

IdaGrass

Volume 3 Issue 2

March - April 2007

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Some of our favorite Websites

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Assoc.
www.mrba.com

University of Idaho Bluegrass Club
<http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~bluegrass/>

Bluegrass Events Calendar

Middle Zone Monthly Jam - 1st Saturday (following a full week) at the Bluegrass Barn. Contact: Bob Greer, (208)466-1719 or Dennis Stokes.

Northern Zone Monthly Jam – 1st Saturday at the Orchards Methodist Church, 1213 Burrell Ave, Lewiston 12 Noon to 5:00pm. For more information contact: Steve Gleason (208) 798-8280 or Pete Northcutt (208) 983-2277

Southern Zone Monthly Jam -

Bluegrass in the Barn

April – No regular Bluegrass in the Barn, instead, come to the **Payette HS Auditorium Seating Benefit Concert** SAT, April 14th, 7pm – **Buckhorn Mountain Boys Chicken Dinner Road and Traditions Bluegrass Band**, See ad on page 6

Same Great Event.... New Location

*Did you attend the Super Jam at Hoot's last April?
 Did you have a great time pickin' and grinin'?
 Plan to attend this years'*

2nd Annual Super Jam, April 27 – 29 at Lewis Clark RV Resort, Kamiah ID. See ad on page 3.

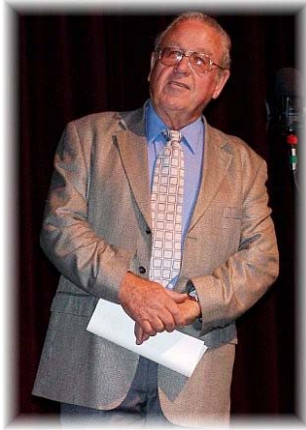
The purpose of the Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association:

- To preserve and perpetuate Bluegrass music as a heritage of our country,
- To promote the education and enjoyment of Bluegrass music,
- To promote fellowship among all musicians and supporters who have a love for Bluegrass music, regardless of race, creed, color, ethnicity, or ability to play music.

Message from the President

Hello fellow ISBA members,

How quickly time passes when you are having fun. April is upon us and we are ready to begin the music season in earnest with our ISBA Super Jam in Kamiah. I feel like the fellow that learned how to make the winter pass quickly. You borrow money with the due date set for spring. If you have not made plans to attend the Super Jam in Kamiah you still have time. Last year was a memorable experience at the Spring Jam at "Hoots" and this year should be better yet. I hope to see you all there.



Sometimes it helps to reflect back on where we have been to get a better understanding of how we should go forward. It wasn't long ago that three people were expressing to one another their desire to have an organization that would encompass their dreams of preserving and advancing the music that has been given to us all, by the pioneers of Bluegrass Music. The ISBA is the result of that heartfelt desire in each of them. The rapid growth of the ISBA is a testimony as to the need of such an organization. I would like to point out that if Will Williams had not volunteered to lead the way and do the work that laid the foundation, the ISBA would not exist today.

This is a truth that we must not lose sight of. Where there is a need, someone has to step up and volunteer to give whatever skills they may have to help fill the needs at hand. As President of the ISBA I am blessed with a number of people to work with that are all volunteers to help carry the load of moving the ISBA forward. Without naming names I can say they all put forth an exemplary effort to help the ISBA. The problem begins at this point. There is only so much you can ask an individual to do. The opportunities that we have to move forward are going to require that

each one of us step forward and do whatever part we are able to contribute.

Our planning efforts are making progress as we prepare for the Second Annual ISBA Bluegrass Festival in Payette, October 5-7, 2007. Put that date on your calendar. Things are coming together but we are still very much in need of more volunteers to make the festival function, as it should. The people who have volunteered their services in the past are greatly appreciated, across the entire spectrum, from the performing bands to the ones that would watch the ticket table, perform security, or any of the other un-noticed jobs. Volunteers all gave their best efforts to get the job done. There is much to be done to run a festival so please consider being part of the team. It will make a better festival for every one. Contact Sydney Howland to volunteer.

sydland1z@juno.com

Being involved in "Tradition Bluegrass Band", Bluegrass In The Barn, and the inner workings of the ISBA, I see potential opportunities presenting themselves to us Bluegrass Music supporters that were not there when we started a couple of years ago. It will take the efforts of all of us to make them happen. I ask you to remember one point. **An opportunity presented is an opportunity squandered if it is not acted upon. -Bob**



Middle Zone February Jam (Photo by Jim McCue)

IdaGrass Classifieds

For Sale: Regal Black Lightning Resophonic Guitar, square neck. \$500 or \$600 with case. (208)983-2277.

Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association



2nd Annual Spring Jam

April 27th - 29th

At Lewis Clark RV Resort in Kamiah, ID

3 Glorious Days of Bluegrass

Concerts, Instrument Workshops

Hats, T-shirts, ISBA Booth, CDs

A raffle for a Recording King Banjo-

RK-R80 (for more info see page 6)



Schedule of Events

Friday, 27th

Open Jam, all Day into the night

Saturday, 28th

9am - Annual ISBA General Meeting

10:30 - Instrument Workshops - Banjo Set-up, Bass, Guitar, Mandolin

12 Noon - Open Jam all afternoon

5:30 pm Dinner buffet, \$11.95, Buffet served by Sacajawea Cafe:

Roast Beef, Potatoes, Salad Bar and Dessert

7-9 pm Free Concert of Idaho Bluegrass Bands

9 pm Open Jam - until we pass out or our fingers fall off, which ever happens first

Sunday 29th

Open Jam all Day

For RV/Hotel Reservations at **Lewis Clark Resort** –

(208)935-2556 or visit them on the web: www.lewisclarkresort.com

For additional Spring Super Jam information – wanab@starband.net

Bluegrass Chatting

This month's chat is with Pat Massie, who currently plays dobro with the Traditions Bluegrass Band. I hope that I can show you a glimpse of the passion Pat Massie has for his instrument and for bluegrass music.

IdaGrass: When did you first become aware of the Dobro?

Pat: *I was in 9th grade, in high school – I saw it on television; it was Roy Acuff and the Smokey Mountain Boys. I saw Brother Oswald playing the Dobro. I started digging around and then I saw one on Hee Haw. I wanted to see what they looked like, what they were. It wasn't too much longer after that and I got an old beater guitar and raised the strings off the neck with a nut, played around with that for a while. The first tune I learned to play was Great Speckled Bird, then Wabash Cannonball.*

IdaGrass: Tell me about your first Dobro.

Pat: *My first guitar was a factory second because it had "blems" on it. I bought it when I visited Original Musical Instruments in Long Beach CA. It's a chrome-nickel body and it's really good for old bluesy sounds stuff. I still have it and I've played it up here quite a bit.*

IdaGrass: Right now how many resonator guitars do you own?

Pat: *I own three. I still have the first one I ever bought. I have a Flint Hill that's been hot-rodded up by Paul Beard that I bought from Bill Elmer and I have my Guernsey, which is the 2nd only black Dobro that he ever built.*

IdaGrass: Tell me about your motivation to learn to play the dobro?

Pat: *I don't know, it's just the love of the instrument. It's in my heart, I feel it. I feel the music. It's just a passion and it comes from within and you feel the song. There are also the numerous records and cds I've played. You listen and you start to get the idea where you want to go with it, when it's supposed to be tasteful and soft. You just learn the instrument*

and you love it. And I do! I love it a lot. I have really a burning passion for it.

IdaGrass: You've told me that you don't read music, so tell me about the process of your learning.

Pat: *When I was living in CA, I ran into Eric Herskowitz and he suggested I get an old Josh Graves record on the Vetco Label. I got the record and basically, it was Josh Graves that I cut my teeth on. I would play the record, play the record, play the record; I am surprised I didn't cut it in half with the needle. But it was really easy to pick up and probably after six to eight months you could start hearing where things were headed and so you kind of knew where to go with it. Just from there it took off. In this process it was Josh Graves, Mike Auldridge and then I stumbled onto Jerry Douglas I met both Jerry Douglas and Mike Auldridge, as well, in 1995. That was huge! It spurred me on even more. It's like, hey, they are real people, and I can do this.*

IdaGrass: The growth process is not without some difficulty however, tell me about when you heard Ivan Rosenburg play this summer.

Pat: *This past summer I was invited to go down to Pocatello to play with New South Fork. You go along and think you are kind of OK and you can carry your own. Then you hear someone else play, like Ivan, and you just want to throw it away and walk away. You think WOW! You hear what they're doing and you see what they're doing and you hear the sound and it's like, "where is that on my guitar?" and you think, "I need to get a different guitar." (LOL) Then you realize, it's there. You just have to dig deeper and try harder, and be patient...be patient.*

I was just commenting to a band member about being in a rut. I said that I'd been in a rut for a while, and then all of a sudden, I got a finger grip on the next step, on a new level. Then I got a really good grip and I just pulled myself up and over and I'm there now. I'm in this new field, so to speak and I'm out rompin' around in it and I'm loving it. That's very

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cool. And it will plateau out in a while and then I will have to find a new finger grip to a new space.

IdaGrass: Do you feel like you have developed your own style, the Pat Massie style?

Pat: *I think its coming. I don't know what it is, but I definitely have my own style. I think it's a little bit of Josh, a little bit of Mike a little bit of Jerry, and a little bit of self taught - my part. I like a little snap once in a while. I think one needs to do that to kind of test yourself to see where you're at and see if you are up to the challenge. That's good and fun.*

IdaGrass: Give us a really simple description of the Dobro.

Pat: *It started in about 1928 with the Dopyera Brothers, Ed and Rudy. They are the ones with the original Dobro label, which, Gibson has since bought out. The instrument is really a resophonic guitar, Dobro is a brand name. Well, I guess to sum it up in three parts - in your basic guitar body you have the sound well, the cone and then the spider. The sound well is inside the guitar, it is circular in shape and made of laminated wood, it would remind you of a tambourine, some have holes some have diamonds and the newer ones, are using a baffle and sound post system. The cone looks like a pie tin and it is sitting upright on a ledge on the sound well. You have a spider, which looks like a spider web, a star with spider web. This spider sits on top of the cone with a screw through it, and you can set that screw at a certain tension, which gives you your vibration. The strings go over the spider and your bridges, just like in a guitar, that's what creates the vibration, and there you have your sound. Finally, you have your cover plate, which is the chrome hubcap everybody refers to on top. The cover plate is nothing but a cover. It doesn't really affect the sound or anything like that; it's just to cover what is inside. There are also two chrome screens that cover the sound holes. Different bridges and cones affect the kind of sound produced.*

IdaGrass: You have described the instrument; now tell us about what happens with your hands.

Pat: *In your left hand you have a steel bar and they are usually chrome plated or the latest is the stainless steel. I use stainless steel.*

On the right hand you wear finger picks. The same kind of picks as the banjo player would use. You wear them on your thumb, index and middle fingers and you basically use those picks, as I know it or as I was taught, just like a banjo. You use the banjo roll.

It started with Josh Graves playing with Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs and the Foggy Mountain Boys. Earl taught Josh a basic banjo roll and that has been the foundation to all Dobro players. We use the 3 fingered banjo roll: forward roll, reverse roll. Some artist have mixed up the roll and created their own, such as Jerry Douglas. He has a couple of different rolls he will do in the Key of D when he is playing a G. He just mixes it up and swaps it around. But the same basic principle is all there.



Pat Massie (photo by Jim McCue)

IdaGrass: In 10 years down the road, give me “the sky’s the limit dream”.

Pat: *I'd love to be in a group and playing and traveling on the road. I'd like to go east. I've played with the Greer's Bluegrass band in Las*

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Vegas at a college sponsored performing arts event, I've done some recording and I have traveled as far east as Missouri. So I've gotten my feet wet in a small pond. But it would maybe be nice to get out there in a bigger pond, sometime and see what it's like. I think I could do it. It's just, "how bad do I want to do it?" I want it real bad.

IdaGrass: This last year you went to Nashville and kind of looked around. Tell me your three favorite things about your trip to Nashville.

Pat: *First, playing my Dobro on the stage at the Ryman. That kind of made the hair on the back of my neck stand up a little bit. There weren't a lot of people in there, but that didn't matter to me. I brought that thing (my guitar) all the way from Idaho with me and I wanted to get on stage and play and I did. I walked up there and started playing and it didn't bother me a bit.*

Second, going to the Grand Old Opry. I snuck around and got in trouble a bit, but I wanted to make the most of that trip as well.

Third, just being there, just being there. I wasn't there two hours and right down the middle of the road, comes Pine Mountain Railroad in their bus. Going to Gruhn Guitars, my heart was just beating like crazy. You hear about all this, you read about all this, you see it on the Internet, you talk to other people about this and then you go and see it. It's a total different deal. I know one thing, I love Tennessee, I love Tennessee, it's beautiful.

IdaGrass: What one way did your trip to Nashville change your outlook?

Pat: *It helps me realize that you can do it. If you want to do it, if you have a dream and it's what you want to you, you can do it. You can achieve your goal. The people that we idolize, the people we look at, that we google over and watch, they are just like us. If you have the desire and you have the drive and you want to do it you can do it, you can do it.*

If you have **Bluegrass Events** you would like posted, send to: trueblue@wildblue.net

March – April 2007

If you are interested in resophonic guitars, you may want to visit with Jim McCue who is in the final stages of building one. This is Jim's guitar pictured below.



Recording King Banjo to be raffled at the Spring Super Jam.

"A piece of history with every Recording Banjo. A reissue of the banjo made by Gibson in the 1930 for Montgomery Ward Recording King feature intricate engravings and expert craftsmanship. Recapturing the Bygone Era of banjos of 1930 6" floral peg head , one piece Master tone type flange. Mahogany wood with a concentric ring resonator A very good bluegrass banjo set up done by Will Williams

Payette High School Auditorium Seating Benefit Concert

Last fall Payette High School was key in the success of our first annual Fall Bluegrass Festival. Superintendent Pauline King and other school personnel were gracious and accommodating the concert portion of our festival in their auditorium. In appreciation and recognition of their contribution to our success, three terrific Idaho bands: **Traditions Bluegrass Band and Chicken Dinner Road** will be presenting a benefit concert to help raise money to replace seating in the auditorium. Each of these bands is donating their time and talents for this benefit concert. We invite all ISBA members and other lovers of bluegrass to come out for an evening of superb bluegrass entertainment. Saturday, April 14th, 7 pm.

Jamming Etiquette

As we move into the summer months with many festivals and jams, I thought it might be of value to review some basic jamming etiquette.

- Keep in tune....If you don't have a tuner, ask another club member if you can borrow theirs.
- Typically, the person who picks the song will lead the song... They will signal who takes a break through eye contact or verbally. Otherwise, try to take a break where you can, but allow others to share in the breaks too.
- Try not to drown out the lead singer...Holding back on the volume helps the singer to be heard without them having to strain their voices.
- Try to work with the other instruments so that everyone is heard and that your playing compliments theirs.
- If you are unsure of a song, step back and play along quietly. This way, you can learn the song without distracting from it by playing the wrong chords, etc. Some jams are more advanced than others. It's OK to challenge your abilities but be mindful of how you fit into the jam.
- Watch your Timing! Listen closely to the bass and guitar for your timing. If you can't hear them, you're playing too loud!
- If someone already in the jam is playing the same instrument as you, either try playing along quietly at a distance, or find another jam to play in. You could also approach the other player and ask if you can step in after a while.
- Harmony vocals are very important in bluegrass music. If someone is already singing harmony, if you're unsure of your voice, start by singing quietly until you're comfortable with singing along louder.
- Bluegrass music is about sharing. If you know a song that you think others would enjoy, or be able to pick along with, then please share it. Just be sure to let others pick their songs as well.
- Don't be discouraged if someone reminds you about one of these 4 rules while

jamming. If we all follow these simple guidelines, then everyone will benefit from a better organized jam.

Summer Bluegrass Happenings

"Bluegrass in the Blues" is a very relaxed weekend of camping and spontaneous acoustical bluegrass jamming in the scenic Blue Mountains of northeastern Oregon. There will be no schedules, stages, band performances, or contests. You may want to leave your watch at home. This year it will be at Emigrant Springs, near Meacham (I-84 exit 234), August 10-12, 2007. For more details: <http://mysite.verizon.net/res8aypu/>

Camp & Jam in Sandpoint

Come pick a little bluegrass with your friends at the Bonner Co Fairgrounds, Sandpoint, ID. Beginning WED, July 25th through SUN noon, July 29th.

The fee for camping is \$15.00/night, payable to the Bonner Co Fairgrounds. Activities include: Potluck supper, Band Scramble, and Gospel Jam. For questions/more information:

Herman & Gail Waldron
PO Box 475
Pomeroy, WA 99347
(509)843-1404

Mike and Tari Conroy's 11th annual Memorial Weekend Bluegrass Campout, May 25th -28th Rain or shine...We furnish heated wall tents for late-night jammin...

- Free camping...
- Potlucks at 6 pm...
- Beautiful campsite...on the edge of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness...
- Plenty of room for big-rigs...
- Paved to campsite---
- Approximately 25 miles south of Darby.... ..

All bluegrass lovers welcome ...

tariconroy@webtv.net or 1-406-821-3777

Payette High School
Presents
Auditorium Seating Fund Benefit
BLUEGRASS CONCERT

Featuring Three ISBA Bluegrass Bands



Saturday April 14, 2007
Payette High School Auditorium

**"Chicken Dinner Road", "Tradition" and
"The Buckhorn Mountain Boys"**

Will perform in concert from 7:00 to 10:00 PM

Admission:
Students - \$5
Adults - \$10
Family - \$25

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO AUDITORIUM SEATING FUND

Application for ISBA Membership

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

IdaGrass, the ISBA newsletter is offered either in email or printed letter format. Using email saves the association the cost of postage and printing, HOWEVER, because we want you to enjoy and look forward to the newsletter, we want you to receive the newsletter in a format with which you are comfortable.

I would like to receive the newsletter Email _____ US Postal Service _____

Yearly membership - \$10/individual \$15/family

Please mail to: Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association

PO Box 123 White Bird, ID

If you have *Ideas*, *Comments*, **QUESTIONS**, or *Concerns*

We would love to hear from you.

ISBA President

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