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 10** - Leftover Biscuits, The Springs in Whitefish, 5:30
- **July 12** - Acousticals, Philipsburg Brewery, 5:00-8:00
- **July 14** - Lil Smokies, Under the Big Sky Festival, Whitefish, [www.underthebigskyfest.com](http://www.underthebigskyfest.com)
- **July 24** - Leftover Biscuits, Buffalo Hill Concert Series, Kalispell, 7:00
- **July 25** - Lochwood, Bitterrot Brewery, Hamilton, 6:00-8:30
- **July 26-28** - Hardtimes Bluegrass Festival (see pgs. 6-7)
- **August 2** - Leftover Biscuits, Great Northern Resort @ West Glacier, 5:00
- **August 3** - Leftover Biscuits, Festival of the Arts, Bigfork, 12:00-2:00
- **August 11-18** - Pasture Pickin’, Libby, MT (see pg. 4)
- **August 11** - Leftover Biscuits, Sliter Park, Big Fork, 7:00
- **August 12** - Leftover Biscuits, Bigfork Farmer’s Market, 5:00
- **August 16-18** - Bannock County Bluegrass Festival, Pocatello, Idaho
- **August 23** - Leftover Biscuits, Great Northern Resort @ West Glacier, 5:00
- **August 23-25** - Montana State Fiddle Contest, Lincoln, MT [https://montanastateoldtimefiddlers.org/](https://montanastateoldtimefiddlers.org/)

Recurring Shows and Jams

- **Missoula**—Pickin’ Circle, Montana Distillery (631 Woody St.)
  - Tuesdays, 6:00 pm
- **Helena** - Bluegrass Jam, Staggering Ox, Tuesdays, 6:00 pm
- **Great Falls**—Celtic Cowboy Open Bluegrass Jam, Sundays, 6:00 pm

Please send information on open jams and shows to the newsletter editor.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Howdy all,

Just got back from the MRBA campout. What a fun weekend, although it was a little cool. The cool weather scared many away, but we had about 30 folks who came to pick, enjoy friends, eat great food, and enjoy the beautiful location. Some of us went for a 4-wheeler ride and saw deer, elk (including a big ole' bull elk) and one bull grouse (he was a big one.).

We are still looking for a great place to have potlucks and jams next winter. The location must allow potlucks, and have several different rooms for several different jams. If you have a location that might work, shoot me an email or call me.

As most of you know, this year Hardtimes Festival is "sink or swim." After the dust cleared and Tari tallied up everything last year, we lost $2000. We have regrouped and are trying different advertising and have raised the price, so we'll see how it all works this year. If you would like to see Hardtimes continue, please print off posters from the MRBA website or Facebook page, put them up, invite friends, spread the word, and above all -- come to the festival. If Hardtimes doesn't float this year, it's been 12 great years. We could all just go camping next year. That would be a lot of FUN also.

Your faithful pot-uck sampler guy --- Mike
Got Something to sell?
Advertise in Bluegrassin!

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

Contact:
Kate McMahon
kate@appcom.net
406-863-9255

Get MRBA Newsletter by E-Mail

If you would like to get your newsletter delivered electronically via e-mail send a message to:

happypasture9@gmail.com

Electronic version has color photos & hyperlinks to websites.

(P.S.—It will help keep down printing and mailing costs for the Association.)

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

Renewal _____ New Member _____

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

www.gregboyd.com  406/327-9925
PASTURE PICKIN'

At Snyder Field, 5418 Pipe Creek Road, Libby, MT

Old-Time, Bluegrass, and Country Music
Non-Electric - Strings Only
Dry Camping and Tents, Spring Water

NO CHARGE

August 11-18

Contact: Dale or Dorothy Berg (406) 293-6608

SAVE THE DATE!

Mandolin Master Emory Lester is coming to Missoula and Hamilton October 25, 26, 27, 2019

Home Sweet Home - https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vr7uQgo000
Darcy Farrow - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCNON9j51Oo

Hamilton concert and workshops - concert Friday, October 25, 2019, 7 pm. Guitar and Mandolin
Workshops Saturday, October 26, 2019, beginning at 11 am
Rooted Music, 100 Skeels Avenue, Hamilton. www.rootedmusic.com

Missoula concert and workshops - Sunday, October 27, 2019 - afternoon Guitar and Mandolin
Workshops followed by evening concert at Longstaff House, 601 Longstaff Street, Missoula
Please check back for specific times. www.longstaffhouse.com

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http://thefiddleschool.com/
Memorial Day Campout
HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL
July 26-27-28, 2019

Featuring:
Ladd Canyon Ramblers-OR  Song Dog Serenade-MT
Kevin Pace & Early Edition-WA  Lochwood-MT
Fred & Emily Frank-ID  Pinegrass-MT
BlueGrass Pals-MT  Darby Sirens-MT&ID
Portneuf Gap-ID  Mike & Tari Conroy-MT
Kids In Bluegrass-MT&ID

Special Featured Pioneers in Bluegrass
Clyde & Nikki Clevenger- Salem, OR
Fred & Jeanne Buckley- Roundup, MT
Randy Gariglietti- Troy, MT

LOCATION: 10 miles south of Hamilton, mile marker 37, 163 Forest Hill Rd
ADMISSION: Adults $20.00 for weekend, Children under 12—$10.00 for weekend
Adults: Friday or Saturday day pass $15.00  Children under 12 Friday or Saturday day pass $7.00
SUNDAY ONLY- $10.00  Dry Camping- $20.00 for weekend

For more information www.hardtimesbluegrass.com or call 1-406-821-3777
HARDTIMES SCHEDULE FOR 2019

Friday, July 26th
5:45-6:00 Landowner Musicians-Ted Heiland, Ramona & Rachel Potter
6:00-6:40 BlueGrass Pals
6:45-7:25 Silver Gravely Revue
7:30-8:10 Pinegrass
8:15-8:55 Song Dog Serenade
9:00-9:40 Lochwood

Saturday, July 27th
12:00-12:35 Kids In Bluegrass
12:40-1:20 Pinegrass
1:25-2:05 Darby Sirens
2:10-2:50 BlueGrass Pals
2:55-3:35 Song Dog Serenade
3:40-4:20 Mike & Tari Corroy Band
4:25-5:05 Portneuf Gap
5:10-5:55 Throw together band contest
6:00-6:50 Pioneers In Northwest Bluegrass
6:55-7:35 Fred & Emily Frank Band
7:40-8:20 Ladd Canyon Ramblers
8:25-9:05 Lochwood
9:10-9:50 Kevin Pace & Early Edition

Sunday, July 28th
10:00-11:55 Open Bluegrass Gospel Show
12:00-12:40 Portneuf Gap
12:45-1:25 Kevin Pace & Early Edition
1:30-2:10 Fred & Emily Frank
2:15-2:35 Raffles
2:40-3:20 Ladd Canyon Ramblers
Bluegrass Profiles

By Kate McMahon

A while back, someone suggested to me that it would be fun to publish interviews or profiles of MRBA members. To follow up on that excellent idea, I created a bluegrass questionnaire and asked attendees at the annual Christmas Party to complete the form. Each newsletter, I will print a few of the profiles that I collected at the meeting. Thanks to everyone who volunteered to share their info.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Person</th>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Songs to Sing</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Banjo Tunes</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Fiddle Tunes</th>
<th>First Bluegrass Festival Attended</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Festival</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Music Camp</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Band</th>
<th>Name of Bluegrass Band</th>
<th>Favorite Bluegrass Memories</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Merrifield</td>
<td>Mandolin</td>
<td>“Let Me Rest at the End of My Journey”</td>
<td>Too many to choose</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>Norco, CA - 1977</td>
<td>Hardtimes—What Else?!</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Too many to choose! Ralph Stanley, Bill Monroe, Michael Cleveland</td>
<td>Haven’t played in a band. I’m a virgin!</td>
<td>Conroy campouts - late nights pickin’ and sippin’ good bourbon.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan McCauley</td>
<td>Guitar &amp; Bass</td>
<td>“There Aint No Ash Will Burn” and “Crying Holy Unto the Lord”</td>
<td>??</td>
<td>“Whiskey Before Breakfast,” “Dill Pickle Rag”</td>
<td>Into the Forest, Whelton, WA - 2009</td>
<td>Hardtimes</td>
<td>West Fork, Memorial Day</td>
<td>Spinny Brothers, Becky Buller</td>
<td>Bittergrass String Band</td>
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Bluegrass History

Pic is Uncle Jimmy Thompson.

Henry Ford liked his playing so much he invited Jimmy to go to the Ford Factory and pick out any Ford he wanted. He picked a new Model T truck. He took it home and built a camper on the back and started roaming the country, fiddlin' along the way.

Happy Birthday, Jack!

Jack Winthers is celebrating his 90th birthday August 4, 2019, and wants to invite his bluegrass friends to come. Bring a chair, a side dish for the potluck in the afternoon and, of course, your instrument. The party will be at Jack and Jean’s home at 210 Silver Bow Drive, Victor MT
Please RSVP by calling 406-642-9519 by AUGUST 1, 2019.

Check out these web sites for other festivals in the region!

Idaho:
http://www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org/
http://www.idahoblugrassassociation.org/

Washington
http://www.spokanebluegrass.org/
http://washingtonbluegrassassociation.org/
PLAYING TECHNIQUE
Ross Nickerson
Banjo Encyclopedia

(Editors Note: Even though this was written for banjo players, there are good tips for all bluegrass musicians.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD TECHNIQUE

Building a solid foundation of technique and understanding should help your progress considerably. It is a good idea to strive for good technique and do your best to learn correctly from the start. However, at the same time, leave yourself room to grow and do not expect perfection in the beginning. If you are getting discouraged by not being able to accomplish something in your technique right away, please remember it does not have to be all done at once. Your goal is to have fun and progress a little each day. Do your best and enjoy!

RHYTHM & TIMING

Timing when playing the banjo is very important. It can be difficult to learn and difficult to teach. When listening to the banjo, most people hear many notes and might consider them all to be part of the melody. However, this is not necessarily the case. It would be better for you as a student to view your banjo playing in this way. As you pick the banjo, you are creating a rhythm with your picking consisting of quarter and eight notes. Within the constant and consistent rhythm that your are producing, your job is to accent melody notes or notes that are to stand out and be heard more clearly.

Accenting notes usually means hitting them harder than the others. Another way you can accent a melody note is by playing that note as a quarter note within your stream of eight notes, which will also bring the note out to the listener.

Learning and understanding timing can be difficult or intimidating, as I mentioned in the above paragraph. However, if you take some time at the beginning to understand and realize its importance and value, you will reap the rewards later. The reason most students have trouble with timing is because they are anxious to let the fingers fly and just skip over the timing lessons. It is not hard to learn if you take the time and will result in a better sound.

When the timing is right, not only will the listener enjoy it more, but it will be much more satisfying to you. Most people will notice a rhythm mistake long before they will notice you have played the second fret instead of the third. In other words, place a lot of value on your timing accuracy in the early stages. Anyone can miss a fret or string, but if you do not develop a sense of timing, everything played out of time will be wrong regardless of whether you are playing the right fret or string.

On thing to your advantage when learning to play the banjo is that you will only be playing quarter and eight notes. This is unlike learning many other instruments that require you to learn to count many varieties of notes. The reason for this is that the banjo is limited to how long it can sustain (hold) a note, much like a drum.

In music, It could be said there are two things to consider; the note played and the value of the note played.

Students generally notice the note to pluck or the fret to play easier than understanding or applying the time value assigned to that note. The good news is that with most bluegrass banjo playing, as I referred to earlier, the timing can be divided into two time values, quarter notes and eight notes. Simply said, if you can count quarter notes and eight notes, you will be able to understand the timing of most bluegrass banjo songs.

RHYTHM & TIMING EXERCISES

Use a pencil and tap out the rhythm against the table, book or music stand.

The down beat will be the numbered beats when the pencil is in the full down position on the table. The up beat will be the one marked with the (+) sign. This will be counted when the pencil is in the full up position.
There are four beats in each measure in the songs and exercises we will be learning. That means that any combination of quarter and eighth notes will equal four quarter beats in each measure.

This example is a measure with eight eighth notes which total up to four quarter beats. Now, try tapping these notes by counting out loud 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and. When you tap your foot, for example, the 1 or numbered note is going down and the + is the foot coming up. In other words you are fitting a note between each quarter note, creating an eight note.

Below are some exercises to county out loud to. Do the same exercises tapping your foot or bobbing your head.

![Musical notation images]

Once you develop a sense of where the down and up beats are and how to count quarter and eight notes, you'll have it forever. With that in mind, keep working with it until you are satisfied that you are understanding it and counting.

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**Chocolate Beer Cake**

(For the next bluegrass potluck!)

**Ingredients**

1 cup stout beer (or porter)  
½ cup butter (cubed)  
2 cups sugar  
¾ cup baking cocoa  
2 large eggs (beaten)  
2/3 cups sour cream  
3 teaspoons vanilla extract  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 ½ teaspoons baking soda

**Directions**

In small saucepan heat beer and butter until butter is melted. Remove from heat and whisk in sugar and cocoa until blended.

Combine eggs, sour cream and vanilla. Whisk into beer mixture.

Add flour and baking soda and stir until smooth. Pour into greased bundt cake pan.

Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes (or until toothpick comes out clean).

Cool. Remove from pan. Frost with cream cheese frosting.
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.