



Bluegrassin'

Volume 16, Issue 2

March—April, 2014

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

- March 7—Trapline Band**—Symes Hotel, Hot Springs, MT 8:00 p.m.
- March 8—Ruby's Winter Jam Series**, Open Jam and potluck. Pickin' and grinnin' starts at 2:00 pm. Potluck at 5:30 followed by more pickin' and grinnin'.
- March 18—Pinegrass**. Top Hat in Missoula. 8:00 pm
- March 24—Acousticals**. Redbird in Missoula. 7:00 pm
- March 29— John Jorgeson Bluegrass Band**. Bozeman. www.theellentheater.com
- March 29— Leftover Biscuits**. Belton Chalet. 7:00 pm
- April 1— Pinegrass with Richie Rienholdt**, Top Hat in Missoula, 8:00 p.m.
- April 3— Acousticals**, Top Hat in Missoula, 6:00 pm
- April 7—Kathy Kallick Band**, Ruby's Inn, Missoula, MT
- April 9—Kathy Kallick Band**, Hilton Garden Inn, Great Falls, MT
- April 10—Kathy Kallick Band**, Hampton Inn, Billings, MT
(See www.rubyjeweljamboree.com for details)
- April 10—Porter Creek**, Top Hat in Missoula,
- April 11—12—Yonder Mountain String Band**, Missoula, www.thewilma.com
- April 11—New South Fork**, Top Hat in Missoula, 6:00 pm
- April 12—MRBA Spring Festival**— Stevensville, Lone Rock School, Details pg. 4 & 5

Recurring Shows and Jams

- ◆ **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 enjoy an evening of music.
- ◆ **Missoula** - Pickin Circle. Tangled Tones Studio. 2005 South Ave., West. - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays—6:00 pm to 9:00 pm . (406-396-3352)
- ◆ **Missoula**—Open Jam. Top Hat. Tuesdays. 7:00 pm
- ◆ **Livingston** - Open Jam. Pine Creek Café. Thursday—8:30—10:30 pm. www.pinecreeklodgemontana.com (406)222-3628

Send corrections or addition to: the_kate@appcom.net

Pete Seeger Tribute

Noted folk artist, and banjo player, Pete Seeger died in January. Pete Seeger was heard saying that if he had done nothing more than write his slim book *How to Play the 5-String Banjo*, his life's work would have been complete. The first printing in 1948, of 100 copies, mimeographed by the author, took three-years to sell out. Seeger mimeographed another 500 copies of an updated 2nd Edition. The book gained popularity during the folk revival movement and is still being published by Homespun Music today. It is available from Amazon. Following is an excerpt from the book.

“It is easy to get bored with a song if you just plunk it out, chord after chord. If you try working out such things as counter-melodies, and bass runs, however, you’ll find it starts to sparkle. And the banjo is so wonderfully adapted to sparking—a commonplace melody becomes quite subtle when surrounded with many other notes. Then it becomes like trying to pick out a constellation from all the other glittering stars in the sky.”

“The people I learned banjo from were mostly old farmers, miners, or working people of one trade or another, who had played the instrument during their courting days, and later kept it hanging on the wall to pass away the time of an evening. Often they knew only a few tunes apiece, and maybe only one method of strumming, which they had picked up from their father, or a neighbor. Yet what they knew, they knew well, and the simple, rippling rhythm of their banjo had more art in it than many a hectic performance piece by a professional virtuoso.

What I am saying is, that it is better to know a few things well than attempt something flashy which sounds sloppy or grating.”

Pete Seeger, How to Play the 5-String Banjo

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association

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Bluegrassin' is a bi-monthly publication of the **Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association**

Information printed in **Bluegrassin'** is at the discretion of the editor.

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Association**

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You can e-mail your membership form to: **mccauley_kemo@hotmail.com**

* * * **MRBA Spring Festival** * * *

Stevensville, MT - April 12, 2013

Well, we're getting geared up for another great Spring Festival, with 18 bands and whole lot of fun. The Festival will again be at the Lone Rock School, on Saturday, April 12th—2012. There will be free overnight camping at the school and the music will start at 12 noon and go non-stop til 10:25 pm. The school will be open after the Festival for jamming and Sunday morning we will have a free breakfast for campers at the school.

Verna Molenda has again offered to cook her wonderful food for the kitchen. She asks that folks that bring food for sale bring desserts. If you would like to volunteer to help Verna, call her at 821-3163.

If you would like to volunteer to help at the festival with the ticket tables or the cd or merchandise sales, please call Ben Essary at 777-7028. Or just check in that day with the organizers and they'll find a spot for you. Thanks!

Directions - (Watch for signs) Lone Rock School: 1112 Three Mile Creek, Stevensville, MT

Directions from south- (traveling North on Highway 93 from Hamilton), turn right at Stevensville turn off- drive 1 mile, turn left when entering Stevensville onto East Side Highway and continue 5 1/2 miles. Turn right on Three Mile Road.

Continue on Three Mile Road for 3 miles, school is on the left.

Directions from the North-(from Lolo) Turn left at Florence (Conoco Station) onto Eastside Highway. Continue on Eastside Highway 6 1/2 miles. Turn left onto Three Mile Road.

Continue on Three Mile Road for 3 miles, school is on the left.

2014 MRBA Bluegrass Festival

12:00—12:30 **Kids in Bluegrass**
 12:35—1:05 **Russell King & Fully Cooked**
 1:10—1:40 **The Bittergrass String Band**
 1:45—2:15 **Darby Sireens**
 2:20—2:50 **Spring Wagon**
 2:55—3:25 **Blue To The Bone**
 3:30—4:00 **Salmon Valley String Band**
 4:05—4:35 **Pinegrass**
 4:40—5:10 **Foggy Mtn. Top**
 5:15—5:45 **Accousticals**
 5:50—6:20 **PJ & Cindy with Flatgrass**
 6:25—6:55 **Mike and Tari Conroy Band**
 7:00—7:30 **New South Fork**
 7:35—8:05 **Black Mtn. Boys**
 8:10—8:40 **Gravelly Mtn Boys**
 8:45—9:15 **Heartbreak Pass**
 9:20—9:50 **Spring Thaw**
 9:55—10:25 **Phyllis Erck and the Ruby Jewel Band**
 10:30—11:00 **Elk River Ramblers**

MONTANA ROCKIES BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

SATURDAY
APRIL 12
NOON - 11
LONE ROCK
SCHOOL

1112 Three Mile
Creek

Lone Rock School is located
5.5 mile north-east of
Stevensville on East Side
Highway, then 3 miles up
Three Mile Creek.

FOOD
AVAILABLE

ADMISSION
\$5 NON MEMBERS
\$3 MRBA MEMBER
UNDER 12 FREE

FEATURED BANDS

- Kids in Bluegrass
from All Over
- Blue to the Bone
Hamilton, MT
- New South Fork
Idaho Falls, ID
- Darby Sireens
Darby, MT
- The Acousticals
Missoula, MT
- Phyllis Erck and the
Ruby Jewel Band
Missoula, MT
- Black Mountain Boys
Missoula, MT
- Pinegrass
Missoula, MT
- Salmon Valley Stringband
Salmon, ID
- PJ & Cindy with Flatgrass
Missoula, MT
- Russell King and
Fully Cooked
Dillon, MT
- Mike & Tari Conroy Band
Conner, MT
- Gravelly Mtn Boys
Alberton, MT
- Foggy Mountain Top
Grangeville, ID
- The Bittergrass String Band
Stevensville, MT
- Spring Wagon
Kalispell, MT
- Spring Thaw Band
Missoula, MT
- Heartbreak Pass
North Idaho, ID
- Elk River Ramblers
Missoula, MT

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The Difference between Bluegrass, Old Time and Celtic bands

“Old Time and Celtic songs are about whiskey, food and struggle. Bluegrass songs are about God, mother and the girl who did me wrong. If the girl isn’t dead by the third verse, it ain’t Bluegrass. If everyone dies, it’s Celtic. The Bluegrass fiddler paid \$10,000 for his fiddle at the Violin Shop in Nashville. The Celtic fiddler inherited his from his mothers 2nd cousin in County Clare. The Old Time fiddler got theirs for \$15 at a yard sale.” ~ The National Folk Festival of Australia The Music

Old Time and Celtic songs are about whiskey, food and struggle. Bluegrass songs are about God, mother and the girl who did me wrong. If the girl isn’t dead by the third verse, it ain’t Bluegrass. If everyone dies, it’s Celtic. Old Time and Celtic bands have nonsense names like “Flogging Molly”, “Fruit Jar Drinkers” and “Skillet Lickers” while Bluegrass bands have serious gender-specific name like “Bluegrass Boys”, “Clinch Mountain Boys” and “Backwoods Babes.”

The most common Old Time keys are major and minor with only 5 notes (modal). Bluegrass uses these, plus Mixolydian and Dorian modes, and a Celtic band adds Lydian and Phrygian modes. A Bluegrass band has between 1 and 3 singers who are all singing about an octave above their natural vocal range. Some Old Time and Celtic bands have no singers at all. If a Celtic band has a singer, it is usually either a bewhiskered ex-sailor, or a petite soprano. A Bluegrass band has a vocal arranger who arranges three-part harmonies. In an Old Time band, anyone who feels like it can sing or make comments during the performance. In a Celtic band, anyone who speaks during a performance gets “the look”, and songs are preceded by a call for silence and a detailed explanation of their cultural significance. Bluegrass tunes & songs last 3 minutes. Old Time and Celtic tunes & songs can be any length, and sometimes last all night.

The Instruments

Banjo

A Celtic banjo is small and quiet. An Old Time banjo is open-backed, with an old towel (probably never washed) stuffed in the back to dampen sound. A Bluegrass banjo has bell bronze mastertone tone ring and a resonator to make it louder. A Celtic banjo weighs 4 pounds, an Old Time banjo weighs 5 pounds, towel included and a Bluegrass banjo weighs 40 pounds. A Celtic banjo has only 4 strings. A Bluegrass banjo has five strings and needs 24 frets. An Old Time banjo needs no more than 5 frets, and some don’t need any. A Bluegrass banjo player has had spinal fusion surgery on all his vertebrae, and therefore stands very straight. If an Old Time banjo player stands, he slouches. A Celtic banjo player has a brace to relieve his carpal tunnel syndrome and remains seated to maintain stability while cross-picking as fast as possible after several pints. An Old Time banjo player can lose 3 right-hand fingers and 2 left-hand fingers in an industrial accident without affecting his performance. A Celtic banjo player flat picks everything. A Bluegrass banjo player puts jewelry on his fingertips to play. An Old Time banjo player puts super glue on his fingernails to strengthen them. Never shake hands with an Old Time banjo player while he’s fussing with his nails.

Fiddle

The Bluegrass fiddler paid \$10,000 for his fiddle at the Violin Shop in Nashville. The Celtic fiddler inherited his fiddle from his mothers 2nd cousin in County Clare. The Old Time fiddler got theirs for \$15 at a yard sale. Celtic and Bluegrass fiddles are tuned GDAE. An Old Time fiddle can be in a hundred different tunings. Old Time fiddlers seldom use more than two fingers of their left hand, and use tunings that maximize the number of open strings played. Celtic and Bluegrass fiddlers study 7th position fingering patterns with Isaac Stern, and take pride in never playing an open string. An Old Time fiddle player can make dogs howl & incapacitate peo-

ple suffering from sciatic nerve damage. An Old Time fiddle player only uses 1/8 of his bow. The rest is just there for show.

Guitar

An Old Time guitarist knows the major chords in G and C, and owns a capo for A and D. A Bluegrass guitarist can play in E-flat without a capo. The fanciest chord an Old Time guitarist needs is an A to insert between the G and the D7 chord. A Bluegrass or Celtic guitarist needs to know C#aug+7-4. A Celtic guitarist keeps his picks in his pocket. Old Time guitarists stash extra picks under a rubber band around the top of the peg head. Bluegrass guitarists would never cover any part of the peg head that might obscure the gilded label of their \$3,000 guitar.

Mandolin

It's possible to have an Old Time or Celtic band without a mandolin. However, it is impossible to have a true Bluegrass band without one. Mandolin players spend half their time tuning their mandolin and the other half of their time playing their mandolin out of tune. Old Time and Celtic mandolin players use "A" model instruments (pear-shaped) by obscure makers. Bluegrass mandolin players use "F" model Gibsons that cost \$100 per decibel.

Bass

A Celtic band never has a bass, while a Bluegrass band always has a bass. An old, Old Time band doesn't have a bass, but new time Old Time bands seem to need one for reasons that are unclear. A Bluegrass bass starts playing with the band on the first note. An Old Time bass, if present, starts sometime after the rest of the band has run through the tune once depending on the player's blood alcohol content. A Bluegrass bass is polished and shiny. An Old Time bass is often used as yard furniture.

Other Instruments

It is not possible to have a Celtic band without a tin whistle or Bodhran(hand drum) if not several, usually too many of each. Old Time and Bluegrass bands never have either. A Bluegrass band might have a Dobro. An Old Time band might have anything that makes noise including: a tambourine, jaw harp, didgeridoo, harmonica, conga, wash tub bass, miscellaneous rattles &shakers, a 1-gallon jug (empty), or a lap (mountain) dulcimer or a hammered dulcimer. In a Celtic band, it's the musicians that are hammered.

Instrumentation

Except for the guitar, all the instruments in a Celtic band play the melody all the time. In an Old Time band, anyone can play either melody or accompaniment at any time. In Bluegrass bands, one instrument at a time solos, and every else plays accompaniment. Bluegrass bands have carefully mapped-out choreography due to the need for solo breaks. If Old Time and Celtic band members move around, they tend to run into each other. Because of this problem (and whiskey) Old Time and Celtic often sit down when performing, while a Bluegrass band always stands. Because they're sitting, Old Time and Celtic bands have the stamina to play the same tune for 20 minutes for a square or contra dance. The audience claps after each Bluegrass solo break. If anyone talks or claps near an Old Time or Celtic band, it confuses them, even after the tune is over.

Personalities and Stage Presence

Bluegrass band members wear uniforms, such as blue polyester suits with gray Stetson hats. Old Time bands wear jeans, sandals, work shirts and caps from seed companies. Celtic bands wear tour tee-shirts with plaid touring caps. All this head wear covers bald spots. Women in Bluegrass bands have big hair and Kevlar under-

garments. Women in Old Time bands jiggle nicely under their overalls. There are no Women in Celtic bands, only Lassies with long skirts and lacy, high collars and Wenches in apple dumplings-on-a-shelf bodices and leather mini-skirts. A Bluegrass band tells terrible jokes while tuning. An Old Time band tells terrible jokes without bothering to tune. Bluegrass band members never smile. Old Time band members will smile if you give them a drink. A Celtic band is too busy drinking to smile, tune or tell jokes. Celtic musicians eat fish and chips, Bluegrass musicians eat barbecue ribs, and Old Time musicians eat tofu and miso soup. Bluegrass musicians have mild high frequency hearing loss from standing near the banjo player. Old Time musicians have moderate high frequency hearing loss from sitting near the fiddler. Celtic musicians have advanced hearing loss from playing in small pubs with all those fiddles, banjos, tin whistles and bodhrans.

Festivals and Transportation

A Celtic band travels in an actual Greyhound bus with marginal air conditioning and then catches a ride from the bus stop to the festival any way they can. A Bluegrass band travels in an old converted Greyhound bus that idles in the parking lot all weekend with the air conditioner running full blast, fumigating the county with diesel exhaust. An Old Time band travels in a rusted-out 1965 VW microbus that blows an engine in North Nowhere, Nebraska. They don't have an Easy-Up, and it's pretty evident that their vehicles don't have air conditioning. Bluegrass players stay on the bus and Celtic musicians stay at the nearest Motel 6, while Old Time musicians camp in the parking lot. The Celtic Band has their name on their instrument cases and a banner for their Easy-Up. The bluegrass band's name and Inspirational Statement are painted on both the side and front of the bus in script lettering. Bluegrass bumper stickers are in red, white and blue and have stars and/or stripes on them. Celtic bumper stickers display fancy knotwork borders, banners, and slogans from the old country. OldTime bumper stickers don't make any sense (e.g. "Gid is My Co-Pilot")

(Thanks Jim McCauley for sending this from the Bluegrass Nation web-site.)

http://bluegrassnation.org/link_type/the-difference-between-bluegrass-old-time-and-celtic-bands-now-finally-explained/

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MRBA February Jam Photos





Grammy Awards—2014



Winner

The Streets Of Baltimore
Del McCoury Band

Nominated

It's Just A Road
The Boxcars

Brothers Of The Highway
Dailey & Vincent

This World Oft Can Be
Della Mae

Three Chords And The Truth
James King

Special Consensus releases John Denver Tribute Album

"Special Consensus" Greg Cahill's band which frequently tours our area is releasing a new album, Country Boy: A Bluegrass Tribute to John Denver, on March 25th. The first track is "Wild Montana Skies" featuring Claire Lynch and mandolinist Rick Faris on vocals. (Both Special Consensus and Claire Lynch have performed at the Ruby's Jewel Jamboree.) According to Cahill: "I've met so many people who were affected by John's music and so many musicians who mention him as an inspiration. It felt like a bluegrass interpretation of his songs would be something really special and might also serve as a way to connect more people to bluegrass music." This new album has guest artists who are among the very top in today's bluegrass music. It would be well worth tapping into this music for bluegrassers who are also fans of the songs of John Denver. For more information contact: betsy@compassrecords.com.

(This info came from: <http://rogersbillingsregionbluegrass.blogspot.com/>)



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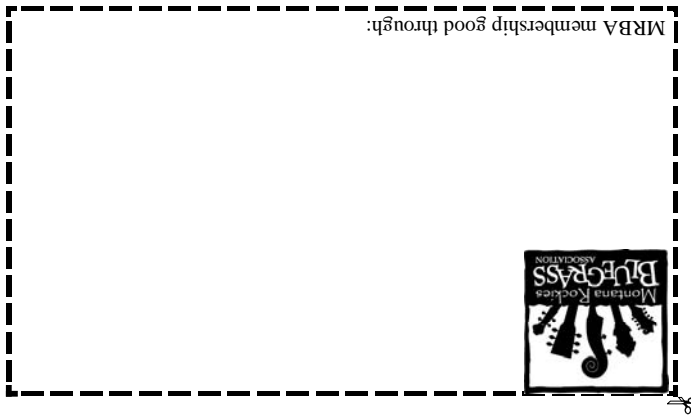
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