



DESERT BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter



Grass Clippings

Volume 26 Issue 1

Apr—May 2020



Last Festival Standing

A Tale from the Festival Frontlines

By Dave Polston, DBA President

The Week Before

Friday before the festival I began watching the news intensely. The weather report, that is. Specifically, the seven-day forecast. The other news was about China and some virus that was taking over that faraway country. It wasn't a big thing here (yet). They were quarantining some cruise ships and flights. I was not worried about that. But I was worried about the storm system hitting the week of the festival. I had a meeting with the town on Monday morning to lock down the logistics of setup. Our main concern was how wet the field was going to be on Friday morning. Over the next 48 hours my concern became more focused on this virus thing rather than on the weather.

Then, SXSW announced the cancellation of their festival: this thing had hit America and, just like that, it was a global pandemic!!

Wednesday

On Wednesday morning I received a text from the town of Marana asking if I was available for a phone call. I then had a conference call with four people from the town. They stated their concerns about what was happening and were wondering about attendance. They were cancelling another event for Saturday that involved handicapped children. I understood their decision to do that. They asked if we had cancellation plans of any kind. No, we didn't, and we hadn't talked about cancelling. (At that moment-- but things would change!) They said they were having a town safety preparedness meeting Thursday morning. I stated if they were going to cancel our event we would need to know by Thursday at noon, which was Campground setup time. On Wednesday one of our board members sent an email to the board with concerns about cancelling.

Continued on page 3

OFFICERS

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Webmaster: Dale Lynne Vickroy. See the DBA website at www.desertbluegrass.org. For information about the website, contact the webmaster at DesertBluegrassWebmaster@gmail.com.

Membership Secretary: Mike Headrick. To join the DBA, renew a membership, or submit an address change, contact Mike via phone at (520) 760-0745, via email at mbheadrick@aol.com, or via snail mail at 13308 Placita el Algodon Tucson, AZ 85749.

Publicity: Mike Headrick. Contact Mike at (520) 760-0745 or mbheadrick@aol.com.

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*DBA Members Free, Space Permitting

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Last Festival Standing, *continued*

Most board members' responses were to keep going, mainly due to there being only one case in unincorporated Pima county and the fact that the festival would be an open-air event. To protect ourselves and others, we sent emails recruiting more hand sanitizer and gloves.

Thursday

The morning arrived dark and gloomy in more than one way. It began with a phone call from Anni Beach of Jam Pak, in tears, having to tell me that after a full night of meetings and phone calls, they would have to cancel. Jam Pak was the first of five bands that would cancel for the weekend. I understood and accepted, with no ill feelings, their decisions to do so. That morning, I packed and constantly had my phone with me, anxiously awaiting a phone call from Marana. I left my house at 11:00 a.m. and headed for the festival grounds, very uncertain about the next hour.



As I exited the freeway, I saw the special events sign. As I drove into the park, I saw the town had already set up their part of the grounds! We must be on!!

That afternoon I received a call from our headliners, Hard Road Trio, who just returned from a two-week tour (three different cities, airports, and flights). They were torn, but to protect themselves and us, they would have to cancel.

I had attended Monroe Crossings' performance at the Gas Light Theater the week before and noticed that Nu-Blu was playing there that Thursday night. They had been our headliner about five years ago. I knew David Van Gelder had contact info, but I debated about our economic situation, now realizing that our attendance was probably going to suffer.



I had spoken with Rudy Mamula, festival emcee, several times during the day, going over all the schedule changes. After a call from him later that evening about Nu-Blu, I made the decision to contact them about their availability. Daniel Routh of Nu-Blu called me back later that evening and stated they were supposed to leave in the morning to go to Long Beach to embark on a bluegrass cruise—but it had just been cancelled. A little negotiation and BOOM, we had a new headliner! Oh, yeah! And in between we jammed in the campgrounds 'til the storm hit!! Sleep.

Continued on page 6

RSVP



THE POSTCARD PEOPLE



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MARANA BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL




Emcee Ron "Rudy" Mamula kicks things off (top), and it's a beautiful day at the festival (above)!



A little cutie enjoys the Kid Zone (left). The festival's raffles are always popular with attendees (center). The youngest contestant in the festival's instrument contest (right).

Membership Renewal Reminder

In case you missed it the first time around . . . **check the expiration date of your DBA membership and renew if you haven't already.** All expirations for the year occurred on March 1st.

You can renew for one year for \$20, or three years for \$50. **The three-year option has real benefits – you save \$10 and you only have to deal with renewals every three years.**

The DBA promotes and preserves Bluegrass Music in so many ways. Think of the workshops, the jams, the festival, the clinics, the website, the newsletter, the directory, the youth scholarships, and more. All of this happens because of two things: First, the hard work of incredible volunteers, and second, your memberships which provide needed funds. So renew today and keep supporting Bluegrass Music in Southern Arizona. Thank you!

Last Festival Standing, *continued*

Friday

In the morning the sun was out and it was time to check out the field for setup. First good news yet: all good! There were some snags with setup, but it got done just in time to start the instrument contest. Then, of course, the storm rolled in!!

Half of the contestants didn't show, but we did have a couple players in each category, except mandolin. We got through the fiddles, then had to take a break for about 15 minutes to let the storm pass.

We continued on through intermittent rain and sunshine and finished the contest. Then, it was on to the band scramble.

We had enough players for a couple of bands for the scramble, and they instantly got to perform a festival set!!



Players enjoy participating in one of the Festival's first-ever band scrambles.

High Lonesome then ended the day with a great set of traditional bluegrass. They were so awesome—the wind was blowing and the temperature had dropped, but they kept right on playing.

With the cancellations, I invited them to do another set on Saturday. We can't say enough about High Lonesome's polished professionalism in playing through some challenging conditions!



High Lonesome nails it onstage at the 2020 Marana Bluegrass Festival!

Continued on page 7

Summary

Saturday and Sunday were beautiful days to be at the festival. We rearranged schedules, extended times, created a Sunday-morning gospel jam set (which seems to have been a great hit) and provided a full weekend of great music and community. (Note: It's a good thing, because that might have been the last live music you'll see for a while.)

There were jams all weekend long in the campgrounds, which is a large part of what we are about. We saw old friends, made new friends, and will never forget the weekend that the world changed!

Financials

I knew we were going to have a loss for this year and hoped it would be less than \$3,000. We would have lost \$2,500 to as much as \$6,000 if we had cancelled the festival, depending on how service deposits would have been handled.

Overall, the festival lost about \$2,700. With our attendance of Saturday dropping from an expected 450 attendees to about 160, I was surprised at how low the loss was. With the sale of DBA t-shirts and some additional memberships, the association suffered a loss of less than \$1,500.

Did you know there was an incentive to respond to the festival survey? There was! It was a pair of weekend passes to next year's festival. And the winner is-- Jody Ossim!

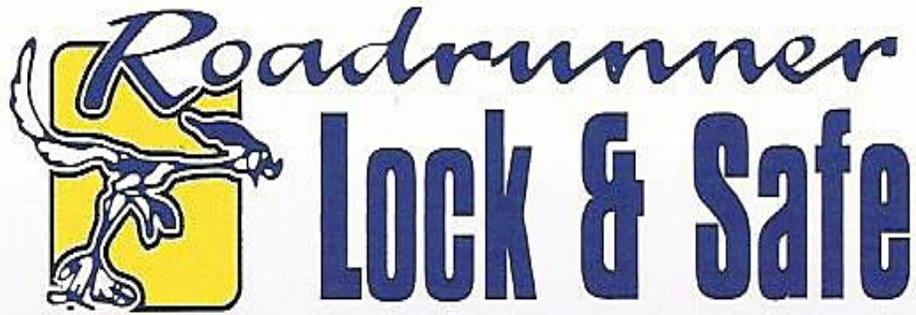
Thank You s and Shout Outs

Special notice to:

- ◆ **Dale Vickroy**, who did a great job of last-minute rearranging of volunteers.
- ◆ **Our volunteers:** a big THANK YOU to the volunteers who did extra shifts to cover!
- ◆ **Suzette Sommerer**, who created a survey to get vital feedback so that we can improve the festival and get some suggestions for next year.
- ◆ **Lou Courtney**, our treasurer, who did a wonderful job keeping track of all the monies and PayPal transactions.
- ◆ To all the **bands, vendors, sponsors**, and especially **YOU** who came out and supported us: thank you!

It was a great group of people that made this happen. They are:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ◆ Holly Tripp: Festival Co-Chair, sponsors, silent auction, management | ◆ Paul Deo: Campground Host |
| ◆ Dale Vickroy: Festival Co-Chair, website, volunteers, PayPal, program | ◆ Jennifer Johnson: Gate |
| ◆ Suzette Sommerer: Public relations and marketing | ◆ Teri Boudreau: PayPal |
| ◆ Curt Holmes: Vendors | ◆ Daniel Bieg: Instrument raffle |
| ◆ Jim Wagner: Green Room | ◆ David Lanham: Festival T-shirts, DBA booth |
| ◆ Doug McMaster: Grounds | ◆ Carole and Jerry Wothe: DBA Booth |
| ◆ Eileen Farland: Kids Zone (a Festival first: awesome job setting it up) | ◆ Lou Courtney: Finances |
| | ◆ Jonathon Grinder: Graphics |
| | ◆ Mike Headrick: Photographer |



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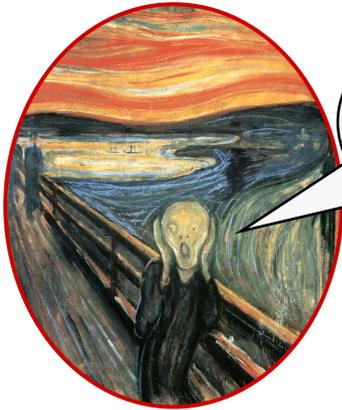
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Where's the
calendar??
[Click here to
look online!!](#)

In case you hadn't heard, there's a pretty nasty virus going around!! Owing to public health concerns regarding the coronavirus outbreak, DBA has cancelled all jams and workshops until further notice.

This won't go on forever, so check the DBA online calendar for updates.

And in the mean time, wash your hands, stay at home, but mostly—keep pickin'!

Seen Around Town

Thanks to Andy McCune and the Chicago Music Store, a free mandolin clinic focusing on Simplified Mandolin Chords, Double-Stops, and Basic Improvising was offered on the last Saturday of February.

Beginners worked on a full range of simplified chords intended to facilitate building basic licks. Andy also offered information and instruction on how to use double-stops in several key licks as a foundation for developing instrument solos.

Andy plays and teaches banjo, guitar, mandolin, and dobro. He performs with local bands Rusty Chops and Titan Valley Warheads.



Andy McCune instructs a rapt group of participants at the free mandolin clinic at the eastside Chicago Music Store (*left*), and demonstrates the proper way to hold a mandolin pick (*right*).

Welcome to our new and returning members:

John Beacat
Trish Beals
Michael Boeck
Doug Bowers
John Emsley
Frederick Flanagan
Rebecca Gaver
Jacqueline Gwynne

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Sandpoint, ID
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In the previous newsletter, the following sidebar, intended to accompany Marshall Vest's article on the Urban DNA Acoustic camp, did not print correctly. Please accept our apologies for this error!

The 17th Street Music Club

The 17th Street Music Club is a private gathering place for musicians and music lovers providing premier access to concerts and events, workshops and seminars, performance opportunities, music lessons, and multi-track audio recording and video services. The Club caters to both professional and amateur musicians, music educators, students, songwriters, and others who maintain a love and appreciation for music. Its family-friendly environment provides a social venue where musicians can gather to teach, perform and listen to music of all kinds. A *lifetime* membership is \$25.

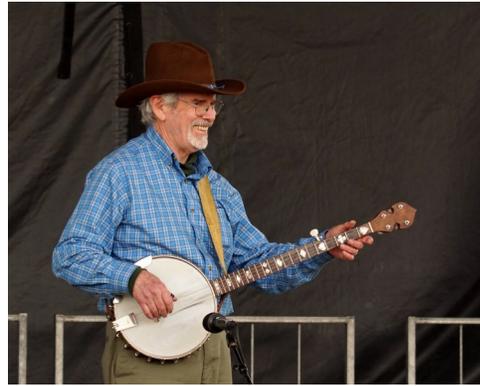
<http://www.17thclub.com/>

Even More from the Marana Bluegrass Festival

Did you know that the festival allows people to play all kinds of instruments? Including accordions! And *even banjos!!*



Alvin Blaine



Bill Bartlett

Did you further know that the festival offers not just great music . . .



Old Pueblo Bluegrass



Scotty Steer of Romen
Buffalo and the Loyal Order



The Sonoran Dogs



Rusted Spurs West

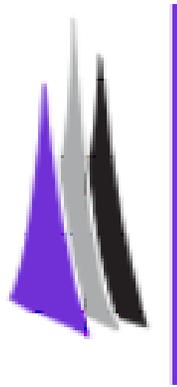
. . . but also trendsetters in Western Wear, Hats, and Hawaiian Shirts? Yes, it's true! See for yourself:



2Lazy2 Ranch's Dave
Polston



Titan Valley Warheads



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Listen Up!

While twiddling my thumbs at home (which I do frequently to avoid practicing scales on the mando) and spending too much time on the Internet, I began idly perusing the chart listings on *Bluegrass Today*. So much great, new music to listen to! I was pleased to see Buddy Melton and Darren Nicholson (of Balsam Range) each have new songs in the Top 20. But there were also listed many artists whose music I did not know and in some cases, had never even heard of. So my new quarantine project is to spend the next few weeks (months?) listening to as much new music as possible while stuck in the house. Heavy emphasis on bluegrass, of course, but also a little country, a little Americana, a little folk. Here's my plan:

Local music — I love our local musicians! I'm not spending money on entertainment now, so I'm going to spend some of it on supporting our local musicians and filling some of the gaps in my collection. Among many others, I hope to score *Seed & Silo* (Rebekah Rolland) and *Brandy of the Damned* (Determined Luddites).

Amazon Music — Amazon Music just offered me a free, three-month trial. Heck yes, I took it! And immediately listened to an entire Daughters of Bluegrass album. Sublime!

Freegal Music — Anyone with a library card to our own Pima County Public Library can stream and even download music. Sign up through the library's website, then download the app. You can browse by genre (including bluegrass, Americana, Celtic, and lots more), then find playlists and trending songs, albums, and artists.

Pandora — Pandora claims 64 million monthly listeners and 90 billion thumbs up. Once you're signed up and logged in, you can create your own stations based on artists and songs you like, or listen to stations created by others.

KXCI — It's great to have the time to catch up on their archive of *The Bluegrass Show's* past programs. Tons of great stuff here.

Give a listen, and let me know what you find!

~Contributed by Cathy Larson

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Thank You, Festival Vendors & Volunteers!



TO INSTRUCTORS & BANDS



Would you like your services, band, and/or concerts listed on our website, at www.desertbluegrass.org ? Current DBA members can be listed by sending their contact information to Dale Lynne Vickroy at DesertBluegrassWebmaster@gmail.com. Refer to the "Links" tab on the homepage to view current band and instructor information. We have added a second calendar on the website for other (non-DBA) concerts and events. If you have something scheduled that you would like added to the calendar: send me the date, time and address info. You may also include a link to your band's website or to a special event flyer. Info can be posted under the "Events" tab. That would need to be specifically requested since I expect that people will begin using the calendar instead. Please submit information in plain text. Varied fonts, colors, formatting, and inserted graphics are extremely time consuming to match in the webpage editor.

BANDS

The 2 Lazy 2 Ranch Band

John Hall 520-647-1234
www.2lazy2ranchband.com

Cabin John

Howard Anderson--480-897-7425
 Anni Beach--480-963-6811
www.cabinjohnbluegrass.com

Dan Levenson and The Cat Mountain Rounders

412-551-0933
clawdan1@gmail.com
www.Clawdan.com

Dusty River Band

Rich Errico 520 818 0358
Rerrico1@q.com

Jam Pak Blues 'N' Grass Neighborhood Band

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

Los Hombres

Kenny Erickson 520-235-7473

MojoGrass

520-369-7524
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mojograssaz@gmail.com

Ocotillo Rain and Thunder

Contact: Holly Tripp
 Phone: 520-241-8421
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<http://www.maranafestival.com/old-pueblo-bluegrass.html>

Peter McLaughlin

520-247-1027

Scattered Grass

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The Sonoran Dogs

Peter McLaughlin 520-247-1027
 Brian Davies 520-349-9497
www.thesonorandogs.com

The Speedway Brothers Band

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thardwater@yahoo.com
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Titan Valley Warheads

Ed Davenport 520-904-6050
www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/pages/The-Titan-Valley-Warheads/161939573828277

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Arizona Bluegrass Association

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Bluegrass Backing Tracks

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www.reso-nation.org

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JAMS & OPEN MICs

All DBA-sponsored jams are temporarily cancelled due to public health warnings relating to the coronavirus. Once resumed, they will be listed on the calendar at www.desertbluegrass.org. Below is the previous list of other, related jams. Check local contacts for current and future scheduling.

Southern AZ Old Time Fiddlers Assn.

Unitarian Universalist Church
4831 E 22nd St, Tucson
Tuesday 6:30—8:30pm
Info: Wilbur 520-743-7086

Kibbey's Jam and Open Mic

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

1st Baptist Church Jam and Open Mic

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

Casa Grande Airport Jam

1st & 3rd Saturday, 12:00 pm.
Casa Grande Municipal Airport, 3225 N Lear Ave. Casa Grande Az. Acoustic stringed

instruments only, NO Amps, Bluegrass songs preferred.
Contact Steve Hartwell
steve@arizonabluegrass.com



Nightly jamming at the festival campground



ASSOCIATIONS

Arizona Bluegrass Association

10343 W Pinehurst Dr
Sun City, Arizona 85351
Leslie Rhodes President
602-565-3285
leslie@arizonabluegrass.com
www.arizonabluegrass.com

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 St.
Mailing Address: 207 East Second St.
Owensboro, KY 42303
270-926-7891
888-MY BANJO (toll-free)

Southern Arizona Old Time Fiddlers Association

3020 W. Avenida Cresta
Tucson, AZ 85745
Info: Wilbur 520-743-7086

Tucson Friends of Traditional Music

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

Tucson Kitchen Musicians Association

PO Box 26531
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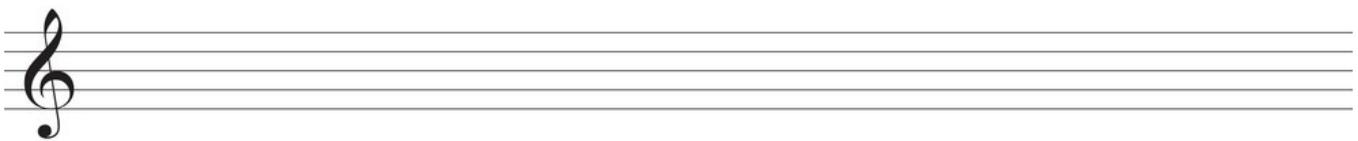
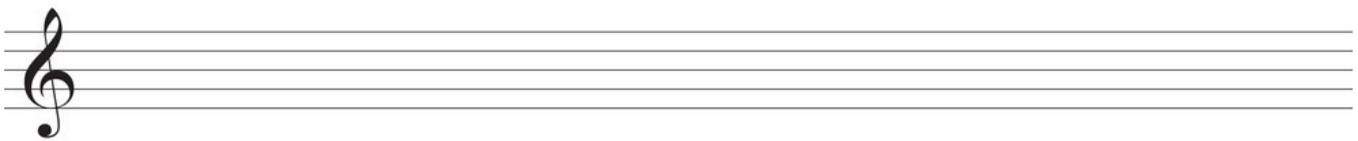
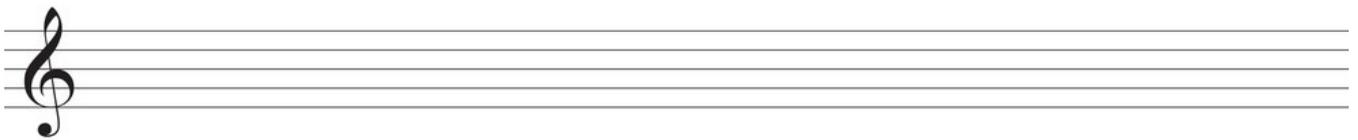
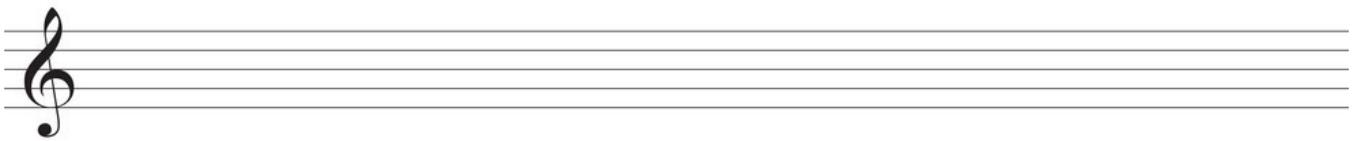
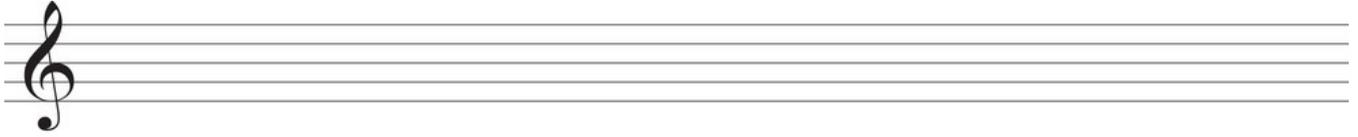
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MEMBER OF THE DESERT BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

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, or email delivery in color. 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: _____
Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____
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 _____

Check here if you wish to receive the DBA Grass Clippings Newsletter by mail

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

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