



Bluegrassin'

Volume 8, Issue 5

September-October 2006

The Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association is a non-profit association dedicated to promoting preserving and sharing our love of bluegrass music in a spirit of family and friendship.

Inside this issue:

Bluegrass Calendar . . .page 1

Recurring Shows . . . page 1 and Jams

Prez's Notes . . . page 2

Fiddle teacher wanted. . page 2

Kids in Bluegrass report...page 3

Contact info for more kids in Bluegrass... page 3

Report from Darrington Bluegrass festival... page 4

Hughes Creek campout photos... page 5

CD Review: Leftover Biscuits "Still Coolin'"...6

Book Review: "A Good Natured Riot: The Birth of the Grand Ole Oprt"....page 6

Fiddlin' Around...page 7

Report from British Columbia Bluegrass Festival...page 8

A poem... page 9



Bluegrass Calendar

- ♦ **September 1 – Flat Mountain Girls** – Top Hat, Missoula. Fabulous all-girl string band from Portland makes their Montana debut.
- ♦ **September 2 – Flat Mountain Girls** – Filling Station, Bozeman.
- ♦ **September 3 – Yellowstone Music Festival** – Gardiner, Montana. Featuring Trampled by Turtles, Flat Mountain Girls, Kelly Joe Phelps, Aaron Parrett and the State Champions, John Floridis, The Bridger Creek Boys, and Taarka.
- ♦ **September 8, 9, 10 - Gibbonsville Campout** – Gibbonsville, Idaho. 30 Miles North of Salmon, Idaho at the Broken Arrow Restaurant and Campground. For more information, contact Gary Moore (208)865-2100 or Arlene Wolf (208)756-2766.
- ♦ **September 15, 16, 17 – Soap Lake Bluegrass Festival** – Soap Lake, Washington. Featuring Round House, The Ohop Valley Boys, Bryant Creek, Blue Mountain Bluegrass, Runaway Train, and Looking Glass.
- ♦ **September 16 – River City Rhythm & Roots Festival** – Missoula. Featuring The John Cowan Band, Martha Scanlan, and Broken Valley Roadshow.
- ♦ **September 21 – Guy Clark** – University of Montana, Missoula.
- ♦ **September 22 – Jackstraw** – The Loft, Missoula. Instrumental wizardry and gritty original material are just some of the great things about this Portland-based bluegrass band.
- ♦ **September 23 – Jackstraw** – Flanagan's Central Station, Whitefish.
- ♦ **September 29 – October 1 – Trumble Creek Campout** – Columbia Falls. 4260 Trumble Creek Road. For more information, contact Mary-Jane (406) 892-3197.
- ♦ **October 13 – Broken Valley Roadshow** – Union Club, Missoula. CD Release Party for their new studio album entitled "Disgrace and Celebration."

Recurring Shows and Jams

- ♦ MISSOULA– Tuesday s ,Top Hat(134 W. Front St) - Bluegrass jam. 7pm.
- ♦ MISSOULA– Tuesdays, Top Hat – Pinegrass plays around 10pm.
- ♦ KALISPELL – Saturdays, Pizza Hut – Bluegrass jam from 8-11pm. Contact Steve: 257-1597
- ♦ GREAT FALLS – 1st and 3rd Thursdays, Bert & Ernie's(300 1st Ave South) 7pm. Call 453-8003 for info.
- ♦ MISSOULA – Tuesdays, Wheat Montana – Moozoola Opry 6PM till 8PM the Cuzin Ray band plays. Admission is free we just ask that you buy a sandwich or soup from the fine folks at Wheat Montana as you sit back and enjoy an evening of music.
- ♦ HAMILTON – Saturdays, Charlos Heights Clubhouse – Bluegrass jam.
- ♦ CHINOOK– first and third Tuesdays, Past Time Bar -- Bluegrass, Old Time, and Old Country

President's Notes

It has been busy on the bluegrass scene this summer. Lots of festivals to enjoy, good bluegrass campouts and some great shows. And, summer is not over.

For those of you who could not attend Hamilton you missed a good festival. Mark Dickerson and crew brought in some really good bands. After years of heading up the festival, Mark decided to step down as director. We all owe Mark a big thanks for all the work he has done over the years putting this festival together. Perry Vose is stepping up to take over as director. Perry really needs help in pulling everything together so we should all consider volunteering some time.

The Hamilton festival is always an important event for the MRBA. We have a table at the festival for publicizing the MRBA. This year we had 13 people join the association and 12 people renew their membership. Thanks to the work of Phyllis Erck and Curtis Rathburn we also sold over \$500 worth of MRBA merchandise. Also, thanks to all the

volunteers who spent time at the table helping out.

The MRBA campout at Hughes Creek was a treat. We had some really good jams, good weather and great food. Although we didn't have a big crowd, the ones who were there had a great time. Some photos are included later in this issue.

On Monday, August 14th, the MRBA and the Missoula Foklore Society sponsored a show by the Wilders in Missoula. This was my first time seeing this band and I was impressed. The Wilders' music is old-time country, honky tonk and fiddle tunes with an occasional bluegrass number. They are energetic with a crowd pleasing stage presence. If you have the chance, take in one of their shows. I've noticed their names on lots of festival venues and they have a busy concert schedule – all evidence of their popularity.

Looking down the road, I have started working on our annual meeting. The tentative date is Saturday, December 2nd. We haven't settled on a location yet. I ask that you put the date on your calendar and make plans to attend. This meeting is important to the health of the MRBA

and membership participation is critical. It is an opportunity for a thorough review of the association's activities and to chart a course for the future. It is also the opportunity to elect officers to guide the association. I have decided not to run for president again. Every organization needs new ideas and new energy periodically and the time has come for a new president. Pam has also decided not to continue as the secretary/treasurer. She has been in that position for four years and also believes it is time for a change. We both look forward to continue being involved in the association but in different roles. All of the officer and director positions will be up for election. I ask that you consider serving in one of these positions.

We are also looking for a location to hold the monthly jams this winter. The facility needs space to hold two separate jam circles. It would be best if we can find a place somewhere between Missoula and Hamilton. Send me an email, bgesary@msn.com, or give me call, 777-7028, if you know of a location that might work.

-Ben

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association

333 Pine Hollow Road, Stevensville, MT 59870
(406) 777-7028

Website: www.mtbluegrass.com

email: mrba@mtbluegrass.com

President – Ben Essary (406) 777-7028

Vice President – Mike Conroy (406) 821-3777

bgesary@msn.com

tariconroy@webtv.net

Secretary/Treasurer – Pam Essary (406) 777-7028 pamessary@msn.com

Board Members – Phyllis Erck, Curtis Rathburn, Tari Conroy, Caroline Keys

Newsletter Editor – Caroline Keys, jymchaak@yahoo.com

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Full Page – \$25.00, 1/2 Page – \$15.00, 1/4 Page – \$10.00 Classified – \$5.00

Kids In Bluegrass at the Bitterroot Valley Bluegrass Festival

By Arlene Wolf

It was a wonderful Saturday afternoon when young musicians took the stage at the Hamilton Bluegrass Festival. We had returning musicians, and some new faces, too. A total of eight young people graced the stage with their talents. The young musicians were supported on stage by Sue Richards, Fred Frank and Raynae Redman.

Amanda Zito from Corvallis played her fiddle for us a second year in a row, and was proud to get her second button from "Kids in Bluegrass". I also heard thru the grapevine that she is an artist! So is that true, Amanda? Another new face was fiddler Courtney Flaten from Lacey, Washington. She was on vacation, and her folks said if she got on stage and played, she's get to ride horseback. Sounds like a win-win situation to me!

Raynae Redman returned with her grandkids and their friends to treat us to the "Bluegrass Stompers". Cortney, Tori and Tanner Christensen from Chubbuck, Idaho, joined their grandmother with friends Brandy Lynde from Missoula and Laramie Roberts

from Livingston. The kids had a great time performing, and the crowd loved their talents. Fiddler Jesse Brown from Florence joined the Stompers, and also played also on his own. He is a young man full of passion for the instrument, and his trills and sweet sounds uplifted everyone around him.

The MRBA supported the kids by giving each on them a \$5 certificate that they used at the festival, a certificate and a button, and a year's membership to the association which includes a subscription to the MRBA newsletter. Remember these names - - hopefully these young folks will be around for us to hear them again. I look forward to it!

Hey all you kids in bluegrass, get in touch with these other young pickers across the country and you'll jam wherever you go!

The Wright Sisters from Indiana
www.wrightsisersbluegrass.com

Jonathan Estep from Kentucky
www.revivalridge.com

The Graves Family from West Virginia
www.gravesfamily.net

The Doerfel Family from New York
www.doerfulfamily.com

Membership Application MONTANA ROCKIES BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

333 Pine Hollow Road, Stevensville, MT 59870

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone No. _____

E-mail _____ Individual (\$10.00) ____ Family (\$15.00) ____

MRBA Board Members Take in a Mighty Fine Festival

By Curtis Rathburn

Phyllis and I make a yearly trip to Seattle, right about the same time the Red Sox come to play the Mariners, don'tcha know. Phyllis has a sister there and we always have a good time. This year, Paisley told us of a festival up north of Seattle that we might enjoy. So we drove the hour and a half up to Darrington, WA, to get a site and check it out. We were greeted by a breathtaking view of what is called White Horse Mountain in the Cascades.

We got our tickets and wristbands and found a very nice shady spot to camp. Shady spots abound - which was nice since it was 110 degrees that weekend.

They also have a very nice, cool stream running behind the stage where we went several times with the dog. Oh yeah, dogs ARE allowed - a huge plus.

By our campsite was Missoula's own Greg Boyd, selling his many fine wares and becoming a kind of cultural center for pickers. We also bumped into our fine MRBA cohorts, Fred and Emily Frank, who were on the bill, with New Southfork. We had a great time pickin' with them 'till round-about 1:30 in the A.M.

So the views, the stream, the shady

spots, the reasonable admittance fee, the friends you bump into, lets see.....OH YEAH!!! The music!!!!

Doyle Lawson was the headliner. He's one of my favorites, with his fusing of Southern Gospel and Bluegrass. We really enjoyed him and got to "shake and howdy" with him after the set. Terry Baucomb plays with him now. You may know him as the "Boone Creek" banjo player.

The Bluegrass Cardinals displayed

why they were one of the first bluegrass acts to actually make money.

But Cheryholmes blew us away. It is rare I am impressed this much with a band, but they sure won me over. Every one of those kids has mastered their

instrument, the vocals are some of the best you will ever hear and they are bubbling over with personality. I sure hope they can come back this way and I sincerely hope MRBA can have something to do with it.

One more idea that I'd like to steal from them, they give you a bumper sticker, with the dates from NEXT YEAR'S show. So you drive around all year advertising it.

Darrington, WA, is about 10 hours from Missoula, but Phyllis and I are planning next year's trip.



The Darrington, Washington Bluegrass Festival

HUGHES CREEK CAMPOUT

Here are some photos of the annual campout. The weather was tolerable, the food was good, the music great and the fellowship was outstanding. Here are some photos.



Saturday evening jam. Bob, the guy on bass, showed up Saturday afternoon and said he played bass in a Norwegian music band in Minnesota. We invited him back to jam later. He showed up for supper. When time to jam came around he fit right in – ya, you betcha!



Saturday supper line. Why are the skinny guys always first?



Emily & Fred



There was also time for other activities. Tucker, Curtis and Phyllis taking an ATV spin.



Sunday morning



Tari – do you think she's enjoying what she's doing?



Warning – Banjo Pickers
Tune it or die!!!!



Elora

So, I put my ring finger right there, then I put my middle finger . . .

Gary, Bob and Jeff



CD Review: Leftover Biscuits

By Caroline Keys

With their third release, "Still Cookin,'" Montana's own Leftover Biscuits branch out from the confines of the bluegrass genre and lay down a playful set of songs that we all know and love... but have never heard quite like this.

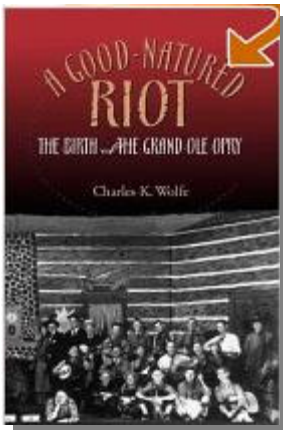
For instance, in the hands of Leftover Biscuits, the song "Flowers on the Wall," written by Lewis Dewitt (you know, the one with the chorus that goes "smokin' cigarettes and watching Captain KANG Kangaroo / now don't tell me I've nuthin' to do"), takes on a much more sincere timbre than the original familiar and goofy recording.

Each instrumentalist comes across strong, and no one band member out-shines another. The CD features enthusiastic harmony singing by Jim Sticka (guitar), Rudy Urban (banjo), Chad Fadely (mandolin), and Andrea Urban. The band's cover of John Lowell's "Fergus County Jail" alone is worth the \$15 that the CD costs. These folks will make you wonder if vocal delivery this honest and authentic is heard outside our glorious state of Montana—and will certainly leave you with a smile on your face.



Track Listing:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Frankie and Johnny | 5. If I Needed You | 10. Standin' on a Rock |
| 2. Fergus County Jail | 6. Fire on the Mountain | 11. Walk on Boy |
| 3. Panama Red | 7. Let's Talk Dirty in Hawaiian | 12. Flowers on the Wall |
| 4. Friend of the Devil | 8. Erase the Miles | 13. Can't Take it With You... |
| | 9. Girl at the Crossroads Bar | 14. (secret hidden bonus track) |



A Good Natured Riot: The Birth of the Grand Ole Opry

By Charles K. Wolfe

Book review by Caroline Keys

While researching Uncle Dave Macon for the New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, I came across a fantastic book that tells the incredible story of the enterprising business men from the insurance industry who propelled amateur musicians to stardom by having them perform on WSM

(“We Shield Millions”)’s radio show.

The author, Charles Wolfe, conducted 25 years of interviews of musicians and their descendants. He uses stories of the Opry stars, descriptions of their music, and details about the motives of the men who founded the show to regale the first 15 years of the Grand Ole Opry’s history.

Definitely a must-read for anyone interested in the history of Country Music.



The Flat Mountain Girls from Portland, make their Montana debut in September. See the Bluegrass Calendar for dates!!!

Montana bluegrassers Nate Biehl and Caroline Keys hit the Bluewaters Bluegrass Festival in Medical Lake, Washington where they got a chance to saw away at "Walkalong John."



Just Fiddlin' Around!!!!



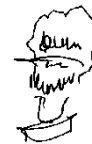
Betse Ellis of The Wilders gives a fiddle lesson to Rachael Wogsland, Nate Biehl, and Caroline Keys

Rough Draft of "Rocky Top"

~~WISH I WAS ON OLD SMOKEY TOP~~
~~WISH I WAS ON OLD HILLY TOP~~
~~WISH I WAS ON OLD MOUNTAIN TOP~~
~~WISH I WAS ON OLD~~
~~WISH I WAS ON OLD FROGGY TOP~~
 WISH I WAS ON OLD ROCKY TOP
 OUT IN THE TENNESSEE HILLS.

GET
 FELIX'S
 SHIRTS FROM
 THE CLEANERS

1 SACK OF FLOUR
 1 LB. BACON
 MILK OF MAGNESIA



TAKE
 BUICK IN
 NEEDS MASTER
 CYLINDER!

Just Home from the British Columbia Bluegrass Workshop (where he spent a week worth of lessons with mando-maniac Mike Compton), Brian Herbel has good things to say about our neighbors to the North.

If you have never been to a bluegrass event in Canada you should go. Soon. Our good neighbors to the North are hospitable and kind in every way and there is a closet musician in nearly ever corner you can find.

Their festivals are largely orientated towards pickers and the lineups are a welcome array of regional and national bands.

From Whitehorse in the Yukon to the Nova Scotia coast bluegrass and oldtime are alive and well in Canada.

But the best thing that happens while being immersed in the bluegrass scene to the North is the difference, regionally and locally in the tunes that get called most often.

We have the same differences between Montana, Washington, Tennessee, West Virginia, and the like. There are sets of tunes that tend to pop up on a regular basis, largely based on the local flavor. Old time fiddlers would often have tunes that belonged to their families and they were the only ones that played them. Banjo tunings were different by family, you could hear Soldier's Joy in one area and go 50 miles away its a tad different.

The same can be said in Canada. Fred Eaglesmith tunes, John Prine, French Canadian fiddle tunes from their own ranks are

fantasic in the bluegrass veins (there is also an amazing diversity of luthiers, I might add).

Also, their takes on Jimmy Martin, Bill Monroe, Hazel Dickens, The Louvin Brothers, the standards, they all have a touch of the maple leaf to them, in the best way.

Its refreshing culturally, musically, and their beer is pretty good too.

Next time you're looking for a good musical road trip, go to Vancouver or Victoria, or Nelson, or Calgary. If you time it right, you're in for the type of good time that only Canadians can give you.

Employ the power of your local internet provider or any Canadian sympathizers to get the skinny on good bands, festivals and

workshops.

While this testament is vague and non specific, let's just say that you can't go wrong with Canadian bluegrass, its a perfect twist on the original recipe.

And they

have their own kind of bacon.



List of newly released local albums that Montana bluegrassers should own:

1. New South Fork (Idaho Falls, Idaho) – “Used”

available at www.newsouthfork.com

2. Leftover Biscuits (Flathead Valley) - “Still Cookin’”

available at www.leftoverbiscuits.com

3. Broken Valley Roadshow (Missoula) - “Disgrace and Celebration”

available at www.brokenvalley.com

4. RichieReinholdt (Missoula) - “Lies of Love”

available at www.richiereinholdt.com

Tent Life – So It's Over*By Sharon A. Sandgren*

It's been 20 years to festivals I've went
And found it rewarding to sleep in a tent
Mostly, it's been cool and without many fears,
Well, it has been a little hard on my rear.
I have tented on land as flat as a coin
And ground so steep that it hurts every bone.

I've mer face-to face with every tiny critter
Of course, there's the birds, loving those early hours to twitter.
I have bathed outdoors for all the world to see,
And undressed in a porta potty that was almost the death of me.

I've learned I can keep a secret
Of the things I have heard
In the tents situated next to me
All I can say...is Good Lord!

Physical challenge, an obvious part of tent life
Character building is a positive outcome of it's stress and strife.

There are other things you find out...like who your real friends are,
they understand why you sometimes have to sleep in your car.
They're there when you drive in after dark, to help you set up your tent, without a nasty remark.
They don't make fun when out comes the Indian rugs,
The little plastic table, and matching tiger mugs, and the animal fur throws, that go on the aluminum cot
Along with leopard pillow cases of course, these can't be forgot.

After much thought and maybe a hair of prayer,
I decided to give up the tent this year.
It's in a garage sale pile, okay, I felt a couple of tears.
But they didn't last long, since I bought the new wheels,
It was such a bargain; I couldn't pass up the deal.
Yes, I will be off the ground wherever I am
All snug and warm in that Town&Country Van
But sad to say, I won't hear a thing, not a snore, a grunt, a swear or that other zing,
From those parked by me in their big aluminum can-like thing.

Editor's Note:

It was a great festival season in Montana and surrounding areas this summer! When I come home from the bluegrass world, it gives me great pleasure to put the MRBA newsletter together. I thank everyone who contributed stories and photos to "Bluegrassin'" this time around. Please please please, don't hesitate to send me your bluegrass thoughts and photos at any time!!! My email address is caroline@brokenvalley.com and I welcome everyone's input!





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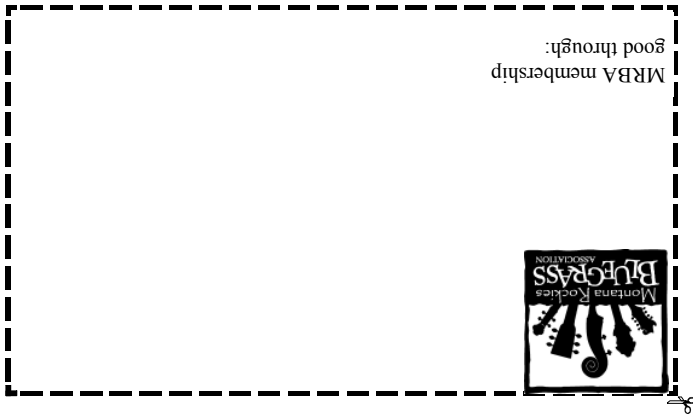
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