



Bluegrassin'

Volume 24 Issue 6

Nov.—Dec. 2022

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
President's Message	2
MRBA Christmas Party	4
Holiday Music Traditions	4
Gibbonsville	6-7
IBMA Awards	8
Meet Norman Blake	9
In Remembrance	10
Bluegrass Tidbits	11

Upcoming Bluegrass

Nov. 6: Johnny Campbell Band, Revolver Bar, Anaconda, 5-7 pm

Nov. 6: Bluegrass Jam & Potluck, First Presbyterian Church, Kalispell (540 South Main Street). Jam starts at 4 pm, break around 6 pm for a potluck and then jam to about 8 pm. Bring a dish to share.

Nov. 11: Lochwood Band, Highlander Brewery, Missoula, 6-8pm

Nov. 13: Infamous Stringdusters, Newberry, Great Falls

Nov. 16: Lochwood Band, Blacksmith Brewery, Stevensville, 6-8 pm

Dec. 4: Bluegrass Jam & Potluck, First Presbyterian Church, Kalispell (540 South Main Street). Jam starts at 4 pm, break around 6 pm for a potluck and then jam to about 8 pm. Bring a dish to share.

Dec. 9: Timber Rattlers Band, Lewis & Clark Brewing, Helena, 7 pm

Dec. 17: MRBA Christmas Party, Missoula (see pg. 4 for details)

Dec. 27 & 28: Lil Smokies, Great Northern Bar, Whitefish

Dec. 31: Lil Smokies, Wilma, Missoula

Tuesday jams in Whitefish: North Valley Music School (432 Spokane Avenue), 6 to 7:30 pm. (Call to RSVP—[\(406\) 862-8074](tel:4068628074))

Notes:

- 1) For ticket info & to confirm times, see venue websites
- 2) Send information about upcoming jams & band dates to newsletter editor



Happy Holidays!

from

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association



President's Message

Here we are in November, after a HOT summer and fall.

The Masonic Lodge in Missoula has graciously allowed us to use their building again for our Christmas party, annual meeting, and election of officers on Saturday, December 17. Doors open at 2 pm, the meeting and election of officers is at 4 pm, with the potluck at 6 pm.

The monthly winter jams are also scheduled for the THIRD Saturday of each month: January 21, February 18, and March 18. Doors open at 2 pm -- potlucks are at 6 pm. Come support our Bluegrass Association and join in the FUN.

P.S. We are saddened to hear of the loss of our friend MaryJane Cunningham from Columbia Falls. A celebration of life will be next spring. (See also tribute on Page 10.)

Mike



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.

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

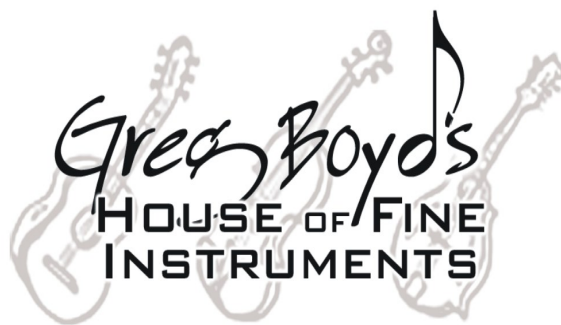
Get MRBA Newsletter by E-Mail

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.)



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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

Renewal _____ New Member _____

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



MRBA Christmas Party!

Saturday, December 17, 2022

LOCATION:

Masonic Lodge in Missoula
126 E Broadway Street



Doors open at 2:00 pm

The business meeting and election of officers will start at 4 pm

Potluck dinner will follow at 6 pm

We ask that everyone bring a dish to share for the potluck.

Jams will be held before and after dinner.

We look forward to seeing you!

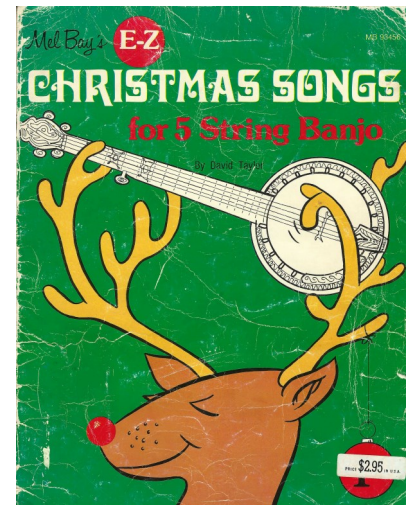
Holiday Music Traditions

By Kate McMahon

Music traditions span all different types of holidays across all cultures. Singing, chanting, bell ringing, drumming, strumming and orchestral arrangements are all part of holiday celebrations. From angels singing on high that first Christmas morning to streaming non-stop 24-hour Christmas stations, our collective memories about the yuletide season are steeped in song—including the following bluegrass songs:

- 1951, Bill Monroe recorded “Christmas Time’s A Coming,” and it has become a holiday classic.
- The song “Beautiful Star of Bethlehem” was written in a milk barn by a Tennessee farmer, R. Fisher Boyes in 1938. It has been recorded by various artists including the popular Ralph Stanley version.
- Still available on Amazon is the album, Christmas on the Mountain—A Bluegrass Christmas. It is a compilation of bluegrass artists such as Mac Wiseman, Doc Watson, and other artists with recordings of Christmas classics and originals songs such as The Osborne Brothers “Christmas Time on Rocky Top.”
- You can watch a Del McCoury recording of the “12 Days of Bluegrass Christmas” on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGnhiFL7xAA>)
- A more humorous parody of the “12 Days of Bluegrass Christmas” can be found in the publication Bluegrass Today, (<https://bluegrasstoday.com/the-twelve-days-of-bluegrass-christmas/>)

Of course, bluegrass renditions of classic songs are always favorites at bluegrass jams. One of the first banjo books I purchased was Mel Bay’s “Christmas Songs for the 5 String Banjo.” Whether playing at jam, a family sing-along, or other holiday get-togethers, there is no better way to share the holiday music tradition than with a touch of bluegrass.



Twin Bridges Bluegrass Festival



**June 28th—July 2nd, 2023, Madison County Fairground
Twin Bridges, Montana**

Come join us June 28th—July 2nd for the first annual Twin Bridges Bluegrass Festival! This brand new event will be held at the Madison County Fairground located in Twin Bridges, Montana. Twin Bridges is located right off of Hwy 41, just across the river from town. This event will feature 3 days of bluegrass music, a building for sewers and quilters to set up in for the entire festival if they want (with stage music piped in), and a horseshoe tournament with prize money. The stage shows will be held inside the 10,000 sq ft pavilion building which means you won't have to worry about things in case of rain, wind, sun or cold. The fairground features expansive areas for both RV and tent camping, a good number of electric hookups (available on a first come first served basis), easy access off a paved road, easy access to town, playgrounds for children, indoor night jamming areas, and a world class trout stream running the length of one side of the entire fairground. Both food and craft vendors will be available onsite. There will be bands coming from Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Washington, and you'll get a chance to listen to some groups you may never had heard before, as well as some you are familiar with. Twin Bridges is very centrally located being 2 ½ hours from Idaho Falls, 3 hours from Missoula, 2 hours from Helena, 1 hour from Butte, 1 ½ hours from Bozeman, 45 minutes from the Madison Valley, and ½ hour from Dillon. The bottom line is it's going to be a LOT of fun, so put it on your calendar and help us make this bluegrass festival a roaring success.

Bands

Kentucky Sky (Idaho), Lochwood (Montana),
Montana Standard (Montana),
The DeGroots (Montana),
Low Water String Band (Wyoming),
Runaway Train (Washington),
Oly Mountain Boys (Washington),
93 North (Idaho),
Mountain Strings (Idaho), plus more.

twinbridgesbluegrass.com



27TH GIBBONSVILLE CAMPOUT

Arlene Wolf
Don't miss it!!

The 27th bluegrass gathering at Broken Arrow was once again a huge success!! Pickers gathered on Thursday night to start the weekend off with a bang. More pickers arrived on Friday and Saturday, and there was music in the air from morning untilearly morning!

Highlights included old and new friends in the music circle, Johnny Campbell's mom Sue visiting from Nashville, Helen Smith and husband Lott back from their mission, Bill Molenda picking and singing late at night, Vicki Bodfish playing in the music circle, the Second Annual Corn Shucking Contest, a big beautiful full moon, tents full of great jams, and of course the fun ice cream social and the delicious potlucks.

The Second Annual Corn Shucking Contest was indeed a hoot! Six confident, strong bluegrass women took on the challenge (the men wimped out) and claimed their spots in front of seven ears of corn to shuck. The women included Janet Griswold, Anne Merrifield, Teri Llovet, Phyllis Erck, Emily Frank, and Charlene Anderson. Rules were explained, and each contestant stated their strategy for winning the contest. The contestants then showed off their corn-shucking muscles while the Corn Shucking Musicians played Shucking the Corn. Once through the tune, the contest began. Musicians continued to play while corn husks were flying and fingers were grabbing. Soon it all lay scattered on the ground, and Charlene Anderson was the first to raise her hands in victory.....but look....oh no.....we all saw that there was one unshucked ear of corn on the ground.....right off of Charlene's side of the table!!!! Contestants didn't need any more urging, and the contest was back on!! Musicians and shuckers all started back up right away and in a matter of a couple of seconds, Janet Griswold had her hands in the air for the official win. Her victory might relate to the fact that she had been canning corn all week.....she was in great corn shucking shape! Congrats to all the participants and to Janet, the Corn Shucking Queen. And thanks, Louise Steinway, for starting such a fun tradition. If you haven't seen the knee-slapping video, check out my Facebook page or Mike Conroy's page. Thank you, Dennis Vick, for such a fun video.

Thankful for Rose Marie Ramey and the Broken Arrow for providing such a great place to camp and pick. Thanks to all who traveled and participated in the fun, put up tents, played in the restaurant, brought items for the ice cream social and the potlucks, and joined in the fun in some way during the corn shucking event. We have the best bluegrass family ever. Let's do it again next year, same time (the weekend after Labor Day) and same place. See you then!!







2022—IBMA Award Winners

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR:

Billy Strings

VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR:

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver

INSTRUMENTAL GROUP OF THE YEAR:

Béla Fleck, My Bluegrass Heart

SONG OF THE YEAR:

"Red Daisy," Billy Strings

ALBUM OF THE YEAR:

My Bluegrass Heart, Béla Fleck

NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR:

Rick Faris

COLLABORATIVE RECORDING OF THE YEAR:

"In the Sweet By and By"

Dolly Parton with Carl Jackson, Larry Cordle, Bradley Walker, and Jerry Salley

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Norman Blake

Paul "Moon" Mullins

Peter Rowan

Bluegrass Wheel of Fortune

— — T T — E — A — — — E

Meet Hall of Fame Inductee—Norman Blake

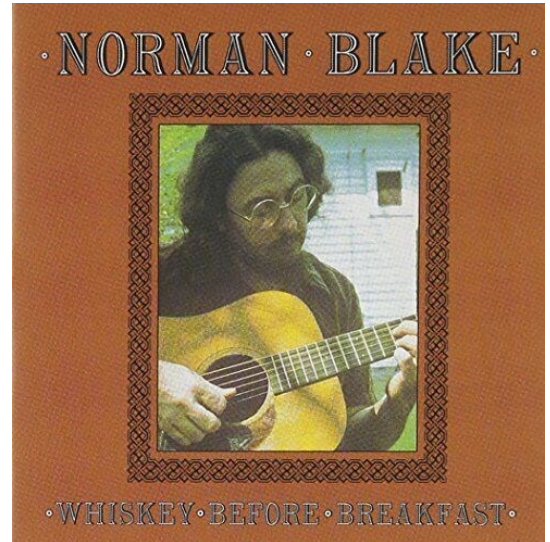
(Source: Wikipedia)

Blake was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and grew up in Sulphur Springs, Alabama. He learned guitar at age 11 or 12, then mandolin, dobro, and fiddle in his teens. When he was 16, he dropped out of school to play music professionally. In the 1950s, Blake joined the Dixieland Drifters and performed on radio broadcasts, then joined the Lonesome Travelers. When he was drafted in 1961, he served as an Army radio operator in the Panama Canal Zone. He started a popular band known as the Kobbé Mountaineers. A year later, while he was on leave, he recorded the album *Twelve Shades of Bluegrass* with the Lonesome Travelers.

After being discharged from the Army, Blake moved to Nashville and became a studio musician. For ten years, he toured and recorded with country singer Johnny Cash and continued to play with Cash intermittently over the next thirty. He met Nancy Short, a cellist with a classical music background who was playing in a folk group. He was asked by Bob Dylan to play on the country-folk album *Nashville Skyline*, then became a member of the house band on Johnny Cash's TV show. Kris Kristofferson, one of the guests, hired Blake to tour with him. Blake recorded with folk singer Joan Baez and appeared on her hit song "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down." In 1971, he became a member of the bluegrass group Aero-plain, led by John Hartford with fiddler Vassar Clements, a short-lived project.

In 1972, Blake recorded his first solo album, *Home in Sulphur Springs* (Rounder, 1972). Soon after his debut, he and Nancy recorded their first album, *The Fields of November* (Flying Fish, 1974), with Nancy on hillbilly cello. They married in 1975 and performed together for twenty years.

Although known as one of the most prominent steel-string guitar flatpickers, Blake is a multi-instrumentalist and vocalist. Other instruments he plays include the mandolin, 6-string banjo, fiddle, dobro, banjo and viola. He is known for his loose, right-hand guitar technique, which arose out of his mandolin technique.



REVOLVER

- JOHNNY CAMPBELL & PHYLLIS ARE BACK FROM NASHV'L -

BLUEGRASS

at The Revolver

221 East Park Ave.,
Anaconda, MT

**06
NOV
5-7PM**

Celebrating a year of
Sunday monthly live
bluegrass music at
The Revolver

4th generation,
Nashville fiddler
Johnny Campbell
brings authentic
traditional
bluegrass to the
stage. He'll be
joined by **Phyllis
Erck**, banjo; **Jeff
Trask**, mando;
Derek Hofer, guitar

In Remembrance: MaryJane Cunningham

In 2005, I moved to the Flathead Valley and was hoping to find some bluegrass pickers to jam with. The MRBA newsletter had a notice about a campout on Trumble Creek Road in Columbia Falls so I called the number to ask if I could attend. When MaryJane answered the phone she said with enthusiasm, “Everyone is welcome here!” She loved bluegrass and loved making new friends.

We fast became bluegrass buddies and traveled together in her camper truck to Pasture Pickin’ in Libby and the Spring Festival in Stevensville. MaryJane was a cautious driver, and we took our time getting places. But it didn’t matter how long the drive, it just gave us more time to talk about bluegrass, about our lives, and solve the world’s problem. There was a lot of laughter on those drives, and sometimes tears as we shared our stories.

Over the years we went to many MRBA Christmas parties and winter jams at Ruby’s. We would share a room with Annie the poodle and later Paddy the dog. MaryJane cherished these memories of old friends, bluegrass music, potlucks, and other escapades with her bluegrass family. She always told me her favorite thing from those weekends was the morning after the jam when we would join everyone at the big round table in the breakfast room at Ruby’s and tell stories and jokes. Lou and Ruby Erck would sometimes stop by the table and tell us we were having too much fun. That just brought a big smile to MaryJane’s face.

Of course, her favorite event was the annual campout at her home in Columbia Falls. What began about 20 years ago as a celebration of life for her husband Walter became an annual gathering of friends old and new. And when MaryJane befriended you, you became part of her extended family. She welcomed everyone with her warmth and generosity. From all your bluegrass friends and family, we will miss you, MaryJane.



Music Theory Resources

Whether you are a beginner or just need a refresher, learning some music theory can take you playing to the next level. Below are some helpful resources specifically for bluegrass.

<https://www.hangoutstorage.com/banjohangout.org/storage/attachments/beginning-bluegrass--463512252012.pdf>

<https://lessonswithmarcel.com/2019/01/23/bluegrass-basics-the-major-scale/>

<https://my.artistworks.com/blog/4-essential-bluegrass-guitar-scales>

BLUEGRASS TIDBITS

BLUEGRASS QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What is your favorite holiday tune to play at a jam or a sing-along?

BLUEGRASS QUOTE

“I always try to work with people who are better than me, so I can learn more.”
Bela Fleck

BLUEGRASS HUMOR

The notes E, G & B *walk into a bar.*
The bartender says, “Sorry, but we don't serve minors.”

BLUEGRASS WHEEL OF FORTUNE

Answer

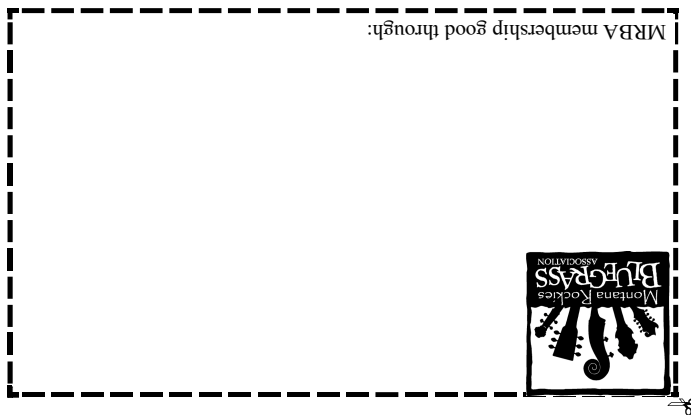
LITTLE MAGGIE



Please don't make me wear this to the
MRBA Christmas Party.

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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