



Oregon Bluegrass Association

www.oregonbluegrass.org

Bluegrass Express

Frank Nelson: OREGON BLUEGRASS PIONEER

by Mike Stahlman

Bluegrass pickers and fans from around Oregon and Washington have grown accustomed to a quiet, friendly man who embodies much of what we love about the music. For decades, Frank Nelson and his trademark smile have done much to quietly move the music forward, while giving all of us a connection to its genuine, more simple past. Like lots of folks living in the Northwest, Frank's story began far from here, in a place and time where singing and picking were a part of everyday life.

As we talked, his hands reached out and moved over the throttles and brake levers of those long-ago engines. He smiled and said, "It was sure fun."



Frank and Irene Nelson 1947
at home in Vanport

Much of the gospel music he heard there is played and sung today in our jams and concerts, and Frank says that it is still his very favorite.

Frank was born on February 14, 1920 in Sardis, Oklahoma, to Frank and Lulabel Nelson. His parents moved the family to Waleetka, Oklahoma soon after, and Frank grew up there, a child of the Depression and the Dust Bowl. He said that when he was about 6, he began going to an Assembly of God church with his family and friends, and that was where he learned to sing and to play the guitar.

He moved to Springfield, Missouri in 1937 to live with his sister and brother-in-law and he soon got a job with the Missouri Pacific Railroad, where he eventually became a locomotive hostler. His job was to bring the steam locomotives to the roundhouse and to clean and service them before their next run. He'd then take them back to the depot to be added to their train. As we talked, his hands reached out and moved

over the throttles and brake levers of those long-ago engines. He smiled and said, "It was sure fun."

While in Springfield, Frank met and married Irene, and they began a family, eventually having two daughters (Comella and Jonita), and a son (Ron). When WW II began, Frank and his family moved to Portland to find work in the defense industry. Frank worked for Columbia Aircraft, making aircraft parts until his induction into the Navy. The war ended before Frank was sent overseas, and he and his family decided to settle in Portland. The Nelsons lived in Vanport, a small city all its own, which was built in North Portland near the Columbia and Willamette Rivers to house defense and shipyard workers. Frank said that he began playing music with others living in Vanport and they soon formed several bands that played country and swing music, the music they had all grown up with. Two of the bands he played with, "The Tualatin Valley Boys" and "The Georgia Black Shirts," played shows in the area and traveled as far as the Oregon coast, playing once a week at the Salmon River Barn Dance in Lincoln City. He particularly remembered two of his band mates, Woody Ball and Mike Franconi. Ball was a Native American who Frank remembered as having a great voice and being a fine guitar and steel guitar player. Franconi was an accomplished fiddle player who also played classical violin with the Portland Symphony. Frank played



FEBRUARY 23-26, 2012

The Hyatt Regency, Bellevue

"Monroe roadtrip"

celebrating the international journey of Bluegrass Music

Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder Fri
Tim O'Brien Sat
Greensky Bluegrass Sat
Claire Lynch Sat/Sun
Väsen (Sweden) Sat/Sun
Junior Sisk & Ramblers Choice Fri/Sat
Red Wine (Italy) Fri/Sat
Frank Solivan & Dirty Kitchen Th/Fri
The Wilders Fri/Sat
The Kruger Brothers (Switzerland) Th/Sat
Black Prairie Fri
Darol Anger, Bruce Molsky, Rushad Eggleston Sat/Sun
Bluegrass 45 (Japan) Fri/Sat
The Grascals Sat
The Deadly Gentlemen Th/Fri
Druhá Tráva (Czech Republic) Fri/Sat
Joe Craven Sat
The Hillbenders Th/Fri
Della Mae Th/Sat/Sun
Hot Buttered Rum Fri/Sat
The Sweetback Sisters Fri/Sat
Jim Gaudet & the Railroad Boys Fri/Sat
Abby Mae & the Homeschool Boys
The Titans of Twang
Cahalen Morrison & Eli West
The Anderson Family

and hey, probably a few surprises because that's the Wintergrass way...

Plus!

*Dances, Jamming, Workshops,
Activities for kids, shopping and Lots to learn!*

Wintergrass Intensives - Feb. 23

Vocal Harmony

w/Frank Solivan, Annalise Tornfelt, Amanda Smith, Martino Coppo

Guitar - Kenny Smith • **Banjo** - Jens Kruger

Fiddle - Betse Ellis • **Mandolin** - Andy Leftwich

Recording Acoustic Instruments in Your Home Studio - Joe Weed

D'Addario Wintergrass Youth Academy - Feb. 23-24

Wintergrass Youth Orchestra - Feb. 25-26

Wintergrass Educator Seminars - Feb. 24

WWW.WINTERGRASS.COM

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Wintergrass

POB 2024

Milton WA 98354

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cover story: Frank Nelson, Irene and Sonny Hammond



Chuck Masi takes on the fiddle



How could you not have a good time with these two around?



Matt Snook shares more music theory and general bluegrass wisdom. Photo by Della Perry.



Be sure to stop in the OBA suite at RiverCity and Wintergrass to keep your fun meters set to max!

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Oregon Bluegrass Association

Bluegrass Express

Bluegrass Express is a quarterly newsletter dedicated to informing members of the Oregon Bluegrass Association about local, regional and national bluegrass issues, events and opportunities.

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The Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA)

PO Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207 is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation founded in 1982. Its purpose is to promote, encourage, foster and cultivate the preservation, appreciation, understanding, enjoyment, support and performance of bluegrass and other closely related music.



O B A Membership & Ad Information



The OBA Board

Membership Information

The OBA Board of Directors invites you to join the OBA and to participate in its many activities. Our membership benefits include a subscription to the quarterly Bluegrass Express, frequent mailings about events, and ticket discounts to Northwest bluegrass events. Annual membership dues are \$20 for a General Member, \$50 for Supporting Performers and \$100 for a Contributing Business Sponsor (see page 12), as well as other options. To join, complete the application on the back cover and mail with your check to: *Oregon Bluegrass Association, P.O. Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207.*

Website

Features include a calendar, excerpts from past issues of the Express, and links for local bands. Come visit us online! Visit the OBA web page today! www.oregonbluegrass.org.

Articles & Editorial Deadlines

The OBA Board invites you to submit letters, stories, photos and articles to the Bluegrass Express. Published files remain in our archives and art is returned upon request.

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Mailed on July 1; Reserve by June 1, Copy deadline June 15

Fall (October, November, December)
Mailed October 1; Reserve by September 1, Copy deadline September 15

Sponsored Jams

The OBA sponsors jam sessions in Portland, Roseburg, Klamath Falls as well as Pendleton. Check the Scheduled Jams section of this issue for a complete listing of these and other jams throughout Oregon. If you are interested in organizing an OBA-sponsored

jam, contact any of the Board members or Express Staff at the phone numbers or email addresses listed on this page and on page 3.

Advertising

Your Express advertising will directly reach over 600 households of bluegrass enthusiasts while helping OBA to keep publishing this valuable resource. Tear sheets or extra copies of the Express are available. We appreciate your support of the Oregon Bluegrass Association.

Please contact Christine Palmer via email at chrispalmer@qwest.net for information about placing an ad for your music-related business in the OBA Bluegrass Express.

Payment

The OBA prefers to receive advertising payment in advance. We would like one-year contracts six months in advance, and we will bill for the next six months.

Please make checks payable to:
The Oregon Bluegrass Association
Mail to PO Box 1115, Portland,
OR 97207

Bluegrass Express Advertising Rates

(size)	(dimension)	(two + issues)	
Full Page	8x10"	\$125.00	\$112.00
Half Page horiz.	8x5"	\$70.00	\$65.00
Half Page vert.	4x10"	\$70.00	\$65.00
Quarter Page	4x4.875"	\$50.00	\$45.00
Eighth Page	3.875x2.375"	\$30.00	\$25.00

Add 3% for late payment.

Ad Specs:

When submitting an advertisement to be in the Bluegrass Express, please be sure the file is black and white, 300 dpi, and in either PDF, TIFF, or JPEG format. If you have questions about your file, email Christine Palmer at chrispalmer@qwest.net.

Contact the OBA: 503 321-5077
www.oregonbluegrass.org

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The OBA holds board elections each April as individual terms expire. The Board of Directors invites you to join our monthly meetings. We welcome your visit and ideas, opinions and proposals. Or, just come to see what we're doing! We generally meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The location is subject to change. Call us or email any board member for time, location and directions.



From the president

Suite memories...Let's make some more!!

Happy New Year to you all! Last year, we thanked you for the "suite" success of our Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA) hospitality suites at RiverCity and Wintergrass (See last year's Jan/Feb/Mar 2011 issue). You supported us by driving the jams, sharing in the showcases and helping with our hospitality. Overall, our well-attended suites were a hit with resounding positive feedback. So, whether you came for the bluegrass and stayed for the beer or vice versa – we are asking for your support again.



Colby Buswell, president *picture taken at KBOO*

The winter solstice passed and the days are getting longer. I hope you all found your holiday cheer, but if you haven't we have something for you. It's RiverCity time, folks! January 6 – 8th at the Red Lion on the River at Jantzen Beach (go to www.rivercitybluegrass.com). Our OBA suite is set and we've got bands lined up to showcase. Lagunitas Brewing is providing the beer. Donations support the OBA directly.. This year we have something special in store. We're broadcasting KBOO's Music from the True Vine live from the suite on Saturday morning, January 7th, 9am-Noon. Bluegrass favorite Jackstraw will be playing an acoustic set and Sugarpine will be showcasing too. We're also working on a national act to join us for the radio show. So tune in according to your location: Corvallis 100.7 FM • Hood River 91.9 FM • Portland 90.7 FM or stream it live at kboo.fm. As always in the suite, there will be jamming. So come on by for a tune or two, no matter what the hour. We'll be there for you.

We have more in store for you at Wintergrass (Hyatt Regency, Bellevue, WA, February 23rd – 26th). Festival details at www.acousticssound.org. The OBA will be there in full force with bands already lined up to showcase.

Remember, it takes a ton of work to put on these two big festivals with national acts, and more importantly, loads of local support – bands, volunteers and fans alike. Bring your friends or make some new ones. We can't wait to see you there and show you some Oregon hospitality.

Check out our website at oregonbluegrass.org or "Like" us on Facebook to stay up to date on the details.

Keep on pickin' toward enlightenment!

 Cheers,
Colby

WHAT'S PLAYING ON THE RADIO?

Local Radio Bluegrass and Country Listings.

Albany/Corvallis-KBOO,
Broadcast from Portland, can be heard
at 100.7 FM. See under Portland, below.

Astoria-KMUN, 91.9 FM.
Some syndicated programming.
503 325-0010.
"Café Vaquera,"
Tuesdays 9-11pm, Bluegrass/Old Timey
Western/ Folk with Calamity Jane.
CafeVaquera@hotmail.com.
"Shady Grove,"
Saturdays 7 - 9pm. Regular folk program.
Monday thru Friday 10am - noon, with
bluegrass included.

Columbia Gorge-KBOO,
broadcast from Portland, can be heard
at 92.7 FM. See under Portland, below.

Corvallis-KOAC, 550 AM,
Syndicated public radio with some blue-
grass included in regular programming.
541 737-4311.

Eugene-KLCC, 89.7 FM,
Local broadcast. 541 726-2224.
Mixed format, "Saturday Café,"
Saturdays 11am - Noon
and "The Backporch,"
9 - 10pm, Saturdays.

Eugene-KRVM, 91.9 FM,
"Routes & Branches" 3 - 5pm,
"Acoustic Junction" 5 - 7pm, Saturdays,
plays bluegrass along w/ other acoustic music.
"Miles of Bluegrass" is 7 - 9pm, Mondays.
www.krvm.org 541 687-3370.

Pendleton-KWHT, 103.5 FM,
"Bushels of Bluegrass," Sundays 9 - 11pm.
contact Phil Hodgen 541 276-2476.

Portland-KBOO, 90.7 FM,
"Music from the True Vine,"
9am - Noon, Saturdays.
Other folk programs also include bluegrass.
503 231-8187.

Please send ideas, feedback,
commentary and hate mail to:

Colby Buswell *President*
The Oregon Bluegrass Association
PO Box 1115 Portland, OR 97207
president@oregonbluegrass.org



Frank Nelson: OREGON BLUEGRASS PIONEER

Cover story continued from page 1

by Mike Stahlman

guitar and sang with the groups and he remembered many jams in Vanport where the doors and windows would be left open and the neighbors would all gather to listen.

After an unusually warm spring and heavy rains in 1948, the rivers around Vanport rose to flood levels and on May 25, the levee protecting the town gave way. Fearing that the levee wouldn't hold, Frank had driven across town that afternoon to rent another house and was returning to get his family, when he heard that the levee had failed. He raced back, afraid for what he'd find, but thankfully Irene and the children had gotten out safely and made it to higher ground. The Nelsons watched the water cover their home and realized they'd lost all of their belongings and the family dog. Frank said that all that mattered to him was that his family was safe, and he showed me a small, souvenir room thermometer stamped, "Vanport,



Frank with mandolin



Frank Nelson 2011

Frank just smiled and said, "Every penny got paid back."

Oregon." He said that it is the only possession from Vanport he still has.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Frank built a reputation as one of the area's best finish carpenters, and many of the finest homes in Portland, as well as businesses and churches, are filled with Frank's craftsmanship. By this time, he and Irene had built a large repertoire of duets they sang together, and they often hosted jams at their house. Their daughter Comella brought a friend, Sonny Hammond, to meet them in the mid-60s and the four of them began singing and playing together regularly, doing old country and bluegrass songs. Before his death in 1999, Sonny often talked of how wonderfully Frank, Irene and Comella sang together, and how genuine and pure their voices were.

When a group of Oregon musicians, including Sonny, Judy Paulsen, Steve Waller, Fred and Sue Langner, Hollis Taylor, Steve Reischman, and Ian Joel, first started discussing the possibility of forming a bluegrass association, Frank and Irene were first on the list of those asked to participate. Frank remembered being at the first meeting and seconding the motion bringing the Oregon Bluegrass Association (OBA) into being. The love Frank and Sonny had for bluegrass gospel music was the driving

force behind the new organization's first public event in 1982, an OBA-sponsored gospel show. Over the years, Frank and Irene were always generous in their support of the OBA and they twice loaned the organization money to fund concerts, one featuring Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys at Grant High School, and another featuring Ralph Stanley and his band. They also helped bands fund recording projects on several occasions and when asked about his generosity, Frank just smiled and said, "Every penny got paid back."

After Irene's death, Frank met and married Harriet in 2001 and she has proven to be as much a fan as Frank, accompanying him to countless shows, festivals and jams over the years. Frank and Harriet don't simply go to "quite a few shows" or "a lot of festivals." They've been fans who have gone to nearly all of them. Big venues, small venues, far ones, near ones, famous bands, unknown bands—there they are, cheering the musicians on. Whether an audience of 500 or 5, Frank and Harriet can usually be found in the front row, smiling and clapping—enjoying the music they love.

In preparing for this article, I called a number of the "first generation" pickers from the area and asked for their thoughts about Frank and what he has



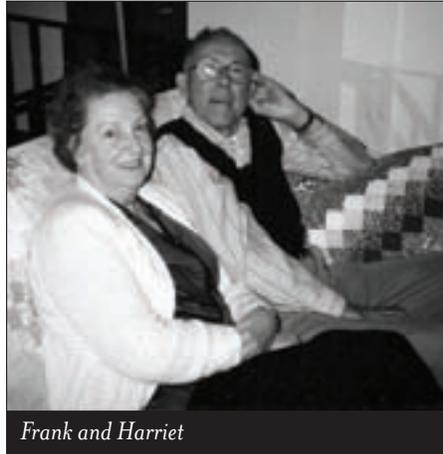
Frank Nelson: OREGON BLUEGRASS PIONEER

meant to them.

Jim Seafeldt said, "The first thing that comes to mind about Frank is how welcoming and friendly he has always been. When you walk into a room he always smiles and grabs you and makes you feel like you're his favorite person in the world. There's a sheer joy about him—he's always smiling and happy to see you." At Frank's 90th birthday jam two years ago, Jim remembered Frank at the center of the jam at 2 a.m., still going strong and picking, while others were starting to leave.

Paul and Lois Smith remembered when they first met Frank and Irene at the old Clark College Festival in the early 1980s. They weren't sure about bringing their small children to the festival and they recalled how Frank and Irene insisted they do so, and then helped them with child care to make it easier. Paul talked of how Frank has always bought used instruments and then loaned them out long term to pickers in need of a good instrument. Paul's 1954 Kay bass came from Frank, who, hearing that Paul needed a bass, insisted that he try it out and then take it home with him. After Paul tried to pay him for it for over two years, Frank finally accepted some money, an amount Paul figures was about half of what it was worth. Paul said, "I just want to thank him for his loyalty to the music and his friendship to everyone. He's always wanted to help and be a friend to everyone."

Ian Joel remembered the first time he met Frank at the old Banjo and Fiddle Shop, which Ian owned and operated on SE Milwaukie Avenue in Portland. He said that Frank brought Sonny Hammond with him to a jam there and they sang and picked together. Ian said, "That was in the early 1970s. Sonny was learning to play the mandolin and singing, and the rest is history." Ian added, "Down through the years Frank has been the most consistent supporter of our kind of music; that's the thing



Frank and Harriet

that's the most dear to my heart. He's brought a lot of people to the music—he's a treasure."

Steve Reischman said, "Frank has always been like a patriarch to the music. There was a time when the bluegrass community felt more tight knit and he and Irene were like the center of it." Steve remembered going to festivals in the 1970s and 1980s and always looking up Frank's campsite first and starting to jam there. He said the jamming was always good and many friends would meet there first and he knew if he wandered off as the evening wore on, his young son Will would be safe staying there until he got back. Steve said he will always remember Frank's kindness and friendship, and how many people were welcomed into the music by him.

Dave Elliot said, "Frank has introduced so many people to the music because he's so approachable and friendly. I've never heard him tell someone they have to play it a certain way. He's just been a huge help to people trying to get into the music." Dave said that in the 1960s and 1970s, Frank began hosting jams when there weren't many around, and it gave the small group of pickers in the area a place to meet and share their music. Dave remembered how Frank would buy used mandolins, guitars, banjos and basses from the want ads, and then give them or sell them cheaply to hard-up pickers. He said that his first good guitar and Sonny Hammond's first mandolin came

*"A man is judged
by the company
he keeps."*

from Frank's kindness. Dave said that one of his favorite memories is of a jam at Frank's house after the Bill Monroe concert in 1982. Dave remembered Bill, Wayne Lewis, Butch Robbins and Kenny Baker all jamming in Frank's living room until the wee hours of the morning. After Bill went out to their bus to sleep, Frank and Kenny Baker stood in Frank's kitchen for hours, sharing a libation and many stories from the "old days." Dave said, "Frank made Kenny feel right at home and they really hit it off."

I remember first meeting Frank in 1974, when Sonny Hammond took me to Frank's house to meet him and play some tunes. Frank, Irene and Sonny sang some beautiful trios together, and being new to town, I felt like I was really picking with some "big leaguers." Frank generously complimented me on some banjo instrumental I played and I remember feeling ten feet tall, to receive a compliment from such a good musician. All these years later I still remember that evening, how good Irene's pie tasted, and Frank Nelson's kindness to a "greenhorn" he'd barely met.

There is an old saying, "A man is judged by the company he keeps." For those of us lucky enough to have picked and laughed and shared a friendship with Frank Nelson for all these years, we have been in good company indeed.





Sonny Hammond Memorial

Gospel Show

Featuring the talents of

Roundhouse

The Mud Springs Gospel Band

*Concert will include a tribute to bluegrass family members
who passed away during the last year*

Saturday, January 28th

7:00 pm

Freedom Foursquare Church

660 SE 160th, Portland, OR 97233

Members \$10

Non-Members \$12

Check the OBA website for advance tickets

www.oregonbluegrass.org

A benefit for the Oregon Bluegrass Association

Big Fiddle Little Fiddle

by Chuck Masi

The problem with being a bass player, besides having to lug the darned thing around, is that in any circle they only need one. Get to the jam and there's already a bass player there and you find yourself sitting in the corner. So I figured it was time to learn another instrument. Sure, I can strum some guitar chords, but so can most everybody else. I could tell that there were already plenty of folks learning banjo and it's pretty obvious that all the cool kids play mando. But I noticed that there weren't that many fiddle players.

While visiting my fiancé's sister in Ann Arbor, Michigan I got a chance to actually meet a fiddle. It was a shiny violin that Justin Ault later described as "certainly having a lot of lacquer." I took it home and tried it out and it sounded just terrible ... lots of scratchy screechy noise and that crazy stick to deal with.

Well, I have been playing bass since I was a kid, so I kind of know how to play that well enough to get by most of the time. But picking up a new instrument at 40 years old is a real challenge. I found that the few fiddle players around have been playing since they were young. They sound great and have a fluid, natural style as a result of years and years of playing. Little ten-year-old kids at festivals who can totally rip it up.

After spending many hours watching online lessons and practicing what I could, I went in search of a teacher. Walking downtown by the library one day I heard a busker playing a version of Red Haired Boy. He was a colorful character and sounded pretty good. I gave him a buck and got his email address. He had a lot of great tips and ideas for me and I took lessons with him for about a year.

As a beginning fiddle player I've had to learn how to stand and move, and how to deal with the bow. I have learned about using the pentatonic scale, notes in the key, and melodies. I found out that it will take years before I am able to competently pick with others, and even then there will be scary keys like



But really, I have found a lot of happiness in learning to play fiddle.

Chuck Masi still plays bass and sings a soulful high lonesome tenor with Stumbleweed. When not playing bluegrass, Chuck also teaches third grade in Portland.

the dreaded B and E. Fortunately I've had a lot of encouragement from other pickers (Thanks Claire!), and the occasional decently played break can be very uplifting.

This is all much different than the simple carefree life that I had as a bass player, in which my main tasks were to pay attention to the soloist and not play any wrong notes. It's been a humbling two years. I listen to lots of fabulous fiddle players and dream of maybe someday being able to play like that. If only I had hours and hours a day to practice but family, rehearsals, and

teaching a class of third graders takes up much of my time.

But really, I have found a lot of happiness in learning to play fiddle. It's a tough instrument to be sure, but when I can sit down and really get some practice time it is so satisfying. I enjoy the focus and concentration that I have to put into it. It is one of those things where the work produces noticeable improvement.

I did eventually get a somewhat better instrument (with less shiny lacquer) and that made a big difference! Now I just need another ten years of practice.





**WENATCHEE RIVER
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JUNE 15-17, 2012

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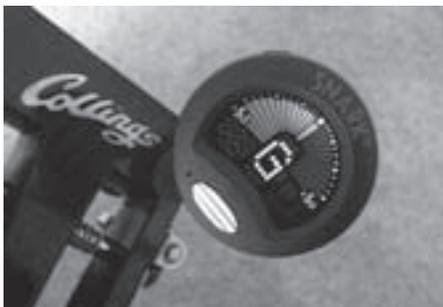
Back in the good old days we tuned our instruments to a tuning fork or a harmonica. Many people just tuned to themselves. This is why the keys in some old recordings are difficult to duplicate. The band could be sharp or flat but at least they were all the same.

My son's college punk rock band did not even bother tuning to each other. They tuned to themselves before a show without any collaboration.

I HAVE OWNED AND USED THE FOLLOWING TUNERS:

- Korg
- Intellitouch (three models)
- Medial
- Planet Wave
- Boss (least accurate)
- Peterson (flip and clip strobe, most accurate).
- Snark

We live in a time of inexpensive and easy-to-use tuners. At the 2011 Puget Sound Guitar Workshop I began noticing musicians using the Snark Tuner. The popularity of the Snark and the rave reviews of its owners intrigued me.



THE SNARK COMES IN THREE FLAVORS FOR BLUEGRASS PLAYERS:

SNARK SN1 (blue)

Clip-on chromatic electronic tuner, optimized for guitar and bass.

SNARK SN2 (red)

All instrument clip-on chromatic electronic tuner.

SNARK SN5 (black)

No frills clip-on chromatic electronic tuner for guitar, bass and violin.

I was able to obtain three Snarks and test them.

I tested the Snark SN1 (blue) and the Snark SN5 (black). My mandolin-playing, "Steer Crazy" band mate, Glenn Denison, tested the Snark SN2 (red).

COLOR MATTERS

The bright Snark colors are more than just attractive. Each color is an indicator of design features. The major difference between the red and blue Snark is that the red Snark has two modes. It can sense the vibration at the clip or it can sense ambient sound through a built-in microphone. In the vibration mode, if it gets turned on accidentally (or you forget to turn it off), it will turn off automatically after a couple of minutes of not hearing any sound.

However, in the microphone mode, if there is enough ambient noise to confuse the electronics, it may not turn off for a very long time. That will eat batteries. If you hear of anyone else having this complaint, perhaps have them check their switch setting to insure that it is in the vibration mode.

The blue Snark has the same performance as the red, except it does not have a microphone mode. If you can clip it onto your instrument conveniently, it will work just fine. If you can't, then the red Snark with its microphone mode will tune without contact to the instrument but just be sure to turn it off when you are finished.

TESTING

I tested the Snark Tuners when I changed the strings on my Dobro. My "control" for the test was a Peterson strobe tuner. The Peterson is a remarkably accurate strobe tuner. The Peterson is also complicated and expensive. I tested the blue and black Snarks on my Dobro. This was an applied research project. The purpose was to compare the simple Snark to a more expensive and sophisticated tuner.

The Snarks' performances were similar when compared to the strobe tuner. The blue and black Snarks had virtually the same pitch readings. This consistency is a good sign of quality. The readings were also very close to the Peterson. This was



a surprising result. When you consider the Snark is half the cost of the Peterson clip-on tuner, the value is amazing. The Snarks were also easier to read than most other tuners on the market.

SNARK PROS

- Simple to use
- Easier to read than other tuners
- Accurate
- Inexpensive
- Great colors

SNARK CONS

- Large size
- Not compact for case storage

CONCLUSION

The Snark tuners are accurate, inexpensive and easy to use. I can recommend them without hesitation.

Tuner Batteries

Changing tuner batteries should be a regular habit. Every tuner works better with a fresh battery. The flagship of the tuner battery fleet is the 2032 3-volt lithium battery. This coin-sized battery is easily obtainable, but relatively expensive. You can find them in stores in Portland in the \$4.00-\$5.00 range. You can obtain them much cheaper at battery stores. The Battery Plus store in Portland offers the 2032 for about a dollar each.

The low price allows me to carry extra 2032s in my guitar case and I regularly hand them out to friends. So get a supply for your instrument case and change your tuner battery before it goes dead.



Recently, someone wrote on the NW Bluegrass Yahoo list about Northern Departure – a group of dynamic young bluegrass musicians. In a band competition against exclusively rock bands, these young men wowed the surprised audience.

Clyde Clevenger answered with his own story about the effects of real music.

Five or six years ago, the Emerald Valley Boys – Chuck Holloway, Ken Cartwright, Nikki (Clevenger) and I – played a job at the Chemawa Indian School in Salem. This is a boarding school for kids who have been kicked out of their reservation schools. A tough crowd.

The coordinator told us not to worry about a sound system, as theirs was “state of the art.” So we just brought our 4033 and a microphone for the bass. Well, it was state of the art, 30 years ago, before phantom power. Oh, and by the way, there was only one working line coming from the stage. As we



Clyde Clevenger, Chuck Holloway and Dennis Berck perform with “Old Circle” at the East-side Bluegrass series

Photo by Kathy Boyd

were going on stage, the principal told us the crowd might be a little hostile. They had booed an Indian rap band off the stage the previous week.

So there we were, one small amp and a crowd that was going to hate everything we did. We were checking our routes to the emergency exits.

We kicked off with “Remington Ride” – and they loved it. They were clapping and dancing. They loved everything we did, even the slow songs, and they

sang along with the “O Brother” songs we did.

We played “Foggy Mountain Breakdown” for our encore, and a very large, long-haired young man with a big scar on his left cheek jumped on stage and was dancing right in front of the mic.

I was a little surprised at the response we got and asked some of the kids about and it – and they all said they liked it because it was real music.

Well, that works for me.

Oregon Bluegrass Association



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Information & registration, contact Casey Henry

murphymethod.com/camps.cfm

themurphymethod@gmail.com or 615.513.8620

Local contact: Patty Spencer (patty@freshairsash.com)

Oregon Bluegrass  *Association*

I first met the members of this outrageous band at the Father's Day Festival in Grass Valley, CA in June of 2010. This was one happening week. The best part about it, at least for me, is that the CBA (California Bluegrass Association) hosts a camp 3 days before the festival and the headliners teach the classes, camp with, jam with and hang out with the campers. This particular year, as you might guess, Frank and his boys were headliners.

By the end of camp, classes, staff/band performances and lots of all-night jamming with them, it was abundantly clear that we were being taught by and playing with an immensely talented emerging bluegrass group.

If you have ever had the privilege of seeing Frank live, you have seen that he thoroughly throws all his heart, soul and passion into every song. Now, if you ever have the good fortune of being invited to a personal house concert, where Frank and the boys cook you dinner, schmooze with you while cooking, and then give you an "in your face" concert, do whatever it takes to get there! Frank is known for his gourmet cooking and seems to love preparing as much as performing. I have heard several people ask him if he leaves the kitchens at these house concerts really dirty and is that where he came up with the name. He just looks up and grins saying, "Naw, I just love getting down and dirty in the kitchen!"

The band's newest member, Dan Booth, was my bass workshop instructor last year at camp. He is incredibly talented on several instruments and has a wicked lonesome voice. Dan is an asset to any band in every way. He is also a great teacher who has taught and encouraged me tremendously. His mentoring and support helped me get



Photo courtesy of Frank Solivan

*"Naw, I just love getting
down and dirty in
the kitchen!"*

started in writing a dozen songs this year and become a valuable member in a really good bluegrass band. If you ever get a chance to take a bass workshop with him, don't pass it up. The band's "flat picker" extraordinaire is Lincoln Meyers. Mike Munford, holy smoking moly on the banjo, is just plain awesome.

O.K. So I want to actually write a bit about the DK CD. I have literally played mine to death, yet it still lives! As a matter of fact, last year driving to Wintergrass from Vancouver, a blizzard set in and it was a white out for over two hours. I saw 5 wrecks in 5 minutes in Chehalis alone. I happened to be listening to my DK CD when the storm hit. It ended up playing over and over because I was so freaked out by the weather I was afraid to take my hands off the wheel. I guess it was an omen,

because that night quite unexpectedly, Frank showed up in the OBA (Oregon Bluegrass Association) suite. He had flown in to surprise his father, Frank Sr. (a really sweet guy who has mentored and supported many children for years, heading up "Kids on Bluegrass" in California). We all had a great time jamming with him throughout the weekend. The whole CD is a driving force that grabs your bluegrass soul from the first song to the last.

Don't miss the opportunity to pick up their great CD at Wintergrass this year, and say hello and get to know these guys. This newly planted Pacific NW bluegrass gal is excited to have Dirty Kitchen here in our neck of the woods and proud to call them my friends. Come by and say hello in the OBA suite while you're at it, and have a great festival!



Q: How do you define perfect pitch?

A: When you toss a banjo in the dumpster, and it hits five others as it lands!

Yuk, yuk. And so it goes. And the banjo players laugh along. After all, it would be unkind to call attention to the obvious question

Q: "Why are there so many banjo jokes?"

A: jealousy.

Yep, other musicians are just downright jealous of banjo pickers, because they just make it seem so easy to get two of the things that make bluegrass so moving – drive and syncopation. I'll leave the discussion about "what is drive?" to contentious online forums, but... why is syncopation so much easier for banjo players?

My grandpa (a banjo player) would often tell me as he helped me with some ridiculously simple chore: "You're trying to fit a square peg in a round hole!" And as soon as I saw the technique, the previously difficult task became as "easy as falling down" another of grandpa's many aphorisms.

Well, banjo players are forced to do just that the entire time they're picking! By adopting a three-finger roll as their basic pattern, and playing music in 2/4 timing, there is a guaranteed mismatch. Syncopation just...happens! In fact it even gets in the way, giving three-finger

banjo a steep learning curve for even the simplest of tunes. It takes many hours of frustrating practice to learn to do it on the fly.

But on the far side of all that practice they can look forward to...banjo jokes. Because now they have – without thinking about it – the drive and syncopation that fiddlers and flatpickers must continually strive for built right into everything they do. Banjo players get the last laugh!

Meanwhile the dobro players, at least, can capitalize on the same thing. Use those three fingers to syncopate even the most mundane melody. Let's take a simple tune with a rather bland opening phrase like *Eight More Miles To Louisville* (EMMTL). Figure 1 shows the simple run from G to C, and then back down again. Very straight, very boring. Pickers often put in some syncopation to give the music some "oomph" (yep, from grandpa). The second line of Figure 1 shows a syncopated version that would probably give a flatpicker fits. Not only is it hard to read from the music, but difficult to conceive and accomplish during a jam. But dobro players can get this syncopation for free.

For example, the tab in Figure 2 shows some reverse roll picking patterns for dobro players. This common pattern can be played while the left hand frets the melody of EMMTL. In Figure 3 you'll see the tab, which just happens to pick the melody with the fitful flatpicking

syncopation from before. Look at the third string and you'll see the melody camouflaged within all those notes. And all the dobro player had to do was stick with a reverse roll while finding the melody. So simple – syncopation for free!

But some of you may now be mumbling that acronym from the temperance movement: TANSTAAFL – There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch. And maybe it holds true in music as well. What I didn't mention is that the dobro player must practice the reverse roll until it can be done without thinking, while you're talking (or singing), while watching TV. People should get up and move to a different part of the bus, because you practice it even without knowing it.

Then, and only then, will the dobro player be able to pull it off smoothly during a jam, making the guitar and mando folks seem rooted to the down-up square rhythm we all count on. Unless they've been working on crosspicking, which means that they've also discovered the secret to getting syncopation for free – untold hours of practice.

Matt teaches banjo & dobro in Coos Bay, Corvallis and Portland, Oregon.

Send messages to matt@greenbeard.us.

Eight More Miles to Louisville

Straight road to Louisville:

T	0	2	4	5	4	2	0
A							
B							

5 Syncopated potholes on the way to Louisville:

T	0	2	4	5	4	2	0
A							
B							

Figure 1: The opening phrase for *Eight More Miles To Louisville* is a simple run from G up to C, and back down again. The second run is one of many ways to syncopate for added interest.



Photo credit is Della Perry.



Some reverse rolls for dobro

Figure 2: Here are some simple reverse rolls that can be played on the dobro. "Reverse" rolls typically start by picking from Thumb-Index-Middle, and then turn back as Middle-Index-Thumb.

Eight More Miles to Louisville

Figure 3: Here is just that opening line from EMMTL, embedded within the reverse roll picking pattern on dobro. The syncopation heard is just like the second line of Figure 1, but appears naturally when the reverse roll is used. Syncopation for free! Just for fun I repeated the run on the bass G string as well.



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DAMASCUS, OR: NO APRON STRINGS JAM
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1:30 - 2:30 workshop, 3-6 open jam. For women to gather and help each other to improve musically. (I will have coffee/snacks available) If interested, send me your email address and I will put you on the contact list.

For Information: Sharon queen.sas@juno.com

KLAMATH FALLS: OBA JAM

Sunday Jam in Klamath Falls.

For specific information contact Ben at 541-783-3478 or benfcocker@gmail.com

PORTLAND: OBA JAM - First Sunday of every month October- April: Portland Area

OBA JAM, 12:30-4:30 pm

Portland Audubon Center, 5151 NW Cornell Road, Portland. Large gathering of OBA supporters, intermediate and advanced, small donation requested to cover room rental.

For Information: Audubon 503-292-6855
email: powellR5923@msn.com

PORTLAND: OBA OFFKEY EASY BLUEGRASS JAM

Every Sunday 2-5pm, at Biddy McGraw's, NE 60th and Glisan. Remember our motto: No one is too crummy to play with us!

For Information: Randy and Tony offkey@oregonbluegrass.org

ROSEBURG: OBA ROSEBURG JAM - 3rd Sunday, Year Round, Evergreen Grange, 5361 Grange, Rd. Take Exit 119 off I-5. Just past the 2nd stop light, turn left on Grange Rd. The Grange is down 1/2 mile on the left.

BLUEGRASS JAM - all levels encouraged. Come to play or just listen and dance to the music. Coffee provided. Snacks to share. Donations accepted.

For Information: 541-679-0553 or email: liz@cmspan.net

TUALATIN: JAM - Third Sunday of the month. 3-6 pm; Winona Grange, 8340 SW Seneca Street, Tualatin. Bluegrass, Old Time, Old Country music jam. \$1 donation requested

For Information: <http://www.winonagrangegrange271.org>
email: Loyce Martinazzi at loycem@gmail.com

WILLIAMS: PANCAKES & JAM

No Jam July and August - see you in September!
Second Sunday of the month. Pancake Breakfast: 8:30-11 am, Bluegrass Jam: 11 am- 1 pm. Williams Grange, 20100 Williams Hwy. A great family atmosphere, organic food & strong coffee! Oh yeah, and some fine music, to boot!

For Information: Kim 541-846-6345

Monday

PORTLAND: RAMBLING BLUEGRASS JAM

Every Monday night all year.

For Information: see our website for information on location, time, contact, etc. Friendly!

For Information: www.ramblingbluegrass.org

PORTLAND: MISSISSIPPI PIZZA OBA JAM

6:30pm to 8:30pm. Mississippi Pizza - 3552 N. Mississippi Ave. Organized by OBA board member, Larry Wilder. Open to all levels.

For Information: Larry Wilder
email: larrybwilder@gmail.com

Tuesday

ASHLAND: BLUEGRASS JAM - 2nd Tuesday 7-11 pm, Siskiyou Micropub, 31 Water St, Ashland

For Information: 541-535-7001

email: justapicker@charter.net

CORVALLIS: ACOUSTIC BLUEGRASS JAM

EVERY Tuesday, from 6:30-8:30 Old World Deli, 341 SW 2nd Street, Corvallis, OR 97330

For Information: Contact Jim Ford 541-231-3163, or Jim Jordan 541-753-6138 or jimpford@hotmail.com

DUNDEE: BLUEGRASS JAM - 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month, 7-9 pm .Held upstairs at La Sierra Mexican Grill right on Hwy 99W in the middle of Dundee

For Information: Jon Cooper 503-702-8978
email: cooperweld@gmail.com

EUGENE: BLUEGRASS JAM - Every Tuesday 9:00 pm - 1:00 am. Sam Bond's Garage, 407 Blair Blvd, Eugene Established in 1995. The venue of this year round jam offers good food and good micro brews. If you're passing through Eugene on a Tuesday evening, come on by and pick some tunes.

For Information: Chuck Holloway & Gary Dunbar 541-431-6603.

HILLSBORO: ROCK CREEK BLUEGRASS JAM

Every Tuesday 7-9 pm McMenamin's Rock Creek Tavern in Washington County off Germantown Road and Cornelius Pass Road.

10000 N.W. Old Cornelius Pass Rd. Hillsboro, 97124. Established, open, intermediate and advanced, bluegrass instruments only.

For Information: Tim, timhowell74@gmail.com

Wednesday

BEAVERTON: BLUEGRASS JAM

First and third Wednesday of every month 6:30-9:30 pm Round Table Pizza, 10150 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy Beaverton, OR (just east of 217) Newcomer Friendly!

For Information: Jane email: janeromfo@yahoo.com

EUGENE: BLUEGRASS JAM

Every Wednesday night from 7:30 - 10:00 pm. Cosmic Pizza All ages welcome.

For Information: Ramblin Robert of KRVM

SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE VALLEY:

BLUEGRASS JAM - Every Wednesday night from 7:30-10:30 pm. Axe & Fiddle (www.axeandfiddle.com) is located at 641 East Main Street, Cottage Grove, OR. It is an acoustic bluegrass jam open to all levels of musicianship.

For Information: Chuck Holloway
email: charlesmholloway@yahoo.com

Thursday

BEND: BLUEGRASS JAM

2nd and 4th Thursdays from 7 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. Held in the board room of the Bend - LaPine School District, downtown Bend, between Wall and Bond Streets, across from the Public Library.

For Information: Becky Brown & Verda Hinkle 541-318-7341 email:hinklebrown@bendbroadband.com

GRANTS PASS: BLUEGRASS-FOLKGRASS-GOSPELGRASS-MOUNTAIN-MUSICGRASS

2nd Thursdays 5-8 pm. Rogue River Valley Grange: 2064 Upper River Road, Grants Pass, Oregon. All levels of players—to take turns in the circle and lead the group in tunes—music includes all the music above. No electronics—no mics—so be prepared to share your instruments and voices with each other so we can all learn and grow together. We'd love to see an RSVP

from you!! Bring a friend—listen or play!! Refreshments, of course!! Intersection of G street and Lincoln—just outside of downtown G street area, Grants Pass.

For Information: 541-471-2206 - Brinkerhoff and Antonuccibluegrasshodson9@yahoo.com

Friday

DALLAS: GUTHRIE PARK ACOUSTIC MUSIC JAM - 7:00 pm

For Information: Sally Clark 503-623-0874

SCIO: BLUEGRASS JAM - 4th Friday of every month, year'round. Held at the ZCBJ Hall in downtown Scio. Kids and listeners are encouraged to attend this community sponsored event. Activities and beginners' jam starts at 7pm, with more advanced jamming beginning at 8:30pm. All acoustic. All ages welcome! Bring a munchie to share if you can, but not required. Donations accepted to help with the Hall rent and the cost of activities.

For Information: Starla Becker 503-394-3811

Saturday

BATTLEGROUNDS, WA: BLUEGRASS JAM

Every second and fourth Saturday evening. The Grange Hall, on the corner of N.E. 72nd Avenue at 179th Street Battle Ground Washington. Hosted by the Columbia River Oldtime Strings. Jamming downstairs at the Grange Hall with an open mic on the stage upstairs. Anyone can join in the fun; listeners as well as musicians are welcome. There is a large stage on the main floor and a comfortable basement are with lots of room for jamming.

CORVALLIS: "OLD-TIME" GOSPEL JAM -

Second and fourth Saturday evenings from 7 pm-9:30 pm Seventh Day Adventist Fellowship Hall at 3160 SW Western Boulevard, Corvallis, OR. It is open to all people in the community and the focus is acoustic Christian music in an "Old-Time" sound. Any acoustic instrument including voice is welcome. People who would like to just come and listen are also welcome.

<https://sites.google.com/site/corvallisgospeljam/>
For Information: corvallis.GJ.Coordinator@gmail.com

DALLAS: ALL GOSPEL, ALL ACOUSTIC JAM

Every third Saturday of the month 7-10 pm Guthrie Park in Dallas.

For Information: Jim 503-623-0874
email: dusterjim@hotmail.com

SNOHOMISH, WA: MALTBY BLUEGRASS JAM

First, Saturday of the month 2pm to midnight. Maltby Community Club, 206th St. S.E. & 87th Ave. S.E., Snohomish Jamming, potluck dinner, stage show and more jamming.

For Information: Jan 360- 568-3685
email: Jlj35@juno.com

WINLOCK, WA: SLOW JAM - Second Saturday of the month. 1 pm, October through May. Held at the Hope Grange in Winlock, Washington. Great for all levels and especially good for total beginners.

For Information: Marv Sobolesky at 360-785-4932
email: marv@marvsmusic.com

If you have jam updates or additions, please contact the OBA at PO Box 1115, Portland, OR 97207, or contact the Webmaster Tony McCormick, banjo@notebene.net.



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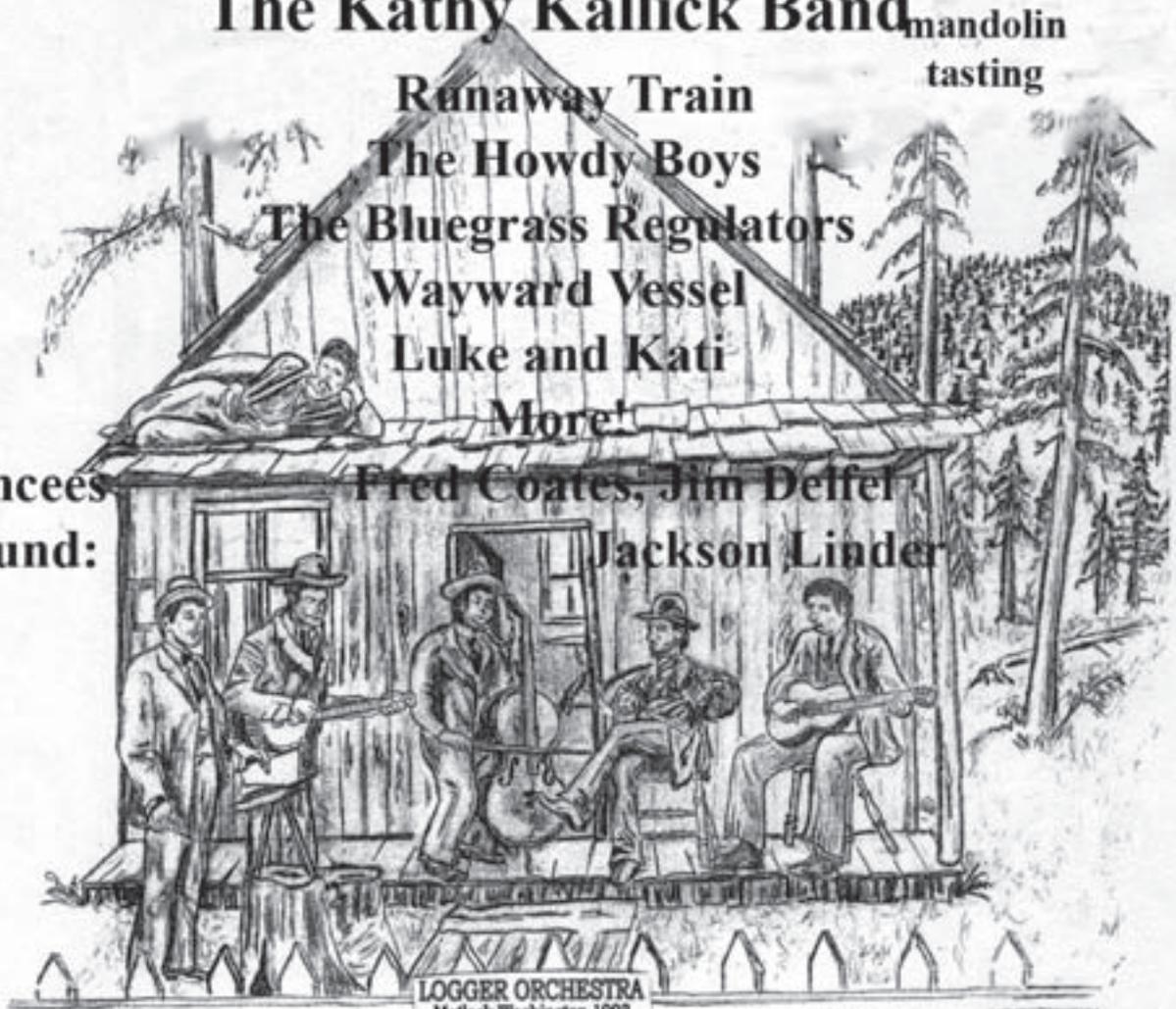
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Christine Weinmeister gives serious consideration to switching to mandolin *photo by Cleve Friedman*



Sarah Ells leads a song at the fall Picker's Fest. *photo by Cleve Friedman*



The fun meters were pointed to max all weekend at the Columbia Gorge Bluegrass Festival in Stevenson. *photo by Vicki Vance*



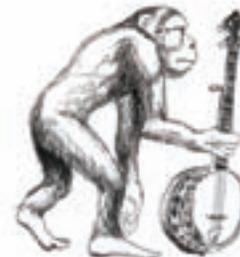
Patty Spencer: OBA Vice President, and a mighty fine "Banjo Pickin' Girl." *photo by Vicki Vance*



Ian Joel and Genavie Thomas at just one of the many great jams that happened at the fall Picker's Fest at Pendarvis Farm. *photo by Cleve Friedman*

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Sound advice: *Hints and tips on sounding your best with Mark Gensman, Ground Zero Sound*

Hi everyone. Here's hoping you had a great safe holiday season and got some great bluegrass music in your stocking, or perhaps you received one of those neat MP3 players and you're filling it with thousands of bluegrass tunes.

Speaking of MP3, it appears to be the format of choice for digital distribution of music and for convenient portable playback. I thought it may be interesting to explain exactly what are the benefits and drawbacks of MP3 audio.

MP3 is a patented "lossy" audio compression format designed to greatly reduce the amount of data in an audio file. The theory behind an MP3 is that the human ear can't hear certain frequencies and the encoder guesses which frequencies should be retained and which should be discarded. The audio can be encoded at one of several bit rates for higher or lower quality. The standard bit rate is 128 kbps.

A typical full-range audio file can be reduced to less than ten percent of its original size by encoding it to an MP3. In 1995, when MP3 started becoming popular, hard drives were small and storage was expensive. Most internet connections were via telephone modem so large "native" audio files could not be transmitted easily or quickly.

One thing that many folks are not aware of is that there are many different MP3 encoders with substantial differences in the quality of the encoded audio. All MP3s are not created equally.

If you use MP3 audio, keep in mind there is a tradeoff in quality and the amount of space the file requires. The higher the bit rate, the higher the quality and the larger the file size. A bit rate of 128 kbps compresses the audio by a ratio of 1:11, a bit rate of 160 kbps creates a ratio of 9:1 and a bit rate of 192 kbps creates a ratio of 7:1. That means that when using the standard 128 kbps compression ratio, a three-minute song in stereo ends up being less than 90 percent of its original size after encoding. Was that lost audio important?

There are limitations to the MP3 format. There may be smearing of high frequency sounds, percussive sounds may suffer pre-echo or smearing, and frequencies above 15.8 KHZ are simply lost.

So, what does this mean for all you bluegrass bands out there trying to distribute your music to the widest audience possible? It means you need to be aware of the product you are creating and its limitations. Mastering your music for MP3 use can help. Be aware of the loss of quality caused by creating an MP3 and make necessary adjustments so they sound as good as possible.

The good news is that people who only listen to downloaded music normally do so on subpar sound systems, cheap computer speakers or with ear buds or headphones.

Since other media such as photographs and video have increased in quality as technology has advanced, I can only hope that audio will catch up and quality will win the battle over convenience. As it is, the audio quality of recorded music has gone backwards and instead of people bragging about having stellar-sounding recordings, the status awards go to those who can store the largest number of songs.

Recording studios are recording full-range audio files and technology has created better converters, higher bit rates, and larger storage devices to help make audio more accurate and better sounding. It seems a shame to have that same audio end up being made worse in favor of convenience. It would be like everyone watching television and movies on black and white units even though the movie studio is producing HD video. MP3 audio is 1995 technology. Let's hope consumers demand better quality in the near future.

As a side note, I will be presenting a sound workshop at the River City Music Festival in January and would appreciate anyone who has any questions about running sound for bluegrass to stop by and say hello. I hope to see you all there.

If you have any questions about anything involving recording, mastering, audio software, duplicating, mics, speakers or sound reinforcement, please feel free to contact me at GZsound@hotmail.com.

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March 3 ~ Ledding Library Winter Concert Series
Milwaukie, Oregon
503-786-7580

March 10 ~ George Coffeehouse Concert Series
George, Washington
509-797-5632

April 14 ~ Tualatin Heritage Center (Kathy's 50th birthday party!)
with special guest **Brian Oberlin**, Tualatin, Oregon
503-691-1177

May 13 ~ Mother's Day Matinee at the Mt. Angel Performing Arts
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Contact: www.backporchrevival.com
booking inquiries: info@backporchrevival.com

Back Up and Push

Members: Dan Kopecky, Mandolin, Vocals; Robert Brownscombe, Bass; Susie Anderson, Fiddle, Vocals; Tom Gall, Guitar, Vocals; Patrick McLaughlin, Banjo. We are a 5 piece bluegrass band from Welches, OR. We have been playing together for about 10 years. We play a mix of traditional bluegrass, southern blues, and a few cowboy tunes. We are available for festivals, shows, parties, dances, barbecues or whatever!

For recorded samples check out our website backupandpush.tripod.com

Bethel Mountain Band

Bethel Mountain Band emphasizes four-part bluegrass gospel harmonies. They also perform other styles including folk and country. Will Barnhart, Larry Knox, Jerry Schrock and Craig Ulrich provide the vocals with Tyce Pedersen on bass, Gene Stutzman on mandolin, Jerry Stutzman on banjo and harmonica and Craig Ulrich on guitar.

Contact: See on facebook or on the website, bethelmountainband.com.

Bluestone County

If you've spent any time at all around the Northwest Bluegrass scene you've run into one or more of these musicians in one or more bands. Formed in late 2008, Bluestone County features powerful vocalists and accomplished instrumentalists, all from the Mid-Willamette Valley. You'll find that they are not afraid to wander the spectrum of bluegrass from traditional to contemporary. Chris Floyd- rhythm/lead guitar/vocals- Jered Widman-rhythm guitar/vocals- Mark Thomas-Banjo- Rick Campbell-mandolin/vocals-Sam Samuels-bass/vocals- Suzi Samuels-vocals.

Contact: www.bluestonecounty.com
booking@bluestonecounty.com

Brian Oberlin

Brian is a singing, songwriting, multi-instrumentalist (guitar and tenor banjo). He teaches private lessons, workshops, and mandolin camps, focusing on many types of musical genres, including swing and bluegrass. As a solo act, Brian lights up the stage with originals and covers that swing, stomp, waltz, and ease into his personal style. He is also the mandolinist for the band *Ida Viper*.

Contact: 503-686-8673.
Email: brian@mandoberlin.com
www.mandoberlin.com

Dewgrass

What started out as a family's love for bluegrass, has now taken off into an all out passion. Dewgrass, made up of siblings Jake, Luke, & Kaiti, with parents Erin & Gary, play straight ahead bluegrass & gospel in a manner that surprises many & delights most who have had an opportunity to hear them. "If this is the next generation of bluegrass, we're in good hands." -TNT

Contact: dewgrassbluegrass@hotmail.com

Down The Road

A trio of bluegrass and American roots music musicians from the Seattle, Washington Area. Husband / wife duo Cathi and Gary Davidson on guitars and vocals and John Tubbs on mandolin and vocals. Old-time, country and traditional bluegrass, folk and contemporary bluegrass, with a focus on duet and trio harmony singing.

Contact: www.downtheroadband.com

Eight Dollar Mountain

With five rising musician singers including Stuart Green on banjo, Darren Campbell on guitar, Phil Johnson on mandolin, Peter Koelsch on bass, and Mark Lackey on dobro, Eight Dollar Mountain brings hard driving traditional inspired bluegrass to the Northwest. Available for most events and establishments.

Contact: www.eightdollarmountain.net

Floating Glass Balls

Floating Glass Ball is a band whose music is broad and pulls from many genres — bluegrass, Caribbean, contemporary, country, and swing tunes — the likes of the Stanley Brothers and the Carter Family, to name just a couple. It is reflected in what each member brings to the table. Together now for 13 years, "The Balls" can easily play four to five straight gigs without repeating a song — a testament to the depth the group has developed throughout those years playing together. They are Dan Conner on Dobro, Joel Marshall on guitar, Gar Keiski on fiddle, Peter (Spud) Siegel on mandolin and Bill Uhligh on bass.

Contact: www.floatingglassballs.com

GTM Stringband

With two guitars and a bass fiddle, members Greg Stone, Tony Rocci and Marty Henick take the stage with a mix of bluegrass, ragtime, swing and blues. They deliver a nice balance of instrumentals and vocal numbers with three part harmonies.

Contact: Greg at 971-207-3195
or visit our website at gtmstringband.com.

Home Grown Old-Time

Old-Time and Old-Grass music in that good old way. Bill Nix, banjo; Steve Smith, guitar; and Dave Morris, fiddle; everyone sings.

Contact: Dave Morris 541-929-3742
www.myspace.com/homegrownoldtime

Hudson Ridge

Hudson Ridge has a sound all it's own. Love of harmony and the desire and ability to "Ridgetize" their own blend of Americana, Bluegrass, and traditional Country music, gives this band a truly unique sound. Members have been 'playing together in different bands' for many years and have now come together to create what promises to be a quality musical experience for themselves and anyone who gives a listen. Harmony is their passion and the love for what they do shines through at each performance.

Mary Luther- lead vocal and bass, Jerene Shaffar-vocal, mandolin and bass, Shelley Freeman- bass and vocal, Kevin Freeman, lead guitar and vocal, Bob Shaffar-fiddle and dobro, Fred Grove- rhythm guitar.

Contact: 541-404-9281 mluther56@gmail.com
www.hudsonridgeband.com

Kate White Band

A compelling folk rock/ gospel/ celtic/ bluegrass blend, the KWB's original songs will resonate with your own life and send your spirit soaring. Stunning vocals, an extensive instrumental repertoire and a powerful yet fun-loving stage presence make the KWB a great choice for festivals, churches, concerts and private events. Kate White (vocals, violin), Glenn Farley (vocals, guitar), Scott Minter (mandolin, banjo, whistles), Robert Wayne (djembe, percussion).

Contact: 360-904-4062
katewhiteband@comcast.net
www.katewhitemusic.com
www.myspace.com/katewhiteband

Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising

Kathy Boyd & Phoenix Rising Family friendly, outstandingly entertaining original roots bluegrass featuring the talents of RMA Bluegrass Songwriter of the year Dennis Nelson along with the talents of Kathy Boyd, Tim Crosby and Tom Tower. This highly entertaining group is willing and able to travel and is a sure fired winner for your next event or festival!

Contact: 503-691-1177,
kathyboyd@phoenixrisingband.org,
www.phoenixrisingband.org

Long Mountain Revival

Long Mountain Revival's main emphasis in the group is sharing the Gospel through song. Their song repertoire includes that of such groups as Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, Hotrice, Nashville Bluegrass Band, Hank Williams, and other artists, as well as original music by Jon Clement. Many of the songs are very upbeat, as bluegrass music usually is, with an occasional waltz or country ballad as part of the set, to balance out the tempo and give listeners variety. Long Mountain Revival is available for church functions, outreaches, community events, and any other venue where Gospel Bluegrass music is desired.

www.myspace.com/lmrevival

Lost Creek Bluegrass Band

Lost Creek delivers driving bluegrass and old time standards with outstanding vocal harmonies and tasteful instrumentation. For years they've delighted audiences at bluegrass festivals, pubs, parks, weddings, and markets in both Oregon and Washington.

Contact: 503-442-2832
theband@lostcreekmusic.com

Lucky Gap

Good Old-time Traditional Americana and bluegrass on the Oregon Coast. Guitar, Banjo, Fiddle, Mandolin, Dobro, Bass. Weddings, Parties, Dances, Special Occasions.

Contact: Chaz Malarkey at 541.265.2677,
malarkey@charter.net, or Bob Llewellyn at
541-444-2069, pusspud@yahoo.com.

Misty Mamas

Misty Mamas serve up powerful harmonies and tasteful instrumentals combining the American genres of bluegrass, gospel, folk and country music. Carol Harley (vocals, guitar, banjo, mandolin), Katherine Nitsch (vocals & guitar), April Parker (vocals & mandolin) and Eilee Rocci (vocals & upright bass).

Mollybloom

Original contemporary bluegrass quintet. David Dahl, guitar; Ron Relaford, mandolin; Clark Blanchard, bass; Bob Rindy, fiddle; and Rand White.

Contact: 503-399-1965
www.mollybloombluegrass.com
or Anita Blanchard at blanchardca@comcast.net

Money Creek Bluegrass

Money Creek plays stirring mountain ballads and burning banjo tunes. At times runnin' wild, then mellow and graceful, Money Creek Mining Co. offers unique arrangements to traditional bluegrass and original songs, as well as some old "Top 40's" tunes. These friends have played with some of the best bluegrass bands in the region. Known for their precise harmonies, rarely do you find a group of singers with their unique blend. Join Money Creek on a musical American journey of triumph, sorrow and just plain fun.

Contact: LuAnn Price 425-346-6136
www.moneycreekbluegrass.com



Go to www.oregonbluegrass.org for more info & links

Please contact Matt Snook, (OBA Database & Membership Manager) at matt@greenbeard.us. if you are interested in receiving a Supporting Performer Membership form.

National Yodeling Champion Larry Wilder & the Stumptown Stars

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See our list of songs at: www.larrywildermusic.com
503-407-8676

New Old Friends

New Old Friends is a "real deal" traditional bluegrass band that gets its inspiration from the major bluegrass bands from the 1940s through the 1960s, and performs its material (including some original tunes) in a way that keeps the essence of "classic" bluegrass intact. Though all play several different instruments, in New Old Friends, they have settled on the following line-up: Rollie Champe, mandolin and vocals; Chuck Davidshofer - acoustic bass and vocals.

Contact: Randy Oman, guitar and vocals
503-288-4191; or Peter Schwimmer, banjo and vocals
503-282-0344, email schwimbo@pacifier.com.

Pacific Rim Bluegrass Band

play bluegrass in the beautiful Willamette Valley region of Oregon, just south of Portland. Pacific Rim band members are Paul King on Guitar and vocals, Gary Schottle on mandolin and vocals, Mary Cox on bass and vocals & Debra King on banjo and vocals.

Contact: Paul King at 503-363-9682
email: pacificrimband@earthlink.net for inquiries

Prairie Dog Backfire

Callin' their style "countrygrass", they're kickin' up bluegrass with country flavor and grassin' up country songs on mandolin, stand-up bass, guitar, and banjo. A fair bit of the music is genuine original with each partner singin' lead and/or harmony. These four seasoned performers have been together since 2009.

Contact Betsy: bluelight@centurytel.net
541-367-6050 or 541-409-8248
www.reverbnation.com/prairiedogbackfire

Rogue Bluegrass Band

Music the way music should be: Bluegrass style, Ed Hershsberger, banjo technician; Don Tolan, professor of mandolin; Ben Trump, fiddlin'; Paul Hirschman, flat pickin'; Deb Smith-Hirschman, bass thumpin'.

Contact: Ed 503-245-4158
www.geocities.com/roguebluegrassband
or email: roguebluegrassband@yahoo.com.

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Contact: Charlie Williamson 503-248-1854 (days)
or 503-892-2641 (evenings).
email: charlie3@nwlink.com
www.rosecitybluegrass.com

Roundhouse

Founded in 1994, members are Donn Whitten, Kim Jones, Ron Leavitt and Joe Denhof. Roundhouse was formed with the goal of providing a variety of musical genres to diverse audiences: something for everyone. Toward this end Roundhouse performs bluegrass, southern rock, doo-wop, gospel, country, blazing instrumentals and original compositions. Roundhouse instrumentation includes guitar, mandolin, banjo and bass.

Contact: www.roundhouse-band.com
roundhouseband@qwestoffice.net

Runs Real Good

Runs Real Good is Clayton Knight, Tom Marshall, Kelli Plummer, and Bill Marshall. We Play not-too-traditional bluegrass, respectful of our roots, but willing to roam a little now and then

Contact: Clayton Knight, 503-358-0658
claytonknight@comcast.net

Sawtooth Mountain Boys

Picking traditional bluegrass music since the mid-1960s all over OR, the Pacific NW and the West Coast, and even Kentucky, Texas, several western states and the UK and Europe, we bring along plenty of fun and energy with our hard-driving sound. From pubs, to wineries, to bluegrass festivals, private gatherings and weddings, we've just about delivered our bluegrass to every situation and venue type possible. Seasoned and well-known members of the SMB are Rollie Champe - guitar, Chuck Davidshofer - bass fiddle, John Van Brocklin - 5-string, and Steve Waller - mandolin. We all sing.

Contact: www.myspace.com/sawtoothmountainboys
or www.facebook.com and search
Sawtooth Mountain Boys or contact
Steve at stwaller@juno.com

Shasta Ray

Shasta Ray and the Downhome Band from Myrtle Creek Oregon. The band's founder and leader is Shasta Ray, born in New England. His travels and experiences are reflected in his songwriting. The music played is a real slice of Americana including bluegrass, folk, country, sing-a-long gospel, and old time favorites.

Contact: Shasta Ray at 541-537-1031
email: downhomeband@yahoo.com

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Contact: 541-923-6946 or 503-580-5274
www.leroynewportsband.com

Siskiyou Summit:

Since 1999, Siskiyou Summit has performed it's special brand of bluegrass music to a growing fan base in the Pacific Northwest. The band has the benefit of six strong singers and instrumentalists as well as song writers and arrangers. This is very unusual for any band, especially one so far, geographically, from the origins of this uniquely American music. The band members have decades of individual musical performance experience. Siskiyou Summit members are Jeff Jones on mandolin, Glenn Freese on guitar, Bob Evoniuk on Dobro, Crystal Reeves on fiddle, Jim Calhoun on upright bass, and Rick Nelson on banjo.

Booking: Jeff Jones Advertising and Marketing 541-488-0178 jrjones@opendoor.com
www.siskiyousummit.com

Steer Crazy

A new brand of Western and American Music. Musical fun and close harmonies that requires no complicated explanation. Nice guys singing and playing great music. Members: Rick King -Guitar, Glenn Denison -Mandolin, Tim Dawdy - Steel Guitar & Dobro

Contact: 360-904-0347
Email: beardvc@pacifier.com
Website: www.facebook.com/Steercrazyband

SugarPine

The SugarPine band formed late in 2010, and after just one festival season has become a Northwest favorite. Centering on the singing and songwriting of bass player Yvonne McMillan, the band includes guitarist Steve Blanchard; dobro and banjo player Matt Snook; mandolinist Garrett Maass; and fiddler Anna Snook. SugarPine's song selection ranges from traditional bluegrass to contemporary covers and complex instrumentals. Yvonne's compositions include thoughtful ballads and up-tempo celebrations of life. Four talented singers provide a variety of presentations and vocal blends. With an instrumental ensemble that plays hard, fast and creatively, SugarPine's the whole package.

Contact: Matthew Snook matt@greenbeard.us
541-805-5133

The Bluegrass Regulators

Fueled by a mutual passion for good music and drawing from a variety of influences such as The Lonesome River Band, Vince Gill, John Mayer, Hot Rize, and Buddy Miller, the Regulators deliver a unique blend of contemporary bluegrass, complete with solid instrument and vocal work. Jake Dewhirst - Guitar, Vocals; Luke Dewhirst - Banjo, Vocals; Martin Stevens - Fiddle, Vocals; Josh Adkins - Bass, Vocals.

Contact: www.myspace.com/regulatorbluegrass,
then give us a yell: regulatorbluegrass@gmail.com

Urban Monroes

Fashioned from the heart of tradition and infused with adrenaline, the Urban Monroes' bluegrass style combines the skills of some of the Pacific Northwest's finest talent. Fast-paced and highly energetic, the band performs both original and traditional bluegrass with a style and delivery uniquely its own.

With Fran Kent - guitar and vocals, Matt Gray - Banjo, Jason Mellow - Bass and Jess Kieras - fiddle, The Urban Monroes are a new tradition in contemporary bluegrass.

Contact: 503-754-7577 www.urbanmonroes.com
or email urbanmonroes@hotmail.com

Wayward Vessel

Members: Ken Chapple (guitar and vocals), Julie Schmidt (violin and vocals), Chris Walther (bass)

Contact: Ken Chapple info@waywardvessel.com
www.waywardvessel.com

Whiskey Puppy

Dedicated to preserving Americana roots music, while exploring early & contemporary bluegrass.

Contact: 503-227-0647 email: rgold@myww.net
www.whiskeypuppy.com

Whistlin' Rufus

The Whistlin' Rufus musicians bring a lot of experience to the stage and have roots in Classical, Irish, Folk, Bluegrass, Rock and Roll and Jazz music. When you stir it all together combining their exciting knack for arrangements, their three and four part vocal harmonies, original ballads and toe tapping fiddle tunes, well, you end up with Whistlin' Rufus. The 2009 release of the latest Whistlin' Rufus CD, "It's About Time" has won rave reviews across the country, from the "Back Porch Music Program" at the WUNC in Raleigh, to KBOO in Portland, OR. Whistlin' Rufus is just perfect for your event or Festival.

Contact: Pat Connell 971-207-5933
whistlinrufus@comcast.net or go to
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Volunteering

- Yes! I am interested in helping as a volunteer at OBA-sanctioned events. Please add me to your list of volunteers.

