

DESERT BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION



GRASS CLIPPINGS

Volume 19 Issue 6

February 2015/March 2015

TUCSON'S DESERT BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL ENDING ITS 14-YEAR FALL RUN



It is with regret that the Tucson's Desert Bluegrass Festival (TDBF) committee, with approval from the Desert Bluegrass Association (DBA) Board of Directors, has decided to discontinue producing the fall festival. For four years the DBA has been involved with the production of two festivals per year, A fall festival (TDBF) and a spring festival (The Marana Bluegrass Festival). The loss of the AVA Venue coupled with limited volunteer resources available to support two festivals per year brought us to this decision. The DBA will move forward with the tradition of providing outstanding bluegrass entertainment in the Tucson area by producing the Marana Bluegrass Festival. As in the past, the DBA will remain partnered with the Town of Marana and the Arizona Bluegrass Association (ABA) in producing this festival.

The DBA would like to thank the loyal Fall Festival fans that attended the festival over the past fourteen years. The

TDBF was produced by the DBA from 2000 to 2013. During that time we had over 10,000 paid attendees who saw 84 bands grace the stage at three venues.

Mike Headrick, longtime festival coordinator and DBA Board Member, sums it up nicely: "I am sad that this is the case. I always hoped that all the work and effort would pay off with something bigger and better in the future. However, life does not always, or even usually, work that way – things blossom, then fade. Other things grow in their place. Our fall festivals were something to be enjoyed in the moment and there are many things that I enjoyed about them. I enjoyed the teamwork which we shared as we planned and executed each festival. Thanks to each of you for your part of that. I enjoyed the friends from far and near who gathered for one weekend each year to celebrate the music, which we love. For me, it was a real coming together of my old Colorado band mates, my Tucson friends and neighbors, my Phoenix friends, my Jam Pak friends, the Old Blue crew and kindred spirits from all over the Southwest. I enjoyed bringing world-class bluegrass music to Tucson. Just think of the artists who we brought here: the Gibson Brothers, Blue Highway, Cherryholmes, Illrd Tyme Out, JD Crowe, Joe Mullins, Sierra Hull, Chris Jones, Special Consensus, Dale Ann Bradley, Blue Moon Rising, Kathy Kallick, Dry Branch Fire Squad, David Parmley, Karl Shifflet and many more. In the Bluegrass world, these include male vocalists of the year, female vocalists of the year, emerging artists of the year, entertainers of the year and

Continued on Page 5

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Advertising-- John David: To purchase advertising in our newsletter, contact by phone or email

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*DBA Members Free, Space Permitting

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GREAT WEBSITES

Desert Bluegrass Association
www.desertbluegrass.org

Arizona Bluegrass Association
www.arizonabluegrass.com

Bluegrass Arizona Blog
www.bluegrassarizona.blogspot.com

Daily Dose of Bluegrass;
www.bluegrassonthetube.com

Bluegrass Lyrics
<http://bluegrasslyrics.com/>

Bluegrass Tablature
http://www.alltabs.com/bluegrass_tabs.php

Guitar:
www.bluegrassguitar.com/

Fiddle:
www.fiddlehangout.com

Banjo:
www.banjohangout.org

Bass:
www.bluegrassbassplace.com

Mandolin:
www.mandohangout.com/

Dobro:
www.reso-nation.org
www.resohangout.com

WELCOME TO OUR NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

New Members:

Roy Coombes	Tucson
Jim Hinshaw	Tucson
Doug McMaster	Tucson
Kenneth Weber	Tucson
Thomas Huiskamp	Salt Lake City, UT

Nancy Ward	Tucson
Patricia Moore	Tucson
David Lotz	Tucson
Vickie Huntington	Marana
Gerard Coghlan	Tucson
Paul Martinie	Tucson



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Contact Info

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THE 3RD ANNUAL MARANA

BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

Preliminary - PRESS RELEASE – January 3, 2015

The 2015 Marana Bluegrass Festival will be held Fri. April 10th, Sat. April 11th and Sun. April 12th at Ora Mae Harn Park in Marana, 13250 N. Lon Adams Road. The festival is presented by a partnership of: **The Town of Marana, the Desert Bluegrass Association of Tucson, the Arizona Bluegrass Association of Phoenix and S&S Bluegrass Promotions, LLC.**

This Festival will be showcasing **(11)** of Arizona's Top Notch Bluegrass Bands and **(1)** national headliner, Jeff Scroggins & Colorado. Opening ceremonies will start at 9:00 am. The music starts at 9:15 am and goes nonstop, one band after another, until 5:00 pm. This is "First Class" Bluegrass ENTERTAINMENT here are the bands: **DBA Bands: Titan Valley Warheads - Old Pueblo Bluegrass – 2 Lazy 2 Ranch Band – The Greg Morton Band. ABA Bands: Nehemiah-Brush Arbor Revival- Bill Cox and Headline Bluegrass Band- Greenwood Sidee- Jam Pak Blues 'N' Grass Neighborhood Band- Cisco & The Racecars- Cabin John**

New this year is our first ever "**Guitar Flat Picking**" contest. We hope that this will be a successful yearly event. It will be held at the festival park from 6PM to 9PM. It will be open to the first 15 applicants with prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place winners. Jeff Collins our Co-Chairman 520-403-4062 will oversee this contest. More information can be obtained via the festival website at www.maranafestival.com

For the visitor's pleasure, there will be food vendors and arts & crafts booths adjacent to the performance area. RV "dry" camping is provided FREE with a weekend pass or \$10 per day. Tent camping is FREE on the grass in the park. Gate fee is \$15 per person per day or \$20 for a weekend pass. Children under 12 are free if accompanied by an adult.

The most current detailed Information is available on the Festival's Website at: www.maranafestival.com

If you have specific questions, use the website's "**Contact Us**" for e-mails or call Jim Sanchez Co-Chairman at 520-869-8468 or Jeff Collins Co-Chairman at 520-403-4062.

TDBF ENDING ITS 14-YEAR FALL RUN (Continued)

many instrumentalists of the year – all performing in our corner of the desert. I loved bringing this quality of bluegrass to town and meeting these stars of bluegrass. We also supported many local bands. Some were experienced professionals, others just starting to showcase their talents. I enjoyed seeing them share the same stage and same audience as our headliners. And, speaking of emerging talent, I enjoyed our band contests which gave opportunity to all to perform and generous rewards to those who won. We even gave questionable talent the chance to shine in our drop of the hat band scramble. I even enjoyed some, but not all, of the unplanned happenings – the rattlesnakes in the restrooms, the missing bands, getting cash for bands so they can gas up the bus, security enforcement of the nudity ban in the campground, etc. All in all, Tucson's Annual Desert Bluegrass Festival was a class act and I am proud to have been a part of it. Now, I guess, it is time to move on."

We invite you to share your memories of the TDBF on our Facebook page – Tucson's Annual Desert Bluegrass Festival. The DBA is committed to promoting Bluegrass music in Southern Arizona and we will continue bringing you the best in bluegrass music at the Marana Bluegrass Festival. The Town of Marana has opened their arms to the DBA and strongly supported our new festival. As a result, the festival that started with local Arizona bands has flourished and grown. Last year's festival introduced a national headliner, a tradition continued this year. This year's festival will introduce a flatpicking contest on Friday night. Please join us this year, April 10-12, in Marana. More information can be found at <http://www.maranafestival.com>



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BANDS

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bluegrassjamboree@gmail.com
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azslim@theguitargarden.com
www.buffelgrassband.com

Cabin John

Howard Anderson--480-897-7425
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Corrine 520-235-3199

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cindermountain@cox.net
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www.ciscoandtheracecars.com
fbriseno@asu.edu

Crucial County

Corrine 520-235-3199

Crystal Ridge Bluegrass Band

Brian Davies 520-349-9497
www.MusicTucson.com

Dusty River Boys

Rich Errico 520 818 0358
Rerrico1@q.com

Greg Morton

520-682-2558

Greenwood Sidee

giselle.lee@cox.net
www.facebook.com/thegreenwoodsidee
www.greenwoodsidee.com

Jam Pak Blues 'N' Grass Neighborhood Band

www.jampak.com
Anni Beach - 480-963-6811

James Reams & The Barnstormers

James Reams 718-374-1086
http://www.jamesreams.com
james@jamesreams.com

Los Hombres

Kenny Erickson 520-235-7473

Old Pueblo Bluegrass

Reid Griffin 520-349-4321
http://www.maranafestival.com/old-pueblo-bluegrass.html

Peter McLaughlin

520-247-1027

Rusty Strings

Klyle Stall 520-709-1279
klylen@aol.com

Superstition Ridge Bluegrass Band

Larry Martell 480-588-5552
lpmartell@cox.net

The Bost Family Tradition

Jeff Bost 520-432-5053
JeffBost@earthlink.net

The 2 Lazy 2 Ranch Band

John Hall 520-647-1234

The Real Deal Band

Francisco Briseno 520-251-7183
www.facebook.com/realdealband
the_realdealband@yahoo.com

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Ed Davenport 520-904-6050
www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/pages/
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Would you like your services, band, and or concerts listed on our website (www.desertbluegrass.org)? Current DBA members can be listed by sending their contact information to Andy MacLeod at desertbluegrasswebmaster@gmail.com. Refer to the 'Links' tab on the homepage for the bands and instructors. For band concert information I will do my best to get your listing posted in a timely manner onto the 'Events - Concerts' tab. Please send me **plain text** with the details for the webpage. Varied fonts, colors, formatting, and inserted graphics are extremely time consuming to match in the webpage editor. A link to a pdf flyer you provide me can be inserted from your listing on the Concerts page.

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NEWS FROM THE NORTHWEST

By Jim Sanchez, DBA Trustee & Jeff Collins



Mr. Jim Sanchez
Desert Bluegrass Association
4701 W. Linda Vista
Apartment 12102
Tucson, AZ 85742

November 26, 2014

Dear Mr. Sanchez,

Thank you very much for entertaining at the Town of Marana's Senior Program Christmas Luncheon. The Senior Member's really enjoyed the music creating an opportunity for the members to get up and dance. Having you at the Christmas Luncheon created an opportunity to reflect community involvement for the betterment of the Marana Senior Program.

We look forward to seeing you at future venues.

Sincerely,

Tammy Haley
Recreation Programmer

The DBA received this certificate of recognition from the Town of Marana. DBA Members in the past have also played for the Town at an outdoor picnic, Valentines Day, and now the [Christmas](#) event. Jeff Collins and Dave Polston along with other members have participated in providing music for these events. The DBA believes that partnership with the Town has been very beneficial for us and we will continue our alliance with them.

Continued on Page 10

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NEWS FROM THE NORTHWEST (Continued)



The DBA NW workshop was invited to play on stage for The Oro Valley Festival of the Arts on December 7th, and they received a \$300 performance fee. This fee was presented to the DBA Board to use in the general fund. SAACA also asked us to provide individuals or Trios of roaming musicians to play Christmas

music. Jeff, Dave and Jim are very proud of the NW workshop attendees because they are stepping forward to play in front of an audience and, in some situations, they are playing individual instrument breaks. The leadership team of Jeff, Dave, and Jim promote this and it seems to work!!



Also, the roving trio; Jeff Collins, Gene and Jolene Berg, made \$50 for an hour of playing. they are also part of a band, the Ocotillo Rain and Thunder Bluegrass Band. They play every Thursday at the Continental Ranch Farmers Market for tips. They took the trio money and tip money, totaling \$175, and donated it to a local Marana Charity of Adopt a Family for Christmas. The money helped feed and give presents to a local Marana family with 9 kids on Christmas Day. The Workshop folks try and use the money they make to

give back to the community and they appreciate the DBA for helping them mold the music to what it is today.

The folks who participated in the performance at the Oro Valley Festival of the Arts are as follows.

Dave Polston, Jeff Collins, Jim Sanchez, Jim Wagner, Gene & Jolene Berg, DeWayne & Holly Tripp, Kylie Harvey, Gabe Romero, Hank Hasenpat, John Blake, Joe Wilkie, Joe Stofan, Arlene Tomlinson, and Sue Elslager

BLUEGRASS CHRISTMAS 2014

Christmas Bluegrass Almost Didn't Happen

By JoAnn Shiflett, DBA Trustee



Some of us Bluegrass workshop attendees started asking ourselves if there was going to be any Bluegrass Christmas this year. It seemed like the odds were stacked against us. Our fearless leader Paul Simpson, was scheduled for surgery the first week of December, and after just recently getting married and adjusting to all those changes he was very overwhelmed. Then a few people spoke up and asked about Bluegrass Christmas. We had to do it, with or without Paul. Michael Crownhart was also having some sugary done right after Thanksgiving so he would be out for a while

and Jo Ann Shiflett just started a full time job that would keep her from practicing early on Mondays but people pulled together and we were able to spread some



cheer and make some people happy with our Bluegrass Christmas shows. We were able to set up 5 shows and people stepped up to help. What a surprise, Doc Simpson injured his knee and so the Doctors made him put his surgery off a few weeks, so he was able to help out with the first 2 shows.

Our first show was at Botanical Gardens Luminaria Night and we were so excited to perform under a lit and covered pavilion. We always had a big crowd to play

to most of the night and everyone loved jingling bells that Maria handed out and singing along with us. What a huge success!!

The next day we performed at the Catalina Village to a very appreciative bunch of wonderful folks. Caroling and jingling bells was everyone's favorite activity during our show and a good time was had by all!

Our third show was a very fun event at TMC on the afternoon of Dec. 16th. Even though the jam master, David Van Gelder, was sick that day and was unable to come, there were many happy bluegrassers who came and performed. Along with performing great

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December 18, 2014

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BLUEGRASS CHRISTMAS 2014

(Continued)



bluegrass music they handed out jingle bells and spread lots of cheer.

A big shout out goes to Arlene Tomlinson whose stellar bass playing kept everyone in perfect time and unity in performing. She made it to 4 of the 5 shows. Wow!

On Dec. 23rd we performed for the folks at Emeritus Assisted Living Center. We had residents lined up at the entrance of the dining halls jingling bells and singing along. Nobody was offended by our favorite

song, "Grandma got Run Over By A Reindeer" and the feeling in the room was so cheerful people just couldn't help but keep smiling and singing.

On Dec. 24th Doug Sample led many enthusiastic bluegrass performers through the



halls at the Diamond's Children Center. How tragic to be in the hospital on Christmas Eve, but our bluegrassers put a smile on everyone's face who came within earshot of the music.

A huge thank you to all you wonderful bluegrassers for not letting a few obstacles get in your way of spreading some cheer and sharing some fun bluegrass music during the holiday season. I wish I could remember everyone's name who helped in this venture but you know who you are and we all are so thankful for you.

DBA Events

February 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1 JAM 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Udall Park Ramada 7200 E. Tanque Verde Road	2 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	3	4 WORKSHOP (NW SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Marana Community Center 13251 N Lon Adams Rd., Marana	5 JAM 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Rincon Market 2513 E. 6th St .	6	7
8	9 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	10	11 WORKSHOP (NW SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Marana Community Center 13251 N Lon Adams Rd., Marana	12 JAM 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Sticks & Strings 8796 E. Broadway Blvd.	13	14
15 JAM 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Music & Arts 8320 Thornydale Rd Suite 150/170	16 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	17	18 WORKSHOP (NW SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Marana Community Center 13251 N Lon Adams Rd., Marana	19 JAM 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Pinnacle Peak Restaurant 6541 E. Tanque Verde Rd.	20	21 CLINIC Greg Morton Guitar 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Chicago Music Store 5646 E. Speedway
22 JAM 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Thirsty's Neigh- borhood Grill 2422 N. Pantano	23 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	24 JAM 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Emeritus Senior Living 8151 E. Speedway	25 WORKSHOP (NW SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Marana Community Center 13251 N Lon Adams Rd., Marana	26	27	28

DBA Events

March 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1 JAM 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Udall Park Ramada 7200 E. Tanque Verde Road	2 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	3	4 WORKSHOP (NW SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Marana Community Center 13251 N Lon Adams Rd., Marana	5 JAM 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Rincon Market 2513 E. 6th St.	6	7
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22 JAM 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Thirsty's Neigh- borhood Grill 2422 N. Pantano	23 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	24 JAM 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Emeritus Senior Living 8151 E. Speedway	25 WORKSHOP (NW SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Marana Community Center 13251 N Lon Adams Rd., Marana	26	27	28
29	30 WORKSHOP (EAST SIDE) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Christ Community Church 7801 E Kenyon Dr	31				

COLOR MY WORLD BLUE(GRASS)

By James Reams



I was so excited when I learned that World of Bluegrass would be held in early October this year. It seems like forever since I've gotten to go as the conference dates conflicted with the Park Slope Jamboree that I've promoted for 15 years now. But underlying the excitement was the memory that the last time I went was back when Tina was still alive. She would have absolutely LOVED all the hype in Raleigh. It seemed like the very air was charged with anticipation when I arrived on Monday.

Raleigh had gone all out to embrace this international event. City blocks were closed and banners were hung pretty much everywhere. Even the Governor made an appearance and gave some good-natured ribbing when he mentioned that bluegrass really got started after a young North Carolinian by the name of Earl Scruggs joined a struggling band led by some guy from Kentucky called Bill somebody or other. Yes, I'd have to say that the decision to move the World of Bluegrass to Raleigh was, in a word, brilliant! While it was always a thrill to be in Nashville, the conference was just one of many such events held there. In Raleigh, I got the sense that this is

THE signature event of the year and I just couldn't have been prouder.

With all that talent piled into one town, it's no wonder that bluegrass music was coming at me from every direction. If I'd had time to go in a grocery store, I wouldn't have been surprised a bit to hear a familiar fiddle tune playing over their sound system! It was definitely an immersion experience. I can only imagine how overwhelming all this might have felt to a new bluegrass.

There's just so much to see and do that it's hard to even decide. Someday, I'd like to attend this event and just roll along with the river of music and let it deposit me on whatever shore it wants!

As a former school teacher, it always interests me to check in with the youngest generation of bluegrassers. Many of these youngsters were getting their first taste of the "big" time by performing at showcase events that went on long into the night. Snaking my way around lobby couches and chairs that served as makeshift beds for these worn out kids became a morning ritual. There wasn't a parent in sight hovering over these pre-teens, there was no need for babysitters...the bluegrass "village" looked after them and made sure their instruments were neatly stacked in a corner somewhere nearby.

And speaking of instruments, funny story...seems that the elevator doors opened up on the lobby floor and these two guitar cases walked out and one said to the other, "Did you forget to bring your picker again?" Hey, it really happened! Well, except for the bit about the guitar case walking and talking. I'm sure there was a frazzled musician somewhere on the 10th floor frantically looking for his instrument case and wondering where on earth he had put it! BTW, no guitars were harmed...the cases were turned in to the lost and found and claimed by a much relieved owner later. Just one more example of the bluegrass village at work.

As I moved through the crowds, it seemed like homecoming to me. Spotting familiar faces and getting a chance to talk with some of them reminded me how much I had missed the "hometown" feel of this event. Grabbing a cup of coffee with a DJ friend, walking corridors talking with festival promoters, and hanging out with many long-time musician buddies made me realize how important it is to keep coming back each year. I always wish I had more time to visit with folks but I'm telling you, there's a lot going on over these 5 days and it keeps you hopping just to attend a few each day.

Let me give you a rundown of what were major highlights for me. On Tuesday, I attended the Grey Fox special reception for Bill Keith as Bill's guest. Bill received the IBMA Distinguished Achievement Award at the award presentation on Thursday. Which I'm sure in no way outshined the Brown Jug Award that he had just taken home from the Park Slope Jamboree a few days earlier! It was great to talk with some of the banjo greats like Bela Fleck and Alan Munde as well as Bill Keith's long time collaborator, Jim Rooney. Alan shared a copy of his newest project "Bright Munde" with me and I encourage all you banjo fans to get your hands on your own copy right away! Seeing Bill Keith celebrated after all these years of dedication to the bluegrass community was one of those "tears in my eyes" moments that seemed to keep cropping up all week long. As Bela gave the keynote speech, it was heartwarming to hear this incomparable musician (winner of more Grammys than any other musical artist in any genre) give the credit for his success to Bill. But even more special was the opportunity to see Bill take the stage later on Thursday and say a few words to those of us gathered there in his honor. Too often it seems that these awards occur after the honoree is



COLOR MY WORLD BLUE(GRASS) (Continued)

gone, that's when we notice the hole they left behind. I'm glad that Bill got a chance to know just how much his contribution to our bluegrass village means to all of us.

The DJ Taping Session was a whirlwind of activity on Wednesday as I sat down with some of my colleagues and hobnobbed about recent projects and "what's new with you" topics. Catching up with Lee Michael Dempsey of WAMU, Jim Fisher from GLOBE in Indiana, Larry Nixon (WQDR – Raleigh), and Wayne Rice (KSON – San Diego) was just like old times. So much has happened since I saw them last, I about talked myself hoarse!

Later that day I attended the showcase "Ramble" organized by my friend, Si Kahn, in support of protecting the pristine wilderness of Bristol Bay, Alaska from mining interests. Musicians sported "Protect Bristol Bay" t-shirts and folks like Jeff Scroggins and Claire Lynch lent their voices in support of this cause. Si even performed a few songs from his album inspired by his time in Alaska and his deep conviction that we need to protect the few remaining "wild places" in our country. I'm always encouraged by the support that these causes receive from fellow musicians; often their involvement truly helps raise awareness about these issues.

Thursday was the big day with receptions all day and the awards show that evening. I attended the Special Awards Luncheon and had the pleasure of sitting at the table with Marshall Wilborn and his wife, Lynn Morris. "Cousin" Lynn Joiner, host of the Hillbilly at Harvard radio program (and another winner of the Distinguished Achievement Award) was seated near me and it was great to reminisce with him about my appearance on his show a few years back. Lynn is such an amazing character but even more amazing is that this show has been going on nonstop since 1948. Talk about staying power!

Nancy Cardwell had invited me to attend the Nominees Press Reception before the awards show. Hanging around with the likes of Fred Bartenstein and talking about pioneers of bluegrass was a highlight for me. I also got to have a nice visit with Doyle Lawson and had a chance to chat with Ronnie McCoury. It was a real pleasure to run into Gary B. Reid (former head of Copper Creek Records) and talk with him about his one-man show "A Life of Sorrow: The Life and Times of Carter Stanley" which was first performed in early September this year. Gary and I go way back and I was especially intrigued by this tribute to his long time hero. It's just Gary and his guitar bringing to life the many aspects that made Carter Stanley such an icon in bluegrass history. Now that's what I call a gutsy performance!

The Award Show was rife with special moments. Seeing Flatt Lonesome take home the award for Emerging Artist of the Year brought back memories of my nomination for that award 12 years ago. It's no wonder they won this year, their harmonies are pristine and perfect and their performance is excitement personified. Particularly moving was Phil Leadbetter walking away with the award for Dobro Performer of the Year. And seeing Bobby Hicks nominated for Fiddle Performer of the Year at 81 kind of choked me up a bit as I realized how some of those performers I have admired for years have aged. I do hope they will all be with us for a long time to come. It was wonderful to listen to those who were honored by awards at this conference but I have to confess that Bill Keith's speech was my favorite. To hear him talking about setting up a teepee at the Grey Fox festival each year just brought all kinds of hilarious pictures to mind! I hope he gets to set it up again next year!

I had to head on back home before my buddy Rick Bowman's film (Herschel Sizemore: Mandolin in B) was shown on Friday. But I was certainly excited to learn that the film screenings were well attended. This film festival is a welcome addition to the conference activities. What was amazing to me was that there were 22 films submitted for the event. Wow! Only 8 made the cut and, from the trailers, it looked like it was a great selection. I sure hope this will be a recurring event. What really energizes me about the IBMA supporting these films is that it will encourage other filmmakers to consider bluegrass as a topic and, hopefully, more bluegrass-themed film festivals will start popping up across the country to complement Mark Hogan's Bluegrass on Broadway Festival that started it all! Already we've added an AZ Bluegrass Film Festival and November will kick off the Point Music and Film Festival in San Diego. It's a great way to get your bluegrass fix during the off-season!

Overwhelming, heart-warming, family reunion style hugging with a side of face-splitting smiles to go around, that about sums up my experience at the 2014 World of Bluegrass. It sure was hard leaving Raleigh.

What was your impression? Send me an email at james@jamesreams.com and let's compare notes!

Side Note: This article by James Reams originally appeared on the California Bluegrass Association's webzine in October.

Tombstone 'Tune it or Die' Campout

March 27-29, 2015

Sponsored by the Desert Bluegrass Association

Tombstone RV Park and Campground

About 1 mile north of Tombstone (1000 ft from Boothill cemetery!), on the right as you drive south into Tombstone.

(520) 457-3829 - Call to reserve a space.

All bluegrass participants will get a 15% discount.

RV spaces with hookups - \$33.25/night before discount.

Cabins. 4 available. Each with 1 bed and 2 bunks. No bathroom. \$44.25/night before discount. Call to reserve!

Cowboy Suites - 3 available. 1 queen bed, 1 queen sleeper. Bathroom. Completely renovated. Call for new rates and to reserve!

Dry Camping including bathroom facilities. \$16.50/night before discount.

There will be a combined DBA and ABA potluck/jam in the rec. room on Saturday night.

Pickers with scores to settle will saddle up late Saturday morning, ride into town and jam things up at various locations including Big Nose Kate's, The Crystal Palace, and The Four Deuces Saloon & Grill.

Tenderfeet be advised!

So tune up and holster your best ax, grab your feller or gal, hitch up the RV and mosey on down Tombstone way for the best darn'd pick out of the year!

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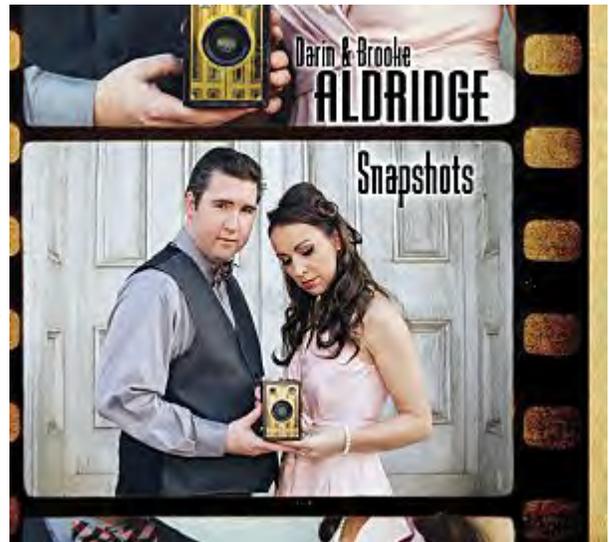
SNAPSHOTS

Darin & Brooke Aldridge, Mountain Home Music Reviewed by Marilyn Ryan Hulbert



You are getting this review before the release of Darin & Brooke's latest CD "Snapshots". The snapshots of this very attractive married couple are delightful to see, and what's inside this album is also very appealing. Darrin is a multi-instrumentalist who spent several years with the Country Gentlemen. His voice is smooth and rich and reminds me a little of Vince

Gill. Brooke's voice is clear and powerful. She has an enormous range and a beauty to her voice that makes me want to just listen over and over to each song. Their harmonies equal the Everly Brothers and surpass many of the duets (my favorite type of singing) in bluegrass and country music. Their voices are close in quality and I bet they are switching harmony parts. That always intrigues me. I am fascinated listening to them.



Their song choices are "Get Up John," "My Rose of Old Kentucky," "Annabelle" - a Gillian Welch tune, "Let's" - a song by Eddie Adcock, "Tennessee Flat Top Box" - one that Johnny Cash wrote, "Let it Be Me" - one the Everly Brothers sang (this is

Continued on Page 22

JAMS & OPEN MICS

DBA sponsored jams are listed at www.desertbluegrass.org & on the enclosed calendar.

Southern AZ Old Time Fiddlers Assn.

Southwest Community Center
Cardinal Ave, Tucson, AZ
Tuesday 7 PM
Info: Wilbur 520-743-7086

Catalina Mountain Chapter of the AZ Old Time Fiddlers Association

3rd Monday at 7 PM
Info: Laura 520-743-9491

Tradition Acoustic Bluegrass Jam Sessions

Tempe, AZ
Wednesday 7-10 PM
Call for confirmation of dates
Info: Howard or Susan
480-897-7425

Saddlebrooke Jam

38759 S Mountain View Blvd
Workshop at 2:30 pm
Jam 4-6 pm
Info: Rich 520-881-0358

Open Mic at The Hut on 4th Ave

Every Monday 9:00 PM
Info: Rudy Cortese@gmail.com

Kibbey's Jam and Open Mic

Info: Jim Howard, 520-825-9413
Twin Lakes Drive, Catalina, AZ
Every Friday Night 6:30 PM-9:00 PM

1st Baptist Church Jam and Open Mic

Wilds Road, Catalina, Arizona
Info: Jim Howard, 520-825-9413
Every Saturday, 6:30 PM-9:00 PM

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SNAPSHOTS

Darin & Brooke Aldridge (Continued)

killer!) and several beautiful gospel songs.

Tyler Collins on banjo does a mighty fine job! Becky Buller Haley plays her sweet style of fiddle. Dwayne Anderson is on the acoustic bass. Darin plays guitar and mandolin. Collin Willis plays Dobro. The band is creative, & the musicianship is wonderful! Also, Carley Arrowood is a young and very accomplished fiddle player who has just joined the band. Special guests included on the album are Sam Bush, Ricky Skaggs, Bobby Hicks, and Doyle Lawson.

If you love bluegrass harmonies and fantastic pickin' when the vocalists take a break, this is a must to add to your collection - a treasure of an album.

Visit their website at darinandbrookealdridge.com. The album will be released some time in February. You can pre-order through I Tunes.

Have a Happy New year!
Marilyn

MINI SERIES: HOW TO BE A GREAT BLUEGRASS RHYTHM PLAYER By Daniel Stolte



Part 2: 'A Banjo in the Wrong Hands can kill a Bluegrass Song'

Welcome to part 2 of our little mini series on bluegrass rhythm playing with Jesse Weitzenfeld. I contacted Jesse after reading a discussion in my favorite online forum, the Acoustic Guitar Forum, about what it takes to play good rhythm in bluegrass jams. Jesse is an experienced bluegrass musician and band coach, and I'm incredibly grateful that he agreed to share his thoughts for the DBA newsletter. In this part, we're going through each instrument and what it can do to support the other instruments.

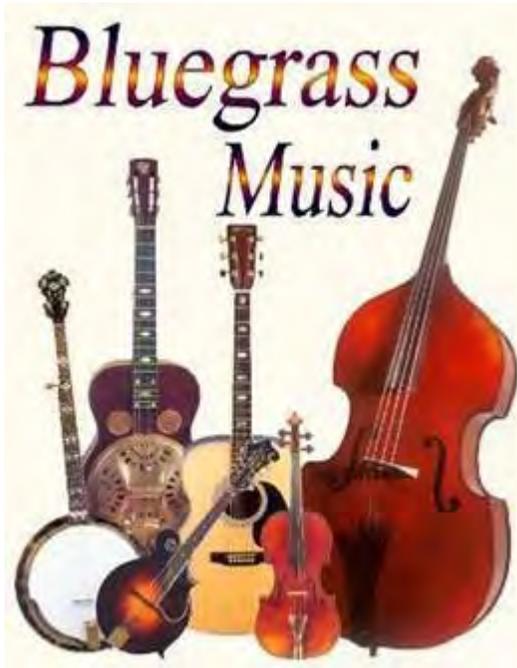
"Each instrument needs to be backed up in a different way," Jesse says. "Let's start with the **guitar**: Lead guitar playing in bluegrass is still not completely accepted by everybody, because it is a quiet instrument, and it's a challenge for the guitar to keep up in a group volume-wise. If banjos and fiddles and mandolins are thrashing away while the guitar is taking a break, you're not going to hear it. In a studio recording, you can do a lot of things to make the guitar cut through the mix that you can't necessarily do in a live setting. If you listen to live recordings of bands with lead guitar players, Tony Rice, for example, you'll hear that the overall volume of the band dramatically decreases.

"So everybody backs off to let the guitar come through, right?"

"Exactly. The guitar is a very powerful rhythm instrument, and when it drops out of the rhythm, that has a big effect on the rest of the instruments. Oftentimes you'll hear the banjo back way off or stops playing completely; you'll hear the mandolin will quiet down a little bit on the chop, the fiddle might stop completely. It creates a very stark sonic picture, almost to where it's just the guitar and the bass, and maybe a light mandolin chop, and *maybe* the fiddle. Personally I don't think you need a fiddle or a banjo during a guitar break. They conflict and overpower it. It's kind of a unique sound because when that guitar takes its break, it's almost like the bottom falls out of the song. The energy drops out and all you hear is this quiet guitar break, and when the guitar is done, everybody comes back in, and it's like, oh, wow, there is all this energy again. I really like that, but some people don't. I think it creates a really cool dynamic. That's a

Continued on Page 23

HOW TO BE A GREAT BLUEGRASS RHYTHM PLAYER (Continued)



hallmark of bluegrass when you compare it to say, old time. Bluegrass has these dynamics."

"What about the guitar playing rhythm?"

"There are a lot of different styles out there. Dan Tyminski, for example: He has a very driving, powerful style, and he doesn't do a whole lot of bass runs or fills. You have to hear it, it's very difficult to describe. When I'm thinking about the rhythm I am thinking of the bass line, it's really the foundation of the song in that it is outlining the beat and the chord changes. The mandolin is coming in with a very dry sounding chop that doesn't have a whole lot of tonality to it. You hear enough of the chord that it doesn't conflict with whatever the guitar and the bass are playing, but you don't really hear what chord the mandolin is playing. The guitar is laying the blanket that ties them together, it smoothens them out. If you ever hear a mandolin without a guitar, it sounds like a skeleton. There are exceptions to that, of course. I heard Chris Thile on mandolin and Edgar Meyer on bass play for two hours once, and that was one of the most incredible things I've ever seen.

But in general, if you're missing the guitar rhythm, it's a huge part of bluegrass sound, and I think in a way the guitar ties everything together."

"What about the **mandolin** taking a break?"

"When the mandolin takes a break, someone needs to come in and pick up the chops. Typically it would be the fiddle or the banjo, but you can chop on a guitar, too. You can do sort of a muted sound, I call it the 'sock rhythm.' But it's almost a jazzy type thing. Typically, I'm going to have the fiddle take over the chops when the mandolin takes a break. And a lot of times I have the banjo come in with a very quiet chop that locks in with the fiddle. The banjo and the mandolin very easily conflict with each other, just like the banjo and the guitar. The banjo players have to be really careful, and know how powerful their instrument is and how easily they can derail the other instruments. And I think probably one of the best banjo players to listen to for that is Sammy Shelor of the Lonesome River Band. He is really good about not stepping on other players and he uses his banjo like a surgeon, he is really precise. If you watch him work a microphone, the way he comes in and out, he is really incredible. Honestly, I think the number one job of the banjo – and this is coming from a non-banjo player – is not to pull everybody else out of the time. Because the banjo is such a powerful instrument, it's so strong, and if the banjo player is not in time or is a bit behind or ahead of the beat, it can really pull everybody else off. And there are a lot of things that the banjo can do on the rhythm. The banjo is a dangerous weapon. The banjo in the wrong hands can really kill a bluegrass song."

"Let's talk about the **banjo** playing a break."

"A lot of times, when the banjo takes a break, nobody needs to quiet down. The banjo is the loudest instrument on the stage. The other thing you'll often hear is the guitar backing off on its bass runs and its G runs and other embellishment and plays more of a straight driving rhythm. The reason is that if you listen to banjo you will hear a lot of banjo players doing the same type of runs in their solos that guitar players do. You'll hear G runs and a lot of similar sounding licks. I have come to realize that the guitar and the banjo are actually much more similar than I thought in terms of what they play and how they play it, and that is one of the

February 2015 ~ Attention Singers!
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Michael G. Stewart

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HOW TO BE A GREAT BLUEGRASS RHYTHM PLAYER (Continued)

reasons why you really don't want the banjo playing while the guitar is taking a break. When that banjo is rolling, it's a very syncopated sound, and if the guitar is taking its break at the same time, it really doesn't match very well. So when the banjo plays a break, the fiddle doesn't do a whole lot. Maybe some longbows, where you draw out a note that matches the chord, or they can do a shuffle rhythm. In general, I think fiddle chops is something that should be used very sparingly because it's redundant. If you have a good mandolin player, you don't need the fiddle to do chops all the time. I like to reserve the fiddle more for playing fills, especially in the vocal section of the song, and then backing up, and I'm not a fiddle guy, so it's kind of hard for me to talk about the fiddle, but I really think that fiddlers should listen to a lot of really good fiddle players and what they do. The ones I've listen to, I've observed that during large parts of a song, they're not even playing. They'll either stop playing altogether or they're not really playing rhythm, what they're doing is fill in the holes. If there is a little space where they can add a little energy, or a fun little fill or something, they'll step in and do that. And maybe they'll fill in the sound behind the guitar break or the banjo break. I imagine the fiddle being a really fun instrument because there is a lot of freedom. If you're playing guitar or bass, you're locked in because you have to hold down that rhythm. But these are just my opinions of course and others may feel differently about that."

"Next up: the **fiddle**. What can the other instruments do to support a fiddle break?"

"When the fiddle takes a break, it's almost the opposite situation as with the banjo taking a break: The fiddle is a very vocal instrument, so I like to hear the guitar coming in behind it with some crosspicking or some nice little embellishments to the rhythm, nice fills because they really complement the fiddle. If the guitar tried to do that behind the banjo break, it would sound terrible, because they conflict too much. The banjo can do the

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

Many of our DBA memberships expire at the end of February. In fact, 85% of our members need to renew their membership for 2015. To find out if you are one of those, check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it says "expires 2-15" above your name then your membership needs to be renewed. You may renew either by mail or from our website. To renew by mail simply fill out the form in the newsletter, enclose a check for \$20 made out to the DBA, then mail it to the address listed. If your information is current you don't even need to fill out the form - just include the mailing address with your payment. To renew from the website go to www.desertbluegrass.org, look for the "join DBA" area, click the "buy now" button and follow the instructions. Either way is simple and easy. So renew today and keep supporting Bluegrass Music in Southern Arizona.

HOW TO BE A GREAT BLUEGRASS RHYTHM PLAYER (Continued)

same thing, it can come in and play some fills, but I really like the sound of guitar behind a fiddle break. I'd like the banjo play a simple roll and play its regular rhythm. The mandolin is just going to chop. But again – the thing to do is to listen to other bands, to listen to other players, because there are many mandolins having different styles of backing up, same with guitar. The first thing many guitar players learn is the 'boom-chuck' strum. When you're in a band, the bass is playing the 'boom' and the mandolin is playing the 'chuck,' so what is the guitar adding to that when it's doing the same thing? It's a bit redundant, and again, I guess one of the cardinal rules of bluegrass is you want to avoid redundancy wherever possible. So if one of the instruments is chopping, like the mandolin, you don't need other instruments chopping. If you listen to really good professional flatpickers like Tony Rice or Kenny Smith, and you listen to them playing in a band with a fiddle and a mandolin player you're not going to hear the 'boom-chuck' very often. Instead, they're going to play more of a driving rhythm. I think it's okay when you're in a limited setting, for example just a guitar and a fiddle, or you and another guitar, but when you're in a band with a mandolin, you don't need that."

"Let's talk about the fiddle as a rhythm instrument for a moment."

"Again, to me the fiddle is more for ornamentation than for actual rhythm playing because it's difficult to do anything rhythmic on the fiddle that isn't redundant compared with the other instruments. The fiddle is great for playing fills. Listen to Jason Carter of the Del McCoury band – he is one of the best fiddlers that I have ever heard in the way he fills during songs. You'll hear him doing all kinds of stuff, but it's all in the background, and every once in a while he'll lean into the mic and punctuate something, but it's really the way that he does it – it's masterful. But then there are hundreds of other great fiddlers, he is just one I have watched over the years more than others."

In the third and last part of this series, Jesse and I will talk about adding pizzazz to bluegrass playing. It turns out that, as important as it is to have some ground rules to go by, like we discussed today, sometimes rules have to be broken to create good music. So stay tuned.

ASSOCIATIONS

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jan@arizonabluegrass.com
www.azbluegrass.org

International Bluegrass Music Association

2 Music Circle South, Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37203
615-256-3222
Toll Free: 1-888-438-4262
http://www.ibma.org

International Bluegrass Music Museum

Museum Entrance: 117 Daviess Street
Mailing Address: 207 East Second Street
Owensboro, KY 42303
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So. Arizona Old Time Fiddlers Association

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Tucson, AZ 85745
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Tucson Friends of Traditional Music

Info: 520-408-6181
www.tftm.org

Tucson Kitchen Musicians Association

PO Box 26531
Tucson, AZ 85726
www.tkma.org

Tucson Old Time Music Circle

Banjo_brad@thegrid.net
Brad 520-818-0260
www.totmc.org



ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2015

AT

2:00 PM

MEETING LOCATION

Christ Community Church
7801 E. Kenyon Drive, Tucson

Note: Folks should park in the North Parking Lot.

AGENDA

"State of the Grass" – John David
Treasurer Report – John Camm
Election of Officers and Trustees for 2015
Scholarship Plans For 2015 – Jo Ann Shiflett/Paul Simpson
Report on Marana Festival – Jim Sanchez
Future Festival Outlook – Jim Sanchez



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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Membership dues for the Desert Bluegrass Association are \$20 annually per family, due March 1st, and includes bulk mailing of the bi-monthly newsletter to each member.

Members joining after November of any year will have their membership extended through the next year. Those joining before November must renew the following March 1st.

First name: _____ Last name: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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Email address: _____

Do you wish to be included in the Membership Directory? (check one) Yes No

What instruments do you play? Banjo Bass Fiddle Guitar
 Mandolin Resonator Guitar Other _____

Complete this form then mail it, along with your personal check or money order payable to Desert Bluegrass Association, to:

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