



IdaGrass

Volume 10 Issue 2

March - April 2014

Upcoming Bluegrass Events

Bluegrass in the Barn

April 12
1822 W Orchard Ave, Nampa ID
7:00 PM
Featuring Ron Spears Band out of Nashville Tenn.
Info: 208-466-1719

Bluegrass Banjo Camp

May 2-4
Weiser, ID

Bill Evans, Chicken Dinner Road & Possum Livin'

May 3
Weiser, ID (see page 3)

ISBA Super Jam

May 16-18
Kamiah, ID
www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

11th Annual Sacajawea Bluegrass Festival

June 13-15
Sacajawea State Park, Pasco, WA
www.mctama.org

Wenatchee River Bluegrass Festival

June 20-22
Chelan County Expo Center, Cashmere, WA
www.wenatcheeriverbluegrass.com

Valley Bluegrass Festival

June 27-28
Nez Perce County Fairgrounds, Lewiston, ID
www.lewisclarkbluegrass.org

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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

Jams! Workshops! Festivals! Suddenly, musical options are abounding, and my calendar is filling up from now until Labor Day. It can only mean one thing....

It's Spring!

Yes, it's true that the arrival of spring has many other welcome aspects, but chief among them is always the opening of bluegrass season.

We're fortunate in this area to have venues in Boise, Lewiston, Montana and Washington close by, as well as our own ISBA jams that bracket the festival season---the Spring Jam in May, and the Round Valley Jam Labor Day weekend. Each venue has its own flavor and opportunities---opportunities for playing, for listening, for re-connecting, and for service.

It's that last one that's on my mind lately. I have the good fortune to serve on the committee that has come together to spearhead the Spring Jam, and I have seen great things come from all the members there. Great ideas, constructive comments, and just good old all-American volunteerism are in evidence at every meeting and in every email. It's a pleasure to work with people like this.

Every time I've served with other ISBA members, I've noticed the same thing, and I've gotten to know some amazing folks. So here's an idea for a spring resolution: volunteer in your bluegrass association! Call a BOD member and offer your assistance. Think about chairing the Round Valley Jam committee. Sign up to spend an hour at the membership table, or the t-shirt booth. Become more involved, and help make this the association YOU want it to be.

And while you're at it, start practicing those warm-up scales, limber up your vocal chords, and....

Let's play some music!

PT Limehouse

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I thought I would let the members know that the committee for the ISBA Kamiah Super Jam had a

meeting in Grangeville on March 15th. We reviewed band submissions, and I believe we have a real good line up of bands. We need instructors for the instrument and vocal harmony workshops. If you are interested in helping, please contact the head honcho of the committee, Helen Smith (208) 983-7910. We need as much help as we can get. We can't make the ISBA Kamiah Super Jam successful without you! Thanks!

Steve Gleason, ISBA President

ISBA SPONSORED BLUEGRASS JAMS

Middle Zone Jam:

Stan Strickland, in Boise, hosts an intermediate jam the first and third Thursday of each month at 5714 Centerbrook Dr. from 7-9 PM

For more information, contact Stan at 208-377-5326

Northern Zone Jams:

First Saturday of the month at the Jack in the Box (1903 G St) in Lewiston, and the third Sunday of the month at the Lenore Store on Highway 12.

The Saturday jam runs 10 AM to 12 noon, and the Sunday one from 1-4 PM.

BLUEGRASS BANJO CAMP CHANGE

The Bluegrass Banjo Camp at Weiser will still be happening in May, but the instructor roster now includes our old friend Bill Evans. In addition to offering parallel novice and intermediate lesson tracks, Bill and the rest of the teaching team will be presenting a Saturday night concert for the camp students and the general public.

ANNUAL ISBA SPRING SUPER JAM

It's almost here..our annual Kamiah Super Jam will be held the weekend after Mother's Day, May 16-18.

Although the Jam officially starts on Friday, tradition demands that we enjoy a potluck on

Thursday evening, so please come, eat, and plan to visit!

On Friday, Stan Stickland will conduct a beginning banjo class. There will also be a vocal harmony workshop, many opportunities for jamming and renewing friendships, and an evening open mic.

On Saturday, there will be beginner and intermediate instrument workshops in the morning, as well as Kids In Bluegrass, followed by six great bands: Diamond Joe, Moscow, ID; Mike & Tari Conroy Band, Conner, MT; Gravely Mountain Boys, Missoula, MT; Milltown, Lewiston, ID; Hotwire, Council ID; and Ozark Mountain Music, Boise ID.

We'll finish up Sunday morning with a gospel open mic before sending everyone off with a smile --and sore fingers!

The Lewis and Clark Resort offers RV spaces, cabins and motel rooms at reasonable rates. Contact them soon to make reservations by calling 208-935-2556, or use their website at: www.lewisclarkresort.com

For more information about the jam, check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/isba.superjam>

KIDS IN BLUEGRASS AT THE SUPER JAM

Once again, we will offer the Kids in Bluegrass program at the Spring Super Jam.

This program is open to all kids ages 3 to 18 and all abilities are welcome. If you have a child that would like to participate please bring them to the **Kids In Bluegrass** banner across from the lodge at noon on Saturday. We will be working with the kids for 2 hours, then we will take the stage to open the show. If you have a child who doesn't play but would still like to participate, they are welcome to be on stage and sing with the kids. If you have any questions feel free to contact

Raynae at blugrsmom@aol.com or call 208-839-2267.

FALL ROUND VALLEY JAM CHAIR NEEDED

The Board is looking for someone who would like to chair the Fall Jam Committee for Round Valley. The great part of the job is that it will not entail all of the jobs that a full fledged festival includes: no band selection, program writing or finding a sound system for example. The job can be tailored to your interests in making a smaller, well executed Fall Jam a success with an emphasis on spreading the word with flyers and other advertising, getting volunteers to help with admission, setting up some workshops (perhaps -- up to you or find a volunteer to do it for you), maybe even doing an open mike, but again, up to you. Members of the board will be supportive and helpful. We have grounds preparation and parking volunteers, and people who can arrange sanitary and garbage pick-up. Mostly we need a person with an interest and imagination to help us do the best possible Fall Jam we can do.

BILL EVANS –THE BANJO IN AMERICA

*Also Featuring **Chicken Dinner Road** and **Possum Livin'***

Weiser, ID Saturday, May 3

"Bill is able to reach into the banjo's past to make a sublime statement of its future...to create a sound firmly rooted in tradition but still fresh and vital." —Tim Bond, Bluegrass Now

Bill Evans is well-known within the bluegrass music community not only as a musician, but also as a teacher, writer and scholar. The Banjo in America concert brings together these interests in a unique presentation designed for the concert stage.

Tracing the banjo from its West African roots to the New World, Evans performs musical examples from the 1700's to the present day on a variety of vintage instruments, explaining how the banjo has

been at the intersection of African- and Anglo-American musical and cultural exchange for over 250 years. From an 18th century African dance tune to the music of the Civil War, and from early 20th century ragtime to folk and bluegrass banjo styles, *The Banjo in America* informs while it entertains, exposing audiences to over 200 years of American music.

Evans has presented *The Banjo in America* at Kobe Shoin Women's University, Kobe, Japan; the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH; Carleton College, Northfield, MN; Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA; Clarion Music Center, San Francisco, CA; Border Folk Festival, El Paso, TX; Columbia Gorge Mixed Bag Music Festival, Stevenson, WA; the Maryland Banjo Academy, Buckeystown, MD; South Plains College, Levelland, TX; the Gettysburg Bluegrass Festival, Gettysburg, PA; the Mid-Winter Bluegrass Festival, Denver, CO and Wintergrass, Tacoma, WA. He showcased at the 1997 International Bluegrass Music Trade Association Trade Show in Louisville, Kentucky and performed at the 1999 & 2000 IBMA Fan Fest. In February, 2001, Bill presented *The Banjo in America* as part of a two week national tour of Japan.

CHICKEN DINNER ROAD

Chicken Dinner Road is a band from the Treasure Valley of Idaho who dabbles in all kinds of acoustic music using bluegrass instrumentation. The band was formed back in May of 2006 as a traditional bluegrass band when a group of us got together to play open-mic at the Library Coffeehouse in Meridian, ID. We had such a great time that we decided to start playing a few gigs. Our second performance was at the National Old-time Fiddle Contest in Weiser, ID where we won the Battle of the Bluegrass Bands Contest that June. We won this contest again in 2009 and 2011. We have also opened for some great nationally known groups including Russell Moore and IIIrd Tyme Out, Chatham County Line, Valerie Smith and Liberty Pike, Carrie Hassler and Hard Rain, and Grammy winner Mike Compton. We've had a few personnel changes over the years, and founding member

Dennis Stokes is the only original member of Chicken Dinner Road remaining.

POSSUM LIVIN'

Possum Livin' is a Boise, Idaho based string band bringing you high energy tunes that'll keep your head ringin. Possum Livin' isn't just a band, it's a lifestyle. When you are fed up with the man and livin off the land, that's Possum Livin'. When your whiskey's taxed more than your car and you just fill your own jar, that's Possum Livin'. They keep the music and their lives simple. Possum Livin's musicians come from all over the US (and Canada) and serve up specials ranging from bluegrass and old timey traditionals to raging punk rock. A hoedown's just a moshpit in overalls! Lace up your boots and get ready for some dancing! "Bluegrass-The Original Punk Rock!" That's Possum Livin'!

The show will be at the historic theater in Slocum Hall immediately adjacent to the National Old Time Fiddle Contest grounds, and admission is \$10 for the general public. If you haven't seen Bill's show before, you are in for a real treat so please help us spread the word. For a 14 minute teaser, see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhcBA0WRm88&list=PLAF50C137533332E0>.

CHORD PROGRESSIONS EVERY BLUEGRASS PLAYER SHOULD KNOW BY HEART

A verse or chorus of a typical bluegrass song consists of 4 lines. Each line, in turn, consists of 4 measures. Of these 16-measure-long one of the most common is:

1144
1155
1144
1511

Let's call this 'Prog. 1'. Many songs use Prog. 1 for both the verse and the chorus (e.g., Bury Me Beneath The Willow; I'm On My Way Back To The Old Home), while others use Prog. 1 for the verse, and use a different - but often closely related -

progression for the chorus (e.g., Rose Of Old Kentucky) How many other songs can you think of that you know that use this same progression?

4411	4411	4411
1155	1155	1155
1144	1141	1111
1511	1511	1511

(All progressions are written here in 'Nashville numbers'. For the 4 most common keys that bluegrass players learn to think in, the number names of the chords translate into letter names as follows: in the key of G: 1=G; 4=C; 5=D; in the key of A: 1=A; 4=D; 5=E; In the key of C: 1=C; 4=F; 5=G; In the key of D: 1=D; 4=G; 5=A.)

Many other common chord progressions in bluegrass are closely related to Prog. 1. For instance, if one simply changes the last measure of lines 1 and 3 from a 4 to a 1, then the result is the progression for Swing Low Sweet Chariot, All The Good Times Are Past And Gone, and the verses of Little Cabin Home On The Hill. (Prog. 2)

If one changes all the 4s to 1s in Prog. 1 or Prog. 2, another fairly common progression results (Prog. 3); e.g., Fireball Mail and the verses of Feast Here Tonight.

Going back to Prog. 1, if one changes the 4s in the first line to 1s, but leaves the rest of the progression intact, the result is the progression for When The Saints Go Marching In, Mama Don't Allow, and the verses of Why Don't You Tell Me So. (Prog. 4)

Prog. 2	Prog. 3	Prog. 4
1141	1111	1111
1155	1155	1155
1141	1111	1144
1511	1511	1511

If one reverses the order of the measures in line 1 of Prog. 1, this results in the progression for the chorus for Rose Of Old Kentucky and Why Don't You Tell Me So. (Prog. 5) In one substitutes the first line of Prog. 5 in place of the first line of Prog. 2, this results in the chorus for Little Cabin Home On The Hill (Prog. 6). Doing this to Prog. 3 results in the chorus for Feast Here Tonight. (Prog. 7)

Prog. 5	Prog. 6	Prog. 7
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Another way that Prog. 1 through 4 (and also 5 through 7) can be modified is by changing the first measure of the last line of the progression from a 1 to a 5. Do this to Prog. 1 and you will have the progression for A Girl From West Virginia. (Prog. 8) Do this to Prog. 3 and you will have the progression for the verses of When You Are Lonely (Prog. 9) Do this to Prog. 4 and you will have the progression for versions of Rollin' In My Sweet Baby's Arms and New River Train that do not use Prog. 4 instead. (Prog. 10) Do this to Prog. 5 and you will have the chorus for I Wonder Where You Are Tonight. (Prog. 11) Do this to Prog. 7 and you have the chorus for When You Are Lonely. (Prog. 12)

Prog. 8	Prog. 9	Prog. 10	Prog. 11	Prog. 12
1144	1111	1111	4411	4411
1155	1155	1155	1155	1155
1144	1111	1144	1144	1111
5511	5511	5511	5511	5511

There are many other ways in which a progression can be modified systematically to create other fairly common progressions (and some not so common). One way is to take the second half of a progression and repeat it to create a new 16 measure progression. The new progression can, in turn, be modified in the ways that allowed us to relate Prog. 2 through 5 to Prog. 1, and to relate Prog. 9 through 11 to Prog. 3 through 5. Give these ideas a try, and see what you come up with it.

Happy Pickin',

Jason Homey (banjomaster1@yahoo.com)

TO KNOW IT IS TO LOVE IT Part Two

Today I'd like to show you a little about major chords. Take our old friend, the G chord. I am sure you know you play all six strings. But did you know that even though you are hearing six different sounds, you are only playing three notes? You are playing G, B and D, but in different octaves.

If you will look at your fingerboard diagram and see where you put your fingers when you are forming 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. Now that you know that 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 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 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.

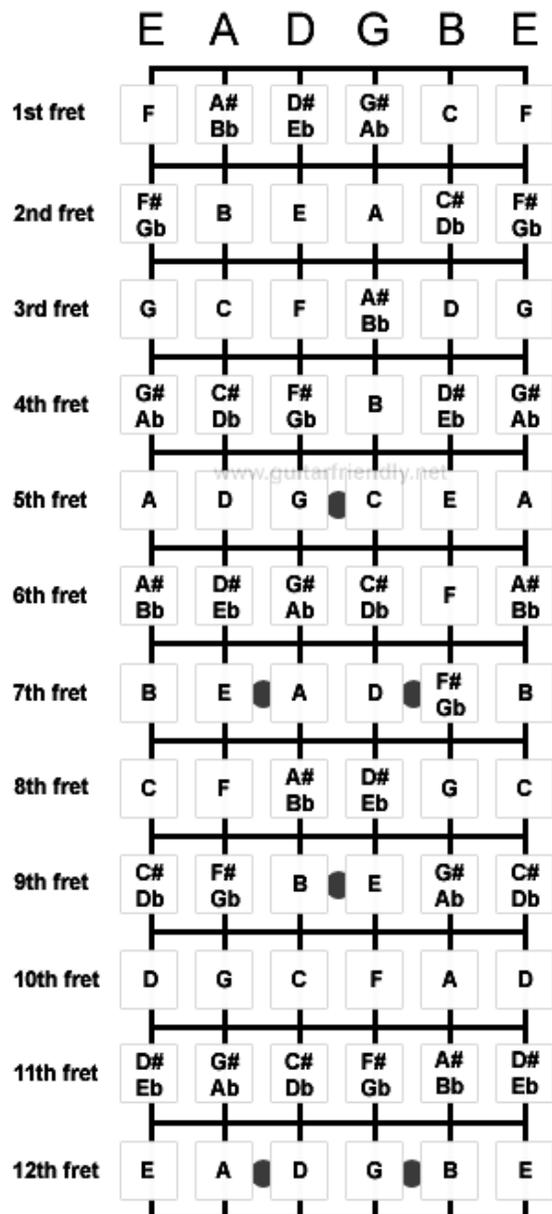
I know this is a lot to get your head around, so please spend some time looking over the fingerboard, and I think it will begin to get more clear. Anyway, I sure hope it does, because---look out---next time we will tackle the minor chords.

A little note: years ago an old friend, Norm Walters, wrote a short article, 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. When you are carrying your instrument in its case, always carry it with the lid facing you. That way, if it opens, your legs will keep it from falling out on the ground. And, when it is not being played, it belongs in its case.

Jim Sanders

Editor's note:

Jim Sanders, a contributing writer to [Bluegrass Soundboard](#) (the newsletter of our sister organization the Southwest California Bluegrass Association), has prepared a series of articles covering a multitude of topics useful for all of us who are (or aspire to be) functioning musicians. We appreciate Bill Estes' efforts in getting permission for us to reprint this series, and Jim's willingness to share his knowledge with us. Stay tuned for Parts 3-8!



ISBA BOARD MEETING March 1, 2014

Members Present:

Carolyn Johnson, Bob Greer, Bill Estes, Keith Freedman, Doug Jenkins, Rich Johnson, Stan Strickland, Trudee Strickland, Steve Gleason

Absent: John Boyer, Scott Lombard

Chairman Carolyn Johnson called the meeting to order.

Minutes from the last meeting were read, approved as read.

Treasurer Bill Estes reported one deposit brought the balance to \$2,082.50.

Carolyn reported the 2013 taxes have been filed.

The board decided not to have a Fall Festival this year. We will hold a Weekend Camp-out Jam in Round Valley instead. Some of the reasons for this change are: cost involved, low membership and poor attendance. Stan moved, all concurred, we will have a Jam in place of a Festival.

Keith and Stan gave the results from the Survey sent to all membership. Replies showed the top three choices are:

1. Weekend Camp-out Jams
2. Monthly area Jams
3. Instrument workshops should separate playing skill levels

Steve had no report from the Kamiah Jam committee; meeting was called because of bad weather. He did have a sample flier that will be printed and passed out when the information is complete.

He also expressed concern regarding the ISBA membership. How we might find ways

to reach new people and not current members. He's willing to help have information at events up North. Rich suggested Boise Music Week coming in May, Bob offered to help with that. Trudee will have a membership table set up there.

We will have our next Board meeting in Kamiah. Our president was grateful. Meeting adjourned.

DUES INFORMATION

Your dues must be current to continue receiving IdaGrass.

If you wish to receive your copy of IdaGrass via email, your dues are \$15.00/year. If you would prefer to have a hard copy mailed to you, yearly dues are \$20.00/year to offset mailing costs.

In either case, you can easily join or renew by contacting Trudee Strickland at (208)377-5326 or by mail at: 5714 Centerbrook Drive, Boise, ID 83705

Our dues year runs from April-April.

WAIT. CAN I STILL GET THIS IN?

"New to bluegrass jamming? No worries! Join the beginner jams at the ISBA Spring Super Jam -
Friday night - after the Open Mic (about 9 pm)
Saturday afternoon - Noon til 2pm
Saturday evening - about 7:30 pm.
Watch for more information, coming to your email box"

Helen Smith

**Have ideas, comments, questions, or concerns?
Want to get involved? Here's your Board of Directors:**

Northern Zone

Steve Gleason, Lewiston
Sgbanjo1@hotmail.com
Scott Lombard, Lewiston
Lombard@gorge.net

Southern Zone

John Boyer, Twin Falls
boyerj1@mindspring.com

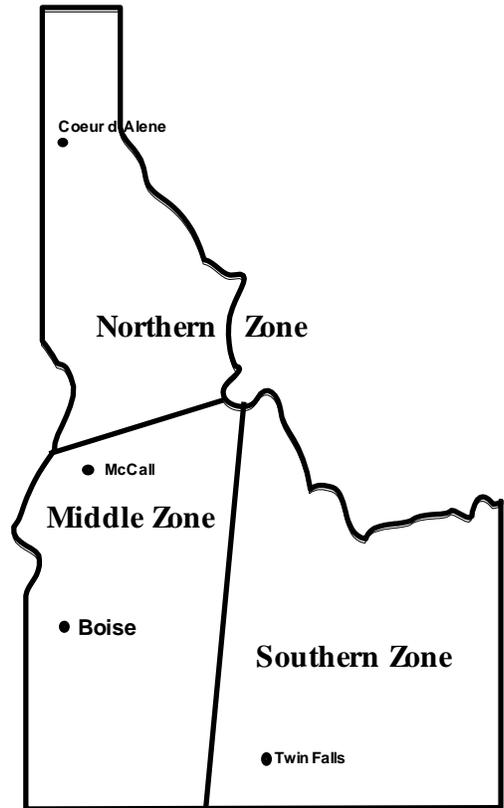
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