



IdaGrass

Volume 7 Issue 2

March – April 2011

2011 Bluegrass Calendar

April 2 – CHICKEN DINNER ROAD - Season's Bistro, Eagle ID. 6:30 pm. Tickets: (208) 926-0094

April 16 – VALLEY BLUEGRASS STAGE - Clarkston HS., 7pm. Prairie Flyer and Wanigan. Tickets, \$5.00 Contact: lombard@gorge.net

April 16 – MRBA 12th ANNUAL OLDTIME BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL - Lone Rock School, Stevensville MT. Noon 'til 10pm. 16 bands. More info: 503-821-3777. www.mtbluegrass.com/mrba-calendar/

May 7 - ONE-DAY BANJO WORKSHOP AT PICKLES BUTTE
9am-5pm, Nampa, ID. Contact: Gary Eller 208-442-8844 or pgaryeller@aol.com.

May 13, 14 & 15 - ISBA SPRING SUPER JAM - Lewis Clark Resort, Kamiah, ID. See page 2. www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

July 22, 23 & 24 – HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL – Hamilton MT. www.hardtimesbluegrass.com. See page 6

August 5, 6, & 7 – FRASER PARK CAMP & JAM – Orofino ID. Contact: sgbanjo@hotmail.com

August 19, 20 & 21 – COUNCIL MOUNTAIN MUSIC FESTIVAL – Council ID. www.councilfestival.com

September 2, 3 & 4 - ISBA FALL FESTIVAL - Round Valley near Cascade Idaho. See page 9

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ISBA Sponsored Jams

Boise – 1st & 3rd TH, 7 pm - 5714 Centerbrook Dr. Intermediate jam, (208) 377-5326 for more info

Lewiston –
1st Saturday @ Orchards United Methodist Church, 1213 Burrell Ave
3rd Saturday @ Highlander Community Room,
616 Warner, Steve Gleason
208-798-8280

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.

From the Editor's Desk

Hello from snowy Grangeville!

On Monday morning as I sat down at my computer to polish up the newsletter, I looked out of my window at 2" of snow – but was I discouraged – NO, because I know that it will be melted by noon and the bluegrass festival season is just around the corner – it will be here before we know it.

I haven't quite given up my soap box about getting together and playing with others – so let me finish my peace and then I'll let it rest. One of my favorite quotes is by Clifton Wares, "Achievement of any worthwhile endeavor requires the investment of time and energy and a willing to take some calculated risk." So let's look at this in relationship to bluegrassing. This quote tells me that to improve my bluegrass musicianship it will require 1) an investment 2) calculate risk. We seem to be excited and willing to do the first, make an investment of time and energy. We spend many hours practicing our instruments at home – working on chords, licks and runs and/or memorizing lyrics about hard time and cabin homes. However, we are often less willing and fearful to do the second, take a calculated risk. For most of us, this calculated risk is allowing ourselves to be vulnerable enough to pick music with others with the potential to make a mistake publically, – GASP! This can be very scary - a very real fear. I have three things for your consideration, which might make it easier for you to take that calculated risk

First off, realize that everyone was a beginner at their beginning. When you compare your skills with others, you have a tendency to forget that everyone was once a beginner. When a toddler begins is learning to walk it we all cheer as they take that first wobbly step and then plop down onto their bottoms. We clap and smile, tell them how well they did and encourage them to try again. The same holds true when a kindergartener shows us their first scribbled

attempts at writing. Why is it we cannot allow ourselves the same process in our new undertakings? Everyone is a beginner in the beginning – and that's OK

Second, you must recognize that there will always be pickers better than you and always be pickers less skilled than you are. This is terrific! This provides you great opportunities - to learn from others those more skilled and to encourage those less skilled than yourself. When you truly accept this fact, you are then free to give your current best effort and to move forward towards where you want to be. **Third**, trust that it gets easier as you go along. It takes a lot of courage to try something new – to take a break, to sing, to join in. You will probably make a mistake or two, but it will be fine. Gather all the courage you have (borrow some if you need) and jump in with both feet! The accomplishment of trying is exhilarating and wonderful.

Fourth, my experience has been that the bluegrass community is very encouraging. Not once in a jam, has anyone thrown a rotten tomato at me – imagine that – not once. Even when I've made mistakes – they didn't throw tomatoes. You smile, but this is true. I am grateful for fellow musicians who have welcomed and encouraged me – mistakes and all. I have found that bluegrass picker are pretty amazing people and this community provides a wonderful place to take that "calculated risk".

Be well & keep pickin', Helen

ISBA Board Changes

The ISBA Board would like to announce the resignation of board member, Pete Northcutt and thank him for his many contributions to the ISBA.

Thank you, Pete!

We would also like to announce the appointment of Scott Lombard as an ISBA board member, serving the northern zone with Steve Gleason. Scott lives in Lewiston and is the band leader of Higher Ground. Watch for him at the Spring Super Jam and be sure to introduce yourself.

Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association Presents

www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

6th Annual Spring Jam.

May 13, 14, 15 2011

**Your Invited
and it's Free**

**Jamming
every day,
all day.**



Bands on Saturday !

Tradition, Nampa ID

Higher Ground, Lewiston, ID

Will Williams and Gravel Road

White Bird, ID

J D Webb and The Down State Ramblers,

Emmett, ID

And More:

**Raynae Redman and
Kids in Bluegrass
Saturday, May 14th**

Family Fun!

Open Mic! Friday Evening

Workshops! Saturday

Good Food!



Where? Lewis Clark R V Resort Kamiah ID.

Call to reserve your camping spot 208-935-2556

Contributions from the Board

Steve Gleason is the board member contributing to this issue of IdaGrass. Steve and his wife, Gail, live in Lewiston. Steve faithfully coordinates the ISBA jam the first SAT of the month in at the Lewiston Orchards Methodist Church. Steve love to pick the banjo and you always feel welcome at his camper to jam. Steve feels strongly about jamming and it's accompanying etiquette. Taken from Pete Wernick's website, Steve offers helpful hints, just in time for the upcoming festival season.



Jamming Tips and Etiquette Introduction, by Steve Gleason

Jamming can be fun and rewarding. It can really change people's lives. There are so many folks who can play pretty decently and are highly motivated to jam, but just need a little coaching to get up and running with confidence. Here are a few pointers to get us started.

Bluegrass Jamming Pointers By Pete Wernick

Bottom Lines:

1. Be in tune, before starting and whenever in doubt. Use an electronic tuner
2. Be on the right chord.
 - A. Remember the cord progression.

. If necessary, watch the left hand of someone who knows the chords.

3. Stay with the beat

It Helps if You:

1. Recognize common guitar chords by sight even if you don't play a guitar.
2. Help with the singing. Knowing the verses to songs is a key ingredient.
3. Suggest songs easy enough for everyone to follow. Be aware of common denominators of ability when picking keys and tempos.
4. Know the basics of simple key transposing, such as when capos are used.
5. Help others be on the right chord.
6. Watch your volume.
 - A. Allow featured singer/soloist to be easily heard. If you can't hear him/her, get quieter
 - B. When it's your turn, make sure you're heard.
 - C. Be aware that your instrument (banjos especially) may not seem as loud to you as to someone who's in front of it.
7. Know the traditional unspoken grown rules (to be covered in the next IdaGrass).
8. Give every one a chance to shine. Be encouraging.

www.drbanjo.com/instructional-bluegrassjammingtips.php

A couple of reminders –

- ❖ **April is the month to renew your ISBA membership, forms on page 10**

- ❖ The ISBA Fall Festival Committee is looking for volunteers willing to help with many different kinds of jobs.

If you would be willing to help at the Fall Festival, contact Bob Greer:

bobgreer@msn.com



Beginner/Slow Jams

By Carolyn Johnson

It is jamming season in the ISBA again and we would like to provide an opportunity for all levels of musicians to get together and play music. When people are just starting out and haven't had the opportunity to play with others they need an opportunity to "get their feet wet", learn jam etiquette, and play at a speed that they can handle. Our beginner/slow jam is an effort to help people make that start.

This year the beginner jam will be hosted by "The Stage Fright Five," a group from Boise that plays at nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We are really just interested in having a good time with music. We will make our presence known on the program and by posting a sign "Slow Jam" where we are playing. We will hold sessions on Friday evening and Saturday evening. Check below for the list of songs we will play and also to find out if you fit, musically, into this jam.

Beginner Jam -- Do I fit?

- ◆ You haven't spent a lot of time playing with groups and are unsure of yourself and your skills.
- ◆ You have a hard time playing songs that you have not practiced.
- ◆ You can play at speeds between 120 and 160 beats a minute
- ◆ You can easily play the cords c, g, d, a, e, and f and move among them efficiently.
- ◆ You would prefer to play from a song list so that you can practice ahead of time.

Song List for Slow Jam

Below is a song list for the Slow Jam compiled by the three zones. We will use this list for both the Kamiah Super Jam and the ISBA Fall Festival in Round Valley. We will have a designated jam area for the Slow Jam

with a jam master to help with organization and music questions. There will be no pressure to do breaks, if you want to work on your back-up skills. We will play at a moderate easy, pace. Most of all, we want it to be fun.

1. Gold Watch and Chain, G
2. Keep on the Sunnyside, G
3. Sittin on Top of the World, G
4. Don't This Road Look Rough and Rocky, G
5. Life's Railway to Heaven, G
6. Will the Circle Be Unbroken, G or A
7. Bury Me Beneath the Willow, G
8. All the Good Times Are Past and Gone, G
9. Blue Ridge Cabin Home, G
10. I Saw the Light, G
11. I'll Fly Away, G
12. Red River Valley, G
13. John Hardy, G
14. Old Joe Clark, A
15. Lonesome Road Blues, G
16. Red River Valley
17. Salty Dog Blues, G
18. Fireball Mail, G
19. Cripple Creek, A
20. Long Black Veil, G

Movin' and Shakin'

Chicken Dinner Road has a new lineup primed and ready to go, with new guitarist, L.B. Robertson and new bassist, John Blakely. If you'd like to hear this new configuration, catch their dinner show, April 2 at the Season's Bistro. Call reservations @ 208-939-6680.

In addition to the Downstate Ramblers, check out what new things **JD & Judy Webb** have going, by visiting them on the web, at: www.thewebbs.homestead.com

3RD ANNUAL

HARDTIMES BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

JULY 22-23-24, 2011

The Callenders
Pendleton, OR

**JD Webb & Downstate
Rambler**
Baker, OR

Blue to the Bone
Hamilton, MT

Will Williams & Gravel Road
Grangeville, ID

Mike & Tari Conroy
Conner, MT

Pinegrass
Missoula, MT

Gravelly Mtn.
Alberton, MT

Kids in Bluegrass
Around the Northwest

Darby Sireens
Darby, MT

New South Fork
Idaho Falls, ID

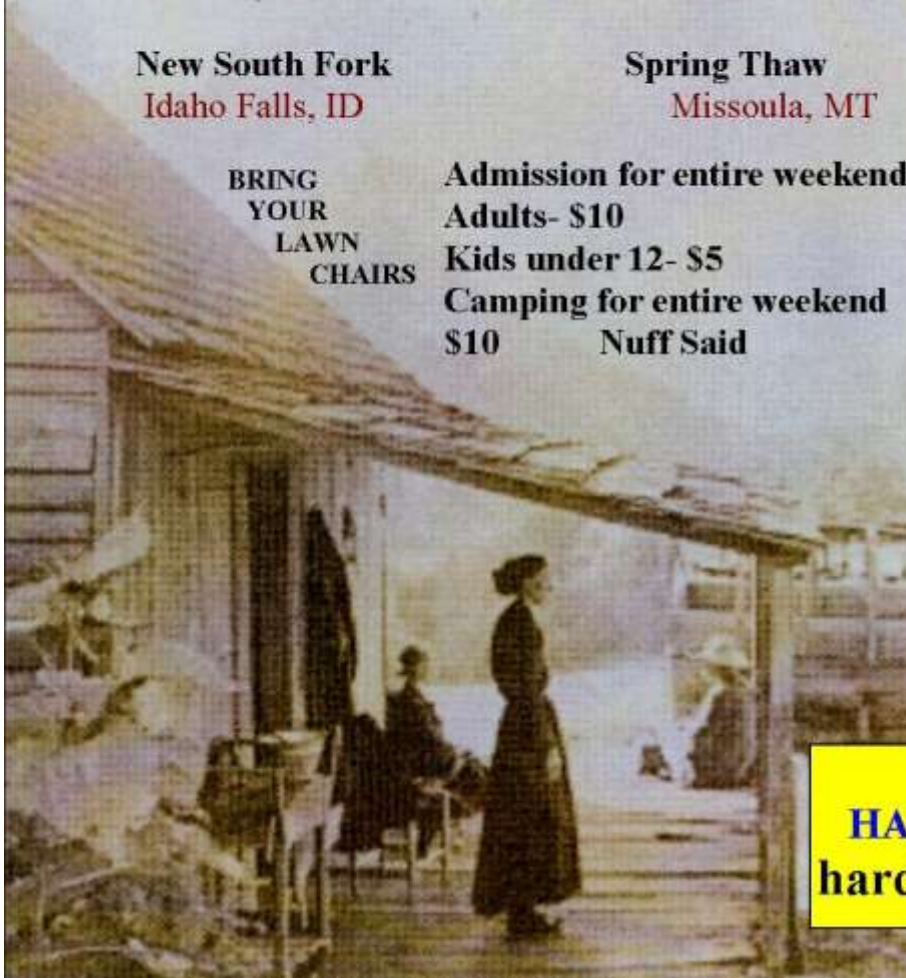
Spring Thaw
Missoula, MT

Individual Pioneers
FIDDLIN' JIMMY WIDNER
MYRON WALTER & ILA
MATTHEWS
FORREST CLARK
FIRP REDMAN
IRA & CHRISTINE TAYLOR

**BRING
YOUR
LAWN
CHAIRS**

Admission for entire weekend
Adults- \$10
Kids under 12- \$5
Camping for entire weekend
\$10 Nuff Said

SUNDAY MORNING GOSPEL
FOOD & VENDORS ON-SITE
ALL DOGS ON A LEASH



1-406-821-3777
163 Forest Hill Road

**10 Miles South of
HAMILTON, MONTANA**
hardtimesbluegrass.com

Jim Sanders of the Southwest Bluegrass Association wrote a series of articles on understanding the guitar fingerboard. These articles are being re-printed in the ISBA newsletter with the hope that our guitar playing friends will find the information helpful. Thanks to Mr. Sanders and the SWBA for granting us permission to re-print their articles. A big thank you, also, to ISBA member Bill Estes who negotiated permission for us to use the articles.

Stan Strickland

I know this is a lot to get your head around, so please spend some time looking over the fingerboard and I think it will begin to get clearer.

Anyway, I sure hope it does because – look out – next time we will tackle the minor chords. A little note: years ago an old friend, Norm Walters, wrote a short article here and he said something that has stayed with me all these years. It's a little piece of advice that I'd like to repeat to you. When you are carrying your instrument in its case, always carry it with the lid facing you. That way, if it comes open your legs will keep it from falling out on the ground. And, when it's not being played, it belongs in its case.

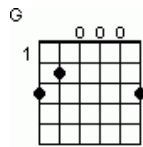
To Know It Is to Love It

- Part 2

By Jim Sanders

Oh, No! Not this again. Yep. I'm back (hahaha) Today I'd like to show you a little about major chords. Take our old friends, the G chord.

I am sure you have seen this diagram before and you know you play all six strings. But did you know that even though you are hearing six different sounds you are lonely playing three notes?



You are playing G, B, D but in different octaves.

If you will look at your fingerboard diagram and see where you put your fingers when you are making a G major chord, you will see what I mean. Look at the top of the fingerboard. The second string is a B note; the third string is a G note; the fourth string is a D note. Not that you know the G, B, and d make up the G chord, look at your fingerboard. Everywhere you can find these notes you can make a G chord. See how many you can find.

You can find the main note (the note that is the name of the chord) of all of the major chords on the G string. If you want to know what three notes make up any particular major chord, find the note on the G string then look at the notes to the left (D string) and to the right (B string) of that note. This will give you the three notes of your chord. Now, find where those three notes occur on the fingerboard to find all the places that you can play that chord.

As you go up the neck on the G string you will find the three notes that make up the twelve major chords. This is known as a major triad.

The Guitar Fingerboard



Article reprinted from the Southwest Bluegrass Association Newsletter.

G Chord Diagrams: bobsguitarpracticetips.com

Traditional Bluegrass

by Nora Killion

What is tradition? The Oxford says, "Time-honored, long established and conventional". Traditional instruments are acoustic by nature as some instruments trace their roots to the beginnings of human history and electrified instruments are a relatively recent adaptation. The instruments the immigrant people brought with them to this country play a large role in the traditional music of America. To discuss the instruments, let's first look at what is said about bluegrass as music.

The encyclopedias say:

"Bluegrass music is a form of American roots music, and it is a sub-genre of country music. It has its roots in Irish, Scottish and English traditional music. Bluegrass was inspired by the music of immigrants from the United Kingdom and Ireland (particularly the Scots-Irish immigrants in Appalachia), as well as jazz and blues. In bluegrass, as in jazz, each instrument takes a turn playing the melody and improvising around it, while the others revert to backing; this is in contrast to old-time music, in which all instruments play the melody together or one instrument carries the lead throughout while the others provide accompaniment. Traditional bluegrass is typically based around acoustic stringed instruments, such as acoustic guitar, banjo, fiddle, and upright bass, with or without vocals." (I take issue with that statement and I will explain later.)

"Bluegrass is not and never was folk music under a strict definition; however, the topical and narrative themes of many bluegrass songs are highly reminiscent of "folk music". In fact, many songs that are widely considered to be bluegrass are older works legitimately classified as folk or old-time performed in a bluegrass style. From its earliest days to today, bluegrass has been recorded and performed by professional musicians. Although amateur bluegrass

musicians and trends such as "parking lot picking" are too important to be ignored, it is professional musicians who have set the direction of the style. While bluegrass is not folk music in that strict sense, the interplay between bluegrass music and folk forms has been studied. Folklorist Dr. Neil Rosenberg, for example, shows that most devoted bluegrass fans and musicians are familiar with traditional folk songs and old-time music and that these songs are often played at shows and festivals."

Bluegrass as a style developed during the mid 1940s. It evolved from Appalachian string-band music, remaining true to its roots but infused with Western swing, blues, and jazz. Because of war rationing, recording was limited during that time. As with any musical genre, no one person can claim to have "invented" it. Nevertheless, bluegrass's beginnings can be traced to one man and one band. Bill Monroe is referred to as the "founding father" of bluegrass music; the bluegrass style was named for his band, the Blue Grass Boys, formed in 1939. Monroe himself noted that, "Bluegrass is the way that I wanted it." You can find music before Bill Monroe that hints at bluegrass but nothing exactly like it. Because of that, I disagree with the aforementioned encyclopedia and have to say that the mandolin is not just necessary but focal to bluegrass music. Although bluegrass is Monroe's singular creation the corroboration of many great musicians fleshed out the music to the living, breathing being it is today. Everyone who plays the music, listens to the music and loves the music becomes part of its evolution and life.

Bluegrass, then, as a genre of traditional music, shares the same instrumentation as many other traditional forms and styles of music. But where did these instruments come from to be thought "traditional"? We will look at the history of the instruments next time.

Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Asso. **6th Annual Bluegrass Festival**

Labor Day weekend Sept. 2nd,3rd,& 4th

Kling Ranch,(Round Valley)

9899 So. Spoor Rd. Cascade, ID 83611

Mr. Al Jackson Festival MC

Bands

Tradition

Kids in Bluegrass

Panhandle Polecats

Mike and Tari Conroy Band

Will Williams and Gravel Road

Buckhorn Mtn. Boys (reunion)

JD Webb & the Downstate Ramblers

Adults \$10.00

for the weekend

Children under 12, \$5.00

Dry camping \$10.00 per unit.

No Alcohol or Drugs

**Dry
Camping
on
Site**

**Bring
Your
Lawn
Chairs**

**Food
&
Vendors
on-site**

**All
Dogs
on
Leash**

**Instrument
work shops**

**A
Family
Event**

Festival Directions From Boise ID: North on Hyw 55 past milepost #101 to valley edge. Go south on Round Valley Road 8/10 mile, turn left on Gray Lane 1 mile Turn right (South) on Spoor Road to end of Valley.

Info; 208-839-2814 /208-484-8678 www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

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: \$15.00 (for an individual or family)

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

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

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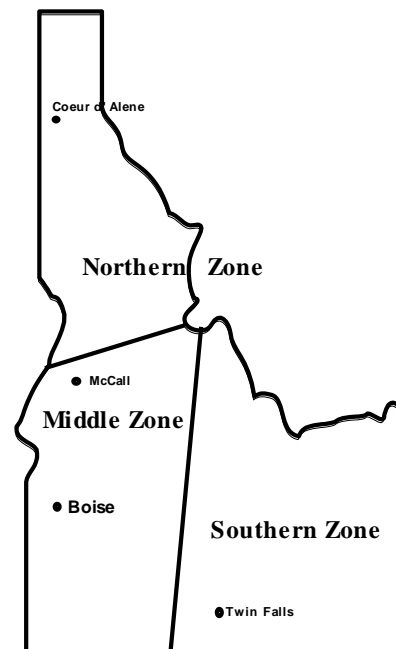
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