



# Bluegrassin'

Volume 17, Issue 4

July—Aug. 2015

## Upcoming Bluegrass Events

*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:

	Page
Tidbits	2
HardTimes Festival	4-5
Conroy Camp Out Photos	7
MRBA Camp Out Photos	8
Ruby Jewel Jamboree	9
Ricky Skaggs	10

- July 2** - Porter Creek, Columbia Falls Farmer's Market at the park
- July 8** - Ricky Skaggs, Top Hat, Missoula, 8:00 pm, <http://tophatlounge.com/events/>
- July 9**—Spring Wagon Band, Columbia Falls Community Market (next to O'Briens)
- July 10—12** Montana Folk Festival, Butte, MT, <http://montanafolkfestival.com>
- July 14**—Hot Rize w/ Red Kuckles and the Trailblazers, Missoula, Snowbowl Ruby Jewel Jamboree— <http://rubyjeweljamboree.com/>
- July 18 & Aug. 21**— Lil Smokies, Top Hat, Missoula
- July 23**—New South Fork, Bitterroot Brewery, Hamilton, 6:00 pm
- July 24-26** Hard Times Festival, Darby (See pg. 4 & 5)
- July 25** - Lil Smokies, Red Ants Pants Festival, White Sulpher Springs
- July 28**—Monroe Crossing & Dolce Canto, "The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass", Missoula, Snowbowl, <http://snowbowlmountainmusic.com/>
- July 30** - Porter Creek, Columbia Falls Community Market (next to O'Brien's)
- July 31**—Porter Creek, West Glacier Farmer's Market, 4:00 pm
- Aug. 1**—Leftover Biscuits, Big Fork Festival of the Arts, <http://bigforkfestivalofthearts.com/>
- Aug. 2**—Leftover Biscuits, Sliter Park Concert Series, Big Fork
- Aug. 7-9**- Targhee Bluegrass Festival—Grand Targhee Resort, WY , <http://www.grandtarghee.com/summer/music-festivals/bluegrass-fest.php>
- Aug. 9** - Pasture Pickin—Libby, MT (Starts Aug 9 and goes for one week after. ) [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pasture-Pickin/136638576370075?sk=info&tab=page\\_info](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pasture-Pickin/136638576370075?sk=info&tab=page_info)
- Aug. 12** —Jeff Scroggins and Colorado, Missoula, Ruby Jewel Jamboree— <http://rubyjeweljamboree.com/>
- Aug. 21**— Lil Smokies, Great Northern Bar—Whitefish, MT
- Aug. 28 & 29** —River City Roots Festival - Missoula, MT, <http://www.rivercityrootsfestival.com/>
- Aug. 29**—Hot Springs Artist Society, Swingaderos Bluegrass, [www.hotspingsartists.org/summer-events/](http://www.hotspingsartists.org/summer-events/)
- Recurring Shows & Jams— & Summer Festival Links—See pg. 6**

## Bluegrass Tidbits

- CONGRATULATIONS - LIL SMOKIES!!! Missoula based band Lil Smokies won the Telluride Bluegrass Festival Band contest. The Telluride Band Contest is a nationally-recognized bluegrass contest. Finalists are awarded cash and prizes, as well as critical acclaim, well-deserved recognition, and a spot on the 2016 lineup to perform on the festival main stage.  
[www.bluegrass.com/telluride/contests.html#band](http://www.bluegrass.com/telluride/contests.html#band)
- Consider writing an article for the newsletter. If you have been to concert or festival, write a review. Do you have good practice tips or techniques to share with others? How about sending the editor your favorite recipe from a bluegrass pot-luck. What is your favorite bluegrass memory? Interview a MRBA bluegrass pioneer or send me a notice if your band has released a new CD. The best newsletters articles are the ones that are written by MRBA members!
- Have you liked Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association on Facebook? MRBA has 671 likes.
- In 2009, a man ran the Nashville Country Music—26.2 mile marathon in while playing the banjo. He did it as a fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's. He ran the marathon in just over 4-hours. If any MRBA members plan on attempting this feat, let me know so we can all come out to cheer you on! (<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/local-news/knox-man-play-banjo-during-marathon> )



## Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association

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**Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association**

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

Do you want the newsletter delivered electronically? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Please mail your application to: MRBA, PO Box 1306, Missoula, MT 59806

**HARDTIMES  
BLUEGRASS  
FESTIVAL**

It's almost time again for the 2015 Hardtimes Bluegrass Festival on July 24-25-26. This years wing-ding will feature 10 great bands and six special Pioneers in Northwest bluegrass.

New this year are the Panhandle Polecats from Rathdrum Idaho. They are a fun band of brothers and sisters that were just young kids when we first met them, now they are all grown up.

We booked the popular Trinity River Band from Florida again this year, this time for a set Saturday evening and a set Sunday at noon.

Thanks to all the bands and Pioneers performing this year, and to the folks that help out at the festival, and of course to the folks that come, that's what pays the bills...

See you there. Mike and Tari

**2015 schedule**

**July 24, 2015**

5:45 to 6:00 *Landowner musicians, Ted Heiland,*

*Ramona & Rachel Potter*

6:00 to 6:40 **Black Mtn**

6:45 to 7:25 **Spring Thaw**

7:30 to 8:10 **Pinegrass**

8:15 to 8:55 **Polecats**

9:00 to 9:40 **New South Fork**

**July 25, 2015**

12:00 to 12:35 **Kids in Bluegrass**

12:40 to 1:20 **Black Mtn**

1:25 to 2:05 **JD Webb**

2:10 to 2:50 **Darby Sireens**

2:55 to 3:35 **Spring Thaw**

3:40 to 4:20 **New South Fork**

4:25 to 5:05 **Mike & Tari Conroy Band**

5:10 to 5:55 *Throw together band contest*

6:00 to 6:50 *Pioneers in Northwest Bluegrass*

6:55 to 7:35 **Gravelly Mtn**

7:40 to 8:20 **Pinegrass**

8:25 to 9:05 **Polecats**

9:10 to 9:50 **Trinity River**

**July 26, 2015**

10:00 to 11:55 *Open Bluegrass Gospel Stage*

12:00 to 12:40 **Trinity River**

12:45 to 1:25 **Mike & Tari Conroy Band**

1:30 to 2:10 **Gravelly Mtn.**

2:15 to 2:55 **JD Webb**







**7th  
ANNUAL**

Bring  
Your  
Lawn  
Chairs

Food  
Vendors  
On  
Site

Bluegrass  
Gospel  
Sunday  
Morning

All  
Dogs  
On  
Leash

# **HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL**

**JULY 24, 25, 26, 2015**

**Featuring:**

**Pinegrass**, Missoula, MT  
**Black Mtn. Boys**, Missoula, MT  
**New South Fork**, Idaho Falls, ID  
**Spring Thaw**, Missoula, MT  
**Darby Sireens**, Darby, MT  
**Gravelly Mtn.**, Alberton, MT

**Trinity River Band**, Callahan, FL  
**Panhandle Polecats**, Rathdrum, ID  
**JD Webb & Downstate Ramblers**,  
 Baker City, OR  
**Kids in Bluegrass**, MT & ID  
**Mike & Tari Conroy Band**,  
 Conner, MT

**Special Featured Pioneers in Bluegrass**  
**Bob & JoAnne Martin**- Hamilton, MT  
**Fiddlin' Duane Stephens**- Grangeville, ID  
**Jack Winthers**- Victor, MT  
**Bill Neaves Sr**- Hamilton, MT  
**Forrest Clark**- Clinton, MT

**Location:** 10 Miles South of Hamilton, mile marker 37, 163 Forest Hill Rd.  
**Admission:** Adults—\$12.00 for weekend, Children under 12-\$6.00 for weekend  
 Dry Camping-\$12.00 for weekend

For more information [www.hardtimesbluegrass.com](http://www.hardtimesbluegrass.com) or call 1-406-821-3777

### Recurring Shows and Jams

- ◆ **Missoula** - Pickin Circle. Tangled Tones Studio. 2005 South Ave., West. - Wednesdays—6:00 pm to 9:00 pm . (406-396-3352)
- ◆ **Missoula**—Open Jam. Top Hat. Tuesdays. 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Livingston** - Open Jam. Pine Creek Café. Thursday—8:30—10:30 pm. [www.pinecreeklodgemontana.com](http://www.pinecreeklodgemontana.com) (406)222-3628

Send corrections or additions to: [the\\_kate@appcom.net](mailto:the_kate@appcom.net)

### Summer is Festival Season

In addition to the MRBA Jams and Festivals, check out these web sites for other regional bluegrass events:

**Eastern Montana:** <http://www.yellowstonebluegrass.com/index.htm>

**Idaho:** <http://www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org/>

**Eastern Washington:** <http://www.spokanebluegrass.org/festivals.html>

### Bluegrass Humor

Q: What is the difference between Sasquatch and a bluegrass picker who has been at a bluegrass camp-out for three days?

A: One is hairy, smelly and has bad-breadth and the other is just a myth.

*Ellie Nuño*

Musical styles on:

- ★ fiddle
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## Conroy Camp-Out Photos

Conroy's 19th Annual Memorial Day Weekend Jam

Great weekend. Perfect size. (100 people) Lots of jamming, eatin, great pot lucks, talkin with friends.



Lots of jammin - lots of good music.

Mando Jam



It almost got darned hot at a Memorial Day Camp-out!



Let's get the chairs set up for some eating.



Ok—Who 's the smart aleck who put up this sign?



# MRBA Annual Campout Photos

Dog Day Afternoon



Beat the heat in the shade with friends.



Myron on bass. Forrest on Guitar. Steve on banjo.



Strummin on the old banjo



It's Fiddling Time!



Paula, Verna & Bill



Yum! Can't beat the breakfast pot luck.







*Montana's premier*  
**BLUEGRASS VENUE**  
*In the heart of your travels*

## **Ruby Jewel Jamboree 2015 Season Begins!!**

We are proud to announce our 2015 season line up:

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### **Hot Rize w/ Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers**

July 14th— Missoula

### **Jeff Scroggins and Colorado**

August 12th—Missoula

### **Dale Ann Bradley**

Sept. 13th—Missoula

Tickets on sale soon!

For more information:

<http://rubyjeweljamboree.com/>

## Ricky Skaggs At The Top Hat

By Kate McMahon

The Top Hat Lounge has been heart of Missoula's music scene for over 60 years. Located on Front Street in downtown Missoula, the Top Hat was recently remodeled and now has increased capacity. The bar has been bringing in top nationally known acts as well as a bluegrass jam on Tuesday nights. On July 8, the Grammy and IBMA award winning band, Ricky Skaggs and the Kentucky Thunder will be playing at the Top Hat.

Ricky Skaggs was born on July 18, 1954 in Cordell, Kentucky, and received his first mandolin at the age of five. When the legendary Bill Monroe came to Martha, Kentucky for a performance, the crowd wouldn't let up until "Little Ricky Skaggs" got up to play. The father of bluegrass called six-year-old Skaggs up and placed his own mandolin around his neck, adjusting the strap to fit his small frame. By age seven, Skaggs performed with bluegrass legends Flatt & Scruggs on their popular syndicated television show.

In 1971, he was invited to join the Ralph Stanley's band. Ricky moved on to play with acts such as Country Gentleman, and J. D. Crowe & the New South. He performed on the New South's band's 1975 debut album for Rounder Records, which is widely regarded as one of the most influential bluegrass albums ever made.

In the late 1970s, Ricky performed country music. He played first as a member of Emmylou Harris' Hot Band and later went out on his own as an individual recording artist. Throughout the 1980s, he recorded a total of 12 #1 hits. In 1982, became a member of the Grand Ole Opry, won eight awards from the Country Music Association (CMA), including "Entertainer of the Year" in 1985, and won four Grammy Awards.

In 1997, he decided to establish his own record label - Skaggs Family Records – with an emphasis on bluegrass and other forms of roots music. The label has worked with such artist as, The Del McCoury Band, Jerry and Tammy Sullivan, Blue Highway, The Whites, Mountain Heart, Melonie Cannon, Ryan Holladay, Keith Sewell, Cherryholmes, and Cadillac Sky. While recording mostly bluegrass albums over the last 20-years, he has also recorded in the country, gospel and folk genres and has collaborated with Bruce Hornsby and other artists. Bluegrass albums that Skaggs has released under the Skaggs label include:



- *Bluegrass Rules!* – Grammy award & IBMA Album of the Year
- *Ancient Tones* - Grammy Award for Best Bluegrass Album
- *Big Mon: The Songs of Bill Monroe*, a project which featured an all-star cast of musicians ranging from Dolly Parton, Patty Loveless and Travis Tritt to Joan Osborne, John Fogerty and Bruce Hornsby, and celebrated the music and the life of Ricky's mentor, Bill Monroe. The album was re-released by Lyric Street Records in 2002 under a new name, *Ricky Skaggs and Friends Sing the Songs of Bill Monroe*.
- *History of the Future* - Traditional bluegrass. Grammy nomination for Best Bluegrass Album and an IBMA nomination for Album of the Year,

- *Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder - Live at the Charleston Music Hall (2003)* - IBMA Award for Instrumental Group of the Year - an award Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder has taken home 8 times in the last decade.
- *Brand New Strings* - Grammy (Best Bluegrass Album)
- *Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder Instrumentals* - Grammy Award (Best Bluegrass Album).
- *Honoring the Fathers of Bluegrass: Tribute to 1946 and 1947* - Grammy Award for Best Bluegrass Album.
- *Country Hits Bluegrass Style* (2011), a compilation of many of Skaggs' #1 country hits and fan favorites, played in a bluegrass style.
- *Music To My Ears* (2012)

(See: <http://www.rickyskaggs.com/> for a complete list of albums)

In 2013, Skaggs autobiography, *Kentucky Travelor: My Life in Music* was published. (*The book can be purchased from his web site.*) Skaggs had the following observations regarding bluegrass music.

**On the picking parties at his family's house when he was growing up:**

"These pickings were the most wonderful fun. In Ireland, they're called a ceili, and I went to several over there when I was on tour in the late 70's. On those nights on Fannin Drive, I saw what music did to people. You'd see the folks coming through the door, and they'd be worn out from the workweek. Then, after a few songs, you'd see the changes in their faces. That is the only way I can describe it. I saw how music can truly bring joy, and joy kills sorrow."

**On his time with the Country Gentleman,**

"If the Clinch Mountain Boys were my college, then the time in Washington, DC with the Country Gentlemen was my graduate school. I was young and green, so it helped that the band was so encouraging."

**He writes about finding inspiration for bluegrass from other music genres.**

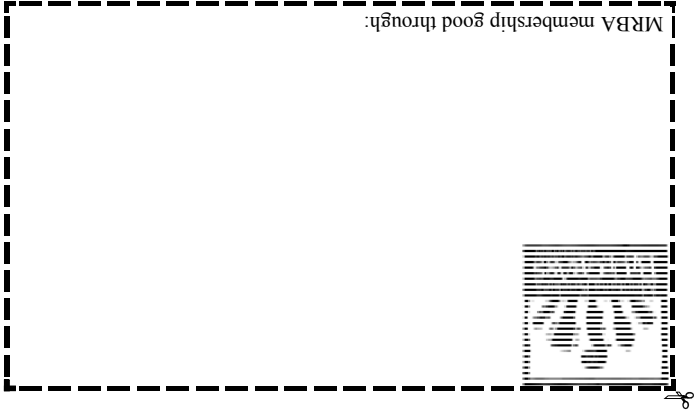
When he was playing violin with the Country Gentleman, he received a gift of a jazz album recorded in the 1930's by Django Reinhardt and violinist Stephane Grappelli. "It sounded a lot like bluegrass, and it amazed me that this was 10-years before Bill Monroe had started the Blue Grass Boys! It had the same elements, the spontaneity and the improvisation, wide open and for the sheer fun of it. ... Listening to Grappelli gave me new ideas more than new licks. He created a sound with his violin that captured my imagination. It was a classical touch with a jazz and blues feeling, and he made it swing."

**On returning to his bluegrass roots after a recording career in country music.**

"My years away gave me new eyes and ears to appreciate things about bluegrass that I'd taken for granted. I realized how pure and uncorrupted and timeless it was. With country music, image was such a big part of the business, especially once CMT, GAC, and to her cable TV networks came along. But bluegrass was still about the beauty of the music, not what the musicians looked like or dressed like. It was music that still had a heart and a soul and an integrity at its core. It was staying alive by staying true to its roots and its heritage."



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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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