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2022

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE!  
Remembering Don Maddox,  
Banjo Dynamics. Yoga For Musicians  
and more...



*Oregon Bluegrass Association*  
www.oregonbluegrass.org

# Bluegrass *Express*

## Bluegrass Gold

By John Kael

*John C. (Chuck) Davidshofer passed away in late October 2021. He touched many hearts in our bluegrass community with generous wit, his music and his kindness. May his memory be a blessing. We share here an article about Chuck written by John Kael, which originally appeared in our Fall 2017 issue. In our Spring 2022 issue, we plan to devote a special section to remembering Chuck. Please send your photos and stories to Linda Leavitt, [expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org).*

I tend to shy away from superlatives, like “so and so is pure gold,” and “you’ll never meet a finer feller than this one here,” but I’ll tell ya what, folks: ol’ Chuck Davidshofer is pure gold. And you’ll never meet a finer feller.

You may have seen him at the festivals, messing around with a cast iron skillet, wearing a practical outfit (he’s staunchly non-trendy, but perhaps the first of the unintentional hipsters), and most likely making friends with a new neighbor. He



seems to know pretty much everyone, and a little something (or a lot) about pretty much anything – especially old bluegrass, old cars, old bikes, old cookware, old tools, old Oregon...you get the idea. The new stuff—maybe not so much.

I talked with Chuck the other night at his place, surrounded by all the trappings of being Chuck: two drill-presses-in-restoration on the dining room table, books and curiosities on most every flat surface, a cheerful collection of tiny antique Volkswagens, instruments hanging anywhere possible, some disturbing art, and a meticulously messy workbench.

While we were chatting, a stranger started rummaging around on the porch. Chuck glanced out the window. “Oh, that’s bottle man.” (I suspect bottle man is well provided for at this stop.) Chuck reminisced how one day this fellow had called out to him, “You know, them cans made you and me friends.” Chuck clearly appreciated the unpretentious sentiment.

Chuck sprouted among the cornfields of Dubuque, Iowa, directly underneath the gleaming KDTH-AM 1370 radio tower, piping in 1000 watts of western swing. His parents loved music, and there was a good

deal of singing around the house growing up. He and his seven siblings all took turns on the family piano, and at the age of 15 his pop gave him his first guitar, which he still plays today.

After a time in college learning horn repair and a brief stint in Korea where he met his first wife, he struck out westward at the age of 26. “I figured if I didn’t leave then, I never would.” He settled in NE Portland, back when the Alberta Street Pub was the Love Train (“The bar stools were chained to the floor, I recall...”), and went about raising a family (he has two grown children - Alecia and CJ). He set up shop fixing horns at Wally’s Music in Oregon City, and has been a co-owner there for the last 35 years, honing the art of instrument repair like a saxophone samurai. Many of Portland’s finest musicians’ finest horns have crossed his bench, and he has his own collection of oddities.

He credits his first serious exposure to bluegrass to our very own KBOO radio, which was often playing at Wally’s music, and he began recording every Saturday morning show, and then listening to them throughout the week on his commute. He

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# OBA Membership & Ad Information

## Membership Information

The OBA Board of Directors invites you to join the OBA and to participate in its many activities. Our membership benefits include a subscription to the quarterly Bluegrass Express, frequent mailings about events, and ticket discounts to northwest bluegrass events. Annual membership dues are \$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)

## The OBA Board

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

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

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

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

## ADVERTISE IN THE EXPRESS!

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).

### PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Issue	Mailed	Reserved By	Copy Deadline
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Spring (Apr-Jun)	April 1	March 1	March 1
Summer (Jul-Sept)	July 1	June 1	June 1
Fall (Oct-Dec)	October 1	September 1	September 1

### AD RATES AND DIMENSIONS

Size	Dimension	Cost	2 or more issues
Full Page	7.5 x 9.5	\$150.00	\$130.00
Half Page Horizontal	7.5 x 4.75	\$90.00	\$80.00
Half Page Vertical	3.75 x 9.5	\$90.00	\$80.00
Quarter Page	3.75 x 4.5	\$60.00	\$50.00
Eighth Page	3.75 x 2.25	\$40.00	\$30.00

### WEBSITE RATES AND DIMENSIONS

Size	Dimension	Cost	With Print Ad
Leaderboard	728 x 90 px	\$50.00	\$30.00
Small Square	300 x 250 px	\$45.00	\$25.00

The OBA prefers to receive advertising payment in advance. For one-year contracts, we request payment six months in advance and we will bill for the next six months. Payment may be made online via PayPal at [www.oregonbluegrass.org/bgexpress.php](http://www.oregonbluegrass.org/bgexpress.php) or you may mail a check payable to The Oregon Bluegrass Association, PO Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207.

When submitting an advertisement to the OBA, please be sure the ad is accurate and the file is black and white, 300 dpi and in either PDF, TIFF, or JPEG format. If you have questions about your file please email John Nice-Snowdy at [nicetunz@gmail.com](mailto:nicetunz@gmail.com).

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.

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*Oregon Bluegrass Association*  
[www.oregonbluegrass.org](http://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.

### **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

**P**lease accept my enthusiastic greetings of the season! Whatever you are celebrating, may it be the best one ever!

With this issue of the Bluegrass Express, we're feeling optimistic about the coming year. We acknowledge that the end of the pandemic isn't in sight yet, but the OBA Directors are planning for 2022, with the perspective that it's better for all of us to plan—and cancel if we must—than to not plan at all.

We are committed to hosting events safely, and because what safety looks like is a moving target, as conditions and requirements change, we promise to clearly spell out our expectations when we promote each event. The most up-to-date information will be on social media; we'll do our best to keep the OBA web site and calendar current, as well. If you have a question that's not addressed there, you know what to do: [president@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:president@oregonbluegrass.org).

Here's what we're up to as I write:

- Our concert series at Multnomah Grange 71, curated by NW bluegrass hero Dave Elliott, continues with a good turnout on the second Saturday of each month.
- Bluegrass Wednesdays, organized by OBA President Emeritus Tony McCormick, presents a concert on the third Wednesday of each month, with hosted jams and open mics on the off-week Wednesdays at Cooper Mountain Alehouse in Tigard.

And here's what's coming up:

- It's not an official OBA event, but we're really excited about the 2022 Winter Music Festival in Florence, Oregon on January 28 and 29. Festival director Kirk Mlinek has some great bluegrass in the line-up, and Linda Leavitt is coordinating the jams and workshops.
- In February, Wintergrass is back! Patrice O'Neill and the Acoustic Sound crew have done an extraordinary job of figuring out how to do a first-class indoor festival safely—yes, some things are going to be done a little differently—in the pandemic era. The good news is that the OBA will be able to do what we always do, including workshops, showcases, and jamming, but in a smarter, safer way. I encourage everyone to visit the Wintergrass web site, [Wintergrass.com](http://Wintergrass.com), to stay abreast of the details.

And—you knew this was coming—our support of Wintergrass is financial. The *Support Wintergrass Suite* button on the OBA web site is ready for any and all donations, no matter how small (or large, for that matter).

- In April, we plan to resume hosting an in-person Annual Members' Meeting on Sunday, April 10, at 12 noon. We're working on the venue as I write, but please save the date on your calendar! We'll announce the place as soon as we know.

Speaking of the Annual Meeting, we plan to announce awards of our two grant programs—The Steve Waller Memorial Fund and The Nora Candey Memorial Songwriting Fund. We will accept applications through March for each award. See the information in this issue.

- Last, we have begun planning the OBA Pickers' Fest in August. If you would like to volunteer and have a voice in the planning, contact Connie Wold at [volunteers@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:volunteers@oregonbluegrass.org).

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

Some syndicated programming  
503-325-0010

"Cafe Vaquera"

Tuesdays 9-11pm, Bluegrass/Old Timey

Western/Folk with Calamity Jane

[CafeVaquera@hotmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.kyacfm.org)

### Salem - KMUZ 88.5 & 100.7

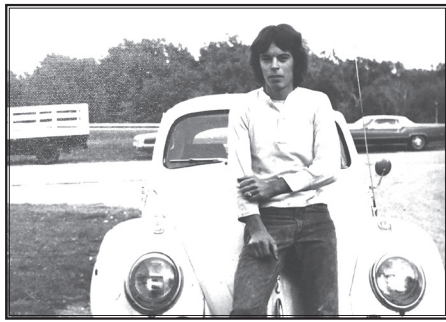
"Ken 'til 10" 6-8am M-F

Simulcast with KYAC.

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

# Bluegrass Gold

Cont. from page 1



was first captivated by guitar players like Leo Kottke and Doc Watson, but quickly started making his way back to the early stuff — Bill Monroe, the Stanley Brothers, the early brother duets.

He was hooked. “Bluegrass is one in a long line of obsessions for me — home brewing, Volkswagens, English bikes.” He took up the banjo with a vengeance, practicing several hours a day. Unfortunately, in an oddly common scenario, this drove his wife out. (“Koreans don’t think much of musicians”) (or banjo players, evidently, ba boom), but there was no turning back, and eventually bluegrass led him to a rich life filled with musical adventures and of course, to all you fine folks.

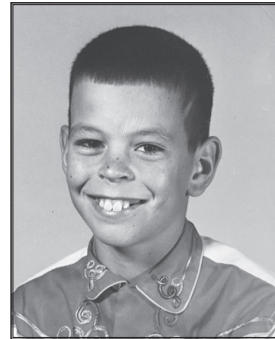
Chuck played in various local bands in the ‘80s and ‘90s, but the real break came when he was invited to play in the Sawtooth Mountain Boys. “I didn’t even play the bass, and I went in for this audi-



tion. The first gig was two months later, at Wolf Mountain Festival in California, with a trip to IBMA right after. I guess it’s good I could sing, ‘cause the bass playing was pretty rocky.” Chuck continued with Sawtooth until they disbanded about 10 years later, and he credits them with really opening up the world of bluegrass for him, and the art of performing.

Bluegrass has continued to be a central figure in Chuck’s life, and he credits it for some of his best times and his best friends. You’ll often hear him playing on his front porch in the evenings, where his neighbors gather and mingle. In fact, one of these

evenings led to him meeting his current sweetheart, Kimmie. She was strolling on Alberta Street when she heard the enticing strains of bluegrass coming from one of Chuck’s gatherings, and the rest is history. Chuck still performs regularly with a group of buddies that started out as the famed jam session at the Alberta Street Pub, and eventually morphed into the Sleepy Eyed Johns. You can catch them at the Muddy Rudder in Sellwood two Thursdays a month, and on Chuck’s porch if you’re lucky.



Chuck’s brand of bluegrass is the crusty, authentic stuff — it’s about the voices and the songs, not the licks and the showmanship, and he’s particularly drawn to singing tenor on the old bluegrass duets. “Tenor is the juiciest singing part there is,” he confides. He listens to Monroe, the Stanleys, Red Allen, Larry Sparks, Mac Martin, and a host of names I’ll bet a bunch of you haven’t even heard of.

His collection of vinyl is astounding, made even more so by the fact that he knows what he has and can retrieve it for you on command, usually including a story. “I remember the first time I saw Del. I was so excited to have him sing ‘Cold Rain and Snow’

that I yelled it out at the top of my lungs. Unfortunately, I yelled “Fire and Rain” to which he responded ‘heh heh, I don’t think we can do that one.’”

His days are spent listening to old bluegrass at the house while working on horns, refurbishing something he found at a thrift or garage sale (“garage sales really appeal to my primitive hunter-gatherer instincts”), foraging for rocks or mushrooms, wandering around the desert, reading about almost any topic you could name, and making the best cornbread this side of an Arkansas grandma. He’s never short of

a topic to discuss with passion, and is an avid listener and learner. “Dad raised all of us to be curious, and that’s a good thing.”

On a personal note, I consider Chuck to be a truly inspirational figure for basically just how to be a fine person, and my gal and I have often evoked the “What would Chuck do?” qualifier when trying to make a judgment call. I aspire to be more like him in most things (ok, not all— sorry, Chuck), and he’s one of our best pals ever.

In recent years, as many of you know, Chuck had to face down leukemia (CLL) and a particularly nasty and aggressive form of lymphoma known as Richter’s transformation, a rare but scary evolution of certain leukemia cells. Chuck underwent a barrage of chemotherapies, treatments and ultimately a stem cell transplant, any of which would have left the average cowboy weeping for ma, but somehow Chuck was able to move through the entire multi-year assault with a grin on his face and an unwavering focus on the positive. It was frightening for all those close to him, but head-shakingly inspirational for everyone from friends and family to caregivers to fellow patients.

Chuck is a rich and earthy resource, and we’re lucky to have him in our music community. I feel fortunate to call myself his friend. If you don’t know him yet, you should take the time.





# WINTERGRASS

MUSIC FESTIVAL

Feb. 24-27, 2022  
Hyatt Regency, Bellevue WA

welcome back -  
old times, new friends

The Dawg Trio  
with David Grisman, Sam Grisman  
and Danny Barnes (th)  
Peter Rowan's Free Mexican Airforce  
featuring Los Texmaniacs (fri)  
The Travelin' McCourys (sun)  
Sister Sadie (th/fri)  
Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper (fri/sat)  
Della Mae (fri/sat)  
Mr. Sun (th/sat/sun)  
Trischka, Molsky, Daves (th/fri)  
Laurie Lewis & the Right Hands (fri/sat)  
Nefesh Mountain (sat/sun)  
Brother Boys with Missy Raines (th/fri)  
Betse & Clarke (th/fri)  
Mike Block Trio (fri/sat)

The Brothers Comatose (fri/sat)  
AJ Lee & Blue Summit (th/fri)  
Kenny & Amanda Smith (th/sat)  
Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer (th/fri)  
Hubby Jenkins (sat/sun)  
Eli West (fri/sat/sun)  
Jake Blount (fri/sat/sun)  
Joe Craven & Mamajowali (sat/sun)  
Never Come Down (fri/sat)  
Pearl Django (th/sat/sun)  
Caleb Klauder & Reeb Willms Country Band (sat)  
Miles & Karina (th/sat)  
Farmstrong (fri/sat)  
The Jangles (fri)  
Kristen Grainger & True North (fri/sat)  
Brother's Keeper (sun)

#### 2022 Info for a Safe and Fun Festival

Expect a full slate of Thursday Intensives (additional registration required) and weekend workshops (included in your ticket)

Limited capacity age specific youth education (Flashgrass!) on Thursday and Friday

To facilitate contact tracing which we hope never to implement, only single day tickets are available.

Jamming only tickets are also available.

All shows from the Grand Ballroom stage will be streamed via the Mandolin platform - streaming tickets available in January.

Festival capacity will be limited. All participants must be fully vaccinated and will be expected to wear masks.

[www.wintergrass.com](http://www.wintergrass.com)

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



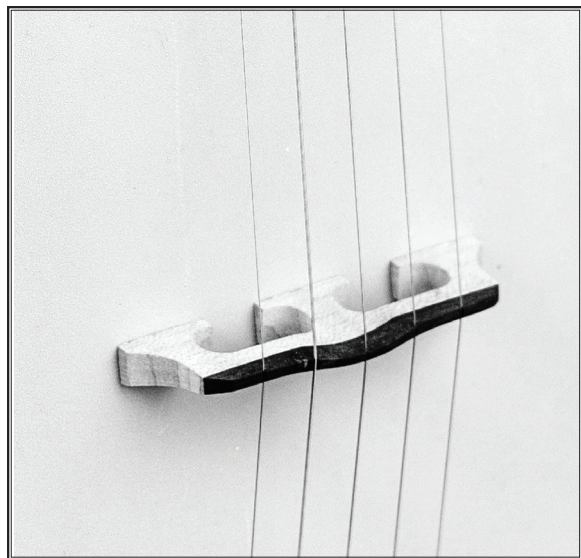
# Banjo Dynamics: “Magic” Bridges

by Tom Nechville

**A**n experienced 5-string banjo player knows there is something “magical” about a good banjo bridge. You have probably tested identical-looking bridges and wondered why there are sometimes big differences in tone between them. With all of the banjo bridges on the market, it is worth considering all the bridge features that affect banjo tone, improve banjo playability, and are good ideas from a structural and functional standpoint.

Common sense dictates that a bridge needs to be strong enough to prevent breaking and/or excessive sagging under string tension. A slight tilt back toward the tailpiece not only helps prevent the bridge from tipping over, but if properly angled back, it bisects the break angle of the strings over the bridge. This geometry optimizes the perpendicularity of the strings’ downward pressure on the bridge, which I believe delivers the most efficient transfer of energy to the head.

The customary ebony bridge top primarily serves the utilitarian purpose of providing a hard surface that will not easily wear out from string tension, and it gives the top edge more strength to prevent collapsing. Hard maple is commonly used for the bridge base because it seems to have the right combination of strength, stiffness, and density, and it’s readily available.



Enterprise Bridge

Another functional feature that is often overlooked, but which I think is essential for 5-string professional banjos, is scale length compensation. The need for compensation varies with the heaviness of the strings and their distance from the frets (the action). Need for compensation is especially pronounced on the non-wound third string. With most conventional 5-string setups with a .014 size 3rd string, the third string slot should be about 3/32” farther back, toward the tailpiece, from the rest of the strings. Some makers (notably Stelling) have addressed the compensation issue from the standpoint of the nut by shortening the 3rd string scale at the nut end compared to the 2nd string and to a lesser extent on the 4th and 1st strings. This means that the 3rd string plays a bit flat when fretted, improving intonation compared to the other fretted notes. The addition of a compensated “Enterprise” or similar bridge usually corrects intonation problems entirely.

A banjo with an arched or radiused fingerboard needs a bridge with a radiused top edge. However, most bridge makers fail to realize that a slight radius to the top edge is beneficial even with regular flat frets. When struck, the heavier 3rd and 4th strings require a little more room to vibrate freely without buzzing against nearby frets. Therefore, higher action is preferred for the heavier strings to prevent rattles and choked tone. Also, it seems a

little bit easier to hit the center strings when they are resting a little higher. An added arch with approximately 16” radius peaking between the 3rd and 4th strings will not only improve playability, but it helps fight a bridge’s tendency to sag in the middle.

For easiest playability, string spacing and bridge height should be based on personal preference according to hand size and playing technique. By themselves, these features don’t really affect tone, but certainly height is related to mass which is a contributing factor to

sound. Sloppy string slots can sometimes be a source of dirty sound. Slots need to be no deeper than the thickness of the string.

There is a general trend to use taller bridges whenever possible. They reduce incidences of picks hitting the head and generally benefit the tone and volume. The reason changing the bridge height affects the banjo sound is because usually the mass of the bridge changes and the break angle over the bridge changes. The higher the bridge, the more downward pressure is directed down on the head. Try to imagine a ridiculously high bridge with the strings forming a sharp break angle over its top. It’s easy to imagine that much more of the strings’ tension is being used to pull the bridge directly down into the head. Cranking down the tailpiece has essentially the same effect of increasing the break angle and resultant downward pressure on the head. Both affect the tone similarly to tightening the head of the banjo. Of course, this becomes a balancing act, and there comes a point where more break angle diminishes the instrument’s warmth and tonal subtleties.

If you are installing a higher bridge, and wish to encourage a warmer sound, raise up the leading edge of the tailpiece the same amount as the increase in bridge height, to keep the break angle as it was with the shorter bridge.

Perhaps the biggest factor in finding a magic bridge is to find the magic weight. Most inexpensive bridges are too light to serve the purposes of professional players. A thin, light bridge causes the banjo head to respond actively to high overtones and high frequency noise. The banjo may be bright, but difficult to work with in recording or over a PA system. If a bridge is too heavy, it will reduce volume and produce a darker tone, with more sustain.

From experimenting with bridges for many years, I have found that the most common bridge of maple topped with ebony still seems to produce the most reliable results. Since wood varies tremen-

*Continued on page 8*

dously from tree to tree - and even from different parts of the same board, it is critical for the bridge builder to be extremely careful in choosing and cutting the raw materials. Considering the inconsistencies and variety of designs offered by bridge builders, you might have to try a dozen bridges before you hit one that is magic.

Maple is not the only material that is suitable for bridges. Wood density is expressed as its specific gravity. The specific gravity of bridge wood is close to .73. Some hardwoods that have specific gravity slightly less than average maple tend to act like noise filters, softening the sound as long as the weight is substantial enough.

Words are inefficient to describe sound accurately, but the following are characteristics of banjo sound and what properties in a bridge would affect the banjo tone toward that result.

## Musicality

This is the elusive “magic” tone that we

all dream about. It is the bottom line, our goal. Musicality is likely the result of all the many setup features being right at the same time. I would define it as a nice rounded edge to the note with good note separation, yet adequate sustain and bass response. Specifically relating to the bridge, I would suggest using a bridge of higher density but not higher weight. This means slimming the thickness and shape while maintaining slightly bigger feet in contact with the head. If I could choose any bridge height I wanted, as on an adjustable neck Heli-Mount banjo, I would opt for a tall 3/4” bridge but have it thinned down to weigh about 2.5 or 2.6 grams. If you have a standard banjo and are following my setup guidelines, you may not be able to use such a high bridge, in which case an 11/16”, 2.4 gram radiused and compensated bridge may be optimal.

## Sustain

Some banjoists will say that a banjo should not have too much sustain. Their problem stems from notes ringing on top of each

other and muddying up their tone. In some cases, and for some styles, this may be a valid argument; however, for my taste, I love sustain.

Quick-picking guitarists do not seem to have a problem with sustain, so why should a banjo not sustain? The answer might be that a lingering banjo sustain is sometimes not very musical. Rather than a full-bodied pleasant sustain, we normally hear nothing but big harmonic overtones that can sound harsh or ringy. However, I cherish the musical richness of a full-bodied smooth sustain.

A heavier bridge makes a crucial difference in approaching this ideal. If you can get all the setup factors working together with a heavier bridge (2.4-2.8 grams), you might open up new musical horizons for yourself.

## Chimes and Bell-Like Tone

The treble end adds life to the tone, but it must be presented in a balanced way for magic sound. Besides the mass being right,

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# Banjo Dynamics: “Magic” Bridges

it is essential that the bridge is in the right position on the banjo head and that it has the proper intonation.

When all of the strings have good intonation, the sympathetic vibrations from all of the non-picked strings will also supplement the harmonic content of the note. The break angle over the bridge should be just enough to bring out the highs. The simplest way to hear if your highs are working is to play your first string at the 21st fret and listen for a nice sustain. Then try the harmonic test as follows:

Starting with the 12th fret (1st harmonic), touch the 1st string lightly, directly above the 12th fret without actually contacting the fret. Then pick the string while immediately releasing contact with the string. You should hear the harmonic chime of a bell-like tone. If the harmonic chime is clear and loud, that's good. Try the chime at the 12th fret. You'll find other harmonics at the 19th, 7th, 5th, 4th and other places which actually add rich chord tones to each note you play. Now you should check the placement of your bridge by first playing a harmonic chime at the 19th fret and then comparing that pitch to the pitch of the note fretted at the same fret. As you know, if the bridge is out of place, the fretted note will be a different pitch than the chime, and you'll have to move your bridge until the pitches of the chime and fretted note match exactly, or suffer from harmonic distortion and a noisy out-of-tune banjo. This method also works at the 12th fret but is not as accurate.

If you are wishing to accentuate more of a harmonic content to your sound, try using a compensated bridge with a thinner, relatively sharp leading edge. You also may consider a bridge that weighs closer to 2 grams.

## Bass Response

Professional players are always looking for great bass response from their instruments. There is a continuing trend to deepen and broaden the banjo sound. The right bridge in the 2.5-gram range will take you partly there, but moderate head tension

and a tailpiece that points slightly upward will help too.

## Wide Sound

A balanced tone with lots of nice highs, mids, and lows is what I call a “wide sound.” If there is overall balance, the highs will not stick out and sound ragged, and you will be glad to hear the sustain. Unmasked highs sound piercing and thin, while lows alone without the balancing effect of treble would be lifeless and dull. I believe that completely even head tension will also assist in widening the sound.

## Summary

The ideal or magic bridge, therefore, should be marked with its weight to the nearest 10th of a gram, in addition to being fully compensated and height-gauged for each string. There are many good maple and ebony bridges on the market, but it is unusual to find bridge builders who pay attention to the details of precision compensation, weight, and height of each individual string.

Enterprise Bridges (available from Nechville West in Sisters) allows for extremely accurate intonation with medium- or light-gauge strings. Each bridge is made from woods which have been selected for proper density and tone characteristics. Its unique slightly curved shape maximizes its stability under string tension and optimizes vibrational transfer to the banjo head. It also has more mass along its top edge to prevent sagging, and has an arched top surface which

improves playability and decreases the possibility of fret noise.

While changing bridges may make a huge difference in your banjo sound, it is essential to continue keeping in mind your instrument's “wholistic” nature. Even the best of bridges is but one component of the overall dynamic sound produced by your banjo. I wish you many hours of musical enjoyment.

*Tom Nechville owns Nechville Banjos and resides in Sisters, Oregon where he sells instruments, accessories, and does repair and teaching. For more information visit [banjoswest.com](http://banjoswest.com)*

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# Country Music Icon Don Maddox Passes

By Joe Ross

Country music legend Don Maddox has passed away, at age 98, on September 12, 2021. The last surviving member of The Maddox Brothers and Rose, Don was a fiddler and singer who certainly leaves a lasting legacy and impact on the genesis of country music.

Don Maddox was born on December 7, 1922. At a young age, Don moved west from Boaz, Alabama with his family when drought and hard times forced them off their sharecroppers' farm. His sister Rose Maddox once told me, "Mama decided we were going to California where you could just pick the gold off the trees. She thoroughly believed that there was gold on the trees out there." With a pittance realized from selling most of their possessions, the Maddox family set out with the hope and aspiration of finding a better life during the Great Depression. Rose Maddox once recorded a song (written by David Price) about their story called "\$35 and a Dream," a title cut on one of her albums.

The family started their westward journey by hitchhiking to the railyard in Meridian, Mississippi. There were many homeless Americans on the road in 1933, but few had children with them, jumping on the moving boxcars of freight trains. Railroad workers sympathized with their plight and helped them hide from the railroad "bulls" (police). The Salvation Army fed the wayward family. In Oakland, California (the end of the line), they settled temporarily in "Pipe City," a homeless community located in big sections of unused sewer pipes.

After picking fruit during the day in California's San Joaquin Valley, the Maddoxes spent evenings picking banjos and guitars around the campfire for other "fruit tramps." Don's father, Charlie, played the five-string banjo for his own pleasure. Don's mother, Lulla, played mandolin and sang. All five of Don's siblings (Cliff, Cal, Henry, Fred and Rose) eventually learned to play various instruments. One of Don's

uncles was a music teacher, and he'd taught Don's brother Cliff to play, who in turn taught brother Cal to play. And so on, down the line.

They became professional musicians when Fred tired of working and decided that music was an easier way to make a living. He talked non-stop for a half hour to a



furniture store sponsor of a radio show in Modesto who agreed to host the band. Little did he know that Fred only played the jew's harp, nothing else. Eventually Fred also learned to play bass. The sponsor insisted that the band have a girl singer, and Fred assured him that they had the "greatest girl singer in the world." That's how Rose Maddox, at age 11 in 1937, began her professional career in music that spanned over six decades. Fred once said, "I didn't know if she could sing or not. All I ever heard her do was when she was doing the dishes and bellerin' just as loud as she could!" Don was a little too young at the time to join the band, but eventually he did.

While not paid for their radio appearances, The Maddox Brothers and Rose promoted their dance, rodeo, street corner

and saloon shows, entertaining other "Dust Bowl Refugees" like themselves. The band became regulars on the Louisiana Hayride radio barn dance program from Shreveport, Louisiana. Before World War II, the band included Cliff, Cal, Fred, Don and Rose. People called them hillbilly singers, not country musicians, back then. Rose says she was one of the first women to sing what she sang – country boogie.

Upright bassist Fred Maddox is given credit for developing the slap bass technique of playing it. "Well, the reason he did a slap bass was because he didn't know how to play the bass," Don Maddox once said in an interview with Saving Country Music. "All he was doing was playing rhythm anyhow. He didn't know the notes so he'd just slap the bass for the rhythm part. Everybody thought he put on a great show and thought he was the best bass player there was."

With radio appearances, and by playing for tips, the band became one of country music's most successful and distinctive acts. Besides their singing and picking, they offered entertaining shows full of upbeat spirit and fun. The

Maddoxes had outrageous comedy routines, and flashy (almost gaudy) costumes to back up their billing as "The Most Colorful Hillbilly Band in America."

Don and his brothers served during World War II, while Rose set out as a solo performer. Following the War, the band regrouped and came on stronger and flashier than ever. They began a long recording career on the Four Star and Columbia labels. Their radio shows typically started with their theme song, Wiley Walker and Gene Sullivan's "I Want to Live and Love," that Rose once said "tells the story of life."

Fred would introduce the band ... "There's Cal, the laughing cowboy. And there's Don Juan and his mule fiddle. Friendly Henry, the working girl's friend greeting all the

*Continued on page 12*

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# Country Music Icon Don Maddox Passes

Cont. from page 10

working girls. And the two hired hands. And then there's Rose, the Sweetheart of Hillbilly Swing ...." Some sidemen who supported the band included guitarists Roy Nichols, Jimmy Winkle and Gene Breeden, as well as steel guitarist Bud Duncan.

Don "Juan" Maddox was often referred to as "America's newest singing sensation." He also provided comedy. His sis Rosie once recalled, "and his fiddle sounded like a mule brayin'." Besides Cal's maniacal laughter, one could also hear yelps, screams, howls and spoken responses behind their spirited music. In 1949, The Maddox Brothers and Rose made their Grand Ole Opry debut singing "Gathering Flowers for the Master's Bouquet" and "I Couldn't Believe it was True." The full group would eventually make several appearances on the Opry, and Rose & Cal appeared as regulars for a six-month period. The Maddoxes also played regularly at huge dance halls that dotted the countryside. Eventually the old dance halls closed up.

Back in a 2012 interview with Saving Country Music, Don Maddox related a story about how they were responsible for Elvis Presley adopting his flashy stage attire. "We were playing a show with Elvis in Beaumont, Texas at the auditorium. A package show. And we had on our fancy outfits, the ones with the bell bottoms on them and all the flowers and all of that stuff. Elvis, he was just coming on the scene at that time. And they came in with their street clothes. That's all they had at that time. It was pretty hot down in Beaumont so we took off our fancy jackets and hung them in the dressing room backstage. When we came off stage and went

back there to get our jackets, Elvis had on one of our fancy jackets and was parading backstage and said, 'One of these days I'm going to get a fancy outfit like this.' So eventually Elvis got himself a fancy outfit, not like ours but even more fancier. But it

dox Revolution Angus," is a landmark just east of Ashland.

With their eclectic and stylistic music,



the Maddox Brothers and Rose are credited with being on the forefront of the rockabilly movement. Their innovative musical mix made them sound like a cross between a 1930's old-time string band and a rock-'n-roll band of the late '50s. Rose continued performing and recording, with several highly acclaimed albums in the bluegrass and country genres. A good read is the 1996 book by Johnny Whiteside, "Ramblin' Rose, The Life and Career of Rose Maddox." Ken Burns' 2019 television documentary about Country Music discussed the contributions of The Maddox Brothers and Rose in episodes two and three.

Cliff Maddox died of kidney failure in 1948 (when just 37). Cal passed away in 1968, and Henry in 1974. Fred passed on in 1993. Rose passed away in 1998, a few years after her appearances at our Myrtle Creek Bluegrass Festival. I had the honor of playing mandolin at her graveside service, and we jammed at brother Don's ranch afterwards. I'd occasionally run into Don at jams and concerts sponsored by the Oregon Oldtime Fiddlers' Association. Don also had an older sister, Alta Mae Troxel, who was not in the band, but wrote several songs recorded by The Maddox Brothers and Rose and also by Rose as a solo act. Alta Mae passed away in 2007 at age 93.

Now, in 2021 at age 98, Don Maddox is the last of this seminal band to leave us. What a musical legacy they have left for us to enjoy!

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



had bell bottoms on it, so the story is he got the idea from seeing bell bottoms on our outfits at that time."

The Maddox Brothers and Rose disbanded in 1956. For a short while, Fred, Henry and Don performed with Henry's wife, Loretta. Fred operated a couple nightclubs in southern California. Henry worked in a few down that way. Don bought himself a cattle ranch near Ashland, Oregon. He'd wanted to trade his 1957 pink Cadillac for it but ended up paying \$27,500 for the ranch. Cal and Rose stayed together because neither was married at the time. They had moderate success in Nashville but ultimately returned to Oregon and lived out their lives on Don's Revolution Ranch, known for its legendary Angus bull named "Ben Bond Revolution #73." Don's barn, with signage that says "Mad-





# ANNUAL MEETING 2022

# Save The Date!

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# ANNUAL MEETING

## Sunday, April 10 at Noon

# Venue Announced Soon!

For us bluegrass fans, this past year might be remembered for being just slightly better than the previous (all public health concerns aside, I'm speaking strictly about music here). 2020 was especially tough for touring and gigging musicians, and for us fans who were not able to get out and see the folks we like to follow playing the music we love. But in 2021 we were rewarded with many great albums by artists who were able to utilize their newfound idle time to get back into the recording studio. Here are just a few of my favorite releases from this past year.

## The Best of the Best

### "I'm the Happiest When I'm Moving"

The Alex Leach Band (Mountain Home Records)

*I'm the Happiest When I'm Moving* is the debut album from The Alex Leach Band. A young veteran of the East Tennessee scene, Alex Leach worked for most of his twenties as a member of Ralph Stanley Jr.'s Clinch Mountain Boys. Now leading his own band, Leach has assembled the perfect group of young pickers and singers to complement his own quirky style and personae. The Alex Leach Band's music is a playful blend of traditional styles with nods to the various eras of bluegrass past. The soulful mountain sound of the Stanleys is instantly recognized and on full display in songs like *Ramblers Return*, which perfectly suits Leach's high-lonesome, holler-rattling wails. The band seems equally comfortable banging out an aggressive, sledgehammer sound, hard enough to play any long-gone Cincinnati barroom, as featured on songs like mandolin player Joshua Gooding's blistering showcase piece *James Russell Rag*, and my personal favorite, *I Can't Live On This Way*, where Leach and Gooding successfully channel a sound reminiscent of a young Red Allen and Frank Wakefield. But what sets TALB apart from other young bands carrying traditional sounds is a free-spirited, almost hippie-like vibe and a reverence for the folky side of bluegrass as heard in songs like *October Fall*, *Take the Long Way Home*, and *Take Me Back*, the latter a lovely duet with Leach's wife, the

group's chief harmony vocalist Miranda Leach. It is in this pairing where The Alex Leach Band really shines. Their voices complement each other to a delightful and tender perfection, and the interplay between the two high tenors is superb and exudes a level of comfortability typically found in bands that have been together for a decade or two. If you want to hear the best example of how they each expertly toggle between melody and harmony duties, check out a new single that is not on this album, a cover of Paul Simon's *Slip Slidin' Away*. I expect great things from this band in the future and as their debut record shows, they are off to a great start.

### "Traveling Kind"

Seth Mulder and Midnight Run (self-released)

Another East Tennessee outfit, Seth Mulder and Midnight Run have honed their chops the last few years as a house band at Ole Smoky Distilling Co. in Gatlinburg, assuming the post formerly held by the Po' Ramblin' Boys, playing for tourists in search of legalized moonshine. Turns out, playing gigs as a day job 5 days a week makes a band really, really tight and provides quite literally a professional venue for what the Johnson Mountain Boys called "Working Close." In fact, when listening to *Traveling Kind* it is hard to not draw a comparison between Seth Mulder and Midnight Run and Johnson Mountain Boys (just give a listen to this version of Duncan and Brady). And like JMB, they too can successfully take an old honky tonkin' Webb Pierce tune, in this instance *Tupelo County Jail*, and give it the full 'grass treatment. *Traveling Kind* contains 13 tracks-worth of traditional bluegrass standards you might hear at just about every festival or jam session (*John Henry*, *Walking the Dog*, *Rabbit in a Log*) and other tunes that are heard less often but are still familiar (*Polka on the Banjo*, *I Haven't Seen Mary in Years*, *Crying Holy*). All feature the stellar banjo work of Colton Powers, and always with a premium on tight vocal harmonies while sharing lead vocal duties. Every member of this band is a strong enough singer to lead a band of their own. While *Traveling Kind* may

be some of the best recorded bluegrass to come out this past year, I urge everyone reading this to visit YouTube and check out one of Seth Mulder and Midnight Run's full live shows, from Isis Theater in Asheville, NC, to get the full effect of what this band is all about.

### "Better Late Than Never"

Never Come Down (self-released)

Anyone who is a regular reader of The Bluegrass Express is most likely already familiar with *Never Come Down*, and this album was so eloquently covered in our most recent edition by Gareth Jenkins, that there is not a whole lot else I can say about this exciting band and this beautiful recording. But I was asked about my favorite albums of the year and it would be dishonest of me to not include *Better Late than Never*. This record has been in constant rotation in our house since the day it came in the mail (along with an autographed "thank you" card signed by all band members...y'all are too sweet!) and has reached the distinguished honor of being one of the few "Dad's Jams" the whole family likes. And folks, **buy this one on vinyl**. The warmth of Crystal Lariza's voice and the attention this band pays to the tonal qualities of their instruments and vocal harmonies, all seem to add up to a sound that was made for the vinyl LP format. The extra effort given to that process is instantly apparent and much appreciated as it brought an end result that is well worth the wait for us pre-order customers ... better late than never.

### "Renewal"

Billy Strings (Rounder)

There will be a full review from Gareth Jenkins in the spring 2022 issue of Bluegrass Express.

### "Things She Couldn't Get Over"

Dale Ann Bradley (Pinecastle)

Dale Ann Bradley's voice is a known commodity to serious bluegrass fans and Sirius Bluegrass listeners (I don't have the luxury of listening to Bluegrass Junction on SiriusXM often, but when I do I feel

# Album Review: *My Favorite Albums of 2021*

like I always hear Dale Ann Bradley), and for great reason. Bradley has been churning out expertly crafted, airplay-friendly albums since the '90s, and count this latest effort among them. Bradley's voice is one of those that just keeps getting better. Strong and sweet, stern yet emotive, it seems to be naturally suited for narrating songs about the lost and the lonely, and this album is full of characters who could use a hug. On *Things She Couldn't Get Over*, Bradley shares the tale of a homeless war veteran in *Lynwood*, an abused soul navigating a toxic relationship in *Living on the Edge*, the entire Cherokee nation (*Yellow Creek*), a young woman in desperate need of some self-reflection and a pep-talk (*Pearl*) and the subject of the title track, a woman unable to outrun her demons. All these stories are handled deftly with a kind of compassionate empathy that very few folks can convey just through the texture and tone of their singing voice. But I suppose that is how one goes about winning the IBMA Female Vocalist of the Year 6 times as has Ms. Bradley.

## “Industrial Strength Bluegrass: Southwestern Ohio’s Musical Legacy”

Various (Smithsonian Folkways)

A companion piece to the book of the same name (see Clayton Knight’s review in the fall 2021 Bluegrass Express), *Industrial Strength Bluegrass: Southwestern Ohio’s Musical Legacy* is the passion project of banjo great Joe Mullins, a native of southwest Ohio and one of the region’s foremost musical historians. Mullins assembled a star-studded list of artists to pay

tribute to some of the legendary musicians with ties to the area. Winner of the IBMA 2021 Album of the Year, *Industrial Strength Bluegrass* features some of the biggest names in bluegrass and country music with their takes on tunes from some of the biggest names in bluegrass history. Some of the highlights are: *Stone Walls and Steel Bars*, a classic Stanley Brothers tune originally recorded in Cincinnati and performed here by three former members of a classic Lonesome River Band lineup, Ronnie Bowman, Don Rigsby and Kenny Smith; *Are You Missing Me* by Daily and Vincent (who else but Daily and Vincent should recreate Jim and Jesse doing the Louvin Brothers?); *Once More*, an early Osborne Brothers tune from way back when Red Allen still formed their trio is handled here with precision by The Grassals; Flatt and Scruggs’ *Baby Blue Eyes*, by Vince Gill (if I am allowed one criticism of Gill, it’s that he hasn’t recorded nearly enough bluegrass). I could go on listing every track on this album. They are all that good. But there is one that truly stood out for me. Whatever the recorded music version is for the term “showstopper,” it’s Lee Ann Womack’s gut-wrenching performance of Dave Evans’ *From Life’s Other Side*, which sounds just about as pained as the original. *Industrial Strength Bluegrass* is more than just a great listening experience. It is a reminder of a historical era in a specific region that made a major contribution to bluegrass music, and thus *Industrial Strength Bluegrass* is an important addition to the bluegrass canon.

## The Rest of the Best

### “How I Hear It”

Jeremy Stephens (Rebel)

Bonus content for fans of the band High Fidelity. Stephens brings the same energy to this solo project, where he has more opportunity to show off his virtuosity on multiple instruments. Stephens once again displays a knack for finding some of the rare gems of the early bluegrass catalogue from folks like Reno and Smiley and Jim and Jesse and always performs them with the highest of fidelity.

### “All Suited Up”

The Kody Norris Show (Rebel)

This is great “House Cleaning Bluegrass,” the type I reserve for a rainy Saturday afternoon, after Music from the True Vine on KBOO has signed off and I have successfully fought off the kids for the last three pancakes, and now it’s time to clean the place up. *All Suited Up* always seems to motivate me to get movin’.

### “Life Goes On”

Sunfish Duo

Classic and timeless duet singing here by Dan Fish and Sarah Ells. *Life Goes On* will take you back to the front porch, where there are no frills, no performative antics and no studio tricks. Just two folks, two instruments, and a whole lotta great harmonizing. Old time music as it should be.

### “My Bluegrass Heart”

Béla Fleck (Renew)

Béla’s Back! And he brought friends!

*Dennis Christensen is a fledgling picker and warbly caterwauler, who dreams of one day being a sideman in a family band with his wife and two young children.*

# Aunt Pearl Tries “Yoga For Musicians”

By Linda Leavitt

## “Get out much?”

In the “Before Times,” my answer would have been “Oh, yes!” followed by blather about how busy I was. More recently I would have to reply, “Not much.” Save for the occasional stroll around Sisters, Oregon country, I have spent more time than I should in a seated position, doing cozy indoor things like watching my beloved “Ted Lasso,” enjoying elaborate ice cream sundaes, and practicing music.

As we move into woodshed season, I’m all caught up on my Lasso-isms, my rear has a little more padding and I can pick Black-berry Blossom fast enough to keep up with Banjo-man, but I can no longer ignore the loud complaints from my overworked hands, wrists, neck and shoulders, as well as creaking noises coming from my back and hips when I try stand up straighter than Quasimodo.

I’ve noticed Banjo-man can pick for hours, and still stand up with the enthusiasm of a twelve-year old gymnast going after a medal, so I asked him, “What’s your secret?”

Well folks, as it turns out, Banjo-man spends half an hour each morning rolling around on a yoga mat, a routine that helps keep him in good form. He’s a walking-talking advertisement for why yoga and stretching are good for what ails you.

After several weeks of rolling around on the mat myself, I’ve found that saying hello to my body by stretching every day makes a big difference for me and my music practice. I’ve also discovered there are yoga moves specifically designed for musicians.

In this column, I will share some resources I’ve found helpful, in case you’d like to give yoga for musicians a whirl. I’ll also share my interview with bluegrass musician and yoga teacher, Kate Potter, who teaches yoga for musicians at festivals and camps in the Northwest.

Remember, warming up your body before you practice music will make your practice sessions easier in the long run, because according to Ted Lasso, “Your body is like day-old rice. If it ain’t warmed up properly, something real bad could happen.” Fortunately, picking tunes is far less demanding than playing soccer with twenty-year-old kids, but repetitive motions and playing without warming up might take a toll over time. I don’t know about y’all, but my goal is to postpone the inevitable for as long as possible and to keep picking until I eventually keel over, with a happy grin on my face.

Now if you’re like Aunt Pearl, over time your body has acquired a bit of patina. You say you haven’t sat cross-legged since you watched the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan show? Don’t worry. There are plenty of stretches you can do that don’t require you to go full-tilt yogi.

The most important thing is to bring awareness to your body. If you feel pain, that’s a good signal to back off or stop. Just listen to your body and do what you can. There are myriad benefits to developing your own routine. The concentration you bring to stretching and yoga movements will help you to focus when you play, to build stamina and to release stress. This is not a competition! This is all about helping you take good care of your body as an instrument.

*(If you have any injuries or medical concerns, please consult a doctor or physical therapist before you try a stretching or yoga routine.)*

## Neck, Shoulders, Forearms, Wrists and Hands

Let’s start with stretches. Here’s a routine that helps my body complain less after I pick. Remember to breathe!

First, stand with your legs hip-width apart. Extend your arms over your head, with your palms facing each other. Drop

your arms and repeat.

Next, raise your arms parallel to the floor, with palms facing toward the front of you. Gently bring your arms back and open your chest. Hold that pose, release and repeat. (You can also open your chest by lying down with a bolster under your back, and your shoulders opening toward the floor.)

Next, in a standing position with legs hip-width apart and knees slightly bent, slowly raise and lower your shoulders, keeping your chin parallel to the floor and your ears over your shoulders. Imagine having a long neck, and having a string coming from your crown to the sky, lengthening your spine. Relax your jaw. Breathe and relax. Drop your jaw, yawn and sigh.

Slowly roll your shoulders back, then forward, and then back again. Breathe and relax. Slowly and gently turn your head to the left, and tilt your head down, feeling a gentle stretch on the right side of your neck and shoulders. Relax into this stretch for five seconds and breathe. Repeat the process on the right side.

Next, stand in a doorway next to the door jamb, with your upper left arm parallel to the floor and your forearm and palm pressing gently into the door jam. Lean your body into the doorway, just until you feel a gentle stretch. Repeat the process on the other side.

Gently massage the muscles that run the length of your forearms. With forearms extended, drop your palm toward the floor and gently push the palm toward your body with your other hand. Then raise your palm away from you and gently push the palm back toward you with your other hand. Repeat the process on the other forearm and wrist.

Finally, try using massage therapy balls to strengthen your hands, fingers and forearms. I like the Gaiam 05-58276 Restore





# Aunt Pearl

Hand Therapy Exercise Ball Kit, which you can order online or find at a sporting goods store. You can also gently rub your wrists, hands and fingers, and clench and relax your fingers. Shake your hands and wrists and wiggle those fingers.

You may have already guessed that Aunt Pearl's favorite yoga position is the "child's pose." Actually it's a toss-up between that one and the "corpse pose," also known as "savasana." Both are good poses for ending your stretching routine.

While you're in these poses, relax and release any desire you may have to play your instrument as fast as some whippersnapper.

Bring your relaxed state to bear when you're playing your instrument. Pay attention to when and where your body holds

tension when you play (and sing), to when you're holding your breath, and purposely breathe and relax your body.

For a good explanation of yogic breathing, visit <https://www.himalayanyogainstitute.com/mysteries-of-pranayama/>. When your breathing is slow and relaxed, your body and mind get the message that you are safe.

When you pay attention to your breath, you can't help but be present, which brings me back to Ted Lasso, who said, "You know what the happiest animal on Earth is? It's a goldfish. You know why? It's got a ten-second memory." That is a good foundation for approaching every activity in life, including playing and singing bluegrass music.

So be a goldfish, and let's pick.

## Resources

Mia Olson, author of *Musician's Yoga: A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Inspiration*. Berklee Press, 2009.

Yoga With Adrienne: <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene> [Search "yoga for musicians" inside her YouTube page. Her videos are free.]

Kate Potter, <https://channel.movementbynm.com/yoga-for-musicians>.

*Linda Leavitt plays guitar, mandolin and sings with The Lois & Clark Expedition. She teaches bluegrass singing and jam classes at Nechville West in Sisters.*



Child's Pose



Corpse Pose, or Savasana

## Don't Be Left In The Dark

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Pacific Northwest & beyond.

<https://www.oregonbluegrass.org/>

# Kate Potter: Yoga For Musicians

Interview by Linda Leavitt

*Kate Potter is a Yoga teacher and musician who lives on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia. I discovered Kate while searching online for yoga routines designed for musicians. I've found her classes helpful and decided to learn more about her. I interviewed Kate via email in September 2021.*

## When did you start doing Yoga?

Although my early training was in no way formal, I started Yoga at the ripe age of seven years old in the Albertan town of Calgary. It was child's magic, and it required solitary quiet, which was a tall order in those days.

## How did Yoga teaching become a career path for you?

I had been to India as a young woman in 1980, traveling solo, with ideas of studying Bharatnatyam, a form of Classical Indian Dance. I traveled the better part of a year in India, but began as an unannounced (but thoroughly welcomed) guest student of the Dance and Yogic Studies program at the University of Mysore. The seeds of my teaching path were planted then and there. Later that decade after multiple trainings in Yoga Therapy, I launched Kate Potter Yoga (<https://www.katepotteryoga.ca/>). This then became my full-time career.

## How were you introduced to bluegrass music?

Teaching Yoga in West Virginia in 2013, I met a chiropractor who also happened to make fiddles in the same location. I was being treated for an injury, and wound up learning a tune on a guitar before I had my back treatment. It sounds odd, but in fact it was such a natural exchange. When he picked up his fiddle, and I managed to hold down the chords on his guitar, I felt myself falling, as if delivered to this music by fate. The sound was haunting and vibrationally thrilling. Doc, as he was called, invited me to attend a 5-day campout at an Appalachian string festival called Clifftop, which I did.

## How would you describe a beginner's experience of Clifftop?

The first year I went to Clifftop and camped with Doc (Robert Davis) and friends was transformational. I was wide-eyed as we entered the camp by night. Hundreds of circles of musicians, all playing; camps lit up, signs, flags, and this tremendous hum of music. There were buyers and sellers of instruments, gear, hot food, drink—you name it, it was all there. I was such a new player and so impossibly anonymous, that I threw myself at it with the bravado only a beginner can have. Considering my lack of ability (and my still pending agility), it is funny that the high has not worn off. It just builds every time I play, or attend our Canadian version of bluegrass heaven called Nimble Fingers at Sorrento Centre, British Columbia.

## Yoga for musicians? Is this a thing you teach?

Oh yes. It will forever be a passion to teach people who share my passion for bluegrass music. The need is so great. As you know, instruments are played one sided, fast and hard. The gift of coming late to a musical life is that I need to be intelligent if I am to play into my older years. But that said, I notice the zone one gets into when practicing. The chances of taking a moment to reset, realign, breathe and stretch are less likely if you don't understand the benefits.

## What are the benefits of Yoga for musicians?

Playing music is physical. I think players forget this. Once injured, it might be a long (and expensive) way back if you don't have a personal therapy. I teach short Yoga routines, and hope musicians get



Kate Potter

hooked on the feeling of it—the rhythm, so to speak. It's central to feel where you need length and where you need strength, and this is driven, in Yoga, by breath. The shoulders, neck, and back are targets of an overall Yoga practice, but when I teach to musicians, I make sure to work on hands, wrists, and particularly the muscles of the forearms.

## I hear you have launched an app for Yoga.

I have been the voice and choreographer for a Yoga television show called Namaste, seen and practiced worldwide. Namaste TV has evolved into a company called Movement by NM, and now features elite athletes giving training classes in different disciplines. KatePotterYoga is part and parcel of the app that NM launched this summer. I personally have over 50 practices available on the app that are filmed, voiced, and edited to be accessible to all levels. Yoga for Musicians is part of the Kate Potter Collection.

## Would you describe one must-do stretch you would recommend bluegrass musicians do before they practice?

Yes! Interlace the fingers behind your back, and pop your chest up. Straighten the arms, drop the chin down and then one ear down to a shoulder. Keep chest high. Change sides. Same again.

## How often should musicians stretch when they're jamming and practicing?



Kate Potter jamming with friends

# Kate Potter: Yoga For Musicians

Between every song, just a little stretch somewhere would be a life-altering habit. Or while playing, change position for one song. Fiddlers could play with the fiddle low. Mandolin players could try placing their strap over one shoulder as an interlude. Guitarists, push your midriff into your instrument to engage a higher chest.

## Would you discuss how a Yoga practice benefits singers?

Every singer benefits from practice of Yoga breathing with the chest high and shoulders relaxed. We use the vocal cords to create a sound of calm, while zeroing in on each exhale as a core-strengthening, back-lengthening breath. On inhale, the diaphragm expands downward, but unlike in singing, that happens slowly. It is counterpoint. It is brilliant. Familiar and rich.



## As we move through the pandemic, what are you doing to keep connected to your bluegrass friends?

I live remotely on an island that has no car ferry and poor Wi-Fi, so I was counting on the Nimble Fingers camp last summer. When that was cancelled, my bluegrass buddies were quick to re-jig. Twelve of us sailed, kayaked, or motored in Zodiac boats to meet and camp on the shores of Keats Island. We played steadily for 4 days, and that will have to suffice for now.

## Who are your favorite bluegrass musicians? What music have you been listening to lately?

I love my Peghead Nation teachers Chad Manning, Joe K. Walsh, Scott Nygaard, John Reischman. I'm really enjoying listening to the Andy Stateman Trio for a Klezmer twist on bluegrass. Bill Monroe and Jethro Burns are good for rabbit holes. Rhonda Vincent and the Rage with Hunter Berry on fiddle is my latest thrill.

## During the last two years, many of us are learning about how to transform a sense of isolation into an appreciation of solitude

## and stillness. How does stillness inform your music?

Solitude is a change of perspective which brings with it the skill of listening, not to the self, but to the world beyond self. Solitude requires turning the dial switch.

If I am to be a useful member of a band, it is crucial for me to understand stillness. We have all met people who do not listen, with minds too full of their own playing. To really listen in the context of music, one needs to let go of the "middle man," the brain, and play with the countenance of an open sky.

Players who play very fast have bodies that are almost still. I think they can access that stillness in the rest beats to vivify what is about to come, or perhaps to point out the awe of what just happened.

## I love how you use music as an adjunct in your teaching. Your original song about The Four Gates, "Reverence," is a beautiful, joyful explanation of that teaching.

Thank you, I hope to write more songs. The gates of innocence, perseverance, exuberance, and reverence are portals into gardens of being. To express through the body and capture in song is just about all I could wish for.

## In your "Four Contemplations: The Alchemy of Stillness," you speak about how your approach to Yoga departs from mainstream approaches to Yoga. How does the music you've incorporated in your teaching affect the practice?

I believe in the rhythm of breath in Yoga, and generally insist on no music, for people to experience breath without distraction. In my classes, every single breath is accounted for and different rhythms of breath are called for. I met Dirje Childs in Texas while teaching Yoga at a destination recording ranch called Blue Rock. The music of her cello with my teaching

was a match unparalleled. People love the help that music gives. People love Dirje holding the stillness with those long bows of breath and sound on cello. Recording with her at Blue Rock was and remains a dream come true.



## How does your practice affect your music?

Without a Yoga practice I just don't have a body that allows for vigor and patience. Yoga somehow reaches all those pieces of me that have come unraveled and puts me back together, encouraging me to play on.

## How does the cultivation of presence benefit musicians?

The cultivation of presence seems to me a crucial aspect of being a musician. Whether relating to an audience, to bandmates, or to practice, there is something about a center that we can identify and rest in. I find it peaceful to play with people who are grounded in presence, even if we are playing fast or outside my skill level. For a relative beginner, having presence has allowed me to not only survive but thrive. I would like to have another 20 years to learn to play my mandolin with bluegrass grace. For that to happen, I know my Yoga will be truly called upon.

You can find Kate Potter's Yoga for Musicians series at: <https://channel.movementbynm.com/yoga-for-musicians>.



# Live Bluegrass Happenings

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*Never Come Down at Mississippi Studios, Portland Oregon*

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*Eli West and Dale Adkins at Suttle Lake*



*Whiskey Deaf (and dancers) at Cooper Mountain Ale Works*



*Whiskey Deaf (with guest Daniel Ullom) on the Muddy Rudder  
Down Home Music Hour*

# Live Bluegrass Happenings



*Ash Creek at Multnomah Grange #71*



*The Cosmic Ramblers at Umpqua Farmers Market*



*Sunfish Trio*



*Skillet Head at River's Bend in Bend*



*Tidewater Twang, Canyonville Farmer's Market*



*My Bluegrass Heart*

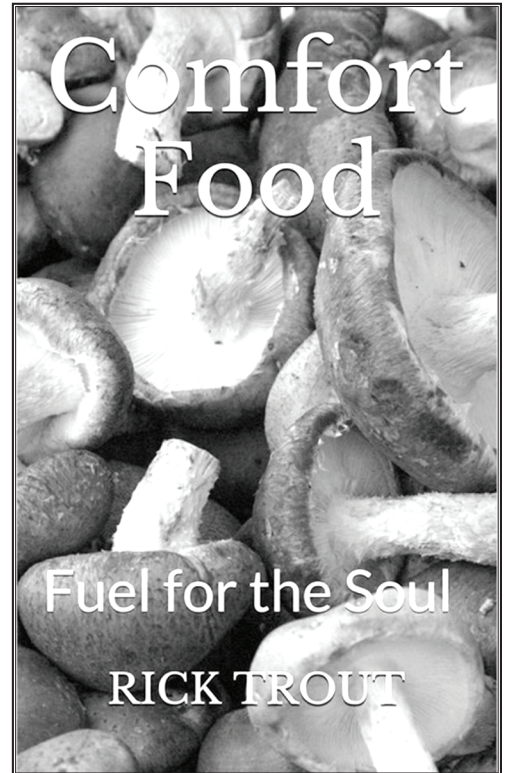
# Tortilla Soup

By Rick Trout

Reprinted by permission of Rick Trout from his cookbook, "Comfort Food: Fuel for the Soul." Copyright 2014.

**N**o one seems to know exactly how Tortilla Soup originated, but most sources concur that it was first prepared somewhere around Mexico City. It first appeared in US kitchens around the middle of the 20th century and has by now become a standard item in every Mexican or Tex-Mex cafe. It has also been the object of a multitude of home recipes. Literally every great home chef has a recipe which is regarded as "the real thing." Quite a claim, given that no one knows for sure what the original "real thing" looked like.

Many recipes, especially those from Mexico, use a paste of tomato, dried chiles, onion and chicken stock as the base for the soup, garnishing it very simply with tortilla chips, queso and some avocado. I of course have my own recipe, and I do not make any claim on its authenticity. It is simply the way I like to make it. When we are having one of our cold, gray, rainy Northwest afternoons, this is one of our family's standards.



## Ingredients-Serves 4

2 chicken breasts, bone-in with skin	1/2 tsp black pepper
1 qt chicken broth, preferably home-made, plus enough water to cover the chicken and vegetables	4 cups tortilla chips
1 yellow onion, chopped coarsely	1 tomato, peeled, seeded and chopped
2 carrots, 1 chopped coarsely, the other julienned	1/2 red onion, finely diced
4 cloves garlic, peeled	1 bunch green onions, coarsely chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped	4 radishes, thinly sliced
1 bay leaf	1 bunch cilantro, stems and leaves rinsed, the leaves removed and coarsely chopped, stems reserved
2 tsp salt	1 cup shredded cotija cheese or your other favorite fresh cheese
1 tsp cumin	2 limes, quartered
1/2 tsp chile powder	1 avocado
1 tsp oregano	

# Tortilla Soup

In a stock pot, brown the chicken pieces. When thoroughly browned, add the onion, the coarsely chopped carrot, the celery, the cilantro stems, the garlic and the bay leaf. Add enough water to cover the ingredients. Bring to a boil, reduce to simmer, and cover. Simmer for at least one hour, until the chicken is beginning to fall off of the bone. Turn off the heat and remove the chicken from the pot.

Reserve the chicken and strain the broth from the pot with a colander. Press as much broth as possible from the vegetables and discard them.

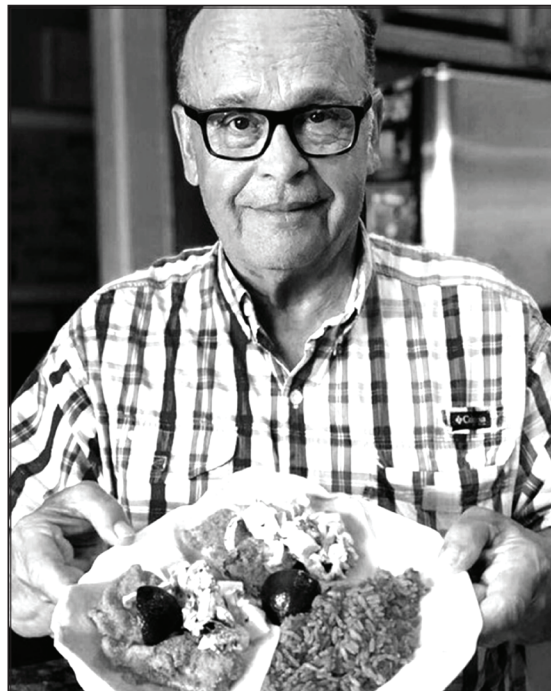
Twenty minutes before serving, shred the chicken meat, discard the bones and skin, add to the broth and bring back up to serving temperature. Season with the salt, cumin, chile powder, oregano and black pepper. Correct the seasoning.

In large, broad bowls, lay down a base of tortilla chips and cover with the soup and shredded chicken. Garnish with diced tomato, red onion, radish, chopped green onion tops, cilantro, cotija, and avocado with lime slices on the side.

Note: I make no claim to being a food historian, but my best guess about the origin of Tortilla Soup is that it is derived from migas, a traditional dish served in Spain, Portugal, Texas and Mexico. In Europe, migas is a sort of soup that employs stale bread, garlic, olives, and a variety of ingredients such as sardines, chorizo or pork products. In Texas it is served with eggs and chorizo, but around Mexico City it is still served as a soup with stale bread. Nothing is ever wasted in traditional kitchens. The use of odds and ends hanging around the pantry is at the center of the comfort food tradition, and thus, Tortilla Soup can claim to be just as firmly in the genre as its chicken noodle cousin.

You can find my own recipe for migas in my first book, Rick Trout's Kitchen, or on the blog at [www.bread-and-salt.com](http://www.bread-and-salt.com).

*Rick Trout grew up in Texas. He is a chef, an avid fisherman, a writer and a guitar picker who knows a thing or two about classic Texas country music. Now retired from the law, Rick lives in Vancouver, Washington.*



**Have You Been To The  
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<https://www.facebook.com/oregonbluegrass>

# Scenes from Preston Thompson Guitar Camp

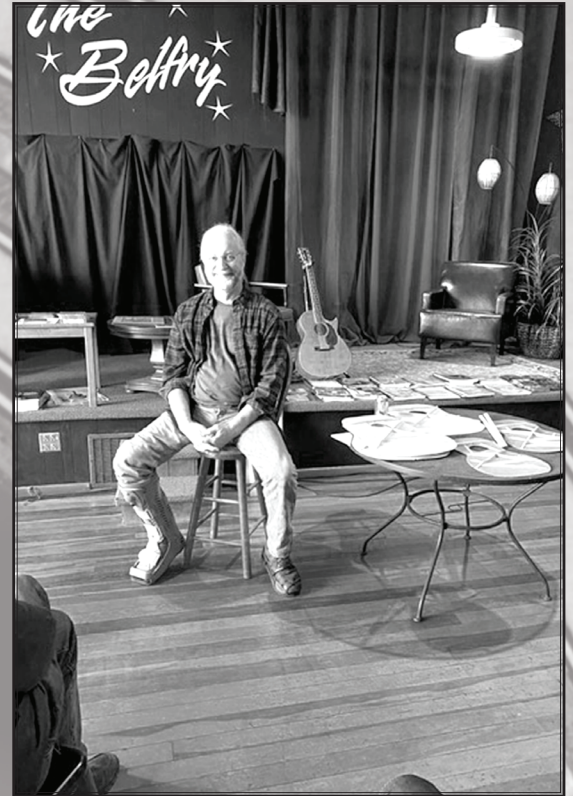




# Scenes from Preston Thompson Guitar Camp



*Three generations learning together at Preston Thompson Guitar Camp*



*Gareth Jenkins*



*Dale Adkins*



# Finding bluegrass (and more) in the time of COVID-19

Compiled by Nancy Christie

Oregon and Washington bluegrass fans have been finding ways to gather safely. All times are Pacific (U.S. west coast). Confirm before you go! You should expect venues to follow their state's COVID-19 guidelines at a minimum, and venues may request stricter rules at their option.

Events and jams are posted on the Oregon Bluegrass Association's web page, <https://oregonbluegrass.org/>, and on the regional Facebook page called Northwest Bluegrass where bluegrass information for Washington, Oregon, and sometimes Idaho can be found.

**Jam organizers:** Update your jam information by emailing to [expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:expressnews@oregonbluegrass.org).

**All the time, all bluegrass:** OBA Radio: <https://live365.com/station/Oregon-Bluegrass-Radio-a62184>

**Sundays (alternate), Portland, Oregon:** 1:30-4:30 p.m. Portland Bluegrass Sunday Jam, every other Sunday at Artichoke Music. Vaccination and mask required. Suggested donation of \$5.00. Updates at Facebook group: Portland Bluegrass Sunday Jam. Murray Nunn, [munn7515@gmail.com](mailto:munn7515@gmail.com).

**Sundays (3rd), Roseburg, Oregon:** 1:00-4:30 p.m., Sutherlin Senior Center, 202 E. Central Ave., Sutherlin, OR 97479. All-levels bluegrass jam. Liz Crain, [lizcrain42@gmail.com](mailto:lizcrain42@gmail.com), 541-679-0553.

**Tuesdays, Portland, Oregon:** \*On hiatus until spring 2022\* 7:00-10:00 p.m., Tomorrow's Verse Taproom, 4605 NE Fremont St. Ste. 103 Portland, OR 97213. Bluegrass jam hosted by Rich Landar. Details at Facebook group: Tomorrow's Verse Bluegrass Jam.

**Tuesdays, Vancouver, Washington:** 6:00 p.m., Intermediate-advanced acoustic bluegrass jam. Doomsday Brewing Safe House, 1919 Main St., Vancouver. Updates at Facebook group: Vancouver Washington Area Bluegrass Jam.

**Wednesdays, Beaverton, Oregon:** 6:00 p.m., Round Table Pizza, bluegrass jam. 10150 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy, Beaverton, OR 97005. Confirm with the organizer if you are not on the email list. Jane Gallagher, [janeromfo5@gmail.com](mailto:janeromfo5@gmail.com).

**Thursdays (2nd and 4th), Medford, Oregon** 7:00-9:00 p.m. Call for location. John Nice (541) 601-0254, [nicetunz@gmail.com](mailto:nicetunz@gmail.com)

**Saturdays, Gresham, Oregon:** Monthly concert series hosted by Dave Elliott at Multnomah Grange #71, 30639 SE Bluff Road, Gresham, Oregon 97080, phone 503-663-4101. Admission \$10. Jamming 6:00-7:00 p.m., followed by concert(s) until 9:30 p.m.

**Saturdays, Portland, Oregon:** Taborgrass at Waverly UCC, 3300 SE Woodward Street Portland, OR 97202. Song Class 12:30-1:45. Tune Class 2:00-3:15. Jam Class 3:30-4:45. Open Jam 12:30-4:45 \$10 for one class, \$5 for each additional class. \$5 suggested donation for the open jam. Pay by cash, PayPal, or Venmo. Vaccination proof and masks required. Details and updates at Facebook group: Taborgrass. Email: [taborgrass@gmail.com](mailto:taborgrass@gmail.com)

**Multiple nights, Portland, Oregon-based online** live performances through the Facebook page: Muddy Rudder Down Home Music Hour. Watch for Thursday night's 7:00 p.m. shows with Annie Staninec, John Kael, and friends playing bluegrass and old-time music. Sundays at noon you'll find Irish tunes from Dan and Fran; Friday nights there's Lauren Sheehan with Americana songs, and other performers to discover.

**2022 Festivals and Camps:** These have been announced, but please confirm before you go:

**January 28-29:** Winter Music Festival, Florence, Oregon (see ad, page 11), [wintermusicfestival.org](http://wintermusicfestival.org)

**February 24-27:** Wintergrass, Bellevue, Washington. [wintergrass.com](http://wintergrass.com)

**June 17-19:** Wenatchee River Bluegrass Festival, Cashmere, Washington. [cashmerecoffeehouse.com/wrbfest.htm](http://cashmerecoffeehouse.com/wrbfest.htm)

**July 11-15:** Washington Old Time Fiddlers Association, Fiddle Camp (all traditional old time and bluegrass instruments), Moses Lake, Washington. [wotfa.org](http://wotfa.org)

**July 18-21:** Oregon Old Time Fiddlers Association, West Cascades Fiddle Camp (all traditional old time and bluegrass instruments), Pleasant Hill, Oregon. [ootfa.org](http://ootfa.org) and [fiddlecamp.net](http://fiddlecamp.net)

**July 29-31:** Bluegrass from the Forest, Shelton, Washington. [bluegrassfromtheforest.com](http://bluegrassfromtheforest.com)

**August 5-7:** Washington Acoustic Music Association, Winlock Pickersfest, Winlock, Washington. [winlockpickersfest.com](http://winlockpickersfest.com)

**August 12-14:** Washington Bluegrass Association, Mt. St. Helens Bluegrass Festival, Toledo, Washington [washingtonbluegrassassociation.org](http://washingtonbluegrassassociation.org)

# Grant Award Information and Application

Applications Due March 1  
Submit to: OBA  
P.O. Box 1115  
Portland, OR 97207  
Or:  
president@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 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 Grant Funds from OBA, should you be awarded a Grant (name, address, phone number, email address)

This is an application for:  
 Waller Award  
 Candey Award

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

## Thank You and Good Luck!

# 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.



## 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 March 1 to [president@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:president@oregonbluegrass.org) or mail by 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.

# The Nora Candey Memorial Songwriting Fund

## History

In memory of Nora Candey, her husband Scott Candey has established The Nora Candey Songwriting Fund, to award a grant to songwriters who would like to further their craft.

Nora was very active in the bluegrass community until her passing in November, 2020. In addition to generously donating her time and talents, Nora was a talented multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, and gifted songwriter who deeply inspired us with her music.

In the words of Scott Candey, Nora “believed the songs are there, in some divine space, waiting. You don’t write them so much as discover them and give them form. There are a lucky few that notice, that snatch them when they are able...(from) that place where the songs come from.”

## Resources

Resources supporting the Nora Candey Songwriting Fund include: OBA general account funds, donations from the Oregon bluegrass community, and potentially grants received from other organizations. Our goal is the raise enough support to endow the Nora Candey Songwriting Fund so the principal balance remains intact in perpetuity and regular earnings support annual grants. Until that goal is achieved, the OBA will strive to maintain financial resources to award funds sufficient for recipients.

The Nora Candey Songwriting Fund and Grant will be administered by the Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA). Nora’s dear friend and fellow songwriter, Joe Newberry, serves as an advisor to the grant committee.

The grant award may vary in amount, and may be awarded to one or more recipients. The grant 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

The Nora Candey Memorial Songwriting Fund will be awarded annually, or as funding allows, to individuals who are involved in the Oregon Bluegrass community. The OBA grant committee will consider all requests received through completion of the Grant Award Application Form by the March 1st due date of each year.

## Criteria

1. Applicants must be an Oregon Bluegrass Association member.
2. Applicants must have a stated financial need.



3. Applicants must complete and submit the grant award application form by the due date. Submit the form by March 1 to [president@oregonbluegrass.org](mailto:president@oregonbluegrass.org) or mail to the OBA.

4. Applications may not be submitted by a current OBA Board Member or relative.

5. Grant award payments will be made by OBA to the entity designated on the grant award application form.

6. OBA may revise the criteria and application process, as needed.

## Use of Funds

Recipients of the award may be asked to present their use of the award at the OBA annual meeting in April, in person or via a recording.



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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](mailto:membership@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**

## **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](mailto:pywaterfalls@yahoo.com)  
[corralcreekbluegrass.com](http://corralcreekbluegrass.com)  
**For bookings please call 503-319-5672**

## **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)

## **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 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**

## **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**

## **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)

## **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**

## **Midshelf String Band**

Midshelf String Band is a 4-piece Portland-based band with roots in bluegrass, folk, Celtic, honky-tonk and other Americana. We're fairly new as a band, but we've all been playing for decades in other bands like Back Porch Revival and Pagan Jug Band. We really enjoy playing together and aim to bring fun and good times with us wherever we go. Check here for our schedule:

[www.midshelfstringband.com/](http://www.midshelfstringband.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**

## **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](mailto:pickledokraband@gmail.com)

## **Rose City Bluegrass Band**

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

**Charlie Williamson**  
[charlie3@nwlink.com](mailto:charlie3@nwlink.com)

# OBA Supporting Performer Directory

## **The Rogue Bluegrass Band**

The Rogue Bluegrass Band is: Paul Hirschmann, guitar, dobro and vocals; Ed Hersherberger, banjo and vocals; Deb Smith-Hirschmann, bass and vocals; and Don Tolan, mandolin and vocals. An entertaining four-piece acoustic bluegrass group, featuring harmony vocals and foot-stomping fiddle tunes.

### **Rogue Bluegrass Band**

Contact Don at  
[RogueBluegrassBand@yahoo.com](mailto:RogueBluegrassBand@yahoo.com)

## **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)

## **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](mailto:djoefish@gmail.com)

## **Timothy Jenkins Band**

Timothy Jenkins

[tjenkins@uoregon.edu](mailto:tjenkins@uoregon.edu)

## **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.

Contact email: [thehardlyheard@gmail.com](mailto:thehardlyheard@gmail.com)

Visit us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/thehardlyheard/](http://www.facebook.com/thehardlyheard/)

[thehardlyheard/](http://thehardlyheard.com)

Band Website: [www.reverbnation.com/thehardlyheard](http://www.reverbnation.com/thehardlyheard)

[thehardlyheard](http://thehardlyheard.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

**We're Looking For**

# **OBA**

## **VOLUNTEERS**

- Events
- Development/Fundraising
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- Merchandising
- Membership Assistant

Contact Connie Wold at [volunteers@oregonbluegrass.com](mailto:volunteers@oregonbluegrass.com)



# Salt Spring

Composed By John Reischman  
Arranged By Lluís Gomez

Capo II

The musical score is written for a five-string banjo with a capo at the second fret. It is in 4/4 time. The score is divided into five systems, each with a treble clef and a single staff. The first system starts with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The second system has a key signature of two sharps (D major). The third system has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The fourth system has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The fifth system has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various fret numbers (0-7), slurs, and articulation marks (M, T, I). There are also some special markings like 'SL' and 'P'.

*Editor's note: Many thanks to Lluís Gomez for contributing his arrangement of John Reischman's "Salt Spring," a tune that is a Northwest jam favorite. Look for arrangements of "Salt Spring" for mandolin, fiddle and guitar in the Spring issue of the Bluegrass Express.*

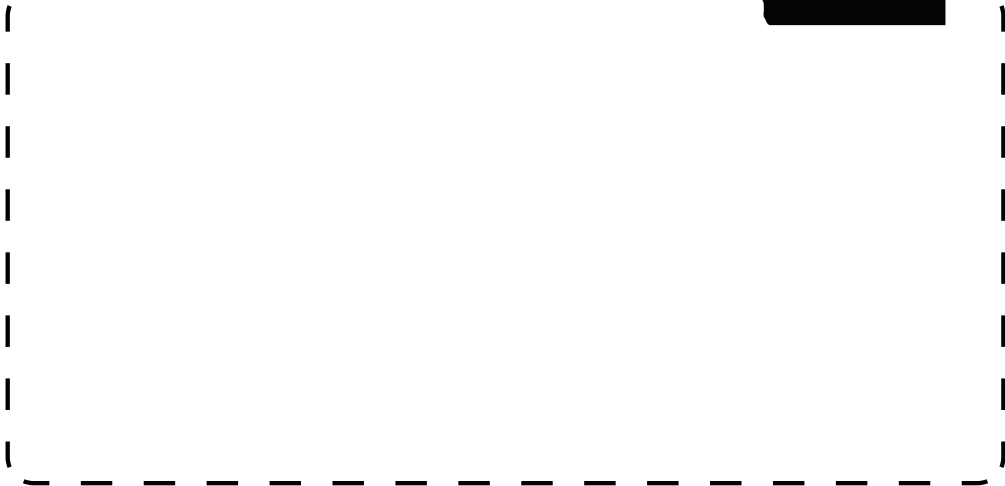
*Lluís Gomez has enjoyed a long career playing five-string banjo, as well as the mandolin and violin. He is the festival director of Al Ras and Barcelona Bluegrass Camp. Lluís lives in Spain. Learn more about Lluís Gomez at [lluísomez.com](http://lluísomez.com).*

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



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# Oregon Bluegrass Association



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## Oregon Bluegrass Association

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Portland, Oregon 97207  
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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.

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