



Bluegrassin'

Volume 18, Issue 4

July—August 2016

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

July 1, Red, White and Bluegrass, Featuring Pinegrass, Sapphire Lutheran Home, Hamilton, MT 6:00 pm

July 2, Beer Garden & Bluegrass, Choteau Pavilion, Choteau, MT
Starts at 3:00 p.m. Featuring Gated Community & Dirt Farmers

July 8-10 Montana Folk Festival, Butte, MT <http://montanafolkfestival.com>

July 9, Acousticals, Philipsburg Brewery, Philipsburg, MT 6:00 pm

July 10, Acousticals, Norris Hot Springs, Norris, MT 7:00 pm

July 15, Pinegrass Reunion, Top Hat, Missoula, MT 6:00 pm

July 15-17, Darrington Bluegrass Festival, Darrington, WA
<http://www.darringtonbluegrass.com/>

July 21, Lochwood Bluegrass, Draught Works Brewery, Missoula, MT

July 22-24, Hardtimes Festival, Darby, MT (see pg. 5), hardtimesbluegrass.com

Aug. 4, Acousticals, Bitterroot Brewery, Hamilton, MT 6:00 pm

Aug. 7, Pasture Pickin', Libby, MT (starts Aug. 7 and goes for one week) https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pasture-Pickin/136638576370075?sk=info&tab=page_info

Aug. 7, Leftover Biscuits, Sliter Park, Big Fork, MT 7:00 pm

Aug. 11, Steep Canyon Rangers, Top Hat, Missoula, MT 9:00 pm

Aug. 12-14, Targhee Bluegrass Festival—Grand Targhee Resort, WY
<http://www.grandtarghee.com/summer/music-festivals/bluegrass-fest.php>

Aug. 20, Lil Smokies, Philipsburg Outdoor Amphitheater, 12:00 pm

Aug. 24, Lil Smokies, Alive at Five, Pioneer Park, Helena, MT 5:00 pm

Aug. 26 & 27, River City Roots Festival, Missoula, MT
<http://www.rivercityrootsfestival.com/>

Aug. 26-28, Bannock County, ID, Bluegrass Festival

Aug. 27, Lil Smokies & Steep Ravine, Top Hat, Missoula, MT 9:00 pm

On the Road With MRBA

*Mary–Jane Cunningham, Sharon Colvin,
Sandy Campbell (Front row)
Kate McMahon (back row)
Girls' weekend at the
Symes Hotel in Hot Springs, MT*



*Teacher John Reischman and student
Anne Merrifield at the Grass Valley
Bluegrass Festival Music Camp.*

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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1/2 Page – \$15.00,
1/4 Page – \$10.00
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Anne Merrifield
happypasture9@gmail.com

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Electronic version has color photos & hyperlinks to websites.

(P.S.—It will help keep down printing & mailing cost for the association)



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MONTANA ROCKIES BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION
Membership Application

Date _____ Last Name _____ First Name _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone # _____
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

Conroy Memorial Day Camp-out



Biscuits in the morning—Yum



Can't beat those outhouse jams



There's a whole lot of pickin' going on



Good Weather—Good Friends—Good Campin'

And Even More Tips on Playing Bluegrass

(<http://billevansbanjo.com/blog/ten-practical-tips-to-become-a-better-banjo-player-now>)

8. Take Songs One Measure at a Time If you're learning from tab, play the first measure or two over and over until you've got it without looking at the tab. If you're learning by ear, you want to be able to play these measures by hearing them first in your head. Listen to the sound of several measures played together and try to identify the musical phrases of your song. After you've mastered the first phrase, move on to the second phrase. After you've got the second phrase down, spend a few moments playing the first and second phrases together, remembering not to rely on the tablature. You'll likely encounter some repetition along the way, so after you have the first sections of a tune down pat, the later section usually takes less time.

9. Play the Right Repertoire If your goal is to play music with others, work on the tunes that they like to play. Luckily, almost all bluegrass and old-time musicians learn a basic shared set of tunes at one time or another. The musicians at your local jam session may also play a few personal favorites, including some tunes that may be unique to your part of the country. Keep in mind that more advanced players share a different set of tunes than beginning-level players, bluegrassers have a different repertoire than old-timers, and younger musicians may play some different tunes than the older folks play. After you've mastered a few basic pieces and you feel you're ready to try a beginner's jam session, find out what tunes these musicians like to play. Attend the session and make a list of the songs you hear or (with the permission of the other musicians) bring a tape recorder along to record the pieces you don't know, so that you can work on them at home.

10. Keep Track of Your Progress Most players keep a tune list in the front pocket of their music notebook. Some players group by key or tempo, while others create a list of tunes they already know, a list of tunes they're working on right now, and another list of tunes they want to learn in the near future. You may also want to maintain a practice diary where you can keep some brief notes about some of the things you worked on that day and also remind yourself about what needs more work the next time your pick up the banjo.

<p><i>Ellie Nuño</i></p> <p>Musical styles on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ fiddle ★ violin ★ violectra 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Studio Recording Artist Services ★ Private and Family Style Lessons ★ Girls with Guitars Workshops <p>ellienuno.com emnuño@hotmail.com home/studio (406)721-3908</p>	
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<http://thefiddleschool.com/>

HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

This year's Hardtimes Bluegrass Festival is shaping up to be a "don't miss" event...11 great bands and 5 "Pioneers in Northwest Bluegrass." Five new bands this year include Kevin Pace and the Early Edition from Washington, Brothers Parker from Arizona and Montana, Ladd Canyon Ramblers from Oregon, Lochwood from Montana, and Portneuf Gap from Idaho. Wowie Zowie-- this should be another stellar year.

Keven Pace's band is known for great southern style gospel and traditional bluegrass. Brothers Parker are in my opinion on of the coolest brother duets ever. The Ladd Canyon Ramblers are seasoned bluegrass pioneers doing it the right way. Lochwood is a recently formed band playing great traditional bluegrass with a new fiddler that we saw grow up in the old time fiddlers - Taylor Buckley. Portneuf Gap from Pocatello is a cool traditional band with a surprise mandolin player (his initials are FF).

Pioneers this year are our old buddy Gary Lee Moore from over the hill in Idaho (not that you are over the hill, Gary); Judy and JD Webb from wherever their camper stops, USA; banjo pickin' Glen Stephens from Boise; and our very own Forrest Clark, who is grandfathered in to the festival. You da man, Forrest! Come join us in our 8th year for a fun-packed weekend July 22-24.

More info at 1-406-821-3777 or



July 22, 2016

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

Ramona & Rachel Potter

6:00 to 6:40 **Portneuf Gap**

6:45 to 7:25 **Gravely Mtn**

7:30 to 8:10 **Lochwood**

8:15 to 8:55 **Kevin Pace**

9:00 to 9:40 **Trinity River**

July 23, 2016

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

12:40 to 1:20 **Brothers Parker**

1:25 to 2:05 **Darby Sireens**

2:10 to 2:50 **Spring Thaw**

2:55 to 3:35 **Gravely Mtn.**

3:40 to 4:20 **Lochwood**

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 **Portneuf Gap**

7:40 to 8:20 **Ladd Canyon Ramblers**

8:25 to 9:05 **Pinegrass**

9:10 to 9:50 **Kevin Pace**

9:55 to 10:35 **Trinity River**

July 24, 2016

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

12:00 to 12:40 **Brothers Parker**

12:45 to 1:25 **Pinegrass**

1:30 to 2:10 **Mike & Tari**

2:15 to 2:55 **Spring Thaw**

3:00 to 3:40 **Ladd Canyon Ramblers**

HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

8th annual

JULY 22, 23, 24, 2016



Featuring:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Trinity River-FL | Kevin Pace & Early Addition-WA | |
| Lochwood-MT | Brothers Parker-MT,AZ | |
| Portneuf Gap-ID | Ladd Canyon Ramblers-OR | BLUEGRASS |
| Pinegrass-MT | Darby Sireens-MT,ID | GOSPEL |
| Spring Thaw-MT | Mike & Tari Conroy-MT | SUNDAY |
| Gravelly Mtn.-MT | Kids In Bluegrass-MT,ID | MORNING |

BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIRS

Special Featured Pioneers in Bluegrass
 Gary Lee Moore-Dry Gulch, Idaho
 Glen Stephens-Boise, Idaho
 JD & Judy Webb-anywhere their bus stops, USA
 Forrest Clark-Canton, MT

FOOD VENDORS ON SITE

ALL DOGS ON LEASH

LOCATION: 10 miles south of Hamilton, mile marker 37, 163 Forest Hill Rd
ADMISSION: Adults \$15.00 for weekend, Children under 12-\$7.50 for weekend
 SUNDAY ONLY- \$10.00 Dry Camping- \$15.00 for weekend

For more information www.hardtimesbluegrass.com or call
 1-406-821-3777

Last Year for Pasture Pickin' Tradition

By Kate McMahon

When Dale Berg's grandparents homesteaded on a farm north of Libby, it's doubtful that they imagined the pasture would be converted twice a year to a music mecca for bluegrass pickers. For the last 23 years, at the end of May, and again in August, musicians and music lovers from western Montana, the Idaho panhandle, Washington, and British Columbia have convened at the Berg homestead for a week (or more) of camping, music, and friendship. This is the last year of "Pasture Pickin'", and at the May event, I was able to visit with Dorothy and Dale Berg to talk about 23 years of good times and memories from these twice a year music gatherings.

Dale Berg recalled that he first took up the banjo in 1958. He is self-taught, and he told me it took two years before he found someone to show him how to tune the banjo properly. After an army career of 42 years, Dale returned to Montana. About 23 years ago when Dale and Dorothy went to a bluegrass festival in Sandpoint, ID, they thought, "This is something we can do." And so they sent out postcards to all of their friends inviting them to the first Pasture Pickin' in 1993.

They decided on a twice-a-year event that was publicized mostly through word of mouth. Eventually they put up a web page, and the event made its way into the MRBA newsletter, but mostly it remained an informal get-together where friends invited friends. The event has always been free, although they do take donations to offset expenses. At its peak, Pasture Pickin' attracted over 200 campers. Some campers came from as far away as Texas. A few have attended all 23 years. There have even been

weddings at the Pasture Pickin' Pavilion, which was built to provide a place for pickers to jam and perform.

There is lots of jammin' at Pasture Pickin'. The first time I attended about 10 years ago, I roamed around with my banjo joining or listening to different jams that were scattered throughout the campers in the pasture. In addition to the jams, the Bergs organize band scrambles and performances. Everyone, no matter what level, is encouraged to participate. The Bergs have prizes for the musicians and sometimes have prizes for other non-music related contests. I remember one year when they called up all of the gentlemen who had just celebrated a 70th birthday and gave an award for "Best Butt." I don't recall who won, but I do remember that Forrest Clark got an award for having no butt.

With the numbers of campers dwindling in recent years, and Dale now in his 80's, the Bergs have made the decision that this will be their last year. Says Dorothy, "It has been a great ride. We have met so many people and made so many friends. Music just bonds people together."

The Bergs would like to see the tradition continue and are talking to another Libby musician to take over the event. If you haven't been to Pasture Pickin', you have one more chance, starting August 7 for a week.



Dale Berg pickin' a tune



Dorothy announcing the bands.

Directions:

From Libby, travel north on Hwy 37. About ¼ mile across the Kootenai River bridge, take a left onto Hwy 567 (Pipe Creek Road). Travel on Pipe Creek road for 5-1/2 miles. The Snyder place is on the right, address 5502 Pipe Creek Road. During Pasture Pickin' time you won't be able to miss the field with campers and motor homes.

Bluegrass Calendar—Continued

Recurring Shows and Jams

- ◆ **Missoula**—Open Jam. Top Hat. Tuesdays. 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Missoula**—Tangled Tones Pickin' class. Wednesdays 6:30 pm.
- **Helena** - Staggering Ox—Bluegrass Jam, Tuesdays, 6:00 pm

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>

Tribute to Ralph Stanley

Ralph Edmund Stanley (February 25, 1927 – June 23, 2016), also known as Dr. Ralph Stanley, was known for his distinctive singing and banjo playing. He was part of the first generation of bluegrass musicians and was one of the last of that generation to still be performing, and he played until this year. He was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Hall of Honor in 1992.

According to the IBMA, “Two eminent first-generation figures in bluegrass music, Carter and Ralph Stanley, were reared on isolated Smith Ridge in southwest Virginia's mountainous Dickenson County. They began playing professionally in late 1946 on Bristol radio station WCYB's daily ‘Farm and Fun Time’ broadcasts. During the ensuing 20 years The Stanley Brothers and The Clinch Mountain Boys recorded more than 400 titles, comprising some of the finest authentic American music in existence. Despite changing times and musical tastes, the Stanleys are the only major early bluegrass artists to have never compromised the rigidly traditional format in their recordings. The favorite lead singer of many fans, Carter authored endearing classics such as ‘The White Dove’ and ‘The Lonesome River.’ Following his death in 1966, younger brother Ralph, the composer of timeless songs and instrumentals such as ‘Clinch Mountain Backstep,’ launched a long and successful solo career faithful to the plaintive, soulful mountain sound that endears the Stanley Brothers’ music to purists throughout the world.”

**16th Annual
TRUMBLE CREEK
BLUEGRASS CAMPOUT**

**September 23 - 25
4260 Trumble Creek Road
Columbia Falls, Montana**

Directions:

From Highway 2: Go west on Highway 40 at the Blue Moon intersection.

From Highway 93: Go east on Highway 40 a bit over 3 miles.

From Highway 40, go south on Trumble Creek Road. Go about ½ mile.

Saturday Night Potluck 6 p.m.

And

Sunday Morning

Biscuits & Gravy Potluck 10 a.m.

For more information, contact Mary-Jane (406) 892-3197

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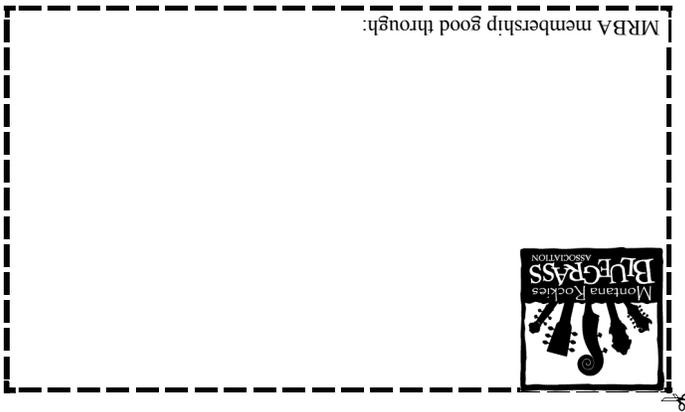
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ATTENTION:

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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