

# **NASHVILLE OLD-TIME STRING BAND ASSOCIATION**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q. How do I become a member?**

A. Fill out the membership application form (available on our Web site at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)) and mail it to the NOTSBA address with a check or money order for \$10 for individual or \$15 for family membership. You will receive a discount if you choose to join for 2 years; that would be \$18 for an individual or \$25 for the family.

**Q. What if I'm joining in the middle of the year, is the membership fee prorated?**

A. The membership fee covers 12 months, which begins the day your membership fee and application are received.

**Q. What are some of the advantages to being a NOTSBA member?**

A. You will gain access to current and future special membership features of the NOTSBA Web site. That includes access to recordings of tunes NOTSBA plays for educational purposes. These are helpful for practice and for expanding your repertoire.

You are eligible to participate in all NOTSBA functions.

You can become eligible to play in NOTSBA performances by becoming a member of the NOTSBA Performance Group (requires rehearsals).

You will have the opportunity to meet and network with other musicians and people with a love for and interest in old-time music and you will be helping to preserve and promote old-time string band music.

**Q. Do you play other types of music—Bluegrass, Celtic, etc?**

A. Many Bluegrass songs have their roots in old-time music, and many Celtic tunes have evolved into old-time tunes, so there is inevitably some sharing and crossover. The focus in NOTSBA is, however, on old-time string band tunes, a separate genre from Celtic or Bluegrass, played in ensemble format.

**Q. Do you sing songs as well as play tunes?**

A. We may occasionally sing a song or two, but most of our old-time music is played instrumentally in string band format.

**Q. Do I have to be a musician to belong?**

A. No. We are a group of primarily recreational musicians dedicated to playing and preserving old-time music. This includes helping beginning and intermediate players learn new tunes. We give players at all levels an opportunity to play with others, to increase their skills, and to develop their repertoire.

**Q. When are the jams, and where are they held?**

A. On the first Thursday and the third Thursday of the month, we hold an educational jam that starts with a “slow” jam, used to teach tunes by playing them slowly and repeating them phrase by phrase. These educational jams conclude with a traditional old-time jam.

The second Thursday of the month, there is a regular jam where some of the tunes from the previous Thursday as well as other tunes are played at regular speed.

The first- and third-Thursday jams are currently held at Two Rivers Mansion located at 3130 McGavock Pike (near McGavock High School and the Opry Mills complex). The second Thursday regular jam is held at Buchanan Log House, located at 2910 Elm Hill Pike in Donelson.

**Q. How do the jams work?**

A. The jams begin at 6:30 pm and end at 8:30 pm. The participants form a circle and take turns selecting tunes to be played by the group. The person who selected the tune being played indicates, usually by raising a foot, when the tune will stop; typically, a tune will be played through 4 or 5 times. Depending on the number of people in the group, each person might have the opportunity to select 2 or 3 tunes to play. We have a list of the tunes we play that can be used for reference. There is an informal “jam etiquette” that is followed, and newcomers are encouraged and offered help and support, particularly at the first- and third-Thursday jams.

**Q. What is the definition of a "family membership"?**

A. “Parents and those children who live at home or attend college.” Grandparents and grandchildren can be included if they live in the same home as the person purchasing the membership.

**Q. Do all members vote?**

A. The supporting memberships do not carry any direct voting privileges. Members of the Board of Directors vote. Membership and active volunteer service are requirements for membership on the Board of Directors.

**Q. Is my membership and participation tax-deductible.**

A. The IRS recognizes NOTSBA as a tax-exempt charitable education organization under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, but membership fees are not generally considered charitable donations when a person receives membership benefits in return. Whether any donation to a 501(c) (3) organization is tax-deductible is specific to each donor's tax situation, and NOTSBA cannot give any tax advice.

If you wish to make a contribution over and above the nominal membership fee, we are happy to accept and will provide a letter of acknowledgement that you can share with your tax preparer.