



IdaGrass

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 Rm. Lewiston

616 Warner,

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.

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Message from the President

The summer season for Bluegrass in the ISBA is over. We had a successful Super Jam in Kamiah and a successful Festival in Donnelly. Along with other volunteers and event organizers, I would like to thank you for your attendance and interest if you joined us. To be successful, events like these need volunteers, audiences, and, in the case of jams, participants. I would give the organization an "A" in all of these areas. It was great to see all of the familiar faces at these events along with new faces that I know will soon become friends.

As we move into fall and winter there are still plenty of Bluegrass activities. In the Northern Region there is the Lewiston Jam run by Steve Gleason. In the Middle Region there is "Bluegrass in the Barn" with a lively, entertaining, and purely Bluegrass show every month. Also, there is the Intermediate Jam hosted by Stan Strickland as well as at least two Bluegrass programs planned by DBR productions. In the South there are two jams, one for Beginner/Intermediate hosted by John Boyer, and an Advanced Jam hosted by Ron Hillier. There are also a multitude of jams, workshops, and other activities in Boise hosted by our sister organization, the "Idaho Bluegrass Association."

In case you are new to the Bluegrass world, jams are not just for players. Many of them are held in locations that will hold a small audience. The music in these jams is excellent and fun to listen to, so if you are really needing to hear some Bluegrass music call the jam organizer and ask if you can sit in and listen. You might also consider picking up an instrument yourself and learning how to play it. Jam leaders usually know who are the good Bluegrass teachers in your area and can make a recommendation or know someone who can. In a year or two (if you practice hard) you will be ready to join a jam and experience the great feeling you get when you play with a group.

To find more information or phone numbers for individuals or events mentioned above check the web site (<http://www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org>).

Upcoming Bluegrass Events:

Bluegrass in the Barn

Saturday, November 14th

7:00 – 9:00 pm

1822 W Orchard, Nampa ID
House Band: Tradition
Guest Band: JD Webb & Downstate Ramblers
Acoustic Bluegrass Jam at 9:00 pm
More info: bobgreer@msn.com

Wintergrass 2010

February 25 – 28th
Hyatt Regency, Bellevue, WA

It's been a long, hot summer and it's been busy in Wintergrass world. After what really was agonizing deliberation we've decided to move Wintergrass to Bellevue...and we know you're going to love it.

More info: www.acousticsound.org

Steve Kaufman returns to Lewiston ID

Mar 11- 13, 2010
Flat-picking and mandolin workshops. Saturday night concert.
More info: lsmusic@clearwire.net or page 6



Raynae Redman and Kids in Bluegrass







ISBA Fall Festival, Donnely 2009
(photos by Dale McMinn)



**Conroy Digital Sound
Studio**

Mike & Tari Conroy
P.O. Box 144
Conner, Mt 59827
406-821-3777 tariconroy@webtv.net



At our small recording studio in Conner, Mt we specialize in making recordings of INDIVIDUALS that sing and or play acoustic music. We often think of these recordings as

“Legacy Recordings” as they are a wonderful permanent keepsake for your family and friends that show your music at it’s best. These Legacy Recordings may start out as just a recording for family and friends but usually end up as a great CD for resale that people want to buy.

Tari & I offer our playing rhythm guitar, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, stand up bass or adding harmony singing to your music at no additional cost...just the normal studio time.

We are proud of every recording we have made here at Conroy Digital Sound Studio. Our job is to capture you at your best, and we work hard to see that gets done. Give us a call to receive our studio information brochure and set up your date to record.

Our motto is “Let’s get-r-done - you ain’t gittin’ any younger!”

Mike & Tari

In the Spotlight with Kristin Scott Benson

Questions – Part two “Kristin Scott-Benson, the professional musician”

IdaGrass: At what point in your life (age or year) did you start to play music professionally?

Kristin: *I joined my first band, Furman Boyce & the Harmony Express, when I was 15. They were a gospel band that mainly played churches, but also some festivals. Then, I joined Petticoat Junction, during my senior year of high school, and later Wild & Blue. I really got going in Sept of 1995 when I joined The Larry Stephenson Band. I missed the first day of my sophomore year of college to play my first show with Larry.*

IdaGrass: .For all those banjo pickers, what kind of a banjo did you play then?

Kristin: *I started with a Gibson RB 250 and then got an 89 Gibson Granada. That was a very good banjo. Later, I moved on to a 1935 Gibson RB-1, which is what I was playing*

when I joined Larry Stephenson's band. In 2000, I bought a 1933 Gibson TB-3, which I still have. I'm currently playing a 2007 Sonny Osborne Chief banjo.

IdaGrass: Now you play both a 2007 Sonny Osborne Chief and a 1933 Gibson TB-3, tell us what you like about each.

Kristin: *Every banjo player wants a prewar Gibson. I discovered that sound in the late '90s. Sonny Osborne was producing a record that I played on and he let me use his 1935 original 5-string Granada and his original 5-string 3, which is the Rocky Top banjo. Having access to those instruments in the studio was the experience that convinced me to buy one. It was like a light switch. Once I heard the intricacies of that sound, I had to have one. The clarity, separation, depth—it's all there. You have to learn how to play them, to get the most out of the instrument. It will make you a better player. The Chief offers many of the same characteristics that are so hard to find in new banjos. I wasn't sure I could play a new banjo, after having an old one, but I'm very happy with The Chief. Sonny is a wonderful friend and I'm proud to play one of his instruments. It's also nice not to have to worry about having an old one with you, all the time.*

IdaGrass: You have played with Laurie Lewis, Sally Jones, Larry Cordel and Lonesome Standard Time. What is one thing you learned from each of those different bands?

Kristin: *All those situations are very different. Actually, I only filled in with Laurie Lewis. Her regular banjo player, Craig Smith, couldn't make a European tour and I was lucky enough to get to go. That was one of my first experiences outside the traditional, east-coast bluegrass environment. Obviously, the audiences were different because we were in Europe, but I loved traveling and playing with people who weren't so embedded in the scene that I was used to. Laurie, Tom Rozum (mandolin), and Todd Sickafoose (bass) are fabulous musicians with open minds. It's healthy to expose yourself to people with different perspectives, and that was one of the first times that I realized that bluegrass was much bigger than what I had seen growing up in the Carolinas. It's art, and they helped open my eyes to the broader implications of what we do.*

With Sally, I developed a more delicate style of playing banjo. We did some straight-ahead bluegrass, but focused more on her songwriting and taste in material. I've always loved lyrics and tried to honor the singer, but it was fun to find a new balance between the banjo playing that attracted me to the instrument originally—driving, NC-style, straight-ahead playing—and a more thoughtful, folksy kind of approach. The key to any situation is playing appropriately. (Photo by Ted Lehmann)

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STEVE KAUFMAN WORKSHOPS & CONCERT

Steve Kaufman will be back in Lewiston Idaho March 11-13, a second time,
to conduct his award winning, all level, eight-hour flat-picking workshop. Additionally, he will be presenting his award winning mandolin workshop.

MANDOLIN WORKSHOP

MARCH 11th (Thurs)

LEVEL: Beginning/Intermediate

TIME: 7:00-9:30 PM

COST: \$45.00

FLAT-PICKING WORKSHOP

MARCH 12 & 13th (Fri & Sat)

LEVEL: ALL

TIME: FRI/7:00-9:00 PM

SAT/9:30-3:30PM

COST: \$90.00

Saturday, March 13, 2010

STEVE KAUFMAN IN CONCERT

TIME: 7:00 PM

TICKETS: \$10.00

Orchard's Baptist Church, Lewiston ID

To sign up for a workshop, buy tickets to the concert, or
for more information, contact Lombards Music:

• Call: 208-746-7127

- Email: ismusic@clearwire.net
- Or just stop by: 1401 21st Street, Lewiston, ID

With Larry Cordle, everything centered on his songwriting. I felt very much like a piece of an overall ensemble, where the banjo had sort of been the driving force in other musical situations I'd been in. Cord is totally unpredictable and we played a lot of rock-oriented bluegrass, for lack of a better description. It was all about exciting the crowd and playing the fabulous songs that he writes.

IdaGrass: In November 2008, you became a member of The Grascals, two-time IBMA Entertainers of the Year. In what ways has this changed your life?

Kristin: *Joining the Grascals has been the best experience of my career. They're great guys and I've never had more fun. It's rare for a bluegrass band to enjoy their level of success, so I feel especially grateful to be invited in after they've worked so hard to build the band. They've offered me the chance to play to more people than ever before and we all appreciate the opportunities that are coming our way.*

IdaGrass: Contained on your two solo projects, Straight Paths and Second Season, you have more than a half dozen original tunes. The inspiration and writing of tunes is as individual as musicians, but tell us about writing one that is particularly meaningful to you.

Kristin: *Hmm....I think the most meaningful is Straight Paths, the title-cut from my first solo record on Pinecastle. There were a lot of things going on at the time, and I came up with a very soothing melody and chord progression. I had been praying for guidance and really leaning on Proverbs 3:5-6. God made His will clear in a key decision right around the time I wrote that tune, so I named it, and the album, Straight Paths.*

IdaGrass: Congratulations to you! In October 2008 you became the IBMA Banjo Player of the Year. That year Earl Scruggs, Jim Mills, JD Crowe and Ron Stewart were also nominees. That is a pretty impressive line-up of banjo players. Within that list, you are the only woman and you are the youngest. Thoughts? Comments?

Kristin: *That was the biggest surprise! Being nominated was a shock and I didn't think there was any chance I'd win. I know everyone says that, but I really mean it. I couldn't believe I was listed with players of that caliber. Two highlights come to mind— having my parents there, and being able to walk up to Larry Cordle who presented the award. Winning that award doesn't mean that you're the best banjo player, but it must mean that people don't totally hate what you do, so that's reassuring.*

IdaGrass: You play with a nationally touring band, you are married to Wayne Benson, of IIIrd Tyme Out, you have completed two solo recording projects and have a young son, Hogan; you are a very busy lady! What in your heart and in your life helps you juggle all those things?

Kristin: *I have a great support system. My parents watch Hogan if both of us are traveling. We relocated from Nashville, six hours away, to South Carolina, so we'd be near family. Wayne is an incredibly supportive husband and a great, self-sufficient dad. Without my parents and Wayne, I obviously couldn't do this. Sometimes, it amazes us that it all works! We are in the really busy time of year right now, so things are crazy, but we also enjoy a down-time when we're not traveling that much and life seems pretty normal. In June, we remember December, and that gives us the energy we need. The beauty of playing music is that when we're home, we're home 24 hours a day, so we actually see each other and Hogan far more than we would with regular jobs.*

IdaGrass: In what ways has becoming a mother changed you?

Kristin: *That's an interview, all to itself. I think the changes are basically the same, for everyone. Being a mom certainly gives you perspective. I'm very thankful for my career, but Hogan keeps us focused on the right things. Kids enrich your life beyond measure. Wayne and I were very happy, before being parents, and would have been quite content just being married. Now that we are parents, however, we are SO glad to have the experience. We wonder how we existed before we had Hogan. Priorities change and career moves down the list. Of course, it can make time away from home terribly heart-wrenching. Now, we have to balance the desire and necessity to work with wanting to be home, but that struggle isn't unique to playing music. Any family, especially with two working parents, has the same issues. We really do have it all. I don't know anyone that I'd rather be.*

IdaGrass: Sometimes when one looks back at your life they are amazed at the opportunities and experiences they've had. What one thing in your life has been most amazing?

Kristin: *It's hard to single something out, professionally, because one thing leads to another. I was certainly amazed to be nominated for the IBMA award—let alone, win. Joining the Grascals definitely exceeded my expectations, but each step along the way led to the next, so it's hard to choose.*

IdaGrass: Describe for me the place/space where playing the banjo is the most rewarding/joyful for you—we can include this with the first set of questions, or not.

Kristin: *Oftentimes, I'm on stage and I just become overwhelmed with thankfulness. I'll find myself thanking God, in the middle of a song. I look to the right and see the guys in the Grascals and I can't believe I'm lucky enough to do this for a living, with such awesome people. Very few people have jobs they don't hate. To find one that you're passionate about is rare and that isn't lost on us.*

Thank-You To Volunteers

I would like to say a big thank you to volunteers who all worked so hard to make the Fall Festival successful.

Jerry Meyers -- MC, Flyers
John Redman -- Stage Manager
Dale McMinn -- Photography, Flyers
Loretta McMinn -- Admission/information, Flyers
Joyce Rolling -- Wristband check
Jim Sturgill -- Wristband check
Chris Williams -- Sound
Rudy Corbett - Sound
Ervin Parish -- Gate
Julie Parish -- Gate
JD Web -- Flyer construction
Judy Web -- Distributed Flyer packages to volunteers
Dallas Christensen - Kids in Bluegrass
Reynae Redman -- Kids in Bluegrass
Gail Williams -- Kids in Bluegrass
Helen Smith -- Workshops
Syd Howland -- Gate Coordinator, flyers
Rich Johnson -- Information Area
Trudy Strickland -- Memberships, Gate

James Stephans -- Gate
Stan Strickland -- Parking
John Boyer --Parking, Intermediate Jam
Steve Gleason -- Parking, Intermediate Jam
Pete Northcutt -- Parking, Flyers
Sharon Stippich and husband -- Parking
Will Williams -- Sound, Stage, General Preparations
Bob Greer -- Sound, Program, Flyers
Dennis Stokes -- Sound
Brian Haken -- Intermediate Jam
Harry Strang -- Intermediate Jam
Bill Cates -- Intermediate Jam
Pat Threewit -- Parking, Flyers
Ayleen Strahan -- Wristband check
Cheryl Terry -- Flyers
Bill Elmer -- Flyers
Carolyn Johnson -- General Duties

As you look at the list above you can see the large number of people it takes to make one of these festivals work. What you don't see is the number of hours some of these people put in. They run from a low of 1 hour to a high of 30 or 40 or in a couple of cases 50/60 hours not counting travel time. It would really be great if next year no one had to put in more than 10 or 15 hours. To make that happen we need more help. When the call for volunteers comes up next year consider submitting your name. It is all for the love of the music and keeping it alive. We are a non-profit organization and everything we make goes into putting on the next event.

In spite of my best efforts I will have inevitably have missed someone. Let me know and we will acknowledge you in the next newsletter. Thank you all. I am so proud of this list.



Donnelly Guitar Workshop, given by Brian Haken



Idaho Bluegrass is well represented at the 2009 Darrington Bluegrass Festival by Tradtion, from the Boise area.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

During Mother's Day weekend in May, I was privileged to attend the ISBA sponsored Super Jam in Kamiah, Idaho, for the third year in a row. Once again, it promised to be the very FINEST bluegrass music event that will occur all summer long. It has so many positive aspects that it is difficult to number them, but I'll try.

The location is extremely nice, and this year because it was two weeks later than the earlier years, the weather was near perfect. There at the Lewis and Clark Resort there are several options for housing making it perfect for those who do, and those who don't have trailers, campers, or motor homes.

As much as I truly loved the program on Saturday, it was PERFECT that it was not longer. Because you save the performance until Saturday afternoon (leaving evening free for jamming), and have only a few bands participate, the big question of "Do I want to attend the entertainment or stay and play music?" is not an issue. And because one is not torn in two directions, the performances are extremely valued. At regular bluegrass festivals that I have attended which have been MANY, one must always decide between the two, and I appreciated so much that you planned things so folks had opportunity to enjoy top quality entertainment and still had lots of time to jam with friends old and new. Friendships found at these events are such an important part of the package. The fact that the bands donate their time also speaks to my heart. It makes them human and good.

Open mike was so refreshingly wonderful this year, also, because it was held early and there was plenty of time for jamming afterward. Hooray!! Lots of folks took advantage of the extra jam time.

The workshops are always appreciated and it was especially nice to see such a nice program for kids this year. What a grand idea. We attended a festival in Fossil, Oregon a couple of years ago where their kids program had been in operation for a few years and it is such a fine and productive effort.

And finally, the price of the weekend simply can't be beat. It is so refreshing to attend such a quality event without a huge price tag.

Thank you so much. Don't change a thing (if it ain't broke, don't fix it) —except I understand next year that it will be held the weekend after Mother's Day. Great choice!!!

Respectfully yours,

Jackie Tolman, Richland Washington

A wannabe musician who sincerely appreciates the opportunities afforded for improvement at your Super Jam



Donnelly Mandolin Workshop given by Bill Elmer

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

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