for three years. It captures our groove."

The CD features covers of some of their favorite songs, plus original instrumentals by Tristan and Jeff. "It's a little more eclectic than our previous work," Tristan said. It ranges from Reno and Smiley bluegrass to the title track, written by Molly Tuttle.

Tristan has high praise for Ellie: "She's a great fiddle player and singer, and she's my best friend."

She is also noted among band members for trying to get into any body of water they pass on their tours. On a northern Canada tour, "... despite many warnings, she insisted on taking a dip in the Yukon River. It seemed pretty crazy -- but she was fine!"



Suggestions For Jamming Banjo Players

By Elliot Picciotto

This article is about chopping and chunking. Perhaps you think, “Wow, that sure sounds boring!” But sometimes a simple musical notion can be very helpful.

First, I'd like to thank the four terrific banjo players who offered their thoughtful input to this article.

Second, I'd like to state that generally, the rolling, driving banjo sounds appropriate during the choruses of medium and quick-tempo bluegrass songs. So this is not about having to chunk all the time. However, you'll be doing a lot of chunking if you're in one of those jams where 3 or 4 fiddle tunes in a row are called!

Mike Stahlman (Sunny South, Sawtooth Mountain Boys, Lee Highway, The Loafers, Mountain Honey) wrote, “I always think of chunking as ‘strumming’ on the banjo. It's unobtrusive and back behind the lead instrument or singer, but stating the beat and the dominant chord sound very clearly. And if you are going to sing during the song, it's the most natural way to keep the beat while you sing.”

Has anyone ever given you the “hairy eyeball” at a jam because you were happily playing continuous forward rolls at “normal” volume on your banjo while a guitar or mandolin player was taking a delicate little lead? Or perhaps when a singer was singing the verse of a song? I sure have!

Could I possibly be drowning out the guitar? Little me? Could I possibly be rolling individual eighth notes while a second banjo player in the circle is taking a break? Wait a minute? Do you mean: It's not ALWAYS my turn? And if one banjo sounds so unbelievably good to my ears, doesn't it go without saying that two banjos sound doubly fine?

Speaking with Ian Joel (Sleepy-Eyed Johns) about this, he explained that the technical complication of having two banjos in a small jam occurs during backup, and not usually when one banjo is taking a lead. All banjo players have their own favorite fills and licks that they're used to

playing at the end of vocal phrases, and unless they're paying attention to each other, it can get pretty cluttered.

You might find it enlightening to place a recording device in the middle of the circle for a song or two, if no one objects. Play it back at home through good speakers and listen for changing dynamics, instrumental balance and clutter. Do the jammers quiet down when a quiet instrument takes a lead? Do the guitars sound like an interminable wall of sound or do they play their “boom-chuck” rhythm with a crisp “chuck” and perhaps do some dampening to give some space between the notes and chords they play?

Can you hear the lead singer during the chorus? Does the bass player change tempo to accommodate an instrument that tends to speed up or drag, or does the bass player keep it steady?

Chopping on the banjo is a pinching technique that doesn't let the strings ring at all. Chunking lets the strings ring very briefly.

Unless I hear a fiddle or another banjo doing it, it's become almost automatic for me to chop or chunk on the 2nd and 4th beats (or 2nd and 3rd beats in a $\frac{3}{4}$ -time song) when the mandolin player is taking a break. When the mandolin takes a solo, the jam loses the high-pitched mando “chop” which, in the words of Ian Joel, is “the key rhythmic signature in bluegrass music.” A good mando chop is fast, staccato (dampened) and though it isn't loud, it's usually loud enough for everyone to hear the pulse and stay on tempo.

Sometimes jams are small and sometimes they're not. In a large jam (~8 or more musicians) it's not unusual to have more than one person chopping. That said, here's what Chuck Holloway (Green Mountain Band) wrote about chopping in a 4- or 5-piece group:

“With a five-piece band (fiddle, guitar, mandolin, bass and banjo), it takes some orchestration to get things to work smoothly and sound professional. That



Elliot Picciotto

can be done with some communication. If the mandolin is taking a break, the fiddle player can do one of two things: (1) Chop in place of the mandolin chop or (2) longbow if the banjo is chopping in place of the mandolin chop. What a person wants to avoid is having two instruments chopping at the same time.

In my experience, what's called a chop on the banjo is rarely used. It's done by pinching three notes and laying the left hand softly over all the strings in various positions up the neck. To do this, find a spot where you're not “chiming” (playing harmonics). As you play with the technique you'll see how you can change the pitch of the pulse to correspond with chord changes. It doesn't have to be perfectly in pitch or even close, but it should be as “staccato” as possible, taking up a minimum of musical space so others can be heard. Listen closely to the bass and keep your tempo accurate. Similarly, when the guitar player takes a break, we've lost the “boom-chuck” which is also an extremely important rhythmic element in bluegrass music. Guitar players appreciate being able to hear a crisp, steady, and accurate but not loud backup rhythm when they solo.

Experienced mandolin players will finish their break by completing the last measure that leads into the next vocal verse

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Suggestions For Jamming Banjo Players

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or the next player's lead. But sometimes the mando player (or guitar/fiddle/other banjo) doesn't do that, and stops on the downbeat of their solo's last measure. If I foresee that happening or notice it when the mando music stops, I still have half a measure to do a little tag lick to fill in that space and complete the leadup to the next vocal.

It's usually fine to roll behind the fiddler. Fiddlers quite often like to hear the rhythm of the syncopated forward roll while they are doing their solos, especially on up-tempo, hard-driving bluegrass songs or fiddle tunes. The sustained fiddle notes and the percussive banjo rolls sound great together. Once in a while you'll encounter a newer and perhaps more timid fiddle player whose lead can be overwhelmed by the banjo. Just roll more quietly and make sure the soloing fiddler remains prominent. You may chunk, but certainly don't have to. Again, if the fiddler is inexperienced and needs a little help ramping up to the next person's lead or the next vocal, it's fine to add a little fill at the end. You might find you have company at that point. Just smile. If the song is slow and sweet, you'll probably want to use a rhythmic type of chunking to complement the tempo rather than a slow forward roll which isn't pleasing. Listen to the overall sound and see what you can do to enhance the music. There are plenty of times when I realize that my banjo playing is drawing people's attention rather than supporting the lead player. When that happens, I quiet down or lay out.

The dobro may sound like a loud instrument but it really isn't. And dobro players often use rolls. So treat it as if it were another banjo, but a quiet one, and do not roll when the dobro player takes a break. If the jam isn't real small and perhaps

already a bit noisy, I usually lay out during dobro breaks.

Once in a while someone will yell "bass" and the bass player takes a break. Everyone including the banjo (chunk) does a very staccato strum, usually on the first beat of each measure. But does the banjo

even pierce. So I keep my right hand pretty close to the bridge and dig in a little more. Earl Scruggs called that right-hand position the "X" position. However, if I'm trying to chunk lightly during a singer's verse, my right hand is usually pretty close to the end of the fret board ("Y" position) and that produces a warmer, rounder

and less intrusive sound. There are so many great players on YouTube and so much can be gleaned from watching them. One exemplary player I like to watch is J.D. Crowe, especially when he's doing backup for a singer. If he's chunking during a vocal, of course he adds some interesting licks here and there, but his right hand is mostly in that Y position. It sounds great when he chunks with alternating G-shape and D-shape chords up the neck and further up the neck, maybe adding a little roll high up as a quick fill. But he doesn't sound busy and cluttered. Check him out on YouTube (Bluegrass Album Band - Blue Ridge Cabin Home).

In speaking with Matt Ruhland (Ruhland Mandolins and an excellent banjo player, too!) he acknowledged that it can get boring if you find yourself

chunking through three fiddle tunes in a row! (I personally think 4 fiddle tunes in a row should be against the law!) But in addition to doing some quiet rolling, he'll do some popcorn-like pops up the neck, sometimes even on the same note, and by contrast, do some walk-ups on the 4th string to the next chunk chord, all in an effort to add interest and variety while still backing up the lead instrument.

Chunking can be done with some interesting rhythm patterns with close-to-the-

According to Larry Perkins in a 1990 interview at IBMA, the Scruggs brothers, Earl and Horace, developed their timing by starting a song, then walking around the house and meeting at the point of origin. They did this on their songs until they consistently were in time with each other after their walk.

player let the strings ring? Nope. To make the chunk loud, the banjo player presses the strings fully onto the fingerboard with the left fingers, and then as soon as the tone of the three-finger pinch become full, lifts the fingers just off the fret board but not off the strings, to limit the length of the chord and making sure not to leave strings open to possibly ring the unwanted open G chord.

How about the right hand? If I'm chunking on the first beat of each measure during a bass break, I want it loud, bright and

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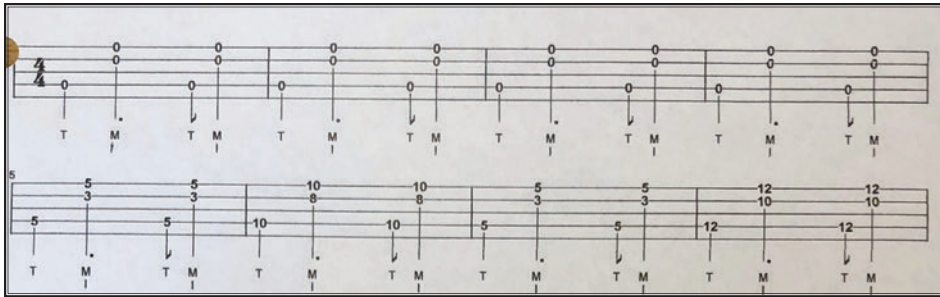


Suggestions For Jamming Banjo Players

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chunk “grace notes” played on the 4th string. The pattern below is the one I mainly use when I’m backing up a vocalist, especially on the verse of a song.

The tablature below is written for you to practice this particular rhythm. It doesn’t show any damping of the strings. Just



know that the duration of all the notes is shorter than written. The first note of each measure can be a quarter note as written, but all the rest are no longer (in duration) than eighth notes.

There are other interesting rhythms that I hear when I watch some of the great bluegrass bands on YouTube. If you’re a beginner you can still play along with these bands by going to the little gear symbol in the lower right corner of the YouTube image frame and change the “Speed” to .75 or .50. It’s great to play along, keeping

your rhythm/tempo steady by using your favorite band as a backing track, while at the same time practicing songs you know, or learning a new one.

Keeping a steady backup rhythm is everyone’s job. Here’s a story you may know about Earl Scruggs and his brother Horace.

According to Larry Perkins in a 1990 interview at IBMA, the Scruggs brothers, Earl and Horace, developed their timing by starting a song, then walking around the house and meeting at the point of origin. They did this on their songs until they consistently were in time with each other after their walk.

So, you might be thinking, “When the heck do I let out all the stops and whale away on my banjo?” The answer is simple: When it’s your turn to take a break.

As jammers, we’re always experimenting

with sound combinations. That’s part of the fun. Does it sound better to you when you’re playing a soft roll while the singer is singing a verse? Does it sound better when you chunk up the neck, down the neck? When you are experimenting and you come across a method that really isn’t working, don’t jump to something else mid-phrase. Just lighten up on your volume and finish that 4- or 8-bar segment of the song before going to something else. That will sound more intentional and not draw an inordinate amount of attention to yourself.

Our knowledge, opinions and taste keep growing and changing over the years. There’s no one right way of playing back-up. The key is to listen for what the band/jam needs, and fill that need. AND – that may be a contradiction to what I’ve written here. Remember: These aren’t hard and fast rules; I would call them “slightly fuzzy guidelines.”

We here in the northwest are fortunate to have such a vibrant bluegrass community with so many fine local bands that we can listen to live. I consider myself a student of music and there’s much to be learned from paying close attention to how the pros do it.

Thanks for reading and keep on picking!

Elliot Picciotto lives in SE Portland and is familiar to folks who jam and gig in the greater Portland area. He enjoys playing out with the Rocky Water String Band and the Orenco Station Country Band.



OBA Steve Waller Memorial Fund

History

In honor of his significant contributions to music and the Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA), the Steve Waller Memorial Fund (the Fund) was established after Steve's passing in June 2015. The purpose of the Fund is to honor Steve through awarding financial grants to deserving individuals, to further their education, professional growth, or the advancement, preservation or support of bluegrass music.

Resources supporting the Waller Fund include: OBA general account funds, donations from the Oregon bluegrass community, and, potentially, grants received from various other organizations. OBA's goal is to receive enough support to endow the Waller fund, so that the principal balance remains intact in perpetuity, and regular earnings support annual grant awards. Until that point is achieved, OBA will strive to maintain financial resources to award funds deemed sufficient for recipients.

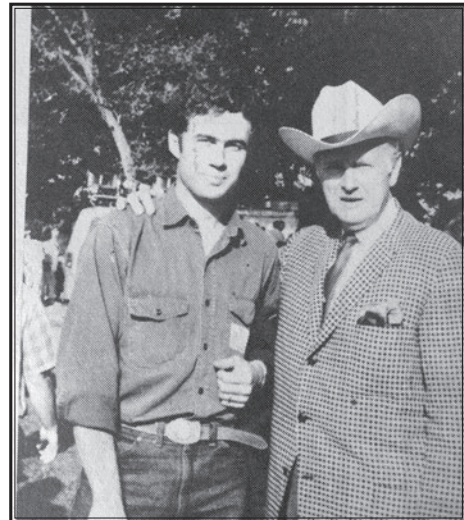
OBA administers the Waller Fund. Grant awards may vary in amount, and may be awarded to one or more recipients. OBA's Waller Fund Committee will review applications and recommend award recipient(s) and amount(s) to the OBA Board of Directors for final approval. The OBA aims to present the award annually at the Annual Meeting in April.

Scope

Steve Waller Memorial Fund grants will be awarded annually to individuals or groups with involvement in the Oregon Bluegrass community. The OBA Waller Fund Committee will consider all requests received through completion of the Waller Grant Application Form by the due date.

Criteria

1. Applicant(s) must be an Oregon Bluegrass Association member (individual or band) and the primary award recipient must be an Oregon resident.
2. Applicants must have a stated financial need.
3. Applicants may request funds for musical tuition or lessons, professional development, or the advancement of the bluegrass genre.
4. Applicants must complete and submit the Waller Grant Application Form by the due date.
5. Applications may not be submitted by a current OBA Board Member or relative.
6. Grant award payments will be made by OBA to the entity designated on the Waller Grant Application Form.
7. OBA may revise the criteria and Waller Fund application process from time to time, as needed.



Steve Waller and Bill Monroe

Use Of Funds

1. Awards are intended to be used within the OBA's mission statement to "promote, encourage, foster, and cultivate the preservation, appreciation, understanding, enjoyment, support, and performance of bluegrass and other closely related music."
2. Awards are to be used within the one-year grant cycle and the Grant Use Summary Form to be completed by June of the year following the award.
3. Submit the form by February 28 to wallerapplication@oregonbluegrass.org or mail to the OBA.
4. Recipients of the award may be asked to present their use of the award at the OBA general membership meeting held annually in April. If awardees are unable to present in person, a statement may be prepared.



OBA Steve Waller Memorial Fund

Grant Award Information and Application

Applications Due Feb. 28, 2019

Submit to: OBA

P.O. Box 1115

Portland, OR 97207

Or:

wallerapplication@oregonbluegrass.org

Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Best Time to Contact _____

Are you an OBA Board Member or Relative? _____

(Use a separate page to complete the following section, if necessary.)

Describe your involvement in the Oregon Bluegrass Community.

Describe the Use of Waller Grant Funds _____

For What Time Period Will Funds Be Used _____

How Will the Grant Funds Further Your Musical or Career Aspirations?

Provide information on who would receive Waller Funds from OBA, should you be awarded a Grant (name, address, phone number, email address)

For questions about this application, contact:
wallerapplication@oregonbluegrass.org

Thank You and Good Luck!



Album Review: Over The Line

By Kaden Hurst
& Patrick Connell

As I type, Jeff Scroggins and Colorado are en route to Germany, where they will be touring on the release of their newest album, *Over The Line*. I wonder what they are listening to right now, as they cross the pond. Based on their newest album, I'd wager to guess "everything." Their third album is a well-curated exposition on all that is bluegrass. Seriously. The entire checklist of bluegrass to-do's is covered, in spades.

I had the opportunity to put my headphones on and listen to this album for the entirety of my bus commute through Portland. I had 90 minutes of warming up the seat to negotiate, and I was grateful to have a copy of this yet-to-be-released gem. During "Headin' West," I felt like a soaring eagle, unbridled by earthly responsibilities and commitments (even though we were parked behind an overflowing shopping cart that had fallen into the road and caught fire). There are no tight transfer times in the mythological freedom that is to be found in the vast expanse of "west," where anybody bold enough to cross the Rockies will find the life they always thought they were owed. Even though it may only exist in our minds and hearts, being able to head "out there," even if only figuratively and for 2 minutes and 54 seconds, is a refreshing escape into one of America's favorite feel-good stories. Greg Blake steers this song with his commanding and motivational vocals, while the band maintains the high-octane locomotion across a snow-capped terrain of mythological wonderment. Starting the chorus on a 6 minor doesn't hurt either.

When I realized I missed my transfer and would be late, I decided to start feeling bad for myself. Click over to Hazel Dickens' "A Few Old Memories" and let the self-loathing commence. Ellie Hakanson, a hometown hero for all of us in the Oregon

bluegrass community, nails this one to the wall. Good gravy. Of all the songs on *Over the Line*, I was most familiar with this Dickens chestnut. There are a number of excellent recordings of this number, but I've always considered James King's version to be the definitive. Until now.

To my knowledge, the Dolly Parton recording is the only post-Hazel, female-led recording that I'm aware of. A great cut, but lacking the desperation and pathos that oozed, effortlessly, out of James and Hazel. Ellie brings it back, rightfully, to

of how easy it is for a bluegrass band to end up in one musical neighborhood and never leave. It's really hard to maintain the ability to cover as much ground as JS&CO manage to. The first track, Don Reno's "Big Train," is a perfect example. Mark Schatz slapping the bass alongside the banjo homage, executed perfectly by Jeff Scroggins, is a perfect choice for track #1, ESPECIALLY because that sound does not return at any point later on in the album. Every stripe of bluegrass enthusiast, from the person who has Larry Gillis as their alarm clock ring, to the person who thinks that Tony Rice and Gordon Lightfoot are the only people that matter in this world, has a lot to like about this album. All members are masters of their respective crafts, and contribute handily to the wide breadth of their sound. What really strikes me is their ability to contort their band sound to match the song and feeling they are trying to convey. *Over the Line* is a perfectly curated, hands-on museum for all that matters in bluegrass.

Let's dig into some of the album's less bus-oriented tunes. The title track "Over the Line" tells the listener exactly what kind of album they're listening to. Released as a single in November, "Over the Line" is a classic tale of misplaced affection, executed exquisitely. The song has an unshakable feeling of forward motion and reckless abandon, echoing the text about interstate travel and questionable decisions. "Over the Line" is driven home by guitarist Greg Blake's considerable vocal power and prowess. Blake has captured something essential about the "contemporary traditional" bluegrass vocal sound. A sound that's more rounded and less nasal than that of the founders, without sacrificing punch. Blake's tone cuts like an axe. As if "Over the Line" needed more going



the gender that built this song. The accompaniment is tasteful, restrained, and lonely. Greg and Ellie have a fantastic vocal blend, and this song is testament. On the second chorus, Ellie takes a couple melodic twists and turns, departing from "how Bill done it" (Bill never did it), and Greg follows along. Just the right amount of variation and personal stamping for these ears.

I'm on my last of three buses. I've careened through 9 or so different neighborhoods, all with their own quirks and identifiable features, and am reminded

Continued



Album Review: Over The Line

cont. from pg 14

for it, the song was written by 2017 IBMA guitar player of the year Molly Tuttle and celebrated songwriter Steve Poltz.

It's hard not to like an artfully arranged, spine-shivering, grass-kicking murder ballad. It's even harder not to like it when it's sung by Ellie Hakanson, it triumphs women's empowerment, and the year is 2018. I'm laying my cards on the table: "Curse the Ohio" is my favorite track. Written by country rocker Matt King, it's one of three songs on the album featuring Hakanson as lead vocalist. Her other features ("A Few Old Memories" and "Hide Your Heart") both being waltzes, I was happy to see her flex her vocal chops on a quicker number. The song has been pulled from its half-serious riff-driven origins in Matt King's version and is rendered here with earnestness and attention to detail. Hakanson sells us on the song's story, and the band drives it home with their arrangement. Rather than boom-chucking right on through, each verse is given the narrative attention it deserves. Folks, this is what an elevated murder ballad sounds like.

"The Future's Not What It Used To Be" is a perfect palate cleanser. Following the titular "Over the Line," it showcases the group's care, craft, and attention to detail. Contrasting the fat, full band sound of the album at large, "The Future's Not What It Used To Be" isn't afraid to keep things small. It opens with an entire verse of nothing but Greg Blake's voice and guitar, and maintains a feeling of sentimentality and restraint even after adding the rest of the band. This approach pairs perfectly with the song's text, depicting uncertainty, doubt, and heartache. Blake's vocal performance shines as much here as elsewhere on the record, and the sprinkled fills from Hakanson, banjoist Jeff Scroggins, and mandolinist Tristan Scroggins leave just enough unsaid.



The following is the transcript of an interview between Jeff Scroggins and Colorado's mandolinist, Tristan Scroggins, and interviewers Patrick Connell and Kaden Hurst.

Tristan, congrats on the imminent release of your third album! What were your goals for "Over the Line"?

When we recorded our last record "Ramblin' Feels Good" we were between band members, but when it came out, we had just hired Ellie. That was a few years ago now and we had also been playing with Mark Schatz pretty regularly during that time. So we mostly wanted to capture that sound. We've done lots of things in new places since that last CD but this will be the first time that our newer fans can buy something that really reflects what they've been hearing on stage for the past few years.

Your new album has classics from Hazel Dickens and Don Reno, but also has more contemporary numbers like "Over the Line" written by Molly Tuttle and Steve Poltz. How did you go about selecting songs for the album? Are these all songs you'd been playing out on the road?

Mark (Schatz) was the producer for this album so he was essentially in charge of picking material. We did have some classics that we had been playing on stage. They were included by popular demand and it helped that they could showcase someone's ability, such as Ellie's singing on the Hazel Dickens song "A Few Old Memories." The others, besides the instrumentals, were chosen largely based on how compelling the lyrics were. Mark was really good about looking for songs that weren't just generic bluegrass-sounding songs but ones he thought we could play well that also had a message. As far as finding them though, it was a mix of us suggesting songs, and Mark knowing of many, many songwriters, like Molly, and pitching them to us.

Musically, the band seems to have a good handle on having one foot forward, and one steeped in tradition. How can one avoid bastardizing a familiar song when making your own arrangement?

You can never please everyone, so you have to know who you're playing for and why. I think a good example of the

complicated nature of the success of covers is to look up YouTube videos of Tony Rice playing Gordon Lightfoot songs. His recordings of Lightfoot songs are some of the best bluegrass recordings of that generation, but the comment section is full of Lightfoot fans saying they still prefer Gordon's version.

Generally speaking though, I think where a lot of people seem to "go wrong," as it were, with this is if they try to do their own "bluegrass" version of something without understanding the original and the 50 years of steps between then and now. Without that context, they can't be deliberate about their choices, and it doesn't really rest on solid foundation. But that's painting with some pretty broad strokes.

How do you like to approach recording already beloved songs?

There are a lot of factors to that and it's not all natural. I've worked on it a lot in my own playing. I've spent a lot of time working on Monroe-style mandolin and studying the phrasing and tone and stylistic choices of many mandolin players but never really try to sound exactly like anyone. It's the same for the rest of the band. We've enjoyed some success in this regard by being able to play the middle of the field. We're able to play music that sounds like traditional bluegrass but isn't just note-for-note recreations. But there are still lots of people who would prefer we'd either just play more traditionally or more progressive. You can't please everyone.

It's been said that "Ramblin' Feels Good," and you guys tour a lot! Any thoughts on how the recording process suffers and/or benefits from being on the road constantly?

In the case of this band, I'd say touring so much has been a double-edged sword. We in five far-apart states, so practicing between shows isn't really possible. But touring so much keeps us tight. We essentially practice for two hours nearly every night onstage.

Continued on page 19



Southern Oregon Voices

By Joe Ross

There's been a lot happening in southern Oregon. The OBA's Roseburg Chapter continues to host its monthly Third Sunday jam at the Sutherlin Senior Center, 202 E Central Ave., Sutherlin, from 1 - 4:30 p.m. Contact Liz Crain at 541-679-0553 for more information.

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

John Nice-Snowdy is a graphic designer who recently moved from Hillsboro to Medford. He's started up a regular Medford Bluegrass Jam on the second and fourth Wednesday each month at 7 p.m. at Wild River Pizza, 2684 North Pacific Hwy, Medford. He reports that their first event on September 26 was "too much fun!" He adds, "We have a few kinks to iron out, but overall everyone had a good time. We had eight pickers and a room full of listeners. Not bad for a first time. Looking forward to the next jams on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month after that, for as long as they will put up with us." Contact John at 805-748-6648 or email at nicetunz@gmail.com.

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

Photos From Our Eagleview Pickout 2018



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Lost River Bluegrass Festival

By Joyce Furlong

On the Monday morning after the 2018 Lost River Bluegrass Festival, Greg Matthews and I stood on the field watching the crew take down the stage cover. Greg turned to me and said, “We did it.” Exhausted and happy, we knew we had pulled it off, a success for a first-year festival. We paid all of our bills, made a great first impression on festival-goers and musicians alike, and had a stack of feedback surveys saying that folks had a fun time and many would be back next year.

We took a little break to recover. Then we jumped into the after-action reports and the suggestions from our surveys. Some of the things people liked about our festival: the bands (of course!), the stage, our pricing, the sound quality, pie and ice cream on Saturday afternoon, camping close to the audience area, friendly food vendors, kids’ activities, the jam tents, the instrument petting zoo, the quilters’ room, the beer garden and the shaded food court.

We had done a good job, but we could do better and we had lots of suggestions there, too. At the top of that list was “more shade,” “more vendors,” and “more food choices” – we are definitely planning all of those things! Something new will be a shaded pet area in the audience for those

with well-mannered dogs. And a change of date: We are moving the festival up one week to the 2nd weekend of July. Next year’s festival will be July 12-14, 2019 – put it on your calendar!



We want to especially thank our band line-up from 2018 for more than just outstanding performances. Many of them helped us launch our first festival financially and by helping us spread the word. As Dave Gooding (bass player for The Central Valley Boys) said, “We love these small festivals and helping them get started – it’s good for all of us.” The bands were instrumental (pun intended!) in our success and we have invited many of them back for encore appearances in 2019, including The Central Valley Boys, The Blue Js, The Hossettes, Keith Little and the LittleBand, Rainy and

The Rattlesnakes, and The Stukel Mountain Stranglers. New bands will be Crying Uncle and Waking Hazel.

We can’t close without some big thanks: To the City of Merrill that has again provided us with a generous grant to help fund the 2019 festival, and to the Merrill Parks District for again providing the venue at no charge. Thanks to our generous sponsors – they really came through for us. And with many thanks to our all-volunteer staff, we should be right on track to repeat our success at the 2019 festival.

The best way to keep in touch with us and find out when tickets go on sale is to “Like” us on Facebook. We are the Lost River Bluegrass Festival in Merrill, Oregon (not the one in Kentucky). To find us on the internet, please go to our website at www.lostriverfestival.com.

See you at the festival July 12-14, 2019!

Joyce Furlong is a co-organizer (with Greg Matthews) of the Lost River Bluegrass Festival.



The Hossettes



Rainy and The Rattlesnakes



The Blue Js



The Central Valley Boys



Does that much travel take a toll?

The travel is pretty stressful and it doesn't leave a lot of time or energy for working up new material. There were one or two songs on this record that we'd been doing live and felt pretty comfortable, but most of the songs we worked up the week, if not the day, of recording. That might seem difficult, but it keeps you on your toes. And it's not the most complicated stuff in the world so it wasn't so bad. That being said, there were a few songs on the record it might have been nice to have a few extra days with.

What's it like being in a touring band with your dad?

I always tell people it's like owning a business with their father. That usually causes them to stop and think about what that would be like, and realize it would be rewarding and frequently exhausting. It is incredible to get to play music with someone I feel so musically connected to. And, similarly, it been amazing to travel the world with my dad. But touring leaves very little room physically and emotionally so it can be intense sometimes. If you have an argument, there's no thinking about it for a few days and then giving them a call. You have to see and play and talk to them on stage that night and then drive around in the van with them for hours and hours. It's a difficult balance to maintain but I've been thankful for the time I've gotten to spend with him and the fact that I didn't really have to figure this out on my own. I had my dad there the whole time.

Anything you'd like to tell our readers about how they buy and experience music?

I know lots of people who feel like they've lost a lot of CD sales to online streaming that they haven't recouped from the streaming revenue. But I also know a lot of people who have made pretty consistent and decent money from Pandora or Spotify or YouTube or Sirius XM or even illegal downloads.

The problem with streaming revenue

seems to be that the money is there but a lot of people don't know how to access it. And while it's changed how people purchase music, it has also changed how people discover music. If your music isn't digitally distributed, I'm probably not going to hear it. For better or worse we live in a society of convenience and leaning away from that isn't really going to pay off for anyone.

This answer is also about intent, actually. There are lots of different reasons someone might record a CD. Out here (in Nashville) bluegrass recordings are kind of moving back to a singles model because the record companies, and bands, stand to make more money from recording four songs, not printing any CDs, releasing them individually to radio and streaming, and collecting the performance royalties. When you cut down on costs like that, you can actually make a decent profit. But a band like ours that tours a lot benefits from having a new record every time we play somewhere because bluegrass fans still, for the most part, buy CDs if you have something to sell.

The band has a generation gap among its members; your dad and Greg likely grew up listening to and idolizing a different group of players than you and Ellie. How do you think the band's age range factors into the way you work together?

There isn't much of a generational problem in our band. Alison Krauss, for example, might be more significant to me and Ellie because we grew up listening to her but Dad and Greg are both still fans. And besides, Ellie's favorite bluegrass bands are Flatt and Scruggs and the Stanley Brothers, and I know an inordinate amount about Bill Monroe. I'd say if there was a divide it comes more from me and my dad liking more progressive stuff. My favorite band, much to Ellie's disapproval, is the New Grass Revival. Greg really, really loves classic country but my dad hates the pedal steel and would much rather listen to Led Zeppelin. So there's been compromise on how to find material that we could all enjoy playing but, like I said, we have pretty broad tastes (within the

narrow confines of bluegrass) so meeting in the middle has turned out to not be so hard. And as it turns out, the middle is the Country Gentlemen, a band we all love.

A lesser-known jam buster is "A Few Old Memories," specifically the turnaround at the end of the 1st verse, and how many measures of 1 chord there are between the 4 and final 5. Hazel had many measures, James King had 2, and both Dolly Parton and JS & CO have just one measure (Ellie slam dunks that one, by the way). Clearly, many things are negotiable and malleable when arranging a classic. Some are not (Uncle Pen's G run, for instance). Any thoughts on what must remain intact, musically or otherwise, to preserve the original intent and sound of a classic?

I'd say a good precursor to this question would be to listen to the original Bill Monroe recording of "Wheel Hoss." That G-run is not at the end of every B part. Not by a long shot. But just try to omit it next time you're at a jam and prepare to be reprimanded for playing it "wrong." The idea of authenticity is kind of a moving target. So the idea of maintaining some sort of perceived integrity when covering a classic is hard to address for me. A lot of small stuff like a measure here or there in a long song isn't really a big deal if you're delivering the song well. If anything should remain intact, it's the emotion and subtlety which made the song appealing to cover in the first place. I think as long as someone is being deliberate about the choices they're making, the authenticity will come through.

In the same spirit of that last question, you kick off the album with a Don Reno classic, and it is definitely an homage to the Reno sound. Do you think modern bluegrass bands have a responsibility to their predecessors in that regard, or do you think any band with enough chops should freely arrange and perform old standards however they like?

The Bluegrass Album Band is a lot of people's entry into traditional bluegrass music but they aren't playing their covers

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Album Review: Over The Line

cont. from page 19

exactly the same as the originals. There are many instances of different chords, different harmonies, different arrangements, different melodies, and even different words. But they're good, exciting recordings that might make someone want to hear the original. Or maybe not. I don't think it's that big of a deal as long as people are interested in bluegrass at all.

Though they may say many different things, everybody has something to say about bluegrass regionalism. As a full-time touring band, any thoughts on region-specific things that you've noticed?

As the internet has become a more standardized part of the bluegrass community experience, a lot of the regionalism has disappeared. When someone wanted to learn a tune before, they essentially either had to buy a record and learn from a recording, or find someone to teach them. Now, someone in Prague can take a lesson from John Reischman in Vancouver, British Columbia with little inconvenience for either of them.

Still, there are some regional things. Northern California has a surprising lean toward traditional bluegrass and specifically the Stanley Brothers (at least among the groups I hang out with there). And there aren't many other places in the country where you'd hear so many Vern & Ray songs. Colorado, in addition to knowing a lot of Hot Rize songs, has gained a reputation for preferring a light touch and sentimental chord substitutions over prettier sounding tunes (though this only broadly represents part of a large community) but a penchant for the downbeat heavy bluegrass typically associated with North Carolina seems to have been growing there recently. I think it's no coincidence that those regions have a large interest and intersection with the ever-growing old-time community. It shouldn't be surprising that a place like Boston would have a certain kind of sound associated with it. Berklee is an incubator for young musicians to all learn from the same people and then jam with each other so, naturally, there's an inherent sameness to how some of the music from there sounds.

So, what's the takeaway? Jeff Scroggins and Colorado *absolutely* deserve to be on your bluegrass radar. Go give 'em a listen, Oregonians.



Kaden Hurst grew up in the Sierra Foothills of Northern California, where he began his musical education in classical music, bluegrass, and Scottish fiddle music. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Mandolin Performance from Regis University, where he studied too much Bach and too little personal finance. Kaden lives in Portland, Oregon where he teaches music, overthinks fiddle tunes, and generally has a good time.

Patrick Connell is a bluegrass guitar player, student, and teacher in Portland. He can run much faster than his 4 year old son, but still allows him the sweet taste of victory, periodically.



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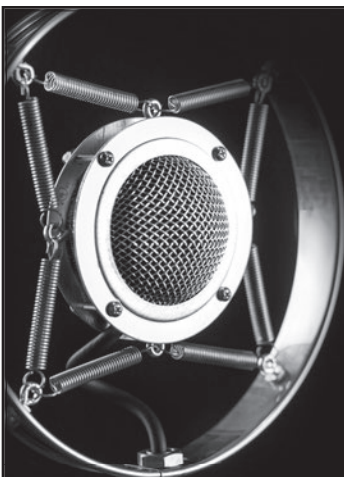


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Billy Strings (fri) • Della Mae (th/fri)
Blue Highway (sat/sun) • Sons of the Pioneers (th/fri)
Laurie Lewis & the Right Hands (sat/sun)
Phil Leadbetter & the All-Stars of Bluegrass (fri/sat)
Sideline (th) • Po' Ramblin' Boys (th/fri)
Jonathan Byrd & the Pickup Cowboy (fri/sat) • Jayme Stone's Folklife (sat/sun)
Joe Craven & the Sometimers (sat) • Ellis Dyson & the Shambles (th/fri)
Molsky's Mountain Drifters (sat) • The Hillbenders (fri/sat)
Hills to Hollers (fri/sun) • Don Vappie Creole Jazz Trio (sat/sun)
Bill & the Belles (fri/sat) • Ben Hunter & Joe Seamons (sat)
Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer (sat) • Fireside Collective (th/fri)
The River Feale Band (fri/sat) • Sugar & the Mint (th/fri) • La Famille Léger (th/fri)
Old Growth Quartet (th/fri) • The Rolling Blackouts (sat)
Vivian Leva & Riley Calcagno (fri/sat)

Youth Education Programs:

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Adult Education Intensives:

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Classic Western Guitar - John Fullerton & Suze Spencer • **Fiddle** - Nicky Sanders • **Mandolin** - Don Rigsby
Turning Poems Into Songs - Joe Craven • **Songwriting** - Tim Stafford •
Ukulele 1 - Cathy Fink • **Ukulele 2** - Marcy Marxer

www.wintergrass.com

Wintergrass is a production of Acoustic Sound, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization



Ask Aunt Pearl: Minding Your Bluegrass Manners

by Linda Leavitt

Dear Aunt Pearl,

I would like to ask your advice about a touchy subject: jam poaching.

How should I respond to folks who try to lure me away from a perfectly fun jam? What should I say if they won't take no for an answer?

Yours Truly,

Cletus Jefferson Barnacle, III

Dear Mr. Barnacle,

Well, there are several ways of looking at your question.

Number one, if the jam is larger than seven or eight warm bodies, and you are playing the fifth guitar, you may want to move on, so as to avoid what my friend Christine calls "guitarmageddon."

Number two, if you've hogged a seat in that fun jam for five hours, and there are other folks milling around hoping to join the jam, you may want to move on, so as to give them a chance to play.

Number three, if you are perfectly happy, the jam size is as right as Goldilocks would judge it, there is a good mix of instruments and you haven't been a seat-hogger, then tell that jam poacher "namaste." If they don't understand, tell them, "Namaste right here."

If they don't understand that, then their cornbread may not be done in the middle.

Hope that works!

Love,

Aunt Pearl

Dear Aunt Pearl,

Lord, have mercy, Pearl! What do you do with rhythm-challenged folks who sit down in your jam and cause a perfectly good jam to end? Jammers politely leave but the fellow who seriously needs to sleep with his metronome is oblivious and thinks that's the time to sing some duets.

What can I do to help them?

Sincerely,

Hope Raines Down

Dear Miss Down,

You are clearly a kind soul and I am sure that rhythm-challenged jammer is drawn to you because you are so welcoming. That also means you might be the perfect person to broach the subject and to sell that fellow on the benefits of practicing with a metronome.

That said, my metronome seems to always be broken. Let me know if you find one that will keep time with me.

Love,

Aunt Pearl



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



Whiskey Deaf at Gastro Mania



LOCAL & LIVE BLUEGRASS MUSIC



Jacob Jolliff and the Traveling McCourys at Mississippi Studios



Handsome Ladies at Strum Guitars



Whiskey Deaf at The Muddy Rudder



Eocenes at Trexler Farm



Julie & The WayVes at Alberta Street Pub



Mountain Honey at Strum Guitars

WANTED

The Bluegrass Express is looking for local band photos to insert on the "Local & Live" page. If you want in, just send us your best photo with a brief caption of Who (preferably just the band name), Where (venue) and When (please, no longer than 6 months ago). Submit to llevitt@comcast.net before the 1st of the month of the issue to be printed.



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

Every Saturday, Taborgrass Bluegrass Jam and Classes
10 a.m.–1 p.m. **New Location:**
Waverly UCC, 3300 SE
Woodward St., Portland.
www.taborgrass.com

Every Tuesday, Bluegrass
Night at **The Ranger Station**,
4260 SE Hawthorne Blvd.,
Portland, with **Never Come
Down**, 9 p.m.–12 midnight.

Every Thursday, Bluegrass
Night at **The Muddy Rudder**,
8105 SE 7th Ave, Portland,
8–10 p.m., bands to be
announced.
[http://muddyrudderpdx.com/
music-schedule/](http://muddyrudderpdx.com/music-schedule/)

Wednesday, January 2,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Never Come
Down**, 7–9 p.m.

**Friday, January 4, Never
Come Down** at **The Willamette
Ale House**, 1720 Willamette
Falls Dr., West Linn, 7–10 p.m.

**Friday, January 8, Bill Evans
Banjo –**
(www.billevansbanjo.com)
Abbie Weisenbloom House
Concert, abbiew@froggie.com

Wednesday, January 9,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Fiddle Mania**
(**Lilly Sawyer, Annie Staninec,
Kian Dye and Mike Eisler**),
7–9 p.m.

Friday, January 11,
Scratchdog Stringband at
Alberta Street Pub, 1036 NE
Alberta St., Portland, 9 p.m.–12
midnight.

Sunday, January 13,
Mountain Honey at **Strum
Guitars**, 1415 SE Stark #C,
Portland, 7–9 p.m.

Wednesday, January 16,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol
Hwy., Portland, with **The Filthy
Skillets**, 7–9 p.m.

Every third Saturday,
Bluegrass Night at the
Multnomah Grange #71,
Bands to be Announced, [www.
Multnomahgrange71.com](http://www.Multnomahgrange71.com), jam
at 5:30 p.m., show at 7 p.m.
Adults \$10, Kids 12 and under
\$5, 30639 SE Bluff Road,
Gresham, Oregon.

**Saturday, January 19, Josh
Cole Duo and Sunny South.**

Wednesday, January 23,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Whistlin' Rufus**,
7–9 p.m.

**Thursday, January 24, Chris
Jones and The Night Drivers**
at Strum Guitars, 1415 SE Stark
#C, Portland, 7–9 p.m.

**Friday–Sunday, January
25–27, Winter Music Festival**,
Florence, Oregon. Friday
headliner: **Chris Jones and
The Night Drivers**. Saturday
headliner: **John McEuen**. Plus
other bluegrass and Americana
performers.
www.wintermusicfestival.org

**Saturday, January 26, Sonny
Hammond Memorial Gospel
Show**, with **Greg Blake Band**,
featuring **Ellie Hakanson**,
Clackamas Bible Church, 15655
SE Johnson Road, Clackamas,
Oregon, 7-9 p.m. Tickets \$12.
Tickets at the door or advance
tickets at
www.oregonbluegrass.org

Wednesday, January 30,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Ash Creek**, 7–9
p.m.

continued on pg. 28



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

cont. from page 27

Wednesday, February 6,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Whiskey Deaf**,
7-9 p.m.

**Friday, February 8, Joe
Newberry at Strum Guitars,**
1415 SE Stark #C, Portland,
7-9 p.m.

**Sunday, February 11,
Mountain Honey at Strum
Guitars,** 1415 SE Stark #C,
Portland, 7-9 p.m.

Wednesday, February 13,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Fern Hill**, 7-9 p.m.

Wednesday, February 20,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **The Horsenecks**,
7-9 p.m.

**Thursday, February 21,
Molsky's Mountain Drifters**
(www.mountaindrifters.com/)
Abbie Weisenbloom House
Concert, abbiew@froggie.com

Wednesday, February 27,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **JT and Rowdy
Mountain**, 7-9 p.m.

Wednesday, March 6,
Bluegrass Wednesdays at
Gastro Mania (formerly
O'Connor's) in Multnomah
Village, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy.,
Portland, with **Mountain Honey**,
7-9 p.m.

**Sunday, March 10, Mountain
Honey at Strum Guitars,** 1415
SE Stark #C, Portland, 7-9 p.m.



Youngberg Hill at The Multnomah Grange #71



Slipshod at The Multnomah Grange #71



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info@mi-squared.com

Add your business name to this list: If you are a bluegrass-friendly business and would like to actively promote your business by being an OBA supporting partner - now you can, as a Contributing Business Sponsor. A Contributing Business Sponsor can get the recognition and promotional benefits of underwriter-style sponsorship. For \$125 annually, your OBA supporting business gets all the member benefits - plus a year of promotional print and announcement recognition at OBA sponsored shows and promotions, as well as a prominent listing in the Bluegrass Express. For more information please contact the OBA at: membership@oregonbluegrass.org.



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Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

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

Sunday

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Monday

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

Tuesday

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

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

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

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

Wednesday

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

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

Thursday

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

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

VANCOUVER, WA: Bluegrass Slow Jam - Every Thursday 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Barberton Grange, 9400 NE 72nd Ave, Vancouver WA 98665
Please note this is a slow jam, with the belief that bluegrass is a non-competitive participation sport. All talent levels are invited to participate. No amplified instruments. Listeners welcome. No charge, but there is a donation jar for those who would like to support the Grange for allowing use of their facility.
For information: Chuck Rudkin pbr@comcast.net

Continued on page 32



Scheduled Jams: Oregon and SW Washington

Friday

CENTRALIA, WA: Acoustic Bluegrass Jam – 3rd Friday 6 pm - 9 pm October through April

Sponsored by WAMA (Washington Acoustic Music Association). Informal event with a few small jams taking place at the same time. Location: Oakview Grange, 2715 North Pearl Street, Centralia, WA. Donations for facility costs are encouraged.

For information: Cheryl (360) 870-8447 or cheryl.terry68@gmail.com

DALLAS: Open Acoustic Jam - Every Friday 7:00 -10:00 pm

Guthrie Park in Dallas.

For information: Sally Clark (503) 623-0874 or email jim dusterjim@hotmail.com

SCIO: Old Country, Folk, Bluegrass and Gospel Jam – Fourth Friday 7:00 pm to Midnight

ZCJB Hall, 38704 N Main St. Scio, OR www.zhall.org Free event, but donations accepted to support the historic hall. Beginners welcome. Please bring goodies to share.

For information: Starla (541) 223-2343 or email Starla91262@yahoo.com

Saturday

PORTLAND: Taborgrass Bluegrass Class & Jam - Every Saturday starting October 6th 10 am -1 pm. The Sessions offers two small jams guided by professional musicians every Saturday during Taborgrass.

Waverly Heights Congregational United Church of Christ, 3300 SE Woodward Street. Portland, OR 97202. For all instruments.

No registration required. Drop-ins welcome. Knowledge of basic chords and the ability to execute chord changes is required.

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

All levels welcome. Guthrie Park in Dallas.

For information: Sally Clark (503) 623-0874 or email jim dusterjim@hotmail.com

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

Hosted by WAMA (Washington Acoustic Music Association) Held at the Hope Grange in Winlock, Washington. Great for all levels and especially good for total beginners.

For Information: see website – wamamusic.com or email info@wamamusic.com

VANCOUVER, WA - Old Time Country Jam -

Every 2nd and 4th Saturday 6:30-10:00 pm

2500 N.E. 78th Ave., Vancouver, WA. 98665 at the Vancouver Masonic Center

All are welcome to join the fun as a musician, singer, or to just listen and or dance.

Contact info: Dean Roettger (360) 892-0769 or (360) 627-1228 email vip1x1@yahoo.com

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



OBA Supporting Performer Directory

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

Ash Creek

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

Booking@eclecticacoustica.com
https://eclecticacoustica.squarespace.com/
Facebook: @ashcreekbluegrass ash-creek-bluegrass
Clayton 503-358-0658

Back Porch Revival

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

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

Corral Creek

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

Pam Young
pywaterfalls@yahoo.com
corralcreekbluegrass.com
For bookings please call 503-319-5672

Steve Blanchard Music

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

www.SteveBlanchardMusic.com
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The Jamblers

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"Americana." We call it "Music," the kind everyone enjoys. www.jamblers.com

Gene Greer, info@jamblers.com
503-702-1867

Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising

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

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

Julie & The Wayves

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

Patrick Connell
patnellconnell@gmail.com

Mountain Honey

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

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

Pickled Okra

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

Paisley Gray
pickledokraband@gmail.com

Rose City Bluegrass Band

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

Charlie Williamson
charliew3@nwlinc.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 both old-school traditionalists of the genre while enchanting modern audiences with a style of music they didn't yet know they loved. Some of the hardest working young musicians in the Pacific Northwest

Steve Eggers
eggers-stephen@gmail.com

Sunfish Duo

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

Daniel Fish
djoefish@gmail.com

Timothy Jenkins Band

Timothy Jenkins
tjenkins@uoregon.edu

True North

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

truenorthband@comcast.net
www.truenorthband.com

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 Rufusian bluegrass experience. A Whistlin' Rufus show guarantees a varied and wonderful mix of blazing bluegrass, original homemade tunes and an Irish fiddle tune or two.

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



Crossing The Cumberland's

By Bill Monroe
Banjo Tablature by Mike Stahlman

Crossing The Cumberland's

TUNE TITLE:

KEY: G / CAPO? 0

TUNING: G D G B D

By Bill Monroe

A

Gm 17 F 15 Gm 12 Cm 10

15 15 13 13 | 11 11 10 10

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T I M I T I M I | T I M I T I M I

Gm 8 8 0 D 12 12

10 10 10 | 11 X 9-10 X 9-10 X X X

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T I M T M I T M | T SL IM SL IM

Gm 17 F 15 Gm 12 Cm 10

15 15 13 13 | 11 11 10 10

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T I M I T I M I | T I M I T I M I

Gm 8 12 8 D 10 Gm 10

10 | 10 8 0 X X

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T I M T M T M I | T I M T I M T

Gm 0 0 0 1 3 5 5

4-5 0 | 0 X 2-3 X 2-3 X

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T SL IM T M I T M | T SL IM SL IM T M

B

D 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 | 2 0 3 0 X

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T I M T M I T M | T I T M T T M

D 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 | 2 0 3 0 X

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

T I M T M I T M | T I T M T T M



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

Volunteering

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

