



IdaGrass

Volume 5 Issue 4

July - August 2009

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ISBA Monthly Jams

Southern Zone Monthly Jam – 7pm @ Gerties' Brick Oven Cookery in Twin Falls.

Hot Jam, 1st Monday of the month

Slow Jam, 3rd Monday of the month

John Boyer 208-733-4552

boyerj1@mindspring.com

Middle Zone Jam – 7pm @ 5714 Centerbrook Drive, Boise.

Intermediate Jam, 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month. Call Stan Strickland at (208) 377-

5326 for more information. For a song list, contact Carolyn Johnson:

cthorse@gmail.com

Northern Zone Jam - Noon to 5pm.

1st Saturday @ Orchards United Methodist Church, 1213 Burrell Ave, Lewiston

3rd Saturday @ Highlander Community Room, 616 Warner, Lewiston

Steve Gleason 208-798-8280

Pete Northcutt 208-983-2277

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

We are at the height of Bluegrass season. Summer here in the north country



means festivals and jams and plenty of them. Right here in Idaho Bluegrass is on the move. We are seeing festivals in both Burley and Pocatello this year. Our local ISBA Bands are busy with each of them playing many dates over the summer. We should single out one, "Tradition," which was invited to Darrington and just finished a very successful date there. We are proud of our boys who got themselves invited to play a national level festival as Darrington. That says something about the caliber of Bluegrass in Idaho.

Then there is our own Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association Festival in September over Labor Day. It is in Donnelley Idaho this year. There is both dry camping and camping with electricity and water. We have a fine line up of bands: Chicken Dinner Road, The Panhandle Polecats, Will Williams and Gravel Road, The Bluegrass Coalition (from Montana), Council Mountain Bluegrass Band, and J.D. Webb and the Down State Ramblers, and Tradition. All of these bands are super pickers and you will see a variety of styles. You will hear the down to earth, back-porch picking of "Council Mountain Bluegrass Band", the slick fast paced style of "Tradition" and the "Bluegrass Coalition," the authentic picking of "Will Williams and Gravel

Road" and "Chicken Dinner Road," the showmanship of "JD Webb and the Downstate Ramblers," and a fine example of the next generation of pickers in the "Panhandle Polecats." We have engaged Gerry Myers as our MC for the fall festival with John Redman handling the back stage organization. We think that these two gentlemen and the bands will put on a show for you that you will not want to miss.

Our campaign for volunteers went well and I would like to thank those of you who contacted either Syd Howland or me to let us know you would help. If there is anyone out there that would still like to help, we could still use more volunteers. We need ticket sellers, ticket takers, and someone willing to work in the ISBA Association booth to give information and sell memberships. If you would like to volunteer contact Syd at (206) 542-7591 or sydland1Z@juno.com.

I would also like to mention again our "Kids in Bluegrass" program. Raynae Redman coordinates the program. If your child plays a bluegrass instrument (any level) Raynae will see to it that he or she will get some time on stage and more importantly connect with other children who play Bluegrass music. I view picking Bluegrass as a lifetime sport. Start them young and they will have a skill that will give them a great deal of satisfaction and many others a great deal of pleasure for as long as they are on this earth. For more information on the program, as well as contact information, see the ISBA Festival web page at: <http://www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org>.

I would like to end by encouraging you to come and support the ISBA Fall Festival in Donnelley. Besides our Kids in Bluegrass program, we will continue to support the beginner/intermediate jams to help those pickers connect with each other and have a chance to play. We will also have a full compliment of free Saturday morning workshops, as well as a special two-day flat pickers workshop* taught by Jonah Shue, a professional musician who not only plays guitar but bluegrass fiddle and mandolin.

Carolyn

*Additional information about the Flat-pickers workshop can be found on pg. 7

Intermediate Jam at the Fall Festival

There will be three intermediate jam times at the ISBA Fall Festival in Donnelly. If you are interested in joining these jams, here is a list of the songs that we will be playing. We look forward to seeing you there!

1. Bury Me Beneath the Willow - G
2. I'll Fly Away - G
3. Life is Like a Mountain Railway - G
4. Lonesome Road Blues - G
5. Salty Dog Blues - G
6. Will the Circle Be Unbroken - G
7. Gold Rush - A
8. Rebekah - B
9. Randy Lynn - G
10. All the Good Times Are Past and Gone - G
11. Fireball Mail - G
12. No Mother Nor Dad - G
13. Cripple Creek - A
14. Old Joe Clark - A
15. John Hardy - A or G
16. Bury Me Beneath the Willow - G
17. Maggie - G
18. Cumberland Gap - G

IdaGrass Classifieds

For Sale:

A beautiful Wilhelm Klier master bass with amazing rich sound. 3/4 size. Made with specially selected older wood, creates an "older" sound with great tone. Comes with a

plush carrying case and Yohannah Snider bow. \$7,000 obo. Contact Liz at 208-270-1090 or ekallenlaw@gmail.com

New ISBA Logo

Earlier this year, a simple conversation between Will William, ISBA board chairman and ISBA member, Raynae Redman was the very beginning of the new logo for ISBA. Will knew that Raynae had designed the beautiful logo for the Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association, which features the silhouettes of bluegrass instrument peg heads fanning over a sunset/sunrise and he invited her to submit a new logo for the ISBA.

Raynae said that when she first started working on this project, the ideas that she envisioned in her mind just wouldn't materialize as she wanted. She said, "You have to be in the right frame of mind to do artistic work like that; you can't just sit down and think, I'm going to design a logo, and have it happen." Raynae said that she gave it much thought for a week or so and then was inspired by a silhouetted black metal coat rack she had designed for her home. The idea of a silhouette band started to come together. As she worked with the design, her husband John, suggested rather than have the whole logo designed in black, that she should give the instruments some color. She took his suggestion, noting that the color would provide a nice contrast against dark silhouette of the band members. And although the official logo has color, the logo adapts very well to a black and white format as well.

As you look at the logo, you will see some components from the original and some new representations. Raynae chose to keep the background of the mountains, representing the Sawtooth part of our name. She changed the text font, however, from the block letters it had been. She wanted lettering that was readable, but a little more artistic. A really interesting part of her design might be missed if you don't look closely. She has used a fiddle bow, representing their stage on which the band stands.

Raynae submitted variations of her design to the ISBA board and they selected the new logo we now use. The new logo was used on sweatshirts and t-shirts, offered for purchase at the Kamiah Spring Super Jam, and will be available at the Fall Festival in Donnelly.

BRING A
LAWN
CHAIR

THE BANNOCK COUNTY BLUEGRASS MUSIC ASSOC.

PROUDLY PRESENTS

IDAHO'S 6TH ANNUAL

BANNOCK COUNTY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

AUGUST 28, 29, 30 2009

AT THE BANNOCK COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS, POCATELLO, ID

BEER
GARDEN



FEATURING



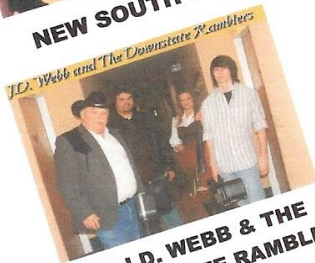
NEW SOUTH FORK



**WILL WILLIAMS &
GRAVEL ROAD**



COLD CREEK



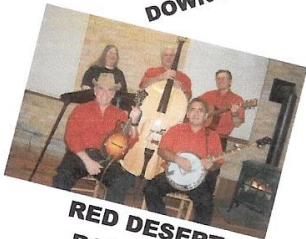
**J.D. WEBB & THE
DOWNSTATE RAMBLERS**



STRINGS ATTACHE



**THE BLUEGRASS
COALITION**



**RED DESERT
RAMBLERS**



TRADITION



RIDIN THE FAULT LINE



PORTNEUF GAP

TICKETS

FRIDAY.....	\$10.00
SATURDAY.....	\$15.00
SUNDAY.....	\$10.00
WEEKEND PASS	
BEFORE AUG. 1ST.....	\$30.00
WEEKEND PASS	
AFTER AUG. 1ST.....	\$35.00
FAMILY PASS	
BEFORE AUG. 1ST.....	\$80.00
AFTER AUG. 1ST.....	\$100.00

ADVANCE WEEKEND PASS

**TO PURCHASE WEEKEND PASS SEND
SELF ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE**

TO

**BANNOCK CO. BLUEGRASS
C/O PENNY STEED
820 E. PINE
POCATELLO, ID 83201**

CAMPING PER NIGHT

WITH HOOKUPS	\$10.00
NO HOOKUPS	\$ 5.00
TENTS	\$ 5.00



FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO OUR WEBSITE AT www.bannockcountybluegrassfestival.com

OR CALL 360-436-1179. OR 208-234-0200

THERE WILL BE A BEGINNERS AND ADVANCED JAM, MUSIC WORKSHOPS AND A BAND SCRAMBLE
THERE WILL BE FOOD AND CRAFT VENDORS AND A BEER GARDEN

In the Spotlight with Kristin Scott Benson



L to R: Caleb Dostal, Karen Dostal and Kristin Scott Benson, watching young Abram Williams fiddle.
(Photo by Gail Williams)

In June, I had the opportunity to attend the California Bluegrass Association Father's Day Festival held in Grass Valley. While there, I was able to meet and make arrangements to interview Kristin Scott Benson, banjo player for the Grascals. She is a delightful, unpretentious young woman and I have had a great time doing this interview. As I started with questions, I realized that I had more questions than could be contained in one article, so the interview will be divided between two issues. I hope you enjoy getting to know her as much as I did.

Helen

Kristin Scott Benson - the making of a banjo player

IdaGrass: You grew up in South Carolina, first performing with the mandolin at age 5. Tell us a little about what music meant and looked like to your family.

Kristin: *My maternal grandfather, Arval Hogan, was half of the duet, Whitey and Hogan. He sang tenor and played mandolin. In the 1940's they were featured on WBT, a 100,000 watt radio station in Charlotte, NC. Their affiliation with*

WBT led to a professional career that lasted many decades. My dad was also a fan of the music and never played professionally, but enjoyed it as a hobby. So, I always heard bluegrass around the house; it's a part of my earliest memories. My dad showed me the G and C chords on mandolin when I was five and that sparked my initial interest in playing. When my grandfather visited, we'd host jam sessions.

IdaGrass: When you were 13, you received a "much anticipated banjo." Tell me about the "much anticipated" part.

Kristin: *Though I started on mandolin, music was something I was very casual about until I started playing banjo. It was just one of many things I liked. We went to a bluegrass festival in Dahlonega, GA in 1985 and the band, Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, was there. Scott Vestal was playing banjo, with Russell Moore on guitar and Curtis Vestal on bass. The band was really young and that caught my attention, being a nine year old. When they started playing, I couldn't believe how much I loved the banjo. From that point on, I asked for one. My parents actually bought a small version, one designed for kids, but our house burned down about a month later. Obviously, that wasn't high on the priority list of things to replace, so I had to wait a while.*

IdaGrass: Playing a banjo doesn't usually top the "things to do list" of 13 year old young women. Tell us about how learning the banjo influenced your teen years, friends, activities, and goals?

Kristin: *Once I started playing banjo, I was consumed by it. I was never overly social, but I became a little reclusive after that. Slowly, my other interests faded away because all I wanted to do was play. My best friends were my parents and the 30 and 40 year old guys at the jam sessions we attended. I had more in common with them. I was fine at school, did well, had friends, but my time away from there was all about playing banjo. It affected major decisions, like where I went to college.*

IdaGrass: Can you relate a comical story from those years?

Kristin: *When I was about eight, I was going to play on-stage with my grandfather. I was running around the building and jumped a stick, onto what I believed was solid ground. It wasn't! I landed in mud, up to my knees. My mom and*

grandmother cleaned me up, as much as they could, and I still played.

IdaGrass: Tell us about the way you learned to play banjo – traditional lessons? Listening to music? Other?

Kristin: *I was lucky to take lessons from two great teachers – Alan Brooker was first and then I went to his teacher, Al Osteen. Both taught in Greenville, SC, about an hour and half from my hometown. That helped me more than anything. Things that people had to work hard to get came easily because they just handed it to me. I took lessons for two or three years. All the while, I was playing with albums and learning on my own. If you're really devoted, you never rely on one source of learning. I was also playing with as many people as I could.*

IdaGrass: Who was your greatest encourager as you learned the banjo? In what way?

Kristin: *I was lucky to have a lot of positive reinforcement from everyone. My parents, obviously, were very supportive. My grandfather always put me on stage with his band and encouraged me. The guys from the jam sessions were always very nice too. That helps tremendously, but I loved it so much that I'm not sure I needed a lot of encouragement. It was nice, but the major motivation was my own desire.*

IdaGrass: What was your greatest challenge?

Kristin: *You know, I really don't remember having many challenges. If I try to think of something I lacked, the only thing that comes to mind is other young people who were also interested in bluegrass. People in Idaho may not appreciate this, but the area where I grew up actually wasn't very rich in the music. There weren't any teenagers from my area that liked bluegrass. It's not like we were completely isolated, but we weren't necessarily in a "hot-bed."*

IdaGrass: Tell us about both the advantage and disadvantage of learning to play the banjo as a young person.

Kristin: *There are so many advantages to young people having avid interests. I don't think it really matters if it's music, swimming, or playing ball. As long as kids have something constructive to occupy their time, it's healthy. I sort of skipped the awkwardness of adolescence. I was pretty secure and didn't seek approval from other kids*

because my interest lied elsewhere. My validation came from better sources – such as my parents and responsible adults.

Like any intense interest, total commitment requires foregoing other activities. I dropped out of sports, for instance, to keep weekends free for festivals. I'm not sure that's a disadvantage, but the more committed I became to music, the more I had to let other things slide. That's the case with anything, though.

IdaGrass: What one banjo player has been most influential in the development of your own style?

Kristin: *Hmmm....naming one is hard. Earl Scruggs is the most influential banjo player [ever] for anybody that plays 3-finger, bluegrass-style banjo. He debatably created the style, but everyone agrees that he perfected it. JD Crowe, Sonny Osborne, Bill Emerson, Bela Fleck, Scott Vestal, Terry Baucom, my banjo teachers...they all had a huge influence. It's really hard to narrow it down.*



Kristin Scott Benson

(Photo by Dean Hoffmeyer)

IdaGrass: And last but not least, what advice do you have for those learning the banjo?

Kristin: *I think it's important to keep it fun. People should play only as much as they want. If it isn't fun anymore, put the banjo down and come back to it later. If you can find a good teacher, lessons help a lot. Focus on the fundamentals – tone, timing, and taste. Learn a few things well, rather than lots of things halfway. Quality is more important than speed. Listen to great players, and try to play with other people. Go see live music, if you can. A great show can inspire you for months.*

Flat Picking Class at the ISBA Fall Festival

For the ISBA Fall Festival we have invited Jonah Shue, a professional guitar and fiddle player to present a workshop on flat picking. Having been a fiddle player, first he wants to help flat pickers craft tunes for the guitar that sound more "fiddle-istic."



Jonah Shue

Class Description:

The class will focus on the fundamentals that make playing more solid and easy. Instead of working on a repertoire, Jonah will start with some exercises in technique that will help students with basic techniques, such as tone production, articulation, ornamentation (licks), and double stops.

The class will learn two very simple bluegrass tunes (a moderately paced tune and a waltz) and apply the above techniques.

Skill Level: Beginning/Intermediate

Prerequisites: The ability to play the G, C, D, and A chords. Being able to play fast is not a prerequisite for this class

Cost: \$75 for two 1-1/2 hour sessions

Contact: To register for the class, please send your name, phone number or email address, and check to:

Carolyn Johnson
Box 1004
Cascade, ID 83611

Please write your check to Jonah Shue. For more information about the class, call or email Carolyn Johnson at: (208) 859-4982 or

cthorse@gmail.com

Association Photographer Retires -- New Photographer Volunteers

Jim McCue, photographer and historian for the Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association since inception, is retiring. Jim has worked hard these last five years and we would like to thank him for all of his work on behalf of the Association. Ninety percent of the pictures that you see on the web site and in the newsletters are Jim's. Going to all of those events and taking all of those pictures was a lot of work. I have stood in for him a few times and I'll have to say, I sure didn't want to take the job. Besides being the organization's photographer he was our first paid member and he created the first organization logo. To thank Jim for all of his hard work, the Board is sending Jim a gift certificate-for-two to his favorite restaurant.

Taking his place is Dale "Mac" McMinn. Mac is a natural for this job. He has also been in the organization since the beginning and never misses an event. Since we have had a Fall Festival, Mac has served as the "camp host," which means that everyone gets situated, knows the rules, has what they need, etc. He has been selfless with his time and equipment, moving people and equipment around with his four-wheeler. He is always willing to greet a newcomer and pick up any odd jobs that come up. The Board felt that since Mac is everywhere all of the time, Association Photographer is a slot that he could fill well, and we were so glad when he consented to do the job. Congratulations, and thanks, Mac!

Looking for a terrific way to spend Labor Day Weekend?

Make plans now to join us at the ISBA Fall Bluegrass Festival in Donnelly ID. We need picker, singers and listeners September 4-6th

Ya'll come join us

Start making your plans now for the
Annual Labor Day Weekend



ISBA FALL BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

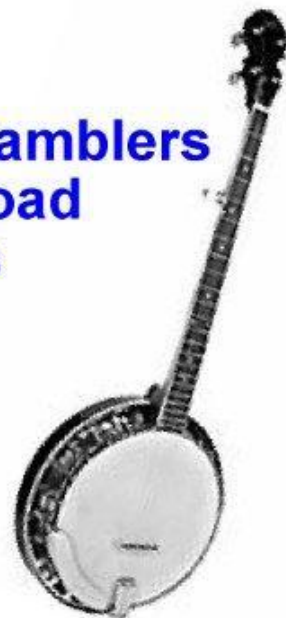
September 4, - 6, 2009

Mountain View R V Park, 1140 West Roseberry Road, Donnelly ID

Come and join us for a three day bluegrass music event in the beautiful mountains of Idaho, featuring daily concerts with 6 fantastic bluegrass bands from Idaho and surrounding states



JD Webb and The Downstate Ramblers
Will Williams and Gravel Road
The Panhandle Polecats
Chicken Dinner Road
Bluegrass Coalition
Tradition



"No Alcohol or Drugs, Just Flatt & Scruggs"
This is a family friendly event so bring your whole family and enjoy.

General
WORKSHOPS
10:00 am / 12:pm
Saturday

LOTS OF JAMMING



50 Full Hook-up Spots
Tent & Dry Camping Space Available
Call for reservations NOW while available
Information & Reservations
Call 208-325-8055

For Information contact
Carolyn Johnson cthorse@gmail.com
Bob Greer 208-466-1719
Dennis Stokes 208-941-5611

For more Information visit
www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

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

ISBA President

Carolyn Johnson - cthorse@gmail.com

Northern Zone

Steve Gleason, Lewiston - (208)798-8280

Pete Northcutt, Grangeville - pnorthcutt@mtida.net

Southern Zone

John Boyer, Twin Falls - (208)733-4552, boyerj1@mindspring.com

Middle Zone

Bill Elmer, Nampa - (208)466-1349, mandobil@mail2Musician.com

Bob Greer, Nampa - (208)466-1719, bobggreer@msn.com

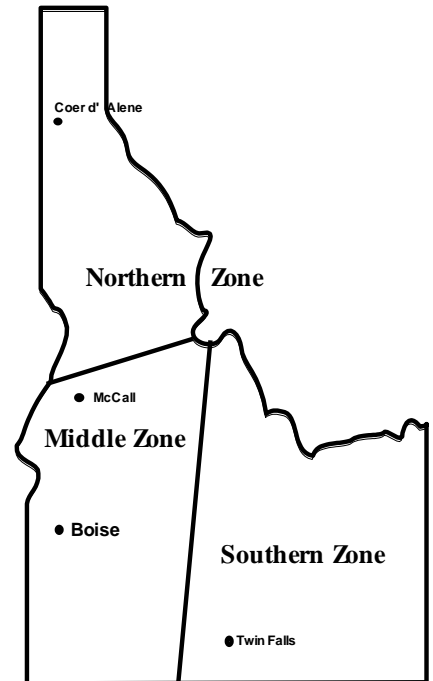
Stan Strickland, Boise - (208)377-5326

Board Chairman - Will Williams, White Bird - will@williamscustombanjos.com

Webmaster - Carolyn Johnson, Boise - cthorse@gmail.com

Membership – Trudee Strickland, Boise - stantrud@msn.com

IdaGrass Editor: Helen Smith, Grangeville - trueblue@wildblue.net



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 the format with which you are comfortable.

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

I am joining as: New Member Renewal

Date: _____

Yearly membership/April to April: \$15 (for an individual or family)

Please mail to: Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association
c/o Trudy Strickland
5714 Centerbrook Dr.
Boise, ID 83705