



A Publication of Your  
Nashville Old-Time  
String Band Association  
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ASSOCIATION  
EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 6  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 13  
Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 20  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday  
Performance Group  
Rehearsal  
July 27  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam  
July 23  
2 to 5 PM  
Hosted by  
Lucy and Roger  
Stolen

# The Old-Time Times

JULY 2006

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## A Message from Our New President

~Jim Hornsby

There was a recent suggestion that the president write a monthly column to keep everyone posted as to Notsba's progress and plans. I think that is a good idea, and I would like to give it a try. I will be writing about a variety of things, and if you have any questions about the association or suggestions as to topics, please let me know. These articles will appear in our newsletter under the title, "The President's Corner."

My first thought is what a great job Don Kent has done as president this past year. He and Darlyne have worked hard to help Notsba grow and prosper. The association has made great strides, and I know you will join with me in offering our sincere thanks for all they have done.

Taking Don's place will not be an easy task, and I am grateful to be working alongside so many talented, dedicated people. Sitting with me on the Board of Directors are Pat Gill, Mary Lou Durham, Trish Cannon, Lilly Hsu, Phil Sparks, Ed Gregory, Don Kent, Martin Fisher, and Ron Whitlow. Darlyne is recording secretary for the board, and Lilly is secretary/treasurer.

I couldn't begin to set out all the things these folks have done for the association over the years, but you know them as friends and fellow musicians, so you are already aware of how generously they have given their time and energies. It is a great pleasure to work, and play, with them.

I am also grateful that all of you are supporting the association. Membership is consistently growing, more new players are joining in the fun, we have two great places for our Thursday night jams, our service projects and appearances have improved community awareness and appreciation for old-time music, and our performance opportunities have increased dramatically. Things are going great, and on behalf of the board, I want to tell you how much we appreciate your help in making it happen.

The board, by majority vote, guides the association's activities. Board members will change by rotation in accordance with our charter and by-laws, and there is ample opportunity for those who want to take a turn in leadership. We encourage your participation.

The association is in a formative stage, and we are trying new things to see what works. We want it to be fun and productive for members and for the community as a whole, and we welcome your thoughts and ideas for making it better. Our recently acquired nonprofit status will give us greater flexibility to expand and improve our activities and community service, and it will allow the association to endure for future generations of old-time pickers. □

**Editor's Note:** For the information of our new members, Jim, last year's vice president, automatically becomes this year's president. We have not yet elected a new vice president (to become next year's president). If you would be willing to serve, please notify someone on the board. □

### **Notsba Performs at the Zoo**

~Mary Lou Durham

The Nashville Zoo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Members' Evening for this season was held on Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of June. Ron Whitlow, Mike Baugh, Jeff Cales, Eddy Hudson, Julie Mavity-Hudson, Rick Fretter, Don Masters, Martin Fisher, Ed Gregory, Drew Fedak, and Mary Lou Durham convened on behalf of Notsba to play tunes and sing songs for the families attending this invitation-only event.

The zoo placed our jam/performance outside on the lawn across the walkway from the shore of the pond behind the Croft Building. We played two sets with a break in between for hotdogs (provided by the zoo) and socializing.

Though we worked mainly from the set list developed over the past year, we also brought in some singing that drew a crowd to stand and listen. The format was what we do best, making ambient music to entertain folks in between, or on their way to, other destinations, with no seats for people to settle

into to have performance expectations of us. Some people did linger, sitting on the grass around us, to listen through several tunes and songs, clapping and occasionally singing along. Of course, we were delighted by their interest and appreciation.

We played some tunes and songs that are enough in the popular culture that folks probably had vague remembrances of them from elementary school: "Golden Slippers," "Chinese Breakdown," "Rock the Cradle Lucy," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Arkansas Traveler," "Shove That Pig's Foot a Little Closer in the Fire." Naturally, we were asked to do "Rocky Top."

The day was typical "summer in Middle Tennessee," but we played under canopies and late enough in the afternoon that the sun was at a slightly more gentle angle, and there were no heat-related casualties amongst us. The time passed quickly with some of us barely getting warmed up to play.

Notsba was given an honorarium for our contribution to Zoo Members' Day, and a fine time was had by all. □

### **A New Emphasis on "Old-Time" at the Festival in Adams**

To all Notsba members,

I would like to invite each of you to come out and participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions in Adams, Tennessee, on August 11 and 12. It will be held at the old Adams Bell (as in Bell Witch) School House property. There is ample shade, concessions on hand, and lots of shade tree picking.

The mayor of Adams contacted me a couple of months ago and asked me if I would take this festival over. It was very short notice, and I felt that the festival was too close at hand to make dramatic changes. However, I did ask them to rename the festival "Old-Time" & Bluegrass.

I'm not too sure they understand my reasoning, but they will. My intention is to work this festival (radically) towards the "old-time," and begin to play down its Bluegrass aspect. It will take me a little time. However, it will be much easier if I can get good

participation from the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association.

Please come. Make yourself at home. You can camp. There is plenty of primitive camping and a limited number of camp sites with electricity, plus there are motels close by and a camp ground (on the Red River) with RV hook-ups less than a mile away. There will be vendors with instruments, CD's, T-shirts, etc.

I will have a suggestion box set out just for you. Please come and make suggestions as to how we can make one of Tennessee's longest running bluegrass festivals into the world's best old-time string band music festival.

Thanks,

Marlin Rood

Springfield Guitar Company

614 Main Street

Springfield, TN 37172

(615) 384-6255

[milo62@earthlink.net](mailto:milo62@earthlink.net). □

### **Pegramites Open for *A Prairie Home Companion***

~Phil Sparks

On Wednesday evening, June 7, Susie Coleman (guitar and vocals), Alan O'Bryant (mandolin), Kirk Pickering (mandolin and fiddle), and Tim Roberts (tenor guitar), billed as the Pegramites, were granted the immense honor of opening for Garrison Keillor and his film version of *A Prairie Home Companion* at the Belcourt Theater.

It was a private screening involving only the jettyest of Nashville's jet set, so Kitty and I put on our best blue jeans, rubbed some Essence of Wisconsin Dairy Air behind our ears, and arrived early.

The Pegramites had just begun playing when we appeared and took third-row-center seats. They chose several old-time standards, the stuff that would have made Garrison proud, and they did an excellent job of it. In addition, golden-throated Susie sang a couple of beautiful folk songs.

The movie itself was excellent. It reminded me of a Broadway musical in that the plot was weak, little more than an excuse to move from tune to tune. Several of my favorite actors

found employment there, Meryl Streep, Lilly Tomlin, Woody Harrelson, Maya Rudolph, and Tommy Lee Jones. Above all, Garrison Keillor was Garrison Keillor, and the music just kept coming. □

### **It's Clifftop Time Again**

~Phil Sparks

Once again, it's almost time for the annual trek to Clifftop, West Virginia, for 17<sup>th</sup> annual Appalachian String Band Music Festival.

Most of us who have been around old-time music for a few years already know it as the foremost old-time event of the year. Thousands of people from the US, Canada, and even Europe converge on Camp Washington-Carver, a West Virginia state park, to camp, jam, dance, shop, attend workshops, compete, make new friends, and soak up an incredible amount of beautiful music.

The official dates this year are Wednesday, August 2, through Sunday, August 6, but lots of people will be there by Saturday, July 29, or even earlier. If you want a nice camping spot, you should probably be there no later than Wednesday, August 2.

The event is called "Clifftop" because that's the name of the nearest small town, and the actual name is just too long for comfort. The grounds offer plentiful camping space (but limited RV hookups), a cafeteria, showers (usually cold), port-a-johns, some conventional restrooms (when they work), a first-rate commercial row, a large hall for dancing and for special performances, and a large outdoor stage for the competitions.

If you are looking for something comparable to Club Med, Clifftop ain't the place. If it's great old-time music you crave, you can't beat it.

For more information on Clifftop, talk to any of the Notsba members who have been there or go to [www.wvculture.org/stringband/](http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/) or call 304-558-0220.

If you don't mind a little rough camping, I'll see you there. The park may not be as well managed as it could be, but the people who attend this festival and the music they make

go together to create a little world that is almost heaven. □

### **Rebekah Weiler Takes Third at Fiddlers' Grove**

On May 27, at the Ole-Time Fiddler's and Bluegrass Festival in Union Grove, North Carolina, Rebekah Weiler took third place in the Senior old-time banjo contest.

Friends, this is no small feat. The competitions at Fiddlers' Grove are reputed to be among the most demanding in the nation.

Congratulations to Rebekah! □

### **Collierville Historic Town Square Jam**

~Betty Westmoreland

The Collierville Jam is held every Friday. It's free. Bring chairs or a blanket to spread out. Bring supper or a sack. It starts around 6:30 and goes till they get tired...usually around 10:30, but it has been as late as 1 AM, when the sprinkler timers started kicking on to water our beautifully groomed town square.

That's no bull...it was lovely! The pickers grabbed up their instruments and cases and moved to an area that wasn't being watered, and they did what pickers do...they kept right on picking. Hey! When you've got a groove, you can't turn it loose! Eventually, the timers changed the sprinkling to a new spot, and the musicians had to scramble again, finally giving up as the town clock struck 2 AM. It was quite a night!

I dreamed all this up about seven years ago. When I drove through the square each Friday afternoon after work, it looked pretty empty at the gazebo and all around. My squeaky wheels began to turn, and I said, to absolutely no one but myself, 'We need some picking in there on Friday nights.'

I e-mailed the local pickers about my idea, and absolutely no one replied. I thought, 'OK, they're not interested. I tried,' and with that I just laid it aside. Finally, banjo player Joe Cupp called me and said, "Where are you?" I said, "Joe, I'm right here...whatcha talkin' about?" Joe said, "You e-mailed the crowd about coming up to the square on Friday nights, and some of us have been doing that.

Where are YOU?" I explained that when no one answered to say that they were interested, I figured they just weren't. I went on up the following Friday. It was great, and it's been building for seven years!

This past Friday night there were four rather large jammin' groups with their supporters sitting in lawn chairs near each group. It just builds and builds through the summer. I told a reporter that it is like Christmas every Friday night, because you never know what you're going to get. We've managed to appear on the Town of Collierville Web site, and somebody from Crye-Leike Realtors was taking pictures for a sales brochure last week—to advertise some of the good things about life in Collierville.

As Martha Stewart would say, "It's a GOOD thing!"

Join us anytime. Take I-40 toward Memphis. Get off at exit 25, and head south toward Collierville. We're smack in the heart of downtown Collierville, which is loaded with charming stores, restaurants, and nostalgia...and music! Marilyn and Coley Graves are here frequently, as is Dennis Baumgardner. Lee Cagle, the gal who heads up the Dulcimer Gathering, often comes and brings Nat J., her ten-year-old. He's also learning the dulcimer.

Join us whenever you can. The latchstring is always out! □

### **A Report from Mt Airy**

~Phil Sparks

For the third consecutive year, Kitty and I attended the Mt Airy Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddler's Convention. It's official dates were June 2 and 3, but we went early this year, arriving Monday, May 29.

Last year, we went only one day before the opening date, and were unable to find a good camping spot. This year, plenty of good spots were available as late as Saturday morning, June 3. We will not go that early next year.

By the way, it's worth mentioning at this point that all of the festivals and contests we have attended this year have been less well attended than they were last year. I've talked to several other people who agree that this

trend seems to be widespread. Perhaps it's due to the price of gas, but for whatever reason, we may have to expect a smaller crowd at Breakin' Up Winter next March.

As always at Mt Airy, we saw multiple old friends, did some good jamming (especially at Woody McKenzie's camp), and generally enjoyed the quaint little town of Mt Airy.

For me, the event had four high points:

1. Joyce Cauthen showed me how to attach a tuner to my banjo, which allows me to keep a close eye on its tuning. (What a simple but useful idea for bringing that stubborn instrument under control!)
2. A guy from Columbus, Ohio, named Mark O'Limpisky (sp?) showed me some hot new banjo licks. (It will be at least a year before I can reproduce them.)
3. Bob Hightower introduced me to a new kind of geared fiddle peg. (I hope to have an article about them in next month's newsletter.)
4. Rebekah Weiler taught me a beautiful new tune, "Sally in the Garden." (We hope to play it together in the contest at Uncle Dave's Days.)

Mt Airy was well worth the trip. Do yourself a favor and be there next year. □

### **Notsba Performs for the Buchanan Log House Board Meeting**

~Mary Lou Durham

We'd been invited to give a short performance for the June 11 Buchanan Log House board meeting, which marked the end of the term of their outgoing president, Sally Prather.

It was during her tenure that the people who care for the Buchanan Log House had agreed to let Notsba use their facility on a tentative basis for the coming year. Sally wanted to expose the board to our activity and let them see and hear how we fit into the mission of their historic building.

Mike Baugh, Martin Cerjan, and I played a short set and talked about the history of the banjo and Notsba's history, as well as the connection between old-time music and dance and how both are available to folks in this area. We answered questions and had

fellowship with board members after our short set.

The board expressed its appreciation for Notsba and what we bring to their wonderful log dwelling, as did we for its use by us. It was a sweet performance. □

### **A Blue Creek Ramblers Update**

~Patsy Weiler

Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers have a brand new Web site, [www.bluecreekramblers.com](http://www.bluecreekramblers.com).

They were a big success at Mountainfest in Gatlinburg. The sound team there called them "the party band" because they had people up dancing in the streets and hooting and hollering with the band.

Their new CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*, is being played on WDVX-FM 89.9 and can be heard on the internet at WDVX.com. WDVX is located in downtown Knoxville on the corner of Summit and Gay Streets and is a grass roots station that offers a mix of outstanding American music. □

### **Uncle Dave's Days Are upon Us**

~Wendy Bryant

Grab your banjos, and shine your dancin' shoes! The 29th Annual Uncle Dave Macon Days old-time music and dance festival is set to kick off July 7-9 in Cannonsburgh Village, located in historic Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Considered one of America's premier summer festivals, this family-oriented event annually gathers more than 40,000 people to Murfreesboro for a hearty helping of fun, Southern-style. It has been selected by the Atlanta-based Southeast Tourism Society as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast. Additionally, the American Bus Association designated it as one of the top 100 events in North America.

The festival was established to honor the memory of Uncle Dave Macon. Uncle Dave lived near Murfreesboro and is considered one of the first Grand Ole Opry superstars. A master banjo player and performer, he died in 1952 and was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1966.

Uncle Dave Macon Days is one of the few old-time music competitions in the country. A purse of more than \$6,100 is at stake during Friday and Saturday's highly charged music and dance competitions. In 1986, the United States House of Representatives proclaimed these competitions to be the National Championships in old-time banjo, old-time clogging and old-time buck dancing.

On Saturday, July 8, the coveted Heritage Award will be presented to Rhonda Vincent. The Heritage Award is a yearly honor presented to an individual dedicated to the preservation and advancement of old-time music and dance. Ms. Vincent will serve as the grand marshal of the Motorless Parade that travels down East Main Street in Murfreesboro on Saturday morning.

Other family-oriented events taking place throughout the festival include heritage activities for children, mouth-watering local concessions, a juried arts and crafts show, a historic photo exhibit, and a Sunday morning service with dinner on the grounds and a gospel sing.

The celebration takes place in Cannonsburgh, an authentic pioneer village. It is located at 312 South Front Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 30 minutes southeast of Nashville on I-24. The village is home to more than 20 restored log structures and will feature living history demonstrations during the weekend. Visit a working blacksmith, or join in with some old-fashioned shape-note singing in the little white church.

The fun starts at 5 PM on Friday, July 7, at 9 AM on Saturday, July 8, and at 10 AM on Sunday, July 9. There is no admission charge. Free and paid parking is available. For more information write: PO Box 5016, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-5016, or call: 1-800-716-7560. Please visit our Web site at: [www.uncledavemacondays.com](http://www.uncledavemacondays.com).

**Contests:** The *Contest Fiddle* competition will probably take place around 10 AM on Saturday. (It Requires a waltz and a breakdown.) The *Traditional Fiddle* competition will happen sometime Saturday afternoon. (No waltz is required, just two tunes.) The *Old-Time Banjo* preliminary takes

place Saturday afternoon, right after the Traditional Fiddle contest. The *Old-Time Band* contest comes right after some ceremonies scheduled for 5 PM. Later Saturday evening, *Old-Time Banjo* and *Old-Time Band* will have their "finals."

Keep in mind that all festivals find it almost impossible to stay on schedule.

**Directions:** From Nashville, take I-24 South to Exit 78B. At the end of the ramp, turn left. You will be on Old Fort Parkway/Highway 96. When you arrive at the intersection with Broad Street (Krystal's will be on the corner), turn right onto Broad Street. After you go through the light at Main Street, you will come to Front Street. Turn right onto Front Street. Cannonsburgh Village will be on your right. □

### A Report from the Dickson Fiddle Contest

~Phil Sparks

This year's fiddle contest at Dickson was another success, though attendance seemed to be down from last year—as has been the case at all of the festivals we've been to this year.

Here are the results as pertains to people you might know:

Phil Sparks took second in the 51-and-Over fiddle contest while his friend Lorraine Porter took third.

Phil Sparks took third in the old-time banjo contest.

The Madison County Ramblers, with Marilyn Graves on hammered dulcimer, Dennis Baumgardner on fiddle, Coley Graves on guitar, and Phil Sparks on old-time banjo, took third in the old-time band contest.

The major Notsba victory of the day came when our own Thomas Maupin, a Notsba member, was awarded the Robert Spicer Plaque for winning the buck dancing contest.

Once again, I encourage you all to attend the local contests. If we want folks to become involved in old-time music, we have to be out there, and we have to be seen. Besides, it's fun! □

**Something New in  
This Month's Newsletter:**

**Performance Group Info**

~Phil Sparks

If you will look back to the front page of this newsletter, in the box to the left, you will notice that under "Association Events," the fourth item down reads

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday

Performance Group Rehearsal

July 27, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Buchanan Log House

For some time now, we've been having those rehearsals, but I haven't done a good job of putting out the word. I'm trying to do better.

**What?**

The performance group is made up of Notsba members who play at various community events. Sometimes we earn a little money (always for Notsba, never for the individuals), and sometimes we play for free, for the fun of it, usually to return a favor or to win important friends.

**Who?**

To join the performance group, (1) you must be a member of our organization. As far as I know, this is the **ONLY** thing we do that is restricted to members. We also ask that (2) you know how to play your instrument fairly well. No, you do not have to be a hot picker, just generally competent. If we play a tune you can't handle, you can always sit that one out. (I do that often.) Finally, (3) we ask that you attend most of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday rehearsals. Participation in the performance group requires a commitment, but it is also an outstanding opportunity to improve your picking.

**How Many?**

Ordinarily, we can use as many people as are willing to show up for the rehearsals and performances. Our strong point is jamming, and with jams it's generally "the bigger the better."

If some event surfaces that requires only a couple of pickers, the president will probably ask around quietly until he finds a few good pickers who can attend that event. I don't know that we've had a situation like that yet.

If you enjoy performing and want a challenge that will make you a better picker faster, join us. We would love to have you.

New members, if you think you have to hang around for a while before you jump in with both feet, you are **WRONG!** Notsba belongs equally to us all, old **and** new members. Join us, we need you! □

**A Report from the Hillbilly Days Contest**

~Phil Sparks

On June 17 in Lafayette, Tennessee, at the 31st annual Hillbilly Days festival, Ashley Sullivan took second in the Junior Fiddle Contest while Wild Bill Jones took third. As we all know, Wild Bill is an excellent fiddler. Ashley had to do her absolute best to tie Bill in the first round and then do it again to edge him out of second in a fiddle-off. The big winner was the audience.

Phil Sparks took third in the Senior Fiddle Contest and won a country ham in a drawing. (Phil also won third in a recent contest in Ohio.)

It was a beautiful day. In addition to Phil, Jeff Cales, Mary Lou Durham, and Jim Hornsby came out, but we could have used more Notsba members to support Susie Coleman's favorite festival. □

**This Summer's Jams in Bowling Green**

~Christy Burns

With summer now well underway, we've had to compare calendars to see when there'd be a quorum for a Saturday jam at Bread and Bagels in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Here are the dates when there will definitely be jams: July 15 and July 22

Our apologies go to those of you who have shown up to find no other musicians around. Hopefully this clears things up, and we can all plan to be there together on the same days! As always, if you want to call first to confirm or get directions or anything, 270-799-3909 is my cell phone number, so even if we're out of town, we can give you the info.

See you there sometime this summer or out at a festival somewhere! □

### Yet Another Article on Jamming Etiquette

If you have read all the articles on jamming etiquette in this newsletter, you may qualify to become the Amy Vanderbilt of old-time music.

The following information is reprinted from page 31 of the June-July *Old-Time Harold*, which stole it from someone else.

#### The 10 Commandments of Jamming

- I Pay attention to what's going on. Sit so that you can see and hear the other musicians.
- II Keep the beat, do not rush, do not drag.
- III Keep your instrument in tune and play in tune.
- IV Play extra softly if someone is singing.
- V The musician who starts a tune is generally the one who decides when to end it. (Refer to Rule 1.)
- VI Be mindful of the banjo section; do not change keys more often than necessary.
- VII Do not practice licks on your instrument between tunes.
- IIIX Do not come to a jam session expecting to impress others with your virtuosity. Jam sessions are opportunities to share tunes and songs.
- IX Play some tunes that everybody knows.
- X It is never a sin to play too softly.

**The Golden Rule of Jamming: *If you don't know what you are doing, play softly.*** □

### A New Contest Category

~Phil Sparks

While browsing through the Charlotte Folk Society's *Folk Calendar*, I noticed that at least one fiddlers' contest has introduced a new performance category: Fiddle and Banjo Duets.

To my ear, nothing is finer than a good fiddler playing with a good banjo picker. If only Clifftop and Mt Airy would add this category! □

### An Excellent New Web Site

~Patsy Weiler

Here's an excellent Web site for Appalachian culture, especially music. Go to <http://www.aca-dla.org/index.php>.

For more great sites, visit the links section of our Website at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org) □

### In the Good Ol' Summertime: String Band Sessions

~Betty Westmoreland

Come and jam with us at the Singleton Community Center in Bartlett, Tennessee, a small town on the eastern edge of Memphis.

We will gather Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 to 8:30 PM and again on Wednesday, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

For more information, call Lee Cagle at 901-372-0510 or go to [www.leecagledulcimers.com](http://www.leecagledulcimers.com). □

### CD Review:

*Ain't Dead Yet*

### By the Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers

~Phil Sparks

One of the last remaining old-time string bands has produced a second excellent CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*.

Little has changed since they produce their first CD in 2002. Delmer still fiddles, Leland Holland still plays guitar, and William Moore still plays the bass. The differences are that Dennis Baumgardner is now missing, and Notsba's own Rebekah, "the kid" Weiler is no longer a kid.

This CD has 12 cuts, 1. "I've Got No Honeybaby Now," 2. "Angeline the Baker," 3. "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad," 4. "Hop High Ladies," 5. "Just Because," 6. "Liza Jane," 7. "Lost Indian," 8. "I Don't Love Nobody," 9. "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree," 10. "Sally Ann," 11. "Sandy River Belle," and 12. "Girl I Left Behind Me."

Cuts 3, 5, and 9 are vocal numbers, sung by Delmer in his honest, clear old-time voice. The rest are instrumentals, most with Delmer's solid fiddle breaks and Rebekah's smooth banjo breaks.

Cut 11, "Sandy River Belle," features Rebekah on the banjo and no fiddling.

Rebekah's pleasing style flows melodically from beginning to end.

This CD is required listening for anyone who loves the old old-time string band music, and for anyone who takes pride in the accomplishments of our Rebekah, who along with Tyler Andal, another Notsba member, has a promising future as a professional musician. □

### **New Notsba Members**

We extend a warm welcome to four new members:

Martin Cerjan  
Casey Driscoll  
Ray Mathes  
Marynell Young

We thank you all for joining us and for supporting old-time music. We hope you will be active members and will participate in our jams, our performances, and our festival, Breakin' Up Winter. □

### **Directions to the Jams at Buchanan Log House**

From more or less the center of Nashville, take I-40 East. From I-40 East, take the Donelson Pike Exit (Exit 216C), and merge onto Donelson Pike. Go about 0.4 mile on Donelson Pike, and turn right onto Elm Hill Pike.

Go 0.5 mile on Elm Hill Pike to the Buchanan Log House, on the left at 2910 Elm Hill Pike. □

### **Direction to the Jams at Two Rivers Mansion**

*From the south or east of Nashville,* take I-40 East to Briley Parkway North.

Go about 3.6 miles on Briley Parkway and take the Two Rivers Parkway Exit. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Follow Two Rivers Parkway East for about 0.7 mile to McGavock Pike, and turn left (north).

Go about 0.4 mile on McGavock Pike, past McGavock High School, to Two Rivers Mansion at 3130 McGavock Pike. It's the

second drive on the left past the high school. A large sign and two stone pillars mark the entrance.

*From I-65 North,* take Briley Parkway East for 5 or 6 miles, and exit at Two Rivers Parkway. (The construction on Briley Parkway, has closed the Two Rivers Exit that serves eastbound traffic. You will have to go on to the next exit and come back with the westbound traffic.) Then follow the directions given above. □

### **Directions to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam**

June's 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam will be hosted by Lucy and Roger Stolen, who live in Gallatin.

To reach their home, from more or less the center of Nashville, take I-65 North to Vietnam Veterans Boulevard, and follow it to the end where it becomes Highway 31E (Nashville Pike). Follow 31E into Gallatin.

As you drive into Gallatin on 31E, you will see a large sign set in stone that says "Welcome to Gallatin." A short distance later, you will see another sign that says "Fairvue Plantation, ¼ Mile." Go the ¼ mile and turn right into the Fairvue Plantation development.

(If you pass the entrance to Fairvue, you will come to Vol State Junior College. Turn around and go back.)

When you turn into the Fairview development, you will be on Plantation Boulevard. Follow that road past the mansion, over a small bridge, and past the clubhouse.

Turn left on Isaac Franklin Drive, the second road on the left past the clubhouse. It ends in a loop. Lucy and Roger live at the end of the loop, on the lake, in a light-colored two-story brick home. The number is on the mailbox, 1042.

If you lose your way, call them at 615-452-2117.

Lucy and Roger don't have many extra chairs, so bring a folding chair or two if you can. See you all there! □

## **EVENTS**

### **TENNESSEE**

#### **Uncle Dave Macon Days**

Held in Murfreesboro, Friday through

Sunday, July 7-9. This festival is extremely popular with Notsba members. You will find us in a clearing off to the right of the stage (as you are facing the stage). For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 5, or call 800-716-7560. □

### **Bluegrass Along the Harpeth Fiddlers Jamboree**

Held in Franklin, Friday and Saturday, July 28-29, around the Williamson County Courthouse in the center of town. The contests will all be held on Saturday, starting at 10 AM. For more information, call Tommy Jackson at 615-790-8616, or go to [www.fiddlersjamboree.com](http://www.fiddlersjamboree.com). □

### **Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions**

Held in Adams, August 11 and 12, at the old Bell School grounds. For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 2, or call Marlin Rood at 615-384-6255. □

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

### **Appalachian String Band Music Festival**

Commonly known as "Clifftop" (the name of the nearest community), this festival is probably the premiere old-time music event in America. It is held at Camp Washington-Carver, a state park, from August 2 through August 6. Many campers will arrive as early as Saturday, July 29, to claim the best campsites and start the picking early.

For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 3, or call Pat Cowdery at (304) 558-0220, extension 130 or go to "Festivals & Contests" at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org). □

## **KENTUCKY**

### **Kentucky State Championship Old-Time Fiddler's Contest**

Held at Rough River Dam State Park, near Leitchfield, Friday and Saturday, July 21-22. If you want to camp, you must reserve a spot by going to [www.kystateparks.ky.gov](http://www.kystateparks.ky.gov). For more information, go to [www.kentuckyfiddler.com](http://www.kentuckyfiddler.com). □

### **Hosts for 2006 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams**

We now have hosts for all of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams to be held in 2006. Darlyne will soon be after us to sign up for 2007. □

### **A Penny Learned**

Peghed and Planetary have come out with "Perfection Pegs," fiddle tuning pegs that look just like the standard ebony pegs only they are made of some synthetic material and are geared.

Ron Alt has them on at least one of his fiddles, and he loves them. I have purchased a set but have not yet installed them. Hopefully, I will have them installed soon and will be able to write an article on them for our next newsletter.

From what I gather, classical violinists won't touch them for fear of damaging their expensive instruments, but for fiddlers, who generally use cheaper instruments and who cross-tune frequently, these new tuners may be something of a breakthrough. □

### **Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!**

If you have information you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the newsletter, contact Phil Sparks.

If you are willing to review a CD or a book, contact Phil Sparks. If you don't contact him, he will contact you!

If you have a tidbit on picking, learning tunes, caring for instruments, etc, please submit it for the "A Penny Learned" article. □

### **General Contact Information for the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association:**

E-mails for All Members

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

Jim Hornsby, President

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

615-650-2328

Ed Gregory, Web Master

615-889-5566

[edgregory@comcast.net](mailto:edgregory@comcast.net)

### **HELP!!!**

If you hear about an upcoming old-time music event, don't assume that we already

know about it. If it's not posted on our Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), we need the information desperately. ***Please help us keep our old-time community informed.***

You can reach Phil Sparks, the editor of this newsletter at:

[kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com)

or

615-797-4356

or

2020 Claylick Road

White Bluff, TN 37187

***The submission deadline for August's newsletter is Monday, July 24.*** This deadline is earlier than usual because Kitty and I are leaving for Clifftop the following Friday. □

She's played countless festivals and all-night jams, bringing home her share of dings and scratches.

Without doubt, she's a singer's guitar and has been played frequently, boldly, and lovingly. Her voice is smooth and rich, and she plays like a dream all the way up the neck. She gained volume from being played, and her lovely sustain supports the female voice particularly well in a solo environment. She's won many singing contests for me over the years.

I bought this baby new at the Rock Block in 1995 for \$2000. A new 810 now runs over \$3000 with Indian rosewood. Brazilian rosewood could cost an additional grand, if they can get it. The difference in the quality of the sound between the Brazilian and Indian rosewoods is significant.

It comes with its original case (deep fuchsia interior), which has some wear.

If you are interested in learning more about this guitar, please e-mail me, Susie Coleman, at [susieco@comcast.net](mailto:susieco@comcast.net) or call me at 615-662-5577 (Pegram, Tennessee). □

#### WANTED, AN OLD BANJO CASE

to go with my old banjo. If you think you might have what I need, please call me, Phil Sparks at 615-797-4356 or e-mail me at [kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com) so we can discuss the details. □

## Classified Ads

### STRING BAND MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

Notsba members are willing to perform for the public for a small fee. All of our earnings go to the organization, none to the pickers. If you know of someone who might make use of our services, contact Don Kent at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org), or call him at 615-868-9951. □

### FINE GUITAR FOR SALE

1995 Taylor 810 BR, Brazilian Rosewood, Original owner must sell, \$2250.

This guitar is not in collector's condition, but she's certainly worthy of a collector's attention. She has not spent her life in a case.



A Publication of Your  
Nashville Old-Time  
String Band Association  
\*\*\*\*\*

ASSOCIATION  
EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 6  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 13  
Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 20  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday  
Performance Group  
Rehearsal  
July 27  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam  
July 23  
2 to 5 PM  
Hosted by  
Lucy and Roger  
Stolen

# The Old-Time Times

JULY 2006

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## A Message from Our New President

~Jim Hornsby

There was a recent suggestion that the president write a monthly column to keep everyone posted as to Notsba's progress and plans. I think that is a good idea, and I would like to give it a try. I will be writing about a variety of things, and if you have any questions about the association or suggestions as to topics, please let me know. These articles will appear in our newsletter under the title, "The President's Corner."

My first thought is what a great job Don Kent has done as president this past year. He and Darlyne have worked hard to help Notsba grow and prosper. The association has made great strides, and I know you will join with me in offering our sincere thanks for all they have done.

Taking Don's place will not be an easy task, and I am grateful to be working alongside so many talented, dedicated people. Sitting with me on the Board of Directors are Pat Gill, Mary Lou Durham, Trish Cannon, Lilly Hsu, Phil Sparks, Ed Gregory, Don Kent, Martin Fisher, and Ron Whitlow. Darlyne is recording secretary for the board, and Lilly is secretary/treasurer.

I couldn't begin to set out all the things these folks have done for the association over the years, but you know them as friends and fellow musicians, so you are already aware of how generously they have given their time and energies. It is a great pleasure to work, and play, with them.

I am also grateful that all of you are supporting the association. Membership is consistently growing, more new players are joining in the fun, we have two great places for our Thursday night jams, our service projects and appearances have improved community awareness and appreciation for old-time music, and our performance opportunities have increased dramatically. Things are going great, and on behalf of the board, I want to tell you how much we appreciate your help in making it happen.

The board, by majority vote, guides the association's activities. Board members will change by rotation in accordance with our charter and by-laws, and there is ample opportunity for those who want to take a turn in leadership. We encourage your participation.

The association is in a formative stage, and we are trying new things to see what works. We want it to be fun and productive for members and for the community as a whole, and we welcome your thoughts and ideas for making it better. Our recently acquired nonprofit status will give us greater flexibility to expand and improve our activities and community service, and it will allow the association to endure for future generations of old-time pickers. □

**Editor's Note:** For the information of our new members, Jim, last year's vice president, automatically becomes this year's president. We have not yet elected a new vice president (to become next year's president). If you would be willing to serve, please notify someone on the board. □

### **Notsba Performs at the Zoo**

~Mary Lou Durham

The Nashville Zoo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Members' Evening for this season was held on Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of June. Ron Whitlow, Mike Baugh, Jeff Cales, Eddy Hudson, Julie Mavity-Hudson, Rick Fretter, Don Masters, Martin Fisher, Ed Gregory, Drew Fedak, and Mary Lou Durham convened on behalf of Notsba to play tunes and sing songs for the families attending this invitation-only event.

The zoo placed our jam/performance outside on the lawn across the walkway from the shore of the pond behind the Croft Building. We played two sets with a break in between for hotdogs (provided by the zoo) and socializing.

Though we worked mainly from the set list developed over the past year, we also brought in some singing that drew a crowd to stand and listen. The format was what we do best, making ambient music to entertain folks in between, or on their way to, other destinations, with no seats for people to settle

into to have performance expectations of us. Some people did linger, sitting on the grass around us, to listen through several tunes and songs, clapping and occasionally singing along. Of course, we were delighted by their interest and appreciation.

We played some tunes and songs that are enough in the popular culture that folks probably had vague remembrances of them from elementary school: "Golden Slippers," "Chinese Breakdown," "Rock the Cradle Lucy," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Arkansas Traveler," "Shove That Pig's Foot a Little Closer in the Fire." Naturally, we were asked to do "Rocky Top."

The day was typical "summer in Middle Tennessee," but we played under canopies and late enough in the afternoon that the sun was at a slightly more gentle angle, and there were no heat-related casualties amongst us. The time passed quickly with some of us barely getting warmed up to play.

Notsba was given an honorarium for our contribution to Zoo Members' Day, and a fine time was had by all. □

### **A New Emphasis on "Old-Time" at the Festival in Adams**

To all Notsba members,

I would like to invite each of you to come out and participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions in Adams, Tennessee, on August 11 and 12. It will be held at the old Adams Bell (as in Bell Witch) School House property. There is ample shade, concessions on hand, and lots of shade tree picking.

The mayor of Adams contacted me a couple of months ago and asked me if I would take this festival over. It was very short notice, and I felt that the festival was too close at hand to make dramatic changes. However, I did ask them to rename the festival "Old-Time" & Bluegrass.

I'm not too sure they understand my reasoning, but they will. My intention is to work this festival (radically) towards the "old-time," and begin to play down its Bluegrass aspect. It will take me a little time. However, it will be much easier if I can get good

participation from the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association.

Please come. Make yourself at home. You can camp. There is plenty of primitive camping and a limited number of camp sites with electricity, plus there are motels close by and a camp ground (on the Red River) with RV hook-ups less than a mile away. There will be vendors with instruments, CD's, T-shirts, etc.

I will have a suggestion box set out just for you. Please come and make suggestions as to how we can make one of Tennessee's longest running bluegrass festivals into the world's best old-time string band music festival.

Thanks,

Marlin Rood

Springfield Guitar Company

614 Main Street

Springfield, TN 37172

(615) 384-6255

[milo62@earthlink.net](mailto:milo62@earthlink.net). □

### **Pegramites Open for *A Prairie Home Companion***

~Phil Sparks

On Wednesday evening, June 7, Susie Coleman (guitar and vocals), Alan O'Bryant (mandolin), Kirk Pickering (mandolin and fiddle), and Tim Roberts (tenor guitar), billed as the Pegramites, were granted the immense honor of opening for Garrison Keillor and his film version of *A Prairie Home Companion* at the Belcourt Theater.

It was a private screening involving only the jettyest of Nashville's jet set, so Kitty and I put on our best blue jeans, rubbed some Essence of Wisconsin Dairy Air behind our ears, and arrived early.

The Pegramites had just begun playing when we appeared and took third-row-center seats. They chose several old-time standards, the stuff that would have made Garrison proud, and they did an excellent job of it. In addition, golden-throated Susie sang a couple of beautiful folk songs.

The movie itself was excellent. It reminded me of a Broadway musical in that the plot was weak, little more than an excuse to move from tune to tune. Several of my favorite actors

found employment there, Meryl Streep, Lilly Tomlin, Woody Harrelson, Maya Rudolph, and Tommy Lee Jones. Above all, Garrison Keillor was Garrison Keillor, and the music just kept coming. □

### **It's Clifftop Time Again**

~Phil Sparks

Once again, it's almost time for the annual trek to Clifftop, West Virginia, for 17<sup>th</sup> annual Appalachian String Band Music Festival.

Most of us who have been around old-time music for a few years already know it as the foremost old-time event of the year. Thousands of people from the US, Canada, and even Europe converge on Camp Washington-Carver, a West Virginia state park, to camp, jam, dance, shop, attend workshops, compete, make new friends, and soak up an incredible amount of beautiful music.

The official dates this year are Wednesday, August 2, through Sunday, August 6, but lots of people will be there by Saturday, July 29, or even earlier. If you want a nice camping spot, you should probably be there no later than Wednesday, August 2.

The event is called "Clifftop" because that's the name of the nearest small town, and the actual name is just too long for comfort. The grounds offer plentiful camping space (but limited RV hookups), a cafeteria, showers (usually cold), port-a-johns, some conventional restrooms (when they work), a first-rate commercial row, a large hall for dancing and for special performances, and a large outdoor stage for the competitions.

If you are looking for something comparable to Club Med, Clifftop ain't the place. If it's great old-time music you crave, you can't beat it.

For more information on Clifftop, talk to any of the Notsba members who have been there or go to [www.wvculture.org/stringband/](http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/) or call 304-558-0220.

If you don't mind a little rough camping, I'll see you there. The park may not be as well managed as it could be, but the people who attend this festival and the music they make

go together to create a little world that is almost heaven. □

### **Rebekah Weiler Takes Third at Fiddlers' Grove**

On May 27, at the Ole-Time Fiddler's and Bluegrass Festival in Union Grove, North Carolina, Rebekah Weiler took third place in the Senior old-time banjo contest.

Friends, this is no small feat. The competitions at Fiddlers' Grove are reputed to be among the most demanding in the nation.

Congratulations to Rebekah! □

### **Collierville Historic Town Square Jam**

~Betty Westmoreland

The Collierville Jam is held every Friday. It's free. Bring chairs or a blanket to spread out. Bring supper or a sack. It starts around 6:30 and goes till they get tired...usually around 10:30, but it has been as late as 1 AM, when the sprinkler timers started kicking on to water our beautifully groomed town square.

That's no bull...it was lovely! The pickers grabbed up their instruments and cases and moved to an area that wasn't being watered, and they did what pickers do...they kept right on picking. Hey! When you've got a groove, you can't turn it loose! Eventually, the timers changed the sprinkling to a new spot, and the musicians had to scramble again, finally giving up as the town clock struck 2 AM. It was quite a night!

I dreamed all this up about seven years ago. When I drove through the square each Friday afternoon after work, it looked pretty empty at the gazebo and all around. My squeaky wheels began to turn, and I said, to absolutely no one but myself, 'We need some picking in there on Friday nights.'

I e-mailed the local pickers about my idea, and absolutely no one replied. I thought, 'OK, they're not interested. I tried,' and with that I just laid it aside. Finally, banjo player Joe Cupp called me and said, "Where are you?" I said, "Joe, I'm right here...whatcha talkin' about?" Joe said, "You e-mailed the crowd about coming up to the square on Friday nights, and some of us have been doing that.

Where are YOU?" I explained that when no one answered to say that they were interested, I figured they just weren't. I went on up the following Friday. It was great, and it's been building for seven years!

This past Friday night there were four rather large jammin' groups with their supporters sitting in lawn chairs near each group. It just builds and builds through the summer. I told a reporter that it is like Christmas every Friday night, because you never know what you're going to get. We've managed to appear on the Town of Collierville Web site, and somebody from Crye-Leike Realtors was taking pictures for a sales brochure last week—to advertise some of the good things about life in Collierville.

As Martha Stewart would say, "It's a GOOD thing!"

Join us anytime. Take I-40 toward Memphis. Get off at exit 25, and head south toward Collierville. We're smack in the heart of downtown Collierville, which is loaded with charming stores, restaurants, and nostalgia...and music! Marilyn and Coley Graves are here frequently, as is Dennis Baumgardner. Lee Cagle, the gal who heads up the Dulcimer Gathering, often comes and brings Nat J., her ten-year-old. He's also learning the dulcimer.

Join us whenever you can. The latchstring is always out! □

### **A Report from Mt Airy**

~Phil Sparks

For the third consecutive year, Kitty and I attended the Mt Airy Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddler's Convention. It's official dates were June 2 and 3, but we went early this year, arriving Monday, May 29.

Last year, we went only one day before the opening date, and were unable to find a good camping spot. This year, plenty of good spots were available as late as Saturday morning, June 3. We will not go that early next year.

By the way, it's worth mentioning at this point that all of the festivals and contests we have attended this year have been less well attended than they were last year. I've talked to several other people who agree that this

trend seems to be widespread. Perhaps it's due to the price of gas, but for whatever reason, we may have to expect a smaller crowd at Breakin' Up Winter next March.

As always at Mt Airy, we saw multiple old friends, did some good jamming (especially at Woody McKenzie's camp), and generally enjoyed the quaint little town of Mt Airy.

For me, the event had four high points:

1. Joyce Cauthen showed me how to attach a tuner to my banjo, which allows me to keep a close eye on its tuning. (What a simple but useful idea for bringing that stubborn instrument under control!)
2. A guy from Columbus, Ohio, named Mark O'Limpisky (sp?) showed me some hot new banjo licks. (It will be at least a year before I can reproduce them.)
3. Bob Hightower introduced me to a new kind of geared fiddle peg. (I hope to have an article about them in next month's newsletter.)
4. Rebekah Weiler taught me a beautiful new tune, "Sally in the Garden." (We hope to play it together in the contest at Uncle Dave's Days.)

Mt Airy was well worth the trip. Do yourself a favor and be there next year. □

### **Notsba Performs for the Buchanan Log House Board Meeting**

~Mary Lou Durham

We'd been invited to give a short performance for the June 11 Buchanan Log House board meeting, which marked the end of the term of their outgoing president, Sally Prather.

It was during her tenure that the people who care for the Buchanan Log House had agreed to let Notsba use their facility on a tentative basis for the coming year. Sally wanted to expose the board to our activity and let them see and hear how we fit into the mission of their historic building.

Mike Baugh, Martin Cerjan, and I played a short set and talked about the history of the banjo and Notsba's history, as well as the connection between old-time music and dance and how both are available to folks in this area. We answered questions and had

fellowship with board members after our short set.

The board expressed its appreciation for Notsba and what we bring to their wonderful log dwelling, as did we for its use by us. It was a sweet performance. □

### **A Blue Creek Ramblers Update**

~Patsy Weiler

Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers have a brand new Web site, [www.bluecreekramblers.com](http://www.bluecreekramblers.com).

They were a big success at Mountainfest in Gatlinburg. The sound team there called them "the party band" because they had people up dancing in the streets and hooting and hollering with the band.

Their new CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*, is being played on WDVX-FM 89.9 and can be heard on the internet at WDVX.com. WDVX is located in downtown Knoxville on the corner of Summit and Gay Streets and is a grass roots station that offers a mix of outstanding American music. □

### **Uncle Dave's Days Are upon Us**

~Wendy Bryant

Grab your banjos, and shine your dancin' shoes! The 29th Annual Uncle Dave Macon Days old-time music and dance festival is set to kick off July 7-9 in Cannonsburgh Village, located in historic Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Considered one of America's premier summer festivals, this family-oriented event annually gathers more than 40,000 people to Murfreesboro for a hearty helping of fun, Southern-style. It has been selected by the Atlanta-based Southeast Tourism Society as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast. Additionally, the American Bus Association designated it as one of the top 100 events in North America.

The festival was established to honor the memory of Uncle Dave Macon. Uncle Dave lived near Murfreesboro and is considered one of the first Grand Ole Opry superstars. A master banjo player and performer, he died in 1952 and was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1966.

Uncle Dave Macon Days is one of the few old-time music competitions in the country. A purse of more than \$6,100 is at stake during Friday and Saturday's highly charged music and dance competitions. In 1986, the United States House of Representatives proclaimed these competitions to be the National Championships in old-time banjo, old-time clogging and old-time buck dancing.

On Saturday, July 8, the coveted Heritage Award will be presented to Rhonda Vincent. The Heritage Award is a yearly honor presented to an individual dedicated to the preservation and advancement of old-time music and dance. Ms. Vincent will serve as the grand marshal of the Motorless Parade that travels down East Main Street in Murfreesboro on Saturday morning.

Other family-oriented events taking place throughout the festival include heritage activities for children, mouth-watering local concessions, a juried arts and crafts show, a historic photo exhibit, and a Sunday morning service with dinner on the grounds and a gospel sing.

The celebration takes place in Cannonsburgh, an authentic pioneer village. It is located at 312 South Front Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 30 minutes southeast of Nashville on I-24. The village is home to more than 20 restored log structures and will feature living history demonstrations during the weekend. Visit a working blacksmith, or join in with some old-fashioned shape-note singing in the little white church.

The fun starts at 5 PM on Friday, July 7, at 9 AM on Saturday, July 8, and at 10 AM on Sunday, July 9. There is no admission charge. Free and paid parking is available. For more information write: PO Box 5016, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-5016, or call: 1-800-716-7560. Please visit our Web site at: [www.uncledavemacondays.com](http://www.uncledavemacondays.com).

**Contests:** The *Contest Fiddle* competition will probably take place around 10 AM on Saturday. (It Requires a waltz and a breakdown.) The *Traditional Fiddle* competition will happen sometime Saturday afternoon. (No waltz is required, just two tunes.) The *Old-Time Banjo* preliminary takes

place Saturday afternoon, right after the Traditional Fiddle contest. The *Old-Time Band* contest comes right after some ceremonies scheduled for 5 PM. Later Saturday evening, *Old-Time Banjo* and *Old-Time Band* will have their "finals."

Keep in mind that all festivals find it almost impossible to stay on schedule.

**Directions:** From Nashville, take I-24 South to Exit 78B. At the end of the ramp, turn left. You will be on Old Fort Parkway/Highway 96. When you arrive at the intersection with Broad Street (Krystal's will be on the corner), turn right onto Broad Street. After you go through the light at Main Street, you will come to Front Street. Turn right onto Front Street. Cannonsburgh Village will be on your right. □

### A Report from the Dickson Fiddle Contest

~Phil Sparks

This year's fiddle contest at Dickson was another success, though attendance seemed to be down from last year—as has been the case at all of the festivals we've been to this year.

Here are the results as pertains to people you might know:

Phil Sparks took second in the 51-and-Over fiddle contest while his friend Lorraine Porter took third.

Phil Sparks took third in the old-time banjo contest.

The Madison County Ramblers, with Marilyn Graves on hammered dulcimer, Dennis Baumgardner on fiddle, Coley Graves on guitar, and Phil Sparks on old-time banjo, took third in the old-time band contest.

The major Notsba victory of the day came when our own Thomas Maupin, a Notsba member, was awarded the Robert Spicer Plaque for winning the buck dancing contest.

Once again, I encourage you all to attend the local contests. If we want folks to become involved in old-time music, we have to be out there, and we have to be seen. Besides, it's fun! □

**Something New in  
This Month's Newsletter:**

**Performance Group Info**

~Phil Sparks

If you will look back to the front page of this newsletter, in the box to the left, you will notice that under "Association Events," the fourth item down reads

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday

Performance Group Rehearsal

July 27, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Buchanan Log House

For some time now, we've been having those rehearsals, but I haven't done a good job of putting out the word. I'm trying to do better.

**What?**

The performance group is made up of Notsba members who play at various community events. Sometimes we earn a little money (always for Notsba, never for the individuals), and sometimes we play for free, for the fun of it, usually to return a favor or to win important friends.

**Who?**

To join the performance group, (1) you must be a member of our organization. As far as I know, this is the ONLY thing we do that is restricted to members. We also ask that (2) you know how to play your instrument fairly well. No, you do not have to be a hot picker, just generally competent. If we play a tune you can't handle, you can always sit that one out. (I do that often.) Finally, (3) we ask that you attend most of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday rehearsals. Participation in the performance group requires a commitment, but it is also an outstanding opportunity to improve your picking.

**How Many?**

Ordinarily, we can use as many people as are willing to show up for the rehearsals and performances. Our strong point is jamming, and with jams it's generally "the bigger the better."

If some event surfaces that requires only a couple of pickers, the president will probably ask around quietly until he finds a few good pickers who can attend that event. I don't know that we've had a situation like that yet.

If you enjoy performing and want a challenge that will make you a better picker faster, join us. We would love to have you.

New members, if you think you have to hang around for a while before you jump in with both feet, you are WRONG! Notsba belongs equally to us all, old *and* new members. Join us, we need you! □

**A Report from the Hillbilly Days Contest**

~Phil Sparks

On June 17 in Lafayette, Tennessee, at the 31st annual Hillbilly Days festival, Ashley Sullivan took second in the Junior Fiddle Contest while Wild Bill Jones took third. As we all know, Wild Bill is an excellent fiddler. Ashley had to do her absolute best to tie Bill in the first round and then do it again to edge him out of second in a fiddle-off. The big winner was the audience.

Phil Sparks took third in the Senior Fiddle Contest and won a country ham in a drawing. (Phil also won third in a recent contest in Ohio.)

It was a beautiful day. In addition to Phil, Jeff Cales, Mary Lou Durham, and Jim Hornsby came out, but we could have used more Notsba members to support Susie Coleman's favorite festival. □

**This Summer's Jams in Bowling Green**

~Christy Burns

With summer now well underway, we've had to compare calendars to see when there'd be a quorum for a Saturday jam at Bread and Bagels in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Here are the dates when there will definitely be jams: July 15 and July 22

Our apologies go to those of you who have shown up to find no other musicians around. Hopefully this clears things up, and we can all plan to be there together on the same days! As always, if you want to call first to confirm or get directions or anything, 270-799-3909 is my cell phone number, so even if we're out of town, we can give you the info.

See you there sometime this summer or out at a festival somewhere! □

### Yet Another Article on Jamming Etiquette

If you have read all the articles on jamming etiquette in this newsletter, you may qualify to become the Amy Vanderbilt of old-time music.

The following information is reprinted from page 31 of the June-July *Old-Time Harold*, which stole it from someone else.

#### The 10 Commandments of Jamming

- I Pay attention to what's going on. Sit so that you can see and hear the other musicians.
- II Keep the beat, do not rush, do not drag.
- III Keep your instrument in tune and play in tune.
- IV Play extra softly if someone is singing.
- V The musician who starts a tune is generally the one who decides when to end it. (Refer to Rule 1.)
- VI Be mindful of the banjo section; do not change keys more often than necessary.
- VII Do not practice licks on your instrument between tunes.
- IIIX Do not come to a jam session expecting to impress others with your virtuosity. Jam sessions are opportunities to share tunes and songs.
- IX Play some tunes that everybody knows.
- X It is never a sin to play too softly.

**The Golden Rule of Jamming: *If you don't know what you are doing, play softly.*** □

### A New Contest Category

~Phil Sparks

While browsing through the Charlotte Folk Society's *Folk Calendar*, I noticed that at least one fiddlers' contest has introduced a new performance category: Fiddle and Banjo Duets.

To my ear, nothing is finer than a good fiddler playing with a good banjo picker. If only Clifftop and Mt Airy would add this category! □

### An Excellent New Web Site

~Patsy Weiler

Here's an excellent Web site for Appalachian culture, especially music. Go to <http://www.aca-dla.org/index.php>.

For more great sites, visit the links section of our Website at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org) □

### In the Good Ol' Summertime: String Band Sessions

~Betty Westmoreland

Come and jam with us at the Singleton Community Center in Bartlett, Tennessee, a small town on the eastern edge of Memphis.

We will gather Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 to 8:30 PM and again on Wednesday, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

For more information, call Lee Cagle at 901-372-0510 or go to [www.leecagledulcimers.com](http://www.leecagledulcimers.com). □

### CD Review:

*Ain't Dead Yet*

### By the Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers

~Phil Sparks

One of the last remaining old-time string bands has produced a second excellent CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*.

Little has changed since they produce their first CD in 2002. Delmer still fiddles, Leland Holland still plays guitar, and William Moore still plays the bass. The differences are that Dennis Baumgardner is now missing, and Notsba's own Rebekah, "the kid" Weiler is no longer a kid.

This CD has 12 cuts, 1. "I've Got No Honeybaby Now," 2. "Angeline the Baker," 3. "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad," 4. "Hop High Ladies," 5. "Just Because," 6. "Liza Jane," 7. "Lost Indian," 8. "I Don't Love Nobody," 9. "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree," 10. "Sally Ann," 11. "Sandy River Belle," and 12. "Girl I Left Behind Me."

Cuts 3, 5, and 9 are vocal numbers, sung by Delmer in his honest, clear old-time voice. The rest are instrumentals, most with Delmer's solid fiddle breaks and Rebekah's smooth banjo breaks.

Cut 11, "Sandy River Belle," features Rebekah on the banjo and no fiddling.

Rebekah's pleasing style flows melodically from beginning to end.

This CD is required listening for anyone who loves the old old-time string band music, and for anyone who takes pride in the accomplishments of our Rebekah, who along with Tyler Andal, another Notsba member, has a promising future as a professional musician. □

### **New Notsba Members**

We extend a warm welcome to four new members:

Martin Cerjan  
Casey Driscoll  
Ray Mathes  
Marynell Young

We thank you all for joining us and for supporting old-time music. We hope you will be active members and will participate in our jams, our performances, and our festival, Breakin' Up Winter. □

### **Directions to the Jams at Buchanan Log House**

From more or less the center of Nashville, take I-40 East. From I-40 East, take the Donelson Pike Exit (Exit 216C), and merge onto Donelson Pike. Go about 0.4 mile on Donelson Pike, and turn right onto Elm Hill Pike.

Go 0.5 mile on Elm Hill Pike to the Buchanan Log House, on the left at 2910 Elm Hill Pike. □

### **Direction to the Jams at Two Rivers Mansion**

*From the south or east of Nashville,* take I-40 East to Briley Parkway North.

Go about 3.6 miles on Briley Parkway and take the Two Rivers Parkway Exit. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Follow Two Rivers Parkway East for about 0.7 mile to McGavock Pike, and turn left (north).

Go about 0.4 mile on McGavock Pike, past McGavock High School, to Two Rivers Mansion at 3130 McGavock Pike. It's the

second drive on the left past the high school. A large sign and two stone pillars mark the entrance.

*From I-65 North,* take Briley Parkway East for 5 or 6 miles, and exit at Two Rivers Parkway. (The construction on Briley Parkway, has closed the Two Rivers Exit that serves eastbound traffic. You will have to go on to the next exit and come back with the westbound traffic.) Then follow the directions given above. □

### **Directions to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam**

June's 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam will be hosted by Lucy and Roger Stolen, who live in Gallatin.

To reach their home, from more or less the center of Nashville, take I-65 North to Vietnam Veterans Boulevard, and follow it to the end where it becomes Highway 31E (Nashville Pike). Follow 31E into Gallatin.

As you drive into Gallatin on 31E, you will see a large sign set in stone that says "Welcome to Gallatin." A short distance later, you will see another sign that says "Fairvue Plantation, ¼ Mile." Go the ¼ mile and turn right into the Fairvue Plantation development.

(If you pass the entrance to Fairvue, you will come to Vol State Junior College. Turn around and go back.)

When you turn into the Fairview development, you will be on Plantation Boulevard. Follow that road past the mansion, over a small bridge, and past the clubhouse.

Turn left on Isaac Franklin Drive, the second road on the left past the clubhouse. It ends in a loop. Lucy and Roger live at the end of the loop, on the lake, in a light-colored two-story brick home. The number is on the mailbox, 1042.

If you lose your way, call them at 615-452-2117.

Lucy and Roger don't have many extra chairs, so bring a folding chair or two if you can. See you all there! □

## **EVENTS**

### **TENNESSEE**

#### **Uncle Dave Macon Days**

Held in Murfreesboro, Friday through

Sunday, July 7-9. This festival is extremely popular with Notsba members. You will find us in a clearing off to the right of the stage (as you are facing the stage). For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 5, or call 800-716-7560. □

### **Bluegrass Along the Harpeth Fiddlers Jamboree**

Held in Franklin, Friday and Saturday, July 28-29, around the Williamson County Courthouse in the center of town. The contests will all be held on Saturday, starting at 10 AM. For more information, call Tommy Jackson at 615-790-8616, or go to [www.fiddlersjamboree.com](http://www.fiddlersjamboree.com). □

### **Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions**

Held in Adams, August 11 and 12, at the old Bell School grounds. For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 2, or call Marlin Rood at 615-384-6255. □

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

### **Appalachian String Band Music Festival**

Commonly known as "Clifftop" (the name of the nearest community), this festival is probably the premiere old-time music event in America. It is held at Camp Washington-Carver, a state park, from August 2 through August 6. Many campers will arrive as early as Saturday, July 29, to claim the best campsites and start the picking early.

For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 3, or call Pat Cowdery at (304) 558-0220, extension 130 or go to "Festivals & Contests" at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org). □

## **KENTUCKY**

### **Kentucky State Championship Old-Time Fiddler's Contest**

Held at Rough River Dam State Park, near Leitchfield, Friday and Saturday, July 21-22. If you want to camp, you must reserve a spot by going to [www.kystateparks.ky.gov](http://www.kystateparks.ky.gov). For more information, go to [www.kentuckyfiddler.com](http://www.kentuckyfiddler.com). □

### **Hosts for 2006 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams**

We now have hosts for all of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams to be held in 2006. Darlyne will soon be after us to sign up for 2007. □

### **A Penny Learned**

Peghed and Planetary have come out with "Perfection Pegs," fiddle tuning pegs that look just like the standard ebony pegs only they are made of some synthetic material and are geared.

Ron Alt has them on at least one of his fiddles, and he loves them. I have purchased a set but have not yet installed them. Hopefully, I will have them installed soon and will be able to write an article on them for our next newsletter.

From what I gather, classical violinists won't touch them for fear of damaging their expensive instruments, but for fiddlers, who generally use cheaper instruments and who cross-tune frequently, these new tuners may be something of a breakthrough. □

### **Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!**

If you have information you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the newsletter, contact Phil Sparks.

If you are willing to review a CD or a book, contact Phil Sparks. If you don't contact him, he will contact you!

If you have a tidbit on picking, learning tunes, caring for instruments, etc, please submit it for the "A Penny Learned" article. □

### **General Contact Information for the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association:**

E-mails for All Members

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

Jim Hornsby, President

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

615-650-2328

Ed Gregory, Web Master

615-889-5566

[edgregory@comcast.net](mailto:edgregory@comcast.net)

### **HELP!!!**

If you hear about an upcoming old-time music event, don't assume that we already

know about it. If it's not posted on our Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), we need the information desperately. ***Please help us keep our old-time community informed.***

You can reach Phil Sparks, the editor of this newsletter at:

[kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com)

or

615-797-4356

or

2020 Claylick Road

White Bluff, TN 37187

***The submission deadline for August's newsletter is Monday, July 24.*** This deadline is earlier than usual because Kitty and I are leaving for Clifftop the following Friday. □

She's played countless festivals and all-night jams, bringing home her share of dings and scratches.

Without doubt, she's a singer's guitar and has been played frequently, boldly, and lovingly. Her voice is smooth and rich, and she plays like a dream all the way up the neck. She gained volume from being played, and her lovely sustain supports the female voice particularly well in a solo environment. She's won many singing contests for me over the years.

I bought this baby new at the Rock Block in 1995 for \$2000. A new 810 now runs over \$3000 with Indian rosewood. Brazilian rosewood could cost an additional grand, if they can get it. The difference in the quality of the sound between the Brazilian and Indian rosewoods is significant.

It comes with its original case (deep fuchsia interior), which has some wear.

If you are interested in learning more about this guitar, please e-mail me, Susie Coleman, at [susieco@comcast.net](mailto:susieco@comcast.net) or call me at 615-662-5577 (Pegram, Tennessee). □

#### WANTED, AN OLD BANJO CASE

to go with my old banjo. If you think you might have what I need, please call me, Phil Sparks at 615-797-4356 or e-mail me at [kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com) so we can discuss the details. □

## Classified Ads

### STRING BAND MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

Notsba members are willing to perform for the public for a small fee. All of our earnings go to the organization, none to the pickers. If you know of someone who might make use of our services, contact Don Kent at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org), or call him at 615-868-9951. □

### FINE GUITAR FOR SALE

1995 Taylor 810 BR, Brazilian Rosewood, Original owner must sell, \$2250.

This guitar is not in collector's condition, but she's certainly worthy of a collector's attention. She has not spent her life in a case.



A Publication of Your  
Nashville Old-Time  
String Band Association  
\*\*\*\*\*

ASSOCIATION  
EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 6  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 13  
Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 20  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday  
Performance Group  
Rehearsal  
July 27  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam  
July 23  
2 to 5 PM  
Hosted by  
Lucy and Roger  
Stolen

# The Old-Time Times

JULY 2006

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## A Message from Our New President

~Jim Hornsby

There was a recent suggestion that the president write a monthly column to keep everyone posted as to Notsba's progress and plans. I think that is a good idea, and I would like to give it a try. I will be writing about a variety of things, and if you have any questions about the association or suggestions as to topics, please let me know. These articles will appear in our newsletter under the title, "The President's Corner."

My first thought is what a great job Don Kent has done as president this past year. He and Darlyne have worked hard to help Notsba grow and prosper. The association has made great strides, and I know you will join with me in offering our sincere thanks for all they have done.

Taking Don's place will not be an easy task, and I am grateful to be working alongside so many talented, dedicated people. Sitting with me on the Board of Directors are Pat Gill, Mary Lou Durham, Trish Cannon, Lilly Hsu, Phil Sparks, Ed Gregory, Don Kent, Martin Fisher, and Ron Whitlow. Darlyne is recording secretary for the board, and Lilly is secretary/treasurer.

I couldn't begin to set out all the things these folks have done for the association over the years, but you know them as friends and fellow musicians, so you are already aware of how generously they have given their time and energies. It is a great pleasure to work, and play, with them.

I am also grateful that all of you are supporting the association. Membership is consistently growing, more new players are joining in the fun, we have two great places for our Thursday night jams, our service projects and appearances have improved community awareness and appreciation for old-time music, and our performance opportunities have increased dramatically. Things are going great, and on behalf of the board, I want to tell you how much we appreciate your help in making it happen.

The board, by majority vote, guides the association's activities. Board members will change by rotation in accordance with our charter and by-laws, and there is ample opportunity for those who want to take a turn in leadership. We encourage your participation.

The association is in a formative stage, and we are trying new things to see what works. We want it to be fun and productive for members and for the community as a whole, and we welcome your thoughts and ideas for making it better. Our recently acquired nonprofit status will give us greater flexibility to expand and improve our activities and community service, and it will allow the association to endure for future generations of old-time pickers. □

**Editor's Note:** For the information of our new members, Jim, last year's vice president, automatically becomes this year's president. We have not yet elected a new vice president (to become next year's president). If you would be willing to serve, please notify someone on the board. □

### **Notsba Performs at the Zoo**

~Mary Lou Durham

The Nashville Zoo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Members' Evening for this season was held on Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of June. Ron Whitlow, Mike Baugh, Jeff Cales, Eddy Hudson, Julie Mavity-Hudson, Rick Fretter, Don Masters, Martin Fisher, Ed Gregory, Drew Fedak, and Mary Lou Durham convened on behalf of Notsba to play tunes and sing songs for the families attending this invitation-only event.

The zoo placed our jam/performance outside on the lawn across the walkway from the shore of the pond behind the Croft Building. We played two sets with a break in between for hotdogs (provided by the zoo) and socializing.

Though we worked mainly from the set list developed over the past year, we also brought in some singing that drew a crowd to stand and listen. The format was what we do best, making ambient music to entertain folks in between, or on their way to, other destinations, with no seats for people to settle

into to have performance expectations of us. Some people did linger, sitting on the grass around us, to listen through several tunes and songs, clapping and occasionally singing along. Of course, we were delighted by their interest and appreciation.

We played some tunes and songs that are enough in the popular culture that folks probably had vague remembrances of them from elementary school: "Golden Slippers," "Chinese Breakdown," "Rock the Cradle Lucy," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Arkansas Traveler," "Shove That Pig's Foot a Little Closer in the Fire." Naturally, we were asked to do "Rocky Top."

The day was typical "summer in Middle Tennessee," but we played under canopies and late enough in the afternoon that the sun was at a slightly more gentle angle, and there were no heat-related casualties amongst us. The time passed quickly with some of us barely getting warmed up to play.

Notsba was given an honorarium for our contribution to Zoo Members' Day, and a fine time was had by all. □

### **A New Emphasis on "Old-Time" at the Festival in Adams**

To all Notsba members,

I would like to invite each of you to come out and participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions in Adams, Tennessee, on August 11 and 12. It will be held at the old Adams Bell (as in Bell Witch) School House property. There is ample shade, concessions on hand, and lots of shade tree picking.

The mayor of Adams contacted me a couple of months ago and asked me if I would take this festival over. It was very short notice, and I felt that the festival was too close at hand to make dramatic changes. However, I did ask them to rename the festival "Old-Time" & Bluegrass.

I'm not too sure they understand my reasoning, but they will. My intention is to work this festival (radically) towards the "old-time," and begin to play down its Bluegrass aspect. It will take me a little time. However, it will be much easier if I can get good

participation from the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association.

Please come. Make yourself at home. You can camp. There is plenty of primitive camping and a limited number of camp sites with electricity, plus there are motels close by and a camp ground (on the Red River) with RV hook-ups less than a mile away. There will be vendors with instruments, CD's, T-shirts, etc.

I will have a suggestion box set out just for you. Please come and make suggestions as to how we can make one of Tennessee's longest running bluegrass festivals into the world's best old-time string band music festival.

Thanks,

Marlin Rood

Springfield Guitar Company

614 Main Street

Springfield, TN 37172

(615) 384-6255

[milo62@earthlink.net](mailto:milo62@earthlink.net). □

### **Pegramites Open for *A Prairie Home Companion***

~Phil Sparks

On Wednesday evening, June 7, Susie Coleman (guitar and vocals), Alan O'Bryant (mandolin), Kirk Pickering (mandolin and fiddle), and Tim Roberts (tenor guitar), billed as the Pegramites, were granted the immense honor of opening for Garrison Keillor and his film version of *A Prairie Home Companion* at the Belcourt Theater.

It was a private screening involving only the jettyest of Nashville's jet set, so Kitty and I put on our best blue jeans, rubbed some Essence of Wisconsin Dairy Air behind our ears, and arrived early.

The Pegramites had just begun playing when we appeared and took third-row-center seats. They chose several old-time standards, the stuff that would have made Garrison proud, and they did an excellent job of it. In addition, golden-throated Susie sang a couple of beautiful folk songs.

The movie itself was excellent. It reminded me of a Broadway musical in that the plot was weak, little more than an excuse to move from tune to tune. Several of my favorite actors

found employment there, Meryl Streep, Lilly Tomlin, Woody Harrelson, Maya Rudolph, and Tommy Lee Jones. Above all, Garrison Keillor was Garrison Keillor, and the music just kept coming. □

### **It's Clifftop Time Again**

~Phil Sparks

Once again, it's almost time for the annual trek to Clifftop, West Virginia, for 17<sup>th</sup> annual Appalachian String Band Music Festival.

Most of us who have been around old-time music for a few years already know it as the foremost old-time event of the year. Thousands of people from the US, Canada, and even Europe converge on Camp Washington-Carver, a West Virginia state park, to camp, jam, dance, shop, attend workshops, compete, make new friends, and soak up an incredible amount of beautiful music.

The official dates this year are Wednesday, August 2, through Sunday, August 6, but lots of people will be there by Saturday, July 29, or even earlier. If you want a nice camping spot, you should probably be there no later than Wednesday, August 2.

The event is called "Clifftop" because that's the name of the nearest small town, and the actual name is just too long for comfort. The grounds offer plentiful camping space (but limited RV hookups), a cafeteria, showers (usually cold), port-a-johns, some conventional restrooms (when they work), a first-rate commercial row, a large hall for dancing and for special performances, and a large outdoor stage for the competitions.

If you are looking for something comparable to Club Med, Clifftop ain't the place. If it's great old-time music you crave, you can't beat it.

For more information on Clifftop, talk to any of the Notsba members who have been there or go to [www.wvculture.org/stringband/](http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/) or call 304-558-0220.

If you don't mind a little rough camping, I'll see you there. The park may not be as well managed as it could be, but the people who attend this festival and the music they make

go together to create a little world that is almost heaven. □

### **Rebekah Weiler Takes Third at Fiddlers' Grove**

On May 27, at the Ole-Time Fiddler's and Bluegrass Festival in Union Grove, North Carolina, Rebekah Weiler took third place in the Senior old-time banjo contest.

Friends, this is no small feat. The competitions at Fiddlers' Grove are reputed to be among the most demanding in the nation.

Congratulations to Rebekah! □

### **Collierville Historic Town Square Jam**

~Betty Westmoreland

The Collierville Jam is held every Friday. It's free. Bring chairs or a blanket to spread out. Bring supper or a sack. It starts around 6:30 and goes till they get tired...usually around 10:30, but it has been as late as 1 AM, when the sprinkler timers started kicking on to water our beautifully groomed town square.

That's no bull...it was lovely! The pickers grabbed up their instruments and cases and moved to an area that wasn't being watered, and they did what pickers do...they kept right on picking. Hey! When you've got a groove, you can't turn it loose! Eventually, the timers changed the sprinkling to a new spot, and the musicians had to scramble again, finally giving up as the town clock struck 2 AM. It was quite a night!

I dreamed all this up about seven years ago. When I drove through the square each Friday afternoon after work, it looked pretty empty at the gazebo and all around. My squeaky wheels began to turn, and I said, to absolutely no one but myself, 'We need some picking in there on Friday nights.'

I e-mailed the local pickers about my idea, and absolutely no one replied. I thought, 'OK, they're not interested. I tried,' and with that I just laid it aside. Finally, banjo player Joe Cupp called me and said, "Where are you?" I said, "Joe, I'm right here...whatcha talkin' about?" Joe said, "You e-mailed the crowd about coming up to the square on Friday nights, and some of us have been doing that.

Where are YOU?" I explained that when no one answered to say that they were interested, I figured they just weren't. I went on up the following Friday. It was great, and it's been building for seven years!

This past Friday night there were four rather large jammin' groups with their supporters sitting in lawn chairs near each group. It just builds and builds through the summer. I told a reporter that it is like Christmas every Friday night, because you never know what you're going to get. We've managed to appear on the Town of Collierville Web site, and somebody from Crye-Leike Realtors was taking pictures for a sales brochure last week—to advertise some of the good things about life in Collierville.

As Martha Stewart would say, "It's a GOOD thing!"

Join us anytime. Take I-40 toward Memphis. Get off at exit 25, and head south toward Collierville. We're smack in the heart of downtown Collierville, which is loaded with charming stores, restaurants, and nostalgia...and music! Marilyn and Coley Graves are here frequently, as is Dennis Baumgardner. Lee Cagle, the gal who heads up the Dulcimer Gathering, often comes and brings Nat J., her ten-year-old. He's also learning the dulcimer.

Join us whenever you can. The latchstring is always out! □

### **A Report from Mt Airy**

~Phil Sparks

For the third consecutive year, Kitty and I attended the Mt Airy Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddler's Convention. It's official dates were June 2 and 3, but we went early this year, arriving Monday, May 29.

Last year, we went only one day before the opening date, and were unable to find a good camping spot. This year, plenty of good spots were available as late as Saturday morning, June 3. We will not go that early next year.

By the way, it's worth mentioning at this point that all of the festivals and contests we have attended this year have been less well attended than they were last year. I've talked to several other people who agree that this

trend seems to be widespread. Perhaps it's due to the price of gas, but for whatever reason, we may have to expect a smaller crowd at Breakin' Up Winter next March.

As always at Mt Airy, we saw multiple old friends, did some good jamming (especially at Woody McKenzie's camp), and generally enjoyed the quaint little town of Mt Airy.

For me, the event had four high points:

1. Joyce Cauthen showed me how to attach a tuner to my banjo, which allows me to keep a close eye on its tuning. (What a simple but useful idea for bringing that stubborn instrument under control!)
2. A guy from Columbus, Ohio, named Mark O'Limpisky (sp?) showed me some hot new banjo licks. (It will be at least a year before I can reproduce them.)
3. Bob Hightower introduced me to a new kind of geared fiddle peg. (I hope to have an article about them in next month's newsletter.)
4. Rebekah Weiler taught me a beautiful new tune, "Sally in the Garden." (We hope to play it together in the contest at Uncle Dave's Days.)

Mt Airy was well worth the trip. Do yourself a favor and be there next year. □

### **Notsba Performs for the Buchanan Log House Board Meeting**

~Mary Lou Durham

We'd been invited to give a short performance for the June 11 Buchanan Log House board meeting, which marked the end of the term of their outgoing president, Sally Prather.

It was during her tenure that the people who care for the Buchanan Log House had agreed to let Notsba use their facility on a tentative basis for the coming year. Sally wanted to expose the board to our activity and let them see and hear how we fit into the mission of their historic building.

Mike Baugh, Martin Cerjan, and I played a short set and talked about the history of the banjo and Notsba's history, as well as the connection between old-time music and dance and how both are available to folks in this area. We answered questions and had

fellowship with board members after our short set.

The board expressed its appreciation for Notsba and what we bring to their wonderful log dwelling, as did we for its use by us. It was a sweet performance. □

### **A Blue Creek Ramblers Update**

~Patsy Weiler

Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers have a brand new Web site, [www.bluecreekramblers.com](http://www.bluecreekramblers.com).

They were a big success at Mountainfest in Gatlinburg. The sound team there called them "the party band" because they had people up dancing in the streets and hooting and hollering with the band.

Their new CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*, is being played on WDVX-FM 89.9 and can be heard on the internet at WDVX.com. WDVX is located in downtown Knoxville on the corner of Summit and Gay Streets and is a grass roots station that offers a mix of outstanding American music. □

### **Uncle Dave's Days Are upon Us**

~Wendy Bryant

Grab your banjos, and shine your dancin' shoes! The 29th Annual Uncle Dave Macon Days old-time music and dance festival is set to kick off July 7-9 in Cannonsburgh Village, located in historic Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Considered one of America's premier summer festivals, this family-oriented event annually gathers more than 40,000 people to Murfreesboro for a hearty helping of fun, Southern-style. It has been selected by the Atlanta-based Southeast Tourism Society as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast. Additionally, the American Bus Association designated it as one of the top 100 events in North America.

The festival was established to honor the memory of Uncle Dave Macon. Uncle Dave lived near Murfreesboro and is considered one of the first Grand Ole Opry superstars. A master banjo player and performer, he died in 1952 and was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1966.

Uncle Dave Macon Days is one of the few old-time music competitions in the country. A purse of more than \$6,100 is at stake during Friday and Saturday's highly charged music and dance competitions. In 1986, the United States House of Representatives proclaimed these competitions to be the National Championships in old-time banjo, old-time clogging and old-time buck dancing.

On Saturday, July 8, the coveted Heritage Award will be presented to Rhonda Vincent. The Heritage Award is a yearly honor presented to an individual dedicated to the preservation and advancement of old-time music and dance. Ms. Vincent will serve as the grand marshal of the Motorless Parade that travels down East Main Street in Murfreesboro on Saturday morning.

Other family-oriented events taking place throughout the festival include heritage activities for children, mouth-watering local concessions, a juried arts and crafts show, a historic photo exhibit, and a Sunday morning service with dinner on the grounds and a gospel sing.

The celebration takes place in Cannonsburgh, an authentic pioneer village. It is located at 312 South Front Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 30 minutes southeast of Nashville on I-24. The village is home to more than 20 restored log structures and will feature living history demonstrations during the weekend. Visit a working blacksmith, or join in with some old-fashioned shape-note singing in the little white church.

The fun starts at 5 PM on Friday, July 7, at 9 AM on Saturday, July 8, and at 10 AM on Sunday, July 9. There is no admission charge. Free and paid parking is available. For more information write: PO Box 5016, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-5016, or call: 1-800-716-7560. Please visit our Web site at: [www.uncledavemacondays.com](http://www.uncledavemacondays.com).

**Contests:** The *Contest Fiddle* competition will probably take place around 10 AM on Saturday. (It Requires a waltz and a breakdown.) The *Traditional Fiddle* competition will happen sometime Saturday afternoon. (No waltz is required, just two tunes.) The *Old-Time Banjo* preliminary takes

place Saturday afternoon, right after the Traditional Fiddle contest. The *Old-Time Band* contest comes right after some ceremonies scheduled for 5 PM. Later Saturday evening, *Old-Time Banjo* and *Old-Time Band* will have their "finals."

Keep in mind that all festivals find it almost impossible to stay on schedule.

**Directions:** From Nashville, take I-24 South to Exit 78B. At the end of the ramp, turn left. You will be on Old Fort Parkway/Highway 96. When you arrive at the intersection with Broad Street (Krystal's will be on the corner), turn right onto Broad Street. After you go through the light at Main Street, you will come to Front Street. Turn right onto Front Street. Cannonsburgh Village will be on your right. □

### A Report from the Dickson Fiddle Contest

~Phil Sparks

This year's fiddle contest at Dickson was another success, though attendance seemed to be down from last year—as has been the case at all of the festivals we've been to this year.

Here are the results as pertains to people you might know:

Phil Sparks took second in the 51-and-Over fiddle contest while his friend Lorraine Porter took third.

Phil Sparks took third in the old-time banjo contest.

The Madison County Ramblers, with Marilyn Graves on hammered dulcimer, Dennis Baumgardner on fiddle, Coley Graves on guitar, and Phil Sparks on old-time banjo, took third in the old-time band contest.

The major Notsba victory of the day came when our own Thomas Maupin, a Notsba member, was awarded the Robert Spicer Plaque for winning the buck dancing contest.

Once again, I encourage you all to attend the local contests. If we want folks to become involved in old-time music, we have to be out there, and we have to be seen. Besides, it's fun! □

**Something New in  
This Month's Newsletter:**

**Performance Group Info**

~Phil Sparks

If you will look back to the front page of this newsletter, in the box to the left, you will notice that under "Association Events," the fourth item down reads

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday

Performance Group Rehearsal

July 27, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Buchanan Log House

For some time now, we've been having those rehearsals, but I haven't done a good job of putting out the word. I'm trying to do better.

**What?**

The performance group is made up of Notsba members who play at various community events. Sometimes we earn a little money (always for Notsba, never for the individuals), and sometimes we play for free, for the fun of it, usually to return a favor or to win important friends.

**Who?**

To join the performance group, (1) you must be a member of our organization. As far as I know, this is the ONLY thing we do that is restricted to members. We also ask that (2) you know how to play your instrument fairly well. No, you do not have to be a hot picker, just generally competent. If we play a tune you can't handle, you can always sit that one out. (I do that often.) Finally, (3) we ask that you attend most of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday rehearsals. Participation in the performance group requires a commitment, but it is also an outstanding opportunity to improve your picking.

**How Many?**

Ordinarily, we can use as many people as are willing to show up for the rehearsals and performances. Our strong point is jamming, and with jams it's generally "the bigger the better."

If some event surfaces that requires only a couple of pickers, the president will probably ask around quietly until he finds a few good pickers who can attend that event. I don't know that we've had a situation like that yet.

If you enjoy performing and want a challenge that will make you a better picker faster, join us. We would love to have you.

New members, if you think you have to hang around for a while before you jump in with both feet, you are WRONG! Notsba belongs equally to us all, old *and* new members. Join us, we need you! □

**A Report from the Hillbilly Days Contest**

~Phil Sparks

On June 17 in Lafayette, Tennessee, at the 31st annual Hillbilly Days festival, Ashley Sullivan took second in the Junior Fiddle Contest while Wild Bill Jones took third. As we all know, Wild Bill is an excellent fiddler. Ashley had to do her absolute best to tie Bill in the first round and then do it again to edge him out of second in a fiddle-off. The big winner was the audience.

Phil Sparks took third in the Senior Fiddle Contest and won a country ham in a drawing. (Phil also won third in a recent contest in Ohio.)

It was a beautiful day. In addition to Phil, Jeff Cales, Mary Lou Durham, and Jim Hornsby came out, but we could have used more Notsba members to support Susie Coleman's favorite festival. □

**This Summer's Jams in Bowling Green**

~Christy Burns

With summer now well underway, we've had to compare calendars to see when there'd be a quorum for a Saturday jam at Bread and Bagels in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Here are the dates when there will definitely be jams: July 15 and July 22

Our apologies go to those of you who have shown up to find no other musicians around. Hopefully this clears things up, and we can all plan to be there together on the same days! As always, if you want to call first to confirm or get directions or anything, 270-799-3909 is my cell phone number, so even if we're out of town, we can give you the info.

See you there sometime this summer or out at a festival somewhere! □

### Yet Another Article on Jamming Etiquette

If you have read all the articles on jamming etiquette in this newsletter, you may qualify to become the Amy Vanderbilt of old-time music.

The following information is reprinted from page 31 of the June-July *Old-Time Harold*, which stole it from someone else.

#### The 10 Commandments of Jamming

- I Pay attention to what's going on. Sit so that you can see and hear the other musicians.
- II Keep the beat, do not rush, do not drag.
- III Keep your instrument in tune and play in tune.
- IV Play extra softly if someone is singing.
- V The musician who starts a tune is generally the one who decides when to end it. (Refer to Rule 1.)
- VI Be mindful of the banjo section; do not change keys more often than necessary.
- VII Do not practice licks on your instrument between tunes.
- IIIX Do not come to a jam session expecting to impress others with your virtuosity. Jam sessions are opportunities to share tunes and songs.
- IX Play some tunes that everybody knows.
- X It is never a sin to play too softly.

**The Golden Rule of Jamming: *If you don't know what you are doing, play softly.*** □

### A New Contest Category

~Phil Sparks

While browsing through the Charlotte Folk Society's *Folk Calendar*, I noticed that at least one fiddlers' contest has introduced a new performance category: Fiddle and Banjo Duets.

To my ear, nothing is finer than a good fiddler playing with a good banjo picker. If only Clifftop and Mt Airy would add this category! □

### An Excellent New Web Site

~Patsy Weiler

Here's a new Web site for Appalachian culture, especially music. Go to <http://www.aca-dla.org/index.php>. □

### In the Good Ol' Summertime: String Band Sessions

~Betty Westmoreland

Come and jam with us at the Singleton Community Center in Bartlett, Tennessee, a small town on the eastern edge of Memphis.

We will gather Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 to 8:30 PM and again on Wednesday, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

For more information, call Lee Cagle at 901-372-0510 or go to [www.leecagledulcimers.com](http://www.leecagledulcimers.com). □

### CD Review:

*Ain't Dead Yet*

By the Delmer Holland and  
The Blue Creek Ramblers

~Phil Sparks

One of the last remaining old-time string bands has produced a second excellent CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*.

Little has changed since they produce their first CD in 2002. Delmer still fiddles, Leland Holland still plays guitar, and William Moore still plays the bass. The differences are that Dennis Baumgardner is now missing, and Notsba's own Rebekah, "the kid" Weiler is no longer a kid.

This CD has 12 cuts, 1. "I've Got No Honeybaby Now," 2. "Angeline the Baker," 3. "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad," 4. "Hop High Ladies," 5. "Just Because," 6. "Liza Jane," 7. "Lost Indian," 8. "I Don't Love Nobody," 9. "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree," 10. "Sally Ann," 11. "Sandy River Belle," and 12. "Girl I Left Behind Me."

Cuts 3, 5, and 9 are vocal numbers, sung by Delmer in his honest, clear old-time voice. The rest are instrumentals, most with Delmer's solid fiddle breaks and Rebekah's smooth banjo breaks.

Cut 11, "Sandy River Belle," features Rebekah on the banjo and no fiddling. Rebekah's pleasing style flows melodically from beginning to end.

This CD is required listening for anyone who loves the old old-time string band music, and for anyone who takes pride in the accomplishments of our Rebekah, who along with Tyler Andal, another Notsba member, has a promising future as a professional musician. □

### **New Notsba Members**

We extend a warm welcome to four new members:

Martin Cerjan  
Casey Driscoll  
Ray Mathes  
Marynell Young

We thank you all for joining us and for supporting old-time music. We hope you will be active members and will participate in our jams, our performances, and our festival, Breakin' Up Winter. □

### **Directions to the Jams at Buchanan Log House**

From more or less the center of Nashville, take I-40 East. From I-40 East, take the Donelson Pike Exit (Exit 216C), and merge onto Donelson Pike. Go about 0.4 mile on Donelson Pike, and turn right onto Elm Hill Pike.

Go 0.5 mile on Elm Hill Pike to the Buchanan Log House, on the left at 2910 Elm Hill Pike. □

### **Direction to the Jams at Two Rivers Mansion**

*From the south or east of Nashville,* take I-40 East to Briley Parkway North.

Go about 3.6 miles on Briley Parkway and take the Two Rivers Parkway Exit. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Follow Two Rivers Parkway East for about 0.7 mile to McGavock Pike, and turn left (north).

Go about 0.4 mile on McGavock Pike, past McGavock High School, to Two Rivers Mansion at 3130 McGavock Pike. It's the second drive on the left past the high school. A large sign and two stone pillars mark the

entrance.

*From I-65 North,* take Briley Parkway East for 5 or 6 miles, and exit at Two Rivers Parkway. (The construction on Briley Parkway, has closed the Two Rivers Exit that serves eastbound traffic. You will have to go on to the next exit and come back with the westbound traffic.) Then follow the directions given above. □

### **Directions to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam**

June's 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam will be hosted by Lucy and Roger Stolen, who live in Gallatin.

To reach their home, from more or less the center of Nashville, take I-65 North to Vietnam Veterans Boulevard, and follow it to the end where it becomes Highway 31E (Nashville Pike). Follow 31E into Gallatin.

As you drive into Gallatin on 31E, you will see a large sign set in stone that says "Welcome to Gallatin." A short distance later, you will see another sign that says "Fairvue Plantation, ¼ Mile." Go the ¼ mile and turn right into the Fairvue Plantation development.

(If you pass the entrance to Fairvue, you will come to Vol State Junior College. Turn around and go back.)

When you turn into the Fairview development, you will be on Plantation Boulevard. Follow that road past the mansion, over a small bridge, and past the clubhouse.

Turn left on Isaac Franklin Drive, the second road on the left past the clubhouse. It ends in a loop. Lucy and Roger live at the end of the loop, on the lake, in a light-colored two-story brick home. The number is on the mailbox, 1042.

If you lose your way, call them at 615-452-2117.

Lucy and Roger don't have many extra chairs, so bring a folding chair or two if you can. See you all there! □

## **EVENTS**

### **TENNESSEE**

#### **Uncle Dave Macon Days**

Held in Murfreesboro, Friday through Sunday, July 7-9. This festival is extremely popular with Notsba members. You will find

us in a clearing off to the right of the stage (as you are facing the stage). For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 5, or call 800-716-7560. □

### **Bluegrass Along the Harpeth Fiddlers Jamboree**

Held in Franklin, Friday and Saturday, July 28-29, around the Williamson County Courthouse in the center of town. The contests will all be held on Saturday, starting at 10 AM. For more information, call Tommy Jackson at 615-790-8616, or go to [www.fiddlersjamboree.com](http://www.fiddlersjamboree.com). □

### **Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions**

Held in Adams, August 11 and 12, at the old Bell School grounds. For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 2, or call Marlin Rood at 615-384-6255. □

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

### **Appalachian String Band Music Festival**

Commonly known as “Clifftop” (the name of the nearest community), this festival is probably the premiere old-time music event in America. It is held at Camp Washington-Carver, a state park, from August 2 through August 6. Many campers will arrive as early as Saturday, July 29, to claim the best campsites and start the picking early.

For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 3, or call Pat Cowdery at (304) 558-0220, extension 130 or go to “Festivals & Contests” at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org). □

## **KENTUCKY**

### **Kentucky State Championship Old-Time Fiddler’s Contest**

Held at Rough River Dam State Park, near Leitchfield, Friday and Saturday, July 21-22. If you want to camp, you must reserve a spot by going to [www.kystateparks.ky.gov](http://www.kystateparks.ky.gov). For more information, go to [www.kentuckyfiddler.com](http://www.kentuckyfiddler.com). □

### **Hosts for 2006 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams**

We now have hosts for all of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday

Jams to be held in 2006. Darlyne will soon be after us to sign up for 2007. □

### **A Penny Learned**

Peghed and Planetary have come out with “Perfection Pegs,” fiddle tuning pegs that look just like the standard ebony pegs only they are made of some synthetic material and are geared.

Ron Alt has them on at least one of his fiddles, and he loves them. I have purchased a set but have not yet installed them. Hopefully, I will have them installed soon and will be able to write an article on them for our next newsletter.

From what I gather, classical violinists won’t touch them for fear of damaging their expensive instruments, but for fiddlers, who generally use cheaper instruments and who cross-tune frequently, these new tuners may be something of a breakthrough. □

### **Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!**

If you have information you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the newsletter, contact Phil Sparks.

If you are willing to review a CD or a book, contact Phil Sparks. If you don’t contact him, he will contact you!

If you have a tidbit on picking, learning tunes, caring for instruments, etc, please submit it for the “A Penny Learned” article. □

### **General Contact Information for the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association:**

E-mails for All Members  
[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

Jim Hornsby, President  
[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)  
615-650-2328

Ed Gregory, Web Master  
615-889-5566  
[edgregory@comcast.net](mailto:edgregory@comcast.net)

### **HELP!!!!**

If you hear about an upcoming old-time music event, don’t assume that we already know about it. If it’s not posted on our Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), we need the

information desperately. *Please help us keep our old-time community informed.*

You can reach Phil Sparks, the editor of this newsletter at:

[kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com)

or

615-797-4356

or

2020 Claylick Road

White Bluff, TN 37187

*The submission deadline for August's newsletter is Monday, July 24.* This deadline is earlier than usual because Kitty and I are leaving for Clifftop the following Friday. □

jams, bringing home her share of dings and scratches.

Without doubt, she's a singer's guitar and has been played frequently, boldly, and lovingly. Her voice is smooth and rich, and she plays like a dream all the way up the neck. She gained volume from being played, and her lovely sustain supports the female voice particularly well in a solo environment. She's won many singing contests for me over the years.

I bought this baby new at the Rock Block in 1995 for \$2000. A new 810 now runs over \$3000 with Indian rosewood. Brazilian rosewood could cost an additional grand, if they can get it. The difference in the quality of the sound between the Brazilian and Indian rosewoods is significant.

It comes with its original case (deep fuchsia interior), which has some wear.

If you are interested in learning more about this guitar, please e-mail me, Susie Coleman, at [susieco@comcast.net](mailto:susieco@comcast.net) or call me at 615-662-5577 (Pegram, Tennessee). □

#### WANTED, AN OLD BANJO CASE

to go with my old banjo. If you think you might have what I need, please call me, Phil Sparks at 615-797-4356 or e-mail me at [kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com) so we can discuss the details. □

## Classified Ads

### STRING BAND MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

Notsba members are willing to perform for the public for a small fee. All of our earnings go to the organization, none to the pickers. If you know of someone who might make use of our services, contact Don Kent at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org), or call him at 615-868-9951. □

### FINE GUITAR FOR SALE

1995 Taylor 810 BR, Brazilian Rosewood, Original owner must sell, \$2250.

This guitar is not in collector's condition, but she's certainly worthy of a collector's attention. She has not spent her life in a case. She's played countless festivals and all-night



A Publication of Your  
Nashville Old-Time  
String Band Association  
\*\*\*\*\*

ASSOCIATION  
EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 6  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 13  
Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 20  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday  
Performance Group  
Rehearsal  
July 27  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam  
July 23  
2 to 5 PM  
Hosted by  
Lucy and Roger  
Stolen

# The Old-Time Times

JULY 2006

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## A Message from Our New President

~Jim Hornsby

There was a recent suggestion that the president write a monthly column to keep everyone posted as to Notsba's progress and plans. I think that is a good idea, and I would like to give it a try. I will be writing about a variety of things, and if you have any questions about the association or suggestions as to topics, please let me know. These articles will appear in our newsletter under the title, "The President's Corner."

My first thought is what a great job Don Kent has done as president this past year. He and Darlyne have worked hard to help Notsba grow and prosper. The association has made great strides, and I know you will join with me in offering our sincere thanks for all they have done.

Taking Don's place will not be an easy task, and I am grateful to be working alongside so many talented, dedicated people. Sitting with me on the Board of Directors are Pat Gill, Mary Lou Durham, Trish Cannon, Lilly Hsu, Phil Sparks, Ed Gregory, Don Kent, Martin Fisher, and Ron Whitlow. Darlyne is recording secretary for the board, and Lilly is secretary/treasurer.

I couldn't begin to set out all the things these folks have done for the association over the years, but you know them as friends and fellow musicians, so you are already aware of how generously they have given their time and energies. It is a great pleasure to work, and play, with them.

I am also grateful that all of you are supporting the association. Membership is consistently growing, more new players are joining in the fun, we have two great places for our Thursday night jams, our service projects and appearances have improved community awareness and appreciation for old-time music, and our performance opportunities have increased dramatically. Things are going great, and on behalf of the board, I want to tell you how much we appreciate your help in making it happen.

The board, by majority vote, guides the association's activities. Board members will change by rotation in accordance with our charter and by-laws, and there is ample opportunity for those who want to take a turn in leadership. We encourage your participation.

The association is in a formative stage, and we are trying new things to see what works. We want it to be fun and productive for members and for the community as a whole, and we welcome your thoughts and ideas for making it better. Our recently acquired nonprofit status will give us greater flexibility to expand and improve our activities and community service, and it will allow the association to endure for future generations of old-time pickers. □

**Editor's Note:** For the information of our new members, Jim, last year's vice president, automatically becomes this year's president. We have not yet elected a new vice president (to become next year's president). If you would be willing to serve, please notify someone on the board. □

### **Notsba Performs at the Zoo**

~Mary Lou Durham

The Nashville Zoo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Members' Evening for this season was held on Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of June. Ron Whitlow, Mike Baugh, Jeff Cales, Eddy Hudson, Julie Mavity-Hudson, Rick Fretter, Don Masters, Martin Fisher, Ed Gregory, Drew Fedak, and Mary Lou Durham convened on behalf of Notsba to play tunes and sing songs for the families attending this invitation-only event.

The zoo placed our jam/performance outside on the lawn across the walkway from the shore of the pond behind the Croft Building. We played two sets with a break in between for hotdogs (provided by the zoo) and socializing.

Though we worked mainly from the set list developed over the past year, we also brought in some singing that drew a crowd to stand and listen. The format was what we do best, making ambient music to entertain folks in between, or on their way to, other destinations, with no seats for people to settle

into to have performance expectations of us. Some people did linger, sitting on the grass around us, to listen through several tunes and songs, clapping and occasionally singing along. Of course, we were delighted by their interest and appreciation.

We played some tunes and songs that are enough in the popular culture that folks probably had vague remembrances of them from elementary school: "Golden Slippers," "Chinese Breakdown," "Rock the Cradle Lucy," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Arkansas Traveler," "Shove That Pig's Foot a Little Closer in the Fire." Naturally, we were asked to do "Rocky Top."

The day was typical "summer in Middle Tennessee," but we played under canopies and late enough in the afternoon that the sun was at a slightly more gentle angle, and there were no heat-related casualties amongst us. The time passed quickly with some of us barely getting warmed up to play.

Notsba was given an honorarium for our contribution to Zoo Members' Day, and a fine time was had by all. □

### **A New Emphasis on "Old-Time" at the Festival in Adams**

To all Notsba members,

I would like to invite each of you to come out and participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions in Adams, Tennessee, on August 11 and 12. It will be held at the old Adams Bell (as in Bell Witch) School House property. There is ample shade, concessions on hand, and lots of shade tree picking.

The mayor of Adams contacted me a couple of months ago and asked me if I would take this festival over. It was very short notice, and I felt that the festival was too close at hand to make dramatic changes. However, I did ask them to rename the festival "Old-Time" & Bluegrass.

I'm not too sure they understand my reasoning, but they will. My intention is to work this festival (radically) towards the "old-time," and begin to play down its Bluegrass aspect. It will take me a little time. However, it will be much easier if I can get good

participation from the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association.

Please come. Make yourself at home. You can camp. There is plenty of primitive camping and a limited number of camp sites with electricity, plus there are motels close by and a camp ground (on the Red River) with RV hook-ups less than a mile away. There will be vendors with instruments, CD's, T-shirts, etc.

I will have a suggestion box set out just for you. Please come and make suggestions as to how we can make one of Tennessee's longest running bluegrass festivals into the world's best old-time string band music festival.

Thanks,

Marlin Rood

Springfield Guitar Company

614 Main Street

Springfield, TN 37172

(615) 384-6255

[milo62@earthlink.net](mailto:milo62@earthlink.net). □

### **Pegramites Open for *A Prairie Home Companion***

~Phil Sparks

On Wednesday evening, June 7, Susie Coleman (guitar and vocals), Alan O'Bryant (mandolin), Kirk Pickering (mandolin and fiddle), and Tim Roberts (tenor guitar), billed as the Pegramites, were granted the immense honor of opening for Garrison Keillor and his film version of *A Prairie Home Companion* at the Belcourt Theater.

It was a private screening involving only the jettyest of Nashville's jet set, so Kitty and I put on our best blue jeans, rubbed some Essence of Wisconsin Dairy Air behind our ears, and arrived early.

The Pegramites had just begun playing when we appeared and took third-row-center seats. They chose several old-time standards, the stuff that would have made Garrison proud, and they did an excellent job of it. In addition, golden-throated Susie sang a couple of beautiful folk songs.

The movie itself was excellent. It reminded me of a Broadway musical in that the plot was weak, little more than an excuse to move from tune to tune. Several of my favorite actors

found employment there, Meryl Streep, Lilly Tomlin, Woody Harrelson, Maya Rudolph, and Tommy Lee Jones. Above all, Garrison Keillor was Garrison Keillor, and the music just kept coming. □

### **It's Clifftop Time Again**

~Phil Sparks

Once again, it's almost time for the annual trek to Clifftop, West Virginia, for 17<sup>th</sup> annual Appalachian String Band Music Festival.

Most of us who have been around old-time music for a few years already know it as the foremost old-time event of the year. Thousands of people from the US, Canada, and even Europe converge on Camp Washington-Carver, a West Virginia state park, to camp, jam, dance, shop, attend workshops, compete, make new friends, and soak up an incredible amount of beautiful music.

The official dates this year are Wednesday, August 2, through Sunday, August 6, but lots of people will be there by Saturday, July 29, or even earlier. If you want a nice camping spot, you should probably be there no later than Wednesday, August 2.

The event is called "Clifftop" because that's the name of the nearest small town, and the actual name is just too long for comfort. The grounds offer plentiful camping space (but limited RV hookups), a cafeteria, showers (usually cold), port-a-johns, some conventional restrooms (when they work), a first-rate commercial row, a large hall for dancing and for special performances, and a large outdoor stage for the competitions.

If you are looking for something comparable to Club Med, Clifftop ain't the place. If it's great old-time music you crave, you can't beat it.

For more information on Clifftop, talk to any of the Notsba members who have been there or go to [www.wvculture.org/stringband/](http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/) or call 304-558-0220.

If you don't mind a little rough camping, I'll see you there. The park may not be as well managed as it could be, but the people who attend this festival and the music they make

go together to create a little world that is almost heaven. □

### **Rebekah Weiler Takes Third at Fiddlers' Grove**

On May 27, at the Ole-Time Fiddler's and Bluegrass Festival in Union Grove, North Carolina, Rebekah Weiler took third place in the Senior old-time banjo contest.

Friends, this is no small feat. The competitions at Fiddlers' Grove are reputed to be among the most demanding in the nation.

Congratulations to Rebekah! □

### **Collierville Historic Town Square Jam**

~Betty Westmoreland

The Collierville Jam is held every Friday. It's free. Bring chairs or a blanket to spread out. Bring supper or a sack. It starts around 6:30 and goes till they get tired...usually around 10:30, but it has been as late as 1 AM, when the sprinkler timers started kicking on to water our beautifully groomed town square.

That's no bull...it was lovely! The pickers grabbed up their instruments and cases and moved to an area that wasn't being watered, and they did what pickers do...they kept right on picking. Hey! When you've got a groove, you can't turn it loose! Eventually, the timers changed the sprinkling to a new spot, and the musicians had to scramble again, finally giving up as the town clock struck 2 AM. It was quite a night!

I dreamed all this up about seven years ago. When I drove through the square each Friday afternoon after work, it looked pretty empty at the gazebo and all around. My squeaky wheels began to turn, and I said, to absolutely no one but myself, 'We need some picking in there on Friday nights.'

I e-mailed the local pickers about my idea, and absolutely no one replied. I thought, 'OK, they're not interested. I tried,' and with that I just laid it aside. Finally, banjo player Joe Cupp called me and said, "Where are you?" I said, "Joe, I'm right here...whatcha talkin' about?" Joe said, "You e-mailed the crowd about coming up to the square on Friday nights, and some of us have been doing that.

Where are YOU?" I explained that when no one answered to say that they were interested, I figured they just weren't. I went on up the following Friday. It was great, and it's been building for seven years!

This past Friday night there were four rather large jammin' groups with their supporters sitting in lawn chairs near each group. It just builds and builds through the summer. I told a reporter that it is like Christmas every Friday night, because you never know what you're going to get. We've managed to appear on the Town of Collierville Web site, and somebody from Crye-Leike Realtors was taking pictures for a sales brochure last week—to advertise some of the good things about life in Collierville.

As Martha Stewart would say, "It's a GOOD thing!"

Join us anytime. Take I-40 toward Memphis. Get off at exit 25, and head south toward Collierville. We're smack in the heart of downtown Collierville, which is loaded with charming stores, restaurants, and nostalgia...and music! Marilyn and Coley Graves are here frequently, as is Dennis Baumgardner. Lee Cagle, the gal who heads up the Dulcimer Gathering, often comes and brings Nat J., her ten-year-old. He's also learning the dulcimer.

Join us whenever you can. The latchstring is always out! □

### **A Report from Mt Airy**

~Phil Sparks

For the third consecutive year, Kitty and I attended the Mt Airy Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddler's Convention. It's official dates were June 2 and 3, but we went early this year, arriving Monday, May 29.

Last year, we went only one day before the opening date, and were unable to find a good camping spot. This year, plenty of good spots were available as late as Saturday morning, June 3. We will not go that early next year.

By the way, it's worth mentioning at this point that all of the festivals and contests we have attended this year have been less well attended than they were last year. I've talked to several other people who agree that this

trend seems to be widespread. Perhaps it's due to the price of gas, but for whatever reason, we may have to expect a smaller crowd at Breakin' Up Winter next March.

As always at Mt Airy, we saw multiple old friends, did some good jamming (especially at Woody McKenzie's camp), and generally enjoyed the quaint little town of Mt Airy.

For me, the event had four high points:

1. Joyce Cauthen showed me how to attach a tuner to my banjo, which allows me to keep a close eye on its tuning. (What a simple but useful idea for bringing that stubborn instrument under control!)
2. A guy from Columbus, Ohio, named Mark O'Limpisky (sp?) showed me some hot new banjo licks. (It will be at least a year before I can reproduce them.)
3. Bob Hightower introduced me to a new kind of geared fiddle peg. (I hope to have an article about them in next month's newsletter.)
4. Rebekah Weiler taught me a beautiful new tune, "Sally in the Garden." (We hope to play it together in the contest at Uncle Dave's Days.)

Mt Airy was well worth the trip. Do yourself a favor and be there next year. □

### **Notsba Performs for the Buchanan Log House Board Meeting**

~Mary Lou Durham

We'd been invited to give a short performance for the June 11 Buchanan Log House board meeting, which marked the end of the term of their outgoing president, Sally Prather.

It was during her tenure that the people who care for the Buchanan Log House had agreed to let Notsba use their facility on a tentative basis for the coming year. Sally wanted to expose the board to our activity and let them see and hear how we fit into the mission of their historic building.

Mike Baugh, Martin Cerjan, and I played a short set and talked about the history of the banjo and Notsba's history, as well as the connection between old-time music and dance and how both are available to folks in this area. We answered questions and had

fellowship with board members after our short set.

The board expressed its appreciation for Notsba and what we bring to their wonderful log dwelling, as did we for its use by us. It was a sweet performance. □

### **A Blue Creek Ramblers Update**

~Patsy Weiler

Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers have a brand new Web site, [www.bluecreekramblers.com](http://www.bluecreekramblers.com).

They were a big success at Mountainfest in Gatlinburg. The sound team there called them "the party band" because they had people up dancing in the streets and hooting and hollering with the band.

Their new CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*, is being played on WDVX-FM 89.9 and can be heard on the internet at WDVX.com. WDVX is located in downtown Knoxville on the corner of Summit and Gay Streets and is a grass roots station that offers a mix of outstanding American music. □

### **Uncle Dave's Days Are upon Us**

~Wendy Bryant

Grab your banjos, and shine your dancin' shoes! The 29th Annual Uncle Dave Macon Days old-time music and dance festival is set to kick off July 7-9 in Cannonsburgh Village, located in historic Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Considered one of America's premier summer festivals, this family-oriented event annually gathers more than 40,000 people to Murfreesboro for a hearty helping of fun, Southern-style. It has been selected by the Atlanta-based Southeast Tourism Society as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast. Additionally, the American Bus Association designated it as one of the top 100 events in North America.

The festival was established to honor the memory of Uncle Dave Macon. Uncle Dave lived near Murfreesboro and is considered one of the first Grand Ole Opry superstars. A master banjo player and performer, he died in 1952 and was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1966.

Uncle Dave Macon Days is one of the few old-time music competitions in the country. A purse of more than \$6,100 is at stake during Friday and Saturday's highly charged music and dance competitions. In 1986, the United States House of Representatives proclaimed these competitions to be the National Championships in old-time banjo, old-time clogging and old-time buck dancing.

On Saturday, July 8, the coveted Heritage Award will be presented to Rhonda Vincent. The Heritage Award is a yearly honor presented to an individual dedicated to the preservation and advancement of old-time music and dance. Ms. Vincent will serve as the grand marshal of the Motorless Parade that travels down East Main Street in Murfreesboro on Saturday morning.

Other family-oriented events taking place throughout the festival include heritage activities for children, mouth-watering local concessions, a juried arts and crafts show, a historic photo exhibit, and a Sunday morning service with dinner on the grounds and a gospel sing.

The celebration takes place in Cannonsburgh, an authentic pioneer village. It is located at 312 South Front Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 30 minutes southeast of Nashville on I-24. The village is home to more than 20 restored log structures and will feature living history demonstrations during the weekend. Visit a working blacksmith, or join in with some old-fashioned shape-note singing in the little white church.

The fun starts at 5 PM on Friday, July 7, at 9 AM on Saturday, July 8, and at 10 AM on Sunday, July 9. There is no admission charge. Free and paid parking is available. For more information write: PO Box 5016, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-5016, or call: 1-800-716-7560. Please visit our Web site at: [www.uncledavemacondays.com](http://www.uncledavemacondays.com).

**Contests:** The *Contest Fiddle* competition will probably take place around 10 AM on Saturday. (It Requires a waltz and a breakdown.) The *Traditional Fiddle* competition will happen sometime Saturday afternoon. (No waltz is required, just two tunes.) The *Old-Time Banjo* preliminary takes

place Saturday afternoon, right after the Traditional Fiddle contest. The *Old-Time Band* contest comes right after some ceremonies scheduled for 5 PM. Later Saturday evening, *Old-Time Banjo* and *Old-Time Band* will have their "finals."

Keep in mind that all festivals find it almost impossible to stay on schedule.

**Directions:** From Nashville, take I-24 South to Exit 78B. At the end of the ramp, turn left. You will be on Old Fort Parkway/Highway 96. When you arrive at the intersection with Broad Street (Krystal's will be on the corner), turn right onto Broad Street. After you go through the light at Main Street, you will come to Front Street. Turn right onto Front Street. Cannonsburgh Village will be on your right. □

### A Report from the Dickson Fiddle Contest

~Phil Sparks

This year's fiddle contest at Dickson was another success, though attendance seemed to be down from last year—as has been the case at all of the festivals we've been to this year.

Here are the results as pertains to people you might know:

Phil Sparks took second in the 51-and-Over fiddle contest while his friend Lorraine Porter took third.

Phil Sparks took third in the old-time banjo contest.

The Madison County Ramblers, with Marilyn Graves on hammered dulcimer, Dennis Baumgardner on fiddle, Coley Graves on guitar, and Phil Sparks on old-time banjo, took third in the old-time band contest.

The major Notsba victory of the day came when our own Thomas Maupin, a Notsba member, was awarded the Robert Spicer Plaque for winning the buck dancing contest.

Once again, I encourage you all to attend the local contests. If we want folks to become involved in old-time music, we have to be out there, and we have to be seen. Besides, it's fun! □

**Something New in  
This Month's Newsletter:**

**Performance Group Info**

~Phil Sparks

If you will look back to the front page of this newsletter, in the box to the left, you will notice that under "Association Events," the fourth item down reads

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday

Performance Group Rehearsal

July 27, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Buchanan Log House

For some time now, we've been having those rehearsals, but I haven't done a good job of putting out the word. I'm trying to do better.

**What?**

The performance group is made up of Notsba members who play at various community events. Sometimes we earn a little money (always for Notsba, never for the individuals), and sometimes we play for free, for the fun of it, usually to return a favor or to win important friends.

**Who?**

To join the performance group, (1) you must be a member of our organization. As far as I know, this is the ONLY thing we do that is restricted to members. We also ask that (2) you know how to play your instrument fairly well. No, you do not have to be a hot picker, just generally competent. If we play a tune you can't handle, you can always sit that one out. (I do that often.) Finally, (3) we ask that you attend most of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday rehearsals. Participation in the performance group requires a commitment, but it is also an outstanding opportunity to improve your picking.

**How Many?**

Ordinarily, we can use as many people as are willing to show up for the rehearsals and performances. Our strong point is jamming, and with jams it's generally "the bigger the better."

If some event surfaces that requires only a couple of pickers, the president will probably ask around quietly until he finds a few good pickers who can attend that event. I don't know that we've had a situation like that yet.

If you enjoy performing and want a challenge that will make you a better picker faster, join us. We would love to have you.

New members, if you think you have to hang around for a while before you jump in with both feet, you are WRONG! Notsba belongs equally to us all, old *and* new members. Join us, we need you! □

**A Report from the Hillbilly Days Contest**

~Phil Sparks

On June 17 in Lafayette, Tennessee, at the 31st annual Hillbilly Days festival, Ashley Sullivan took second in the Junior Fiddle Contest while Wild Bill Jones took third. As we all know, Wild Bill is an excellent fiddler. Ashley had to do her absolute best to tie Bill in the first round and then do it again to edge him out of second in a fiddle-off. The big winner was the audience.

Phil Sparks took third in the Senior Fiddle Contest and won a country ham in a drawing. (Phil also won third in a recent contest in Ohio.)

It was a beautiful day. In addition to Phil, Jeff Cales, Mary Lou Durham, and Jim Hornsby came out, but we could have used more Notsba members to support Susie Coleman's favorite festival. □

**This Summer's Jams in Bowling Green**

~Christy Burns

With summer now well underway, we've had to compare calendars to see when there'd be a quorum for a Saturday jam at Bread and Bagels in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Here are the dates when there will definitely be jams: July 15 and July 22

Our apologies go to those of you who have shown up to find no other musicians around. Hopefully this clears things up, and we can all plan to be there together on the same days! As always, if you want to call first to confirm or get directions or anything, 270-799-3909 is my cell phone number, so even if we're out of town, we can give you the info.

See you there sometime this summer or out at a festival somewhere! □

### Yet Another Article on Jamming Etiquette

If you have read all the articles on jamming etiquette in this newsletter, you may qualify to become the Amy Vanderbilt of old-time music.

The following information is reprinted from page 31 of the June-July *Old-Time Harold*, which stole it from someone else.

#### The 10 Commandments of Jamming

- I Pay attention to what's going on. Sit so that you can see and hear the other musicians.
- II Keep the beat, do not rush, do not drag.
- III Keep your instrument in tune and play in tune.
- IV Play extra softly if someone is singing.
- V The musician who starts a tune is generally the one who decides when to end it. (Refer to Rule 1.)
- VI Be mindful of the banjo section; do not change keys more often than necessary.
- VII Do not practice licks on your instrument between tunes.
- IIIX Do not come to a jam session expecting to impress others with your virtuosity. Jam sessions are opportunities to share tunes and songs.
- IX Play some tunes that everybody knows.
- X It is never a sin to play too softly.

**The Golden Rule of Jamming: *If you don't know what you are doing, play softly.*** □

### A New Contest Category

~Phil Sparks

While browsing through the Charlotte Folk Society's *Folk Calendar*, I noticed that at least one fiddlers' contest has introduced a new performance category: Fiddle and Banjo Duets.

To my ear, nothing is finer than a good fiddler playing with a good banjo picker. If only Clifftop and Mt Airy would add this category! □

### An Excellent New Web Site

~Patsy Weiler

Here's a new Web site for Appalachian culture, especially music. Go to <http://www.aca-dla.org/index.php>. □

### In the Good Ol' Summertime: String Band Sessions

~Betty Westmoreland

Come and jam with us at the Singleton Community Center in Bartlett, Tennessee, a small town on the eastern edge of Memphis.

We will gather Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 to 8:30 PM and again on Wednesday, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

For more information, call Lee Cagle at 901-372-0510 or go to [www.leecagledulcimers.com](http://www.leecagledulcimers.com). □

### CD Review:

*Ain't Dead Yet*

By the Delmer Holland and  
The Blue Creek Ramblers

~Phil Sparks

One of the last remaining old-time string bands has produced a second excellent CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*.

Little has changed since they produce their first CD in 2002. Delmer still fiddles, Leland Holland still plays guitar, and William Moore still plays the bass. The differences are that Dennis Baumgardner is now missing, and Notsba's own Rebekah, "the kid" Weiler is no longer a kid.

This CD has 12 cuts, 1. "I've Got No Honeybaby Now," 2. "Angeline the Baker," 3. "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad," 4. "Hop High Ladies," 5. "Just Because," 6. "Liza Jane," 7. "Lost Indian," 8. "I Don't Love Nobody," 9. "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree," 10. "Sally Ann," 11. "Sandy River Belle," and 12. "Girl I Left Behind Me."

Cuts 3, 5, and 9 are vocal numbers, sung by Delmer in his honest, clear old-time voice. The rest are instrumentals, most with Delmer's solid fiddle breaks and Rebekah's smooth banjo breaks.

Cut 11, "Sandy River Belle," features Rebekah on the banjo and no fiddling. Rebekah's pleasing style flows melodically from beginning to end.

This CD is required listening for anyone who loves the old old-time string band music, and for anyone who takes pride in the accomplishments of our Rebekah, who along with Tyler Andal, another Notsba member, has a promising future as a professional musician. □

### **New Notsba Members**

We extend a warm welcome to four new members:

Martin Cerjan  
Casey Driscoll  
Ray Mathes  
Marynell Young

We thank you all for joining us and for supporting old-time music. We hope you will be active members and will participate in our jams, our performances, and our festival, Breakin' Up Winter. □

### **Directions to the Jams at Buchanan Log House**

From more or less the center of Nashville, take I-40 East. From I-40 East, take the Donelson Pike Exit (Exit 216C), and merge onto Donelson Pike. Go about 0.4 mile on Donelson Pike, and turn right onto Elm Hill Pike.

Go 0.5 mile on Elm Hill Pike to the Buchanan Log House, on the left at 2910 Elm Hill Pike. □

### **Direction to the Jams at Two Rivers Mansion**

*From the south or east of Nashville,* take I-40 East to Briley Parkway North.

Go about 3.6 miles on Briley Parkway and take the Two Rivers Parkway Exit. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Follow Two Rivers Parkway East for about 0.7 mile to McGavock Pike, and turn left (north).

Go about 0.4 mile on McGavock Pike, past McGavock High School, to Two Rivers Mansion at 3130 McGavock Pike. It's the second drive on the left past the high school. A large sign and two stone pillars mark the

entrance.

*From I-65 North,* take Briley Parkway East for 5 or 6 miles, and exit at Two Rivers Parkway. (The construction on Briley Parkway, has closed the Two Rivers Exit that serves eastbound traffic. You will have to go on to the next exit and come back with the westbound traffic.) Then follow the directions given above. □

### **Directions to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam**

June's 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam will be hosted by Lucy and Roger Stolen, who live in Gallatin.

To reach their home, from more or less the center of Nashville, take I-65 North to Vietnam Veterans Boulevard, and follow it to the end where it becomes Highway 31E (Nashville Pike). Follow 31E into Gallatin.

As you drive into Gallatin on 31E, you will see a large sign set in stone that says "Welcome to Gallatin." A short distance later, you will see another sign that says "Fairvue Plantation, ¼ Mile." Go the ¼ mile and turn right into the Fairvue Plantation development.

(If you pass the entrance to Fairvue, you will come to Vol State Junior College. Turn around and go back.)

When you turn into the Fairview development, you will be on Plantation Boulevard. Follow that road past the mansion, over a small bridge, and past the clubhouse.

Turn left on Isaac Franklin Drive, the second road on the left past the clubhouse. It ends in a loop. Lucy and Roger live at the end of the loop, on the lake, in a light-colored two-story brick home. The number is on the mailbox, 1042.

If you lose your way, call them at 615-452-2117.

Lucy and Roger don't have many extra chairs, so bring a folding chair or two if you can. See you all there! □

## **EVENTS**

### **TENNESSEE**

#### **Uncle Dave Macon Days**

Held in Murfreesboro, Friday through Sunday, July 7-9. This festival is extremely popular with Notsba members. You will find

us in a clearing off to the right of the stage (as you are facing the stage). For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 5, or call 800-716-7560. □

### **Bluegrass Along the Harpeth Fiddlers Jamboree**

Held in Franklin, Friday and Saturday, July 28-29, around the Williamson County Courthouse in the center of town. The contests will all be held on Saturday, starting at 10 AM. For more information, call Tommy Jackson at 615-790-8616, or go to [www.fiddlersjamboree.com](http://www.fiddlersjamboree.com). □

### **Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions**

Held in Adams, August 11 and 12, at the old Bell School grounds. For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 2, or call Marlin Rood at 615-384-6255. □

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

### **Appalachian String Band Music Festival**

Commonly known as “Clifftop” (the name of the nearest community), this festival is probably the premiere old-time music event in America. It is held at Camp Washington-Carver, a state park, from August 2 through August 6. Many campers will arrive as early as Saturday, July 29, to claim the best campsites and start the picking early.

For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 3, or call Pat Cowdery at (304) 558-0220, extension 130 or go to “Festivals & Contests” at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org). □

## **KENTUCKY**

### **Kentucky State Championship Old-Time Fiddler’s Contest**

Held at Rough River Dam State Park, near Leitchfield, Friday and Saturday, July 21-22. If you want to camp, you must reserve a spot by going to [www.kystateparks.ky.gov](http://www.kystateparks.ky.gov). For more information, go to [www.kentuckyfiddler.com](http://www.kentuckyfiddler.com). □

### **Hosts for 2006 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams**

We now have hosts for all of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday

Jams to be held in 2006. Darlyne will soon be after us to sign up for 2007. □

### **A Penny Learned**

Peghed and Planetary have come out with “Perfection Pegs,” fiddle tuning pegs that look just like the standard ebony pegs only they are made of some synthetic material and are geared.

Ron Alt has them on at least one of his fiddles, and he loves them. I have purchased a set but have not yet installed them. Hopefully, I will have them installed soon and will be able to write an article on them for our next newsletter.

From what I gather, classical violinists won’t touch them for fear of damaging their expensive instruments, but for fiddlers, who generally use cheaper instruments and who cross-tune frequently, these new tuners may be something of a breakthrough. □

### **Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!**

If you have information you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the newsletter, contact Phil Sparks.

If you are willing to review a CD or a book, contact Phil Sparks. If you don’t contact him, he will contact you!

If you have a tidbit on picking, learning tunes, caring for instruments, etc, please submit it for the “A Penny Learned” article. □

### **General Contact Information for the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association:**

E-mails for All Members  
[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

Jim Hornsby, President  
[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)  
615-650-2328

Ed Gregory, Web Master  
615-889-5566  
[edgregory@comcast.net](mailto:edgregory@comcast.net)

### **HELP!!!!**

If you hear about an upcoming old-time music event, don’t assume that we already know about it. If it’s not posted on our Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), we need the

information desperately. *Please help us keep our old-time community informed.*

You can reach Phil Sparks, the editor of this newsletter at:

[kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com)

or

615-797-4356

or

2020 Claylick Road

White Bluff, TN 37187

*The submission deadline for August's newsletter is Monday, July 24.* This deadline is earlier than usual because Kitty and I are leaving for Clifftop the following Friday. □

jams, bringing home her share of dings and scratches.

Without doubt, she's a singer's guitar and has been played frequently, boldly, and lovingly. Her voice is smooth and rich, and she plays like a dream all the way up the neck. She gained volume from being played, and her lovely sustain supports the female voice particularly well in a solo environment. She's won many singing contests for me over the years.

I bought this baby new at the Rock Block in 1995 for \$2000. A new 810 now runs over \$3000 with Indian rosewood. Brazilian rosewood could cost an additional grand, if they can get it. The difference in the quality of the sound between the Brazilian and Indian rosewoods is significant.

It comes with its original case (deep fuchsia interior), which has some wear.

If you are interested in learning more about this guitar, please e-mail me, Susie Coleman, at [susieco@comcast.net](mailto:susieco@comcast.net) or call me at 615-662-5577 (Pegram, Tennessee). □

#### WANTED, AN OLD BANJO CASE

to go with my old banjo. If you think you might have what I need, please call me, Phil Sparks at 615-797-4356 or e-mail me at [kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com) so we can discuss the details. □

## Classified Ads

### STRING BAND MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

Notsba members are willing to perform for the public for a small fee. All of our earnings go to the organization, none to the pickers. If you know of someone who might make use of our services, contact Don Kent at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org), or call him at 615-868-9951. □

### FINE GUITAR FOR SALE

1995 Taylor 810 BR, Brazilian Rosewood, Original owner must sell, \$2250.

This guitar is not in collector's condition, but she's certainly worthy of a collector's attention. She has not spent her life in a case. She's played countless festivals and all-night



A Publication of Your  
Nashville Old-Time  
String Band Association  
\*\*\*\*\*

ASSOCIATION  
EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 6  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 13  
Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Jam  
July 20  
Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers Mansion  
♫

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday  
Performance Group  
Rehearsal  
July 27  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House  
♫

4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam  
July 23  
2 to 5 PM  
Hosted by  
Lucy and Roger  
Stolen

# The Old-Time Times

JULY 2006

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## A Message from Our New President

~Jim Hornsby

There was a recent suggestion that the president write a monthly column to keep everyone posted as to Notsba's progress and plans. I think that is a good idea, and I would like to give it a try. I will be writing about a variety of things, and if you have any questions about the association or suggestions as to topics, please let me know. These articles will appear in our newsletter under the title, "The President's Corner."

My first thought is what a great job Don Kent has done as president this past year. He and Darlyne have worked hard to help Notsba grow and prosper. The association has made great strides, and I know you will join with me in offering our sincere thanks for all they have done.

Taking Don's place will not be an easy task, and I am grateful to be working alongside so many talented, dedicated people. Sitting with me on the Board of Directors are Pat Gill, Mary Lou Durham, Trish Cannon, Lilly Hsu, Phil Sparks, Ed Gregory, Don Kent, Martin Fisher, and Ron Whitlow. Darlyne is recording secretary for the board, and Lilly is secretary/treasurer.

I couldn't begin to set out all the things these folks have done for the association over the years, but you know them as friends and fellow musicians, so you are already aware of how generously they have given their time and energies. It is a great pleasure to work, and play, with them.

I am also grateful that all of you are supporting the association. Membership is consistently growing, more new players are joining in the fun, we have two great places for our Thursday night jams, our service projects and appearances have improved community awareness and appreciation for old-time music, and our performance opportunities have increased dramatically. Things are going great, and on behalf of the board, I want to tell you how much we appreciate your help in making it happen.

The board, by majority vote, guides the association's activities. Board members will change by rotation in accordance with our charter and by-laws, and there is ample opportunity for those who want to take a turn in leadership. We encourage your participation.

The association is in a formative stage, and we are trying new things to see what works. We want it to be fun and productive for members and for the community as a whole, and we welcome your thoughts and ideas for making it better. Our recently acquired nonprofit status will give us greater flexibility to expand and improve our activities and community service, and it will allow the association to endure for future generations of old-time pickers. □

**Editor's Note:** For the information of our new members, Jim, last year's vice president, automatically becomes this year's president. We have not yet elected a new vice president (to become next year's president). If you would be willing to serve, please notify someone on the board. □

### **Notsba Performs at the Zoo**

~Mary Lou Durham

The Nashville Zoo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Members' Evening for this season was held on Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of June. Ron Whitlow, Mike Baugh, Jeff Cales, Eddy Hudson, Julie Mavity-Hudson, Rick Fretter, Don Masters, Martin Fisher, Ed Gregory, Drew Fedak, and Mary Lou Durham convened on behalf of Notsba to play tunes and sing songs for the families attending this invitation-only event.

The zoo placed our jam/performance outside on the lawn across the walkway from the shore of the pond behind the Croft Building. We played two sets with a break in between for hotdogs (provided by the zoo) and socializing.

Though we worked mainly from the set list developed over the past year, we also brought in some singing that drew a crowd to stand and listen. The format was what we do best, making ambient music to entertain folks in between, or on their way to, other destinations, with no seats for people to settle

into to have performance expectations of us. Some people did linger, sitting on the grass around us, to listen through several tunes and songs, clapping and occasionally singing along. Of course, we were delighted by their interest and appreciation.

We played some tunes and songs that are enough in the popular culture that folks probably had vague remembrances of them from elementary school: "Golden Slippers," "Chinese Breakdown," "Rock the Cradle Lucy," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Arkansas Traveler," "Shove That Pig's Foot a Little Closer in the Fire." Naturally, we were asked to do "Rocky Top."

The day was typical "summer in Middle Tennessee," but we played under canopies and late enough in the afternoon that the sun was at a slightly more gentle angle, and there were no heat-related casualties amongst us. The time passed quickly with some of us barely getting warmed up to play.

Notsba was given an honorarium for our contribution to Zoo Members' Day, and a fine time was had by all. □

### **A New Emphasis on "Old-Time" at the Festival in Adams**

To all Notsba members,

I would like to invite each of you to come out and participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions in Adams, Tennessee, on August 11 and 12. It will be held at the old Adams Bell (as in Bell Witch) School House property. There is ample shade, concessions on hand, and lots of shade tree picking.

The mayor of Adams contacted me a couple of months ago and asked me if I would take this festival over. It was very short notice, and I felt that the festival was too close at hand to make dramatic changes. However, I did ask them to rename the festival "Old-Time" & Bluegrass.

I'm not too sure they understand my reasoning, but they will. My intention is to work this festival (radically) towards the "old-time," and begin to play down its Bluegrass aspect. It will take me a little time. However, it will be much easier if I can get good

participation from the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association.

Please come. Make yourself at home. You can camp. There is plenty of primitive camping and a limited number of camp sites with electricity, plus there are motels close by and a camp ground (on the Red River) with RV hook-ups less than a mile away. There will be vendors with instruments, CD's, T-shirts, etc.

I will have a suggestion box set out just for you. Please come and make suggestions as to how we can make one of Tennessee's longest running bluegrass festivals into the world's best old-time string band music festival.

Thanks,

Marlin Rood

Springfield Guitar Company

614 Main Street

Springfield, TN 37172

(615) 384-6255

[milo62@earthlink.net](mailto:milo62@earthlink.net). □

### **Pegramites Open for *A Prairie Home Companion***

~Phil Sparks

On Wednesday evening, June 7, Susie Coleman (guitar and vocals), Alan O'Bryant (mandolin), Kirk Pickering (mandolin and fiddle), and Tim Roberts (tenor guitar), billed as the Pegramites, were granted the immense honor of opening for Garrison Keillor and his film version of *A Prairie Home Companion* at the Belcourt Theater.

It was a private screening involving only the jettyest of Nashville's jet set, so Kitty and I put on our best blue jeans, rubbed some Essence of Wisconsin Dairy Air behind our ears, and arrived early.

The Pegramites had just begun playing when we appeared and took third-row-center seats. They chose several old-time standards, the stuff that would have made Garrison proud, and they did an excellent job of it. In addition, golden-throated Susie sang a couple of beautiful folk songs.

The movie itself was excellent. It reminded me of a Broadway musical in that the plot was weak, little more than an excuse to move from tune to tune. Several of my favorite actors

found employment there, Meryl Streep, Lilly Tomlin, Woody Harrelson, Maya Rudolph, and Tommy Lee Jones. Above all, Garrison Keillor was Garrison Keillor, and the music just kept coming. □

### **It's Clifftop Time Again**

~Phil Sparks

Once again, it's almost time for the annual trek to Clifftop, West Virginia, for 17<sup>th</sup> annual Appalachian String Band Music Festival.

Most of us who have been around old-time music for a few years already know it as the foremost old-time event of the year. Thousands of people from the US, Canada, and even Europe converge on Camp Washington-Carver, a West Virginia state park, to camp, jam, dance, shop, attend workshops, compete, make new friends, and soak up an incredible amount of beautiful music.

The official dates this year are Wednesday, August 2, through Sunday, August 6, but lots of people will be there by Saturday, July 29, or even earlier. If you want a nice camping spot, you should probably be there no later than Wednesday, August 2.

The event is called "Clifftop" because that's the name of the nearest small town, and the actual name is just too long for comfort. The grounds offer plentiful camping space (but limited RV hookups), a cafeteria, showers (usually cold), port-a-johns, some conventional restrooms (when they work), a first-rate commercial row, a large hall for dancing and for special performances, and a large outdoor stage for the competitions.

If you are looking for something comparable to Club Med, Clifftop ain't the place. If it's great old-time music you crave, you can't beat it.

For more information on Clifftop, talk to any of the Notsba members who have been there or go to [www.wvculture.org/stringband/](http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/) or call 304-558-0220.

If you don't mind a little rough camping, I'll see you there. The park may not be as well managed as it could be, but the people who attend this festival and the music they make

go together to create a little world that is almost heaven. □

### **Rebekah Weiler Takes Third at Fiddlers' Grove**

On May 27, at the Ole-Time Fiddler's and Bluegrass Festival in Union Grove, North Carolina, Rebekah Weiler took third place in the Senior old-time banjo contest.

Friends, this is no small feat. The competitions at Fiddlers' Grove are reputed to be among the most demanding in the nation.

Congratulations to Rebekah! □

### **Collierville Historic Town Square Jam**

~Betty Westmoreland

The Collierville Jam is held every Friday. It's free. Bring chairs or a blanket to spread out. Bring supper or a sack. It starts around 6:30 and goes till they get tired...usually around 10:30, but it has been as late as 1 AM, when the sprinkler timers started kicking on to water our beautifully groomed town square.

That's no bull...it was lovely! The pickers grabbed up their instruments and cases and moved to an area that wasn't being watered, and they did what pickers do...they kept right on picking. Hey! When you've got a groove, you can't turn it loose! Eventually, the timers changed the sprinkling to a new spot, and the musicians had to scramble again, finally giving up as the town clock struck 2 AM. It was quite a night!

I dreamed all this up about seven years ago. When I drove through the square each Friday afternoon after work, it looked pretty empty at the gazebo and all around. My squeaky wheels began to turn, and I said, to absolutely no one but myself, 'We need some picking in there on Friday nights.'

I e-mailed the local pickers about my idea, and absolutely no one replied. I thought, 'OK, they're not interested. I tried,' and with that I just laid it aside. Finally, banjo player Joe Cupp called me and said, "Where are you?" I said, "Joe, I'm right here...whatcha talkin' about?" Joe said, "You e-mailed the crowd about coming up to the square on Friday nights, and some of us have been doing that.

Where are YOU?" I explained that when no one answered to say that they were interested, I figured they just weren't. I went on up the following Friday. It was great, and it's been building for seven years!

This past Friday night there were four rather large jammin' groups with their supporters sitting in lawn chairs near each group. It just builds and builds through the summer. I told a reporter that it is like Christmas every Friday night, because you never know what you're going to get. We've managed to appear on the Town of Collierville Web site, and somebody from Crye-Leike Realtors was taking pictures for a sales brochure last week—to advertise some of the good things about life in Collierville.

As Martha Stewart would say, "It's a GOOD thing!"

Join us anytime. Take I-40 toward Memphis. Get off at exit 25, and head south toward Collierville. We're smack in the heart of downtown Collierville, which is loaded with charming stores, restaurants, and nostalgia...and music! Marilyn and Coley Graves are here frequently, as is Dennis Baumgardner. Lee Cagle, the gal who heads up the Dulcimer Gathering, often comes and brings Nat J., her ten-year-old. He's also learning the dulcimer.

Join us whenever you can. The latchstring is always out! □

### **A Report from Mt Airy**

~Phil Sparks

For the third consecutive year, Kitty and I attended the Mt Airy Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddler's Convention. It's official dates were June 2 and 3, but we went early this year, arriving Monday, May 29.

Last year, we went only one day before the opening date, and were unable to find a good camping spot. This year, plenty of good spots were available as late as Saturday morning, June 3. We will not go that early next year.

By the way, it's worth mentioning at this point that all of the festivals and contests we have attended this year have been less well attended than they were last year. I've talked to several other people who agree that this

trend seems to be widespread. Perhaps it's due to the price of gas, but for whatever reason, we may have to expect a smaller crowd at Breakin' Up Winter next March.

As always at Mt Airy, we saw multiple old friends, did some good jamming (especially at Woody McKenzie's camp), and generally enjoyed the quaint little town of Mt Airy.

For me, the event had four high points:

1. Joyce Cauthen showed me how to attach a tuner to my banjo, which allows me to keep a close eye on its tuning. (What a simple but useful idea for bringing that stubborn instrument under control!)
2. A guy from Columbus, Ohio, named Mark O'Limpisky (sp?) showed me some hot new banjo licks. (It will be at least a year before I can reproduce them.)
3. Bob Hightower introduced me to a new kind of geared fiddle peg. (I hope to have an article about them in next month's newsletter.)
4. Rebekah Weiler taught me a beautiful new tune, "Sally in the Garden." (We hope to play it together in the contest at Uncle Dave's Days.)

Mt Airy was well worth the trip. Do yourself a favor and be there next year. □

### **Notsba Performs for the Buchanan Log House Board Meeting**

~Mary Lou Durham

We'd been invited to give a short performance for the June 11 Buchanan Log House board meeting, which marked the end of the term of their outgoing president, Sally Prather.

It was during her tenure that the people who care for the Buchanan Log House had agreed to let Notsba use their facility on a tentative basis for the coming year. Sally wanted to expose the board to our activity and let them see and hear how we fit into the mission of their historic building.

Mike Baugh, Martin Cerjan, and I played a short set and talked about the history of the banjo and Notsba's history, as well as the connection between old-time music and dance and how both are available to folks in this area. We answered questions and had

fellowship with board members after our short set.

The board expressed its appreciation for Notsba and what we bring to their wonderful log dwelling, as did we for its use by us. It was a sweet performance. □

### **A Blue Creek Ramblers Update**

~Patsy Weiler

Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers have a brand new Web site, [www.bluecreekramblers.com](http://www.bluecreekramblers.com).

They were a big success at Mountainfest in Gatlinburg. The sound team there called them "the party band" because they had people up dancing in the streets and hooting and hollering with the band.

Their new CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*, is being played on WDVX-FM 89.9 and can be heard on the internet at WDVX.com. WDVX is located in downtown Knoxville on the corner of Summit and Gay Streets and is a grass roots station that offers a mix of outstanding American music. □

### **Uncle Dave's Days Are upon Us**

~Wendy Bryant

Grab your banjos, and shine your dancin' shoes! The 29th Annual Uncle Dave Macon Days old-time music and dance festival is set to kick off July 7-9 in Cannonsburgh Village, located in historic Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Considered one of America's premier summer festivals, this family-oriented event annually gathers more than 40,000 people to Murfreesboro for a hearty helping of fun, Southern-style. It has been selected by the Atlanta-based Southeast Tourism Society as one of the top 20 events in the Southeast. Additionally, the American Bus Association designated it as one of the top 100 events in North America.

The festival was established to honor the memory of Uncle Dave Macon. Uncle Dave lived near Murfreesboro and is considered one of the first Grand Ole Opry superstars. A master banjo player and performer, he died in 1952 and was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1966.

Uncle Dave Macon Days is one of the few old-time music competitions in the country. A purse of more than \$6,100 is at stake during Friday and Saturday's highly charged music and dance competitions. In 1986, the United States House of Representatives proclaimed these competitions to be the National Championships in old-time banjo, old-time clogging and old-time buck dancing.

On Saturday, July 8, the coveted Heritage Award will be presented to Rhonda Vincent. The Heritage Award is a yearly honor presented to an individual dedicated to the preservation and advancement of old-time music and dance. Ms. Vincent will serve as the grand marshal of the Motorless Parade that travels down East Main Street in Murfreesboro on Saturday morning.

Other family-oriented events taking place throughout the festival include heritage activities for children, mouth-watering local concessions, a juried arts and crafts show, a historic photo exhibit, and a Sunday morning service with dinner on the grounds and a gospel sing.

The celebration takes place in Cannonsburgh, an authentic pioneer village. It is located at 312 South Front Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 30 minutes southeast of Nashville on I-24. The village is home to more than 20 restored log structures and will feature living history demonstrations during the weekend. Visit a working blacksmith, or join in with some old-fashioned shape-note singing in the little white church.

The fun starts at 5 PM on Friday, July 7, at 9 AM on Saturday, July 8, and at 10 AM on Sunday, July 9. There is no admission charge. Free and paid parking is available. For more information write: PO Box 5016, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-5016, or call: 1-800-716-7560. Please visit our Web site at: [www.uncledavemacondays.com](http://www.uncledavemacondays.com).

**Contests:** The *Contest Fiddle* competition will probably take place around 10 AM on Saturday. (It Requires a waltz and a breakdown.) The *Traditional Fiddle* competition will happen sometime Saturday afternoon. (No waltz is required, just two tunes.) The *Old-Time Banjo* preliminary takes

place Saturday afternoon, right after the Traditional Fiddle contest. The *Old-Time Band* contest comes right after some ceremonies scheduled for 5 PM. Later Saturday evening, *Old-Time Banjo* and *Old-Time Band* will have their "finals."

Keep in mind that all festivals find it almost impossible to stay on schedule.

**Directions:** From Nashville, take I-24 South to Exit 78B. At the end of the ramp, turn left. You will be on Old Fort Parkway/Highway 96. When you arrive at the intersection with Broad Street (Krystal's will be on the corner), turn right onto Broad Street. After you go through the light at Main Street, you will come to Front Street. Turn right onto Front Street. Cannonsburgh Village will be on your right. □

### A Report from the Dickson Fiddle Contest

~Phil Sparks

This year's fiddle contest at Dickson was another success, though attendance seemed to be down from last year—as has been the case at all of the festivals we've been to this year.

Here are the results as pertains to people you might know:

Phil Sparks took second in the 51-and-Over fiddle contest while his friend Lorraine Porter took third.

Phil Sparks took third in the old-time banjo contest.

The Madison County Ramblers, with Marilyn Graves on hammered dulcimer, Dennis Baumgardner on fiddle, Coley Graves on guitar, and Phil Sparks on old-time banjo, took third in the old-time band contest.

The major Notsba victory of the day came when our own Thomas Maupin, a Notsba member, was awarded the Robert Spicer Plaque for winning the buck dancing contest.

Once again, I encourage you all to attend the local contests. If we want folks to become involved in old-time music, we have to be out there, and we have to be seen. Besides, it's fun! □

**Something New in  
This Month's Newsletter:**

**Performance Group Info**

~Phil Sparks

If you will look back to the front page of this newsletter, in the box to the left, you will notice that under "Association Events," the fourth item down reads

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday

Performance Group Rehearsal

July 27, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Buchanan Log House

For some time now, we've been having those rehearsals, but I haven't done a good job of putting out the word. I'm trying to do better.

**What?**

The performance group is made up of Notsba members who play at various community events. Sometimes we earn a little money (always for Notsba, never for the individuals), and sometimes we play for free, for the fun of it, usually to return a favor or to win important friends.

**Who?**

To join the performance group, (1) you must be a member of our organization. As far as I know, this is the **ONLY** thing we do that is restricted to members. We also ask that (2) you know how to play your instrument fairly well. No, you do not have to be a hot picker, just generally competent. If we play a tune you can't handle, you can always sit that one out. (I do that often.) Finally, (3) we ask that you attend most of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday rehearsals. Participation in the performance group requires a commitment, but it is also an outstanding opportunity to improve your picking.

**How Many?**

Ordinarily, we can use as many people as are willing to show up for the rehearsals and performances. Our strong point is jamming, and with jams it's generally "the bigger the better."

If some event surfaces that requires only a couple of pickers, the president will probably ask around quietly until he finds a few good pickers who can attend that event. I don't know that we've had a situation like that yet.

If you enjoy performing and want a challenge that will make you a better picker faster, join us. We would love to have you.

New members, if you think you have to hang around for a while before you jump in with both feet, you are **WRONG!** Notsba belongs equally to us all, old **and** new members. Join us, we need you! □

**A Report from the Hillbilly Days Contest**

~Phil Sparks

On June 17 in Lafayette, Tennessee, at the 31st annual Hillbilly Days festival, Ashley Sullivan took second in the Junior Fiddle Contest while Wild Bill Jones took third. As we all know, Wild Bill is an excellent fiddler. Ashley had to do her absolute best to tie Bill in the first round and then do it again to edge him out of second in a fiddle-off. The big winner was the audience.

Phil Sparks took third in the Senior Fiddle Contest and won a country ham in a drawing. (Phil also won third in a recent contest in Ohio.)

It was a beautiful day. In addition to Phil, Jeff Cales, Mary Lou Durham, and Jim Hornsby came out, but we could have used more Notsba members to support Susie Coleman's favorite festival. □

**This Summer's Jams in Bowling Green**

~Christy Burns

With summer now well underway, we've had to compare calendars to see when there'd be a quorum for a Saturday jam at Bread and Bagels in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Here are the dates when there will definitely be jams: July 15 and July 22

Our apologies go to those of you who have shown up to find no other musicians around. Hopefully this clears things up, and we can all plan to be there together on the same days! As always, if you want to call first to confirm or get directions or anything, 270-799-3909 is my cell phone number, so even if we're out of town, we can give you the info.

See you there sometime this summer or out at a festival somewhere! □

### Yet Another Article on Jamming Etiquette

If you have read all the articles on jamming etiquette in this newsletter, you may qualify to become the Amy Vanderbilt of old-time music.

The following information is reprinted from page 31 of the June-July *Old-Time Harold*, which stole it from someone else.

#### The 10 Commandments of Jamming

- I Pay attention to what's going on. Sit so that you can see and hear the other musicians.
- II Keep the beat, do not rush, do not drag.
- III Keep your instrument in tune and play in tune.
- IV Play extra softly if someone is singing.
- V The musician who starts a tune is generally the one who decides when to end it. (Refer to Rule 1.)
- VI Be mindful of the banjo section; do not change keys more often than necessary.
- VII Do not practice licks on your instrument between tunes.
- IIIX Do not come to a jam session expecting to impress others with your virtuosity. Jam sessions are opportunities to share tunes and songs.
- IX Play some tunes that everybody knows.
- X It is never a sin to play too softly.

**The Golden Rule of Jamming: *If you don't know what you are doing, play softly.*** □

### A New Contest Category

~Phil Sparks

While browsing through the Charlotte Folk Society's *Folk Calendar*, I noticed that at least one fiddlers' contest has introduced a new performance category: Fiddle and Banjo Duets.

To my ear, nothing is finer than a good fiddler playing with a good banjo picker. If only Clifftop and Mt Airy would add this category! □

### An Excellent New Web Site

~Patsy Weiler

Here's an excellent Web site for Appalachian culture, especially music. Go to <http://www.aca-dla.org/index.php>.

For more great sites, visit the links section of our Website at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org) □

### In the Good Ol' Summertime: String Band Sessions

~Betty Westmoreland

Come and jam with us at the Singleton Community Center in Bartlett, Tennessee, a small town on the eastern edge of Memphis.

We will gather Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 to 8:30 PM and again on Wednesday, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

For more information, call Lee Cagle at 901-372-0510 or go to [www.leecagledulcimers.com](http://www.leecagledulcimers.com). □

### CD Review:

*Ain't Dead Yet*

### By the Delmer Holland and The Blue Creek Ramblers

~Phil Sparks

One of the last remaining old-time string bands has produced a second excellent CD, *Ain't Dead Yet*.

Little has changed since they produce their first CD in 2002. Delmer still fiddles, Leland Holland still plays guitar, and William Moore still plays the bass. The differences are that Dennis Baumgardner is now missing, and Notsba's own Rebekah, "the kid" Weiler is no longer a kid.

This CD has 12 cuts, 1. "I've Got No Honeybaby Now," 2. "Angeline the Baker," 3. "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad," 4. "Hop High Ladies," 5. "Just Because," 6. "Liza Jane," 7. "Lost Indian," 8. "I Don't Love Nobody," 9. "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree," 10. "Sally Ann," 11. "Sandy River Belle," and 12. "Girl I Left Behind Me."

Cuts 3, 5, and 9 are vocal numbers, sung by Delmer in his honest, clear old-time voice. The rest are instrumentals, most with Delmer's solid fiddle breaks and Rebekah's smooth banjo breaks.

Cut 11, "Sandy River Belle," features Rebekah on the banjo and no fiddling.

Rebekah's pleasing style flows melodically from beginning to end.

This CD is required listening for anyone who loves the old old-time string band music, and for anyone who takes pride in the accomplishments of our Rebekah, who along with Tyler Andal, another Notsba member, has a promising future as a professional musician. □

### **New Notsba Members**

We extend a warm welcome to four new members:

Martin Cerjan  
Casey Driscoll  
Ray Mathes  
Marynell Young

We thank you all for joining us and for supporting old-time music. We hope you will be active members and will participate in our jams, our performances, and our festival, Breakin' Up Winter. □

### **Directions to the Jams at Buchanan Log House**

From more or less the center of Nashville, take I-40 East. From I-40 East, take the Donelson Pike Exit (Exit 216C), and merge onto Donelson Pike. Go about 0.4 mile on Donelson Pike, and turn right onto Elm Hill Pike.

Go 0.5 mile on Elm Hill Pike to the Buchanan Log House, on the left at 2910 Elm Hill Pike. □

### **Direction to the Jams at Two Rivers Mansion**

*From the south or east of Nashville,* take I-40 East to Briley Parkway North.

Go about 3.6 miles on Briley Parkway and take the Two Rivers Parkway Exit. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Follow Two Rivers Parkway East for about 0.7 mile to McGavock Pike, and turn left (north).

Go about 0.4 mile on McGavock Pike, past McGavock High School, to Two Rivers Mansion at 3130 McGavock Pike. It's the

second drive on the left past the high school. A large sign and two stone pillars mark the entrance.

*From I-65 North,* take Briley Parkway East for 5 or 6 miles, and exit at Two Rivers Parkway. (The construction on Briley Parkway, has closed the Two Rivers Exit that serves eastbound traffic. You will have to go on to the next exit and come back with the westbound traffic.) Then follow the directions given above. □

### **Directions to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam**

June's 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam will be hosted by Lucy and Roger Stolen, who live in Gallatin.

To reach their home, from more or less the center of Nashville, take I-65 North to Vietnam Veterans Boulevard, and follow it to the end where it becomes Highway 31E (Nashville Pike). Follow 31E into Gallatin.

As you drive into Gallatin on 31E, you will see a large sign set in stone that says "Welcome to Gallatin." A short distance later, you will see another sign that says "Fairvue Plantation, 1/4 Mile." Go the 1/4 mile and turn right into the Fairvue Plantation development.

(If you pass the entrance to Fairvue, you will come to Vol State Junior College. Turn around and go back.)

When you turn into the Fairview development, you will be on Plantation Boulevard. Follow that road past the mansion, over a small bridge, and past the clubhouse.

Turn left on Isaac Franklin Drive, the second road on the left past the clubhouse. It ends in a loop. Lucy and Roger live at the end of the loop, on the lake, in a light-colored two-story brick home. The number is on the mailbox, 1042.

If you lose your way, call them at 615-452-2117.

Lucy and Roger don't have many extra chairs, so bring a folding chair or two if you can. See you all there! □

## **EVENTS**

### **TENNESSEE**

#### **Uncle Dave Macon Days**

Held in Murfreesboro, Friday through

Sunday, July 7-9. This festival is extremely popular with Notsba members. You will find us in a clearing off to the right of the stage (as you are facing the stage). For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 5, or call 800-716-7560. □

### **Bluegrass Along the Harpeth Fiddlers Jamboree**

Held in Franklin, Friday and Saturday, July 28-29, around the Williamson County Courthouse in the center of town. The contests will all be held on Saturday, starting at 10 AM. For more information, call Tommy Jackson at 615-790-8616, or go to [www.fiddlersjamboree.com](http://www.fiddlersjamboree.com). □

### **Bell Witch Old-Time and Bluegrass Competitions**

Held in Adams, August 11 and 12, at the old Bell School grounds. For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 2, or call Marlin Rood at 615-384-6255. □

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

### **Appalachian String Band Music Festival**

Commonly known as “Clifftop” (the name of the nearest community), this festival is probably the premiere old-time music event in America. It is held at Camp Washington-Carver, a state park, from August 2 through August 6. Many campers will arrive as early as Saturday, July 29, to claim the best campsites and start the picking early.

For more information, read the article in this newsletter, page 3, or call Pat Cowdery at (304) 558-0220, extension 130 or go to “Festivals & Contests” at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org). □

## **KENTUCKY**

### **Kentucky State Championship Old-Time Fiddler’s Contest**

Held at Rough River Dam State Park, near Leitchfield, Friday and Saturday, July 21-22. If you want to camp, you must reserve a spot by going to [www.kystateparks.ky.gov](http://www.kystateparks.ky.gov). For more information, go to [www.kentuckyfiddler.com](http://www.kentuckyfiddler.com). □

### **Hosts for 2006 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams**

We now have hosts for all of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams to be held in 2006. Darlyne will soon be after us to sign up for 2007. □

### **A Penny Learned**

Peghed and Planetary have come out with “Perfection Pegs,” fiddle tuning pegs that look just like the standard ebony pegs only they are made of some synthetic material and are geared.

Ron Alt has them on at least one of his fiddles, and he loves them. I have purchased a set but have not yet installed them. Hopefully, I will have them installed soon and will be able to write an article on them for our next newsletter.

From what I gather, classical violinists won’t touch them for fear of damaging their expensive instruments, but for fiddlers, who generally use cheaper instruments and who cross-tune frequently, these new tuners may be something of a breakthrough. □

### **Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!**

If you have information you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the newsletter, contact Phil Sparks.

If you are willing to review a CD or a book, contact Phil Sparks. If you don’t contact him, he will contact you!

If you have a tidbit on picking, learning tunes, caring for instruments, etc, please submit it for the “A Penny Learned” article. □

### **General Contact Information for the Nashville Old-Time String Band Association:**

E-mails for All Members

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

Jim Hornsby, President

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

615-650-2328

Ed Gregory, Web Master

615-889-5566

[edgregory@comcast.net](mailto:edgregory@comcast.net)

### **HELP!!!**

If you hear about an upcoming old-time music event, don’t assume that we already

know about it. If it's not posted on our Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), we need the information desperately. ***Please help us keep our old-time community informed.***

You can reach Phil Sparks, the editor of this newsletter at:

[kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com)

or

615-797-4356

or

2020 Claylick Road

White Bluff, TN 37187

***The submission deadline for August's newsletter is Monday, July 24.*** This deadline is earlier than usual because Kitty and I are leaving for Clifftop the following Friday. □

She's played countless festivals and all-night jams, bringing home her share of dings and scratches.

Without doubt, she's a singer's guitar and has been played frequently, boldly, and lovingly. Her voice is smooth and rich, and she plays like a dream all the way up the neck. She gained volume from being played, and her lovely sustain supports the female voice particularly well in a solo environment. She's won many singing contests for me over the years.

I bought this baby new at the Rock Block in 1995 for \$2000. A new 810 now runs over \$3000 with Indian rosewood. Brazilian rosewood could cost an additional grand, if they can get it. The difference in the quality of the sound between the Brazilian and Indian rosewoods is significant.

It comes with its original case (deep fuchsia interior), which has some wear.

If you are interested in learning more about this guitar, please e-mail me, Susie Coleman, at [susieco@comcast.net](mailto:susieco@comcast.net) or call me at 615-662-5577 (Pegram, Tennessee). □

#### WANTED, AN OLD BANJO CASE

to go with my old banjo. If you think you might have what I need, please call me, Phil Sparks at 615-797-4356 or e-mail me at [kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com) so we can discuss the details. □

## Classified Ads

### STRING BAND MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

Notsba members are willing to perform for the public for a small fee. All of our earnings go to the organization, none to the pickers. If you know of someone who might make use of our services, contact Don Kent at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org), or call him at 615-868-9951. □

### FINE GUITAR FOR SALE

1995 Taylor 810 BR, Brazilian Rosewood, Original owner must sell, \$2250.

This guitar is not in collector's condition, but she's certainly worthy of a collector's attention. She has not spent her life in a case.