



Bluegrassin'

Volume 11, Issue 3

May-June 2009

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.

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Upcoming Bluegrass Events

May 8-10—Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association Spring Jam, Lewis-Clark Resort, Kamiah, ID. Visit www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org for more info. For camping/cabin reservations call 208-935-2556. Mention you are coming for the jam to get special rates.

May 22-25—Conroy's Memorial Day Campout, Little West Fork Campground. See more information later in this issue.

May 31-June 7—Pasture Pickin', 5502 Pipe Creek Road, Libby, MT. For more information contact Dale or Dorothy Berg, 406-293-6608. (Note change in date. Date listed in the previous MRBA newsletter was in error)

June 12-14—Sacajawea Bluegrass Festival and Dutch Oven Cook off, Pasco, WA. For more information visit www.sacajaweabluegrass.org or contact Reade Obern at 509-492-1555

July 18—Railroad days in Alberton will include bluegrass in the park. Music from 4 pm until ????.

June 19-21—Jack Piippo is hosting the Haven Campout at Seeley Lake, MT. More information later in this issue.

June 26-28—Garrison Junction Campout. More information later in this issue.

July 10-12—National Folk Festival, Butte, MT. First presented in 1934, the National is the oldest multicultural festival in the nation. Visit www.nationalfolkfestival.com or call 406-497-6464 for more information.

July 11—Bluegrass Luau Party, Dallas Olson's house. More information later in this issue.

July 17-19—Kootenai River Bluegrass Festival, Troy, MT. See the ad later in this issue.

July 17-19—Darrington Bluegrass Festival. For more information visit www.glacierviewe.net/bluegrass or call Diana Morgan at 360-436-1179.

July 24-26—Hardtimes Bluegrass Festival, 10 miles south of Hamilton off Highway 93. See the ad later in this issue.

August 7-9—MRBA Campout, Forrest Flats, Clinton, MT. More information in upcoming issue.

Recurring Show and Jams

- ◆ MISSOULA—Tuesdays, Top Hat Jam 7pm, Pinegrass plays at 9pm.
- ◆ MISSOULA – Tuesdays, Wheat Montana – Moozoola Opry 6pm 'til 8pm the Black Mountain Boys play. Admission is free, the band asks that you buy a sandwich or soup from the fine folks at Wheat Montana as you sit back and enjoy an evening of music.
- ◆ GREAT FALLS – 1st and 3rd Thursdays, Bert & Ernie's 300 1st Ave South) 7pm. Call 453-8003 for info.
- ◆ NORRIS HOT SPRINGS – Sunday evenings 7-10pm, Thermalgrass plays, The band includes Tom Murphy, Quentin King, and Ian Fleming

President's Corner

By Dallas Olson

Well the 10th annual MRBA festival is behind us and it was a great success. We had a good turnout despite the great weather and the crowd stayed until the last band played their last song. As you all know the festival has two main purposes. The first is to get together and enjoy some great bluegrass music. The other is to raise money to support the activities of the association. We were very successful on both counts.

The bands who played throughout the day were great. The youngsters kicked off the festival and what a job they did. Some were polished performers and others were just getting started but they all played with enthusiasm. Throughout the day, we were also able to enjoy several bluegrass styles and heard some old standards, some new songs and quite a few written by the performers themselves. I heard some comments that this festival was one the best so far.

Total receipts were \$2436 and that was \$1087 from admission fees, \$201 from merchandise sales, \$718 from food, and \$345 from membership renewals. We had 7 new members sign up as well. The cost of food was about \$300 so we made about \$400 profit on the food. Thanks to all who donated food items for sale.

There are some people I want to thank for their efforts in making the festival a great success. First, I want to thank all the musicians who played at the festival without any compensation. Some travelled long distances at considerable expense to volunteer their talents, The festival would not be possible without their effort.

There are some other people I and the board of directors want to thank by name. First is Mike and Tari Conroy who rounded up all musicians and did a hundred other things to make the festival happen. John and Lois Maliekie's work started long before festival day. Their efforts were key to organizing the "business" end of things, getting the food ready and they worked tirelessly the day of the festival. Lela Schaffer, who is in charge of the merchandise, spent a lot of time getting together shirts, caps, bumper stickers and other items which promote the MRBA. She also worked tirelessly at the merchandise table on festival day. Raynae Redman organized the Kids in Bluegrass set. Forrest Clark, Mary Jane Cunningham, Roger Underwood and Kate McMahon worked the admissions and membership table throughout the day. Faun Treichel, John Redman and Mary Irwin worked in the kitchen. I'm sure there are other members who helped out but I failed to get their names. Thanks to them also. We even got great help from the folks in the audience who stacked all the chairs when the festival ended.

However, we could have used more volunteers in the kitchen and at the other tables. According to the old saying many hands make light work.

We have a lot of bluegrass events coming up on the calendar so I hope to see you at one down the road.

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association

PO Box 1306, Missoula, MT 59806

(406) 549-2444

Website: www.mtbluegrass.com email: mrba@mtbluegrass.com**President** – Dallas Olson **Vice President** – Mike Conroy**Secretary/Treasurer** – Lois Maliekie, (406) 549-2444**Board Members**—Tari Conroy, Ben Essary, Brian Herbel, Ted Lowe**Merchandise Manager**—Lela Schaffer (406) 207-6564**Newsletter Editor**—Ben Essary (406) 777-7028**MRBA Webmaster**—Phyllis Erck mrba@mtbluegrass.com

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Got Something to sell? Advertise in *Bluegrassin'*!

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

Bill Monroe Commemorative Stamp

(Ed. Note: the following information came from a letter from Katy Daley, WAMU's Bluegrass Country, to Bluegrass Unlimited. WAMU is the public radio station in Washington, DC)

The U.S. Postal Service Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee is currently considering Bill Monroe as a subject for a commemorative stamp. No date for the final decision has been given but now is the time for the bluegrass community to work together and ask the U.S. Postal Service to honor Bill Monroe and bluegrass music.

WAMU's *Bluegrass Country* will host a page on their website (www.bluegrasscountry.org) with a petition and a sample letter that can be downloaded for this campaign. Here's what bluegrass professionals, organizations, musicians and individual fans can do to help: 1. download the petition and take it to the next jam session, concert or festival you attend and get as many signatures as you can. 2. write a letter of support. Mail your petition or letter to: Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, c/o Mr. Terrance W. McCaffery, Manager of Stamp Development, U.S. Postal Service, 1735 N. Lynn St., #5013, Arlington, VA 22209

HELP RAISE MONEY FOR THE MRBA

We have our newsletter printed at Staples and they are giving a generous credit of \$3.00 for each used printer ink cartridge turned in. They will accept 20 per month (any brand) from the club so if you have any used empty ink cartridges please get them to Lois and John Malikie so they can turn them in for credit for the club.



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In the early days of the Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs band Curly Seckler was hired to sing tenor and play mandolin. Flatt and Scruggs were seeking to differentiate their "sound" from Bill Monroe and rarely permitted a break on the mandolin. The story goes that awhile after Curly joined he asked Lester what he thought of his mandolin playing. Lester thought for a few moments and said "well Curly I sure like how you hold it."

Membership Application MONTANA ROCKIES BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION PO Box 1306, Missoula, MT 59806

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone No. _____

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

Forrest Clark**By Mike Conroy**

I first met Forrest about 1970 when I started going to local fiddle jams. We've been good friends ever since. Forrest just feels that old time mountain style bluegrass down to his toes. He was kind enough to do us a little write-up.

I was born about a half-a-mile across the road from Pompey's Pillar, which is about half a mile from my Grandfather's place. He had been an old time banjo picker and he played the fiddle, but by the time I came along, he had given up both- due to arthritis.

We then moved to Eastern Montana, and when I was about 8 or 9, my father traded a old set of car horns for an old guitar. Of course with no musicians around, and no music store within 30 miles, the guitar with busted strings sat in the closet for many years.

In about 1946, we moved to Livingston where I met the Counts family. Gool and Henry had grown up with the Stanley Brothers. *(note-the Counts actually attended the same one room school house with Carter and Ralph Stanley in the Clinch Mountains of Virginia. MC)* They are both now members of the MRBA. Then one day my sister gave me an old 45 record with Jim and Jesse on it. I guess that gave me a kick start. I bought my first banjo while living in Butte about 1962. So after that every time I would get a chance I would jam at Gool's place.

In about 1968 we moved to Missoula. At about that time the Bluegrass people would jam at the Montana Fiddlers jam, generally it would be off to the side.

About 1970 I met Dale Berg at the Pasture Picking jam in Libby, and also Fred and Alice McFalls who lived in Libby. Fred and Alice were from North Carolina, via Marysville, WA. They also started the festival at Darrington, WA. Fred played all instruments, one of which was a 1925 ball-bearing Gibson Mastertone banjo. I might mention that our Mike Conroy is now the proud owner of that banjo.

After I met Dale and Fred I could see that my old Kay banjo was not going to do it, and just learning I could not afford one of those, so I built one. It still plays good after 30 some years. In 2002 I built the one I now play.

About four years ago, as I had never sang, I thought maybe I should give it a go and, to date, they haven't told me to shut up. Although some have said some of my songs are sick, pathetic and morbid, but they are about life.

Mountain style bluegrass most generally has a moral. It is repentance for an ill deed, either murder, leaving parents all alone, placing them in a home for the old or songs of Mother and of home. These are the songs that I hope to keep doing. Keep pickin'. Forrest Clark



UPCOMING BLUEGRASS EVENTS

Here is some more information on four upcoming bluegrass events.

Conroy's Memorial Day Campout—May 22-25 Conroy's annual Memorial Weekend Campout will be held at the Little West Fork Campground. It'll be just like past years, heated wall tents, pot luck suppers at six in the evenings and a biscuit and gravy breakfast Monday morning at 10:00 am, before everyone has to leave. The campground is approximately 23 miles south of Darby. Heading south from Darby, turn right on to the West Fork Highway about 4 miles from town. Continue on the West Fork to just past the 14 mile marker and turn right onto the Nez Perce Rd., stay on this road for 4 miles. At the end of the black top the campground will be on the right. Signs will be along the way. All bluegrass lovers welcome! For more information call Mike or Tari 821-3777 or email tariconroy@webtv.net. Ya'll come!

Haven Campout—June 19-21 Jack and Donna Piippo will host the Haven Bluegrass Jam and Campout on the Clearwater River at Seely Lake, MT. Location: 1 mile north on Hwy 83 from entrance to Double Arrow Resort. Take Wagon Wheel Rd (West) off Hwy 83 (road. is approx. 2 miles South of Seeley Lake, before you get to the store) ½ mile West, then turn right (north) on West Wagon Wheel Way (longest road name on Double Arrow subdivision) (second road to right from hwy) Go to the end of the road, look for the number "242", go to the number and travel between the two posts (west again) Cross the Railroad Car Bridge and you are there. Proceed to the house and pavilion on the loop to the right. Contact name and number: Jack and Donna Piippo 677-3147. Email: piippo@blackfoot.net Plenty of room for campers, motor homes, and tents. Pavilion with tables, chairs, cooking facilities (Bar-be-que, cooking stoves, grill/ griddle, Dutch oven cooking) (all the cooking utensils you may need) (bring your food or you can buy it at the store one mile from site) Bathrooms with showers (2). Pavilion utensil washing facility. Anyone who is interested is invited to play at the farmer's market, 10-2 PM.

Garrison Junction Campout—June 26-28- Bill sez "the cook may be gone but the party's still on." Garrison jam at the Riverfront Campground, Garrison Junction . Call 406-846-2282 or 800-255-1318 for campground reservations. Pot luck on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Heated wall tents for jamming. Call Bill Anderson at 406-498-6621 for more info.

Bluegrass Luau Party—July 11 Dallas Olson will host a bluegrass luau party at her home, 2596 Eastside Highway, Stevensville, MT from 2 pm until midnight. Dress in your best Hawaiian outfit (you may see Mike Conroy in a grass skirt). Lots of jamming' and good food. Pot luck dinner at 6pm. Bring a dish to share.

Festival Photos

Here are photos of all the groups who played at the festival in the order they appeared.



Kids in Bluegrass



Ken Benson and Friends



Pine Holler



Salmon Valley Stringband



Black Mountain Boys



Gravelly Mountain



Wise River Merchantile



Uncle Bacca Juice



The Accoustials



Ramblin' Rose



Will Williams & Gravel Road



Chester Rudyard & Mullan Road



Fred & Emily Frank



BVDs



Mike & Tari Conroy & Friends



Pinegrass



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Spring Thaw



Shook Mountain Productions, LLC (Mike & Tari Conroy) Present:

HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

July 24-25-26, 2009

Featuring:

Gravelly Mtn. from Alberton, MT

Three Flats & A Spare from Boise, ID

Fred & Emily Frank from Idaho Falls, ID

Darby Sireens reunion tour

Spring Thaw from Missoula, MT

Bill & Verna Molenda from Darby, MT

Bosco Land & Stone Mountain Bluegrass from Casper, WY

Blue to the Bone from Victor, MT

Will Williams and Gravel Road from Grangeville, ID

JD Webb & the Downstate Ramblers from Baker, OR

Mike & Tari Conroy from Conner, MT

Special Featured Individuals that are Pioneers in Northwest Bluegrass

Chuck & Jeanne Burruss, Corvallis, MT

Fiddlin' Jimmy Widner, Darby, MT

Forrest Clark, Clinton, MT

Dale Berg, Libby, Mt

Ed Dobson, Pollock, ID

**Bring
Your
Lawn
Chairs**

**Bluegrass
Gospel
Sunday
Morning**

Location: 10 miles South of Hamilton, mile marker 37, The Thomas Ranch on Forest Hill Road

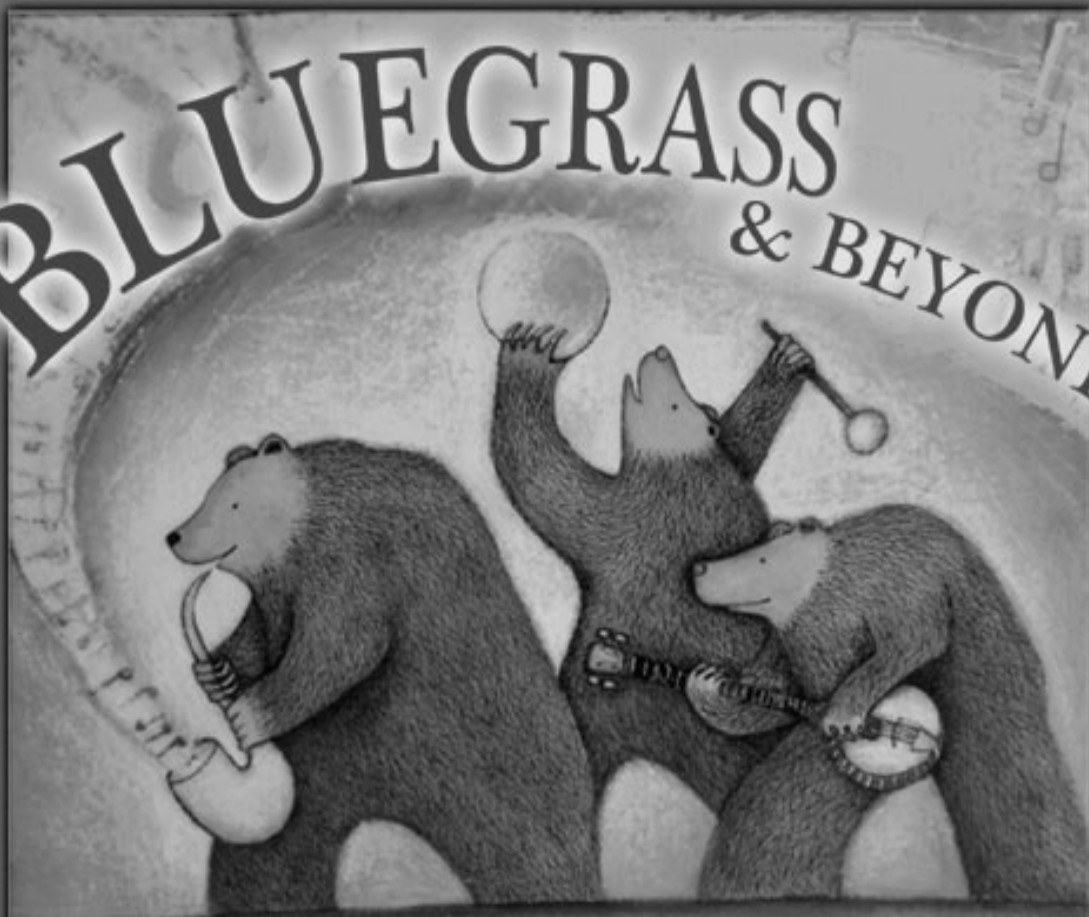
Admission: Adults-\$10.00 for weekend, Children under 12- \$5.00 for weekend

Dry Camping- \$10.00 for weekend

For more information call 1-406-821-3777 or email tariconroy@webtv.net

KOOTENAI RIVER

BLUEGRASS & BEYOND



John Reischman and the Jaybirds

Jackstraw

Viper Central

Loose Digits

Mighty Squirrel

Big Red Barn

Bryan Bowers

Mike and Tari Conroy and Friends

Wise River Mercantile

Ray and Shirley Jacobs

JULY 17-19 ROOSEVELT PARK

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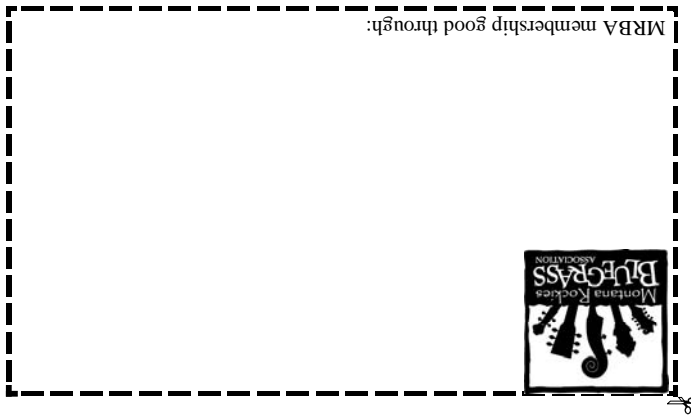
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ATTENTION:

We have set up the address label on your newsletter to be your membership card, please clip it out and use it for proof of your membership to the MRBA.



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