

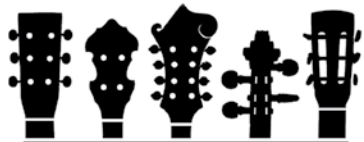
FIREBALL MAIL

Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc. Newsletter

July/August '09



Photo by Bruce Nichols



SOUTHERN WISCONSIN
BLUEGRASS
MUSIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Generation to Generation

Bluegrass legend Little Roy Lewis gives some pointers to a young banjo student at the recent Bean Blossom Festival.

FIREBALL MAIL

Volume 26 Issue 4

Fireball Mail is published bimonthly: January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Please send advertising inquiries, articles, calendar information, photos and letters to :

Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 7761

Madison, WI 53707-7761

Attn: Fireball Mail

E-mail: FireballMailEditor@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month preceding the month of publication.



SWBMAI is a member of IBMA (International Bluegrass Music Association) and the International Bluegrass Music Museum



Proud Supporter of WORT 89.9 FM

Every Tuesday

Pastures of Plenty,

9:00 am - noon with John Fabke

Every Wednesday

Back to the Country,

9:00 am - noon with Bill Malone

Every Friday

Mud Acres Bluegrass Special,

9:00 am - noon with Chris Powers

Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc.

The SWBMAI is a non-profit educational organization devoted to the preservation and promotion of bluegrass music, and supported by the volunteer efforts of its members.

The SWBMAI mission as stated in the by-laws:

- 1) To promote bluegrass music and musicians
- 2) To bring together persons of all ages who enjoy singing, playing and listening to bluegrass music
- 3) To hold regular bluegrass jam sessions
- 4) To publicize information about bluegrass concerts and festivals
- 5) To help younger persons obtain instruments and instruction in bluegrass music
- 6) To introduce bluegrass music to new listeners

SWBMAI Board of Directors

President; Marketing and Public Relations – Jean Knickelbine, jeanknick@gmail.com

Vice-President – Ellis Bauman, 608-257-2431, ellisabau@aol.com

Acting Secretary Rotation – Ellis Bauman, Jim Knobloch, James Brocksmith, Julie Cherney

Membership Chair – Sharon Manion, 608-424-3408, smdw@charter.net

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Attendant Board Members

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Julie Cherney, 608-260-2675, cherney@uwalumni.com

Jim Knobloch, knobhill@chorus.net

Catherine Rhyner, 608-835-8117, catherine.rhyner@gmail.com

Lane Venden, 608-442-0315, lane@laneslutherie.com

Webmaster (non-voting board member) – Scott Knickelbine, swbmai@gmail.com

Other Member Volunteers: John Fabke, Fay Ferington, Carolyn Hegeler, Mary Helmke, Dave Nance, Chris Powers, Arvid Berge, Mona Wasow, Bruce Nichols

Board Meetings

The board meets the first Wednesday of each month, at 6:00 pm in the Germania Parlor of the Hotel Ruby Marie, 524 E. Wilson St., Madison, WI. If you would like to attend, contact a board member to be sure of the date, time and location as they are subject to change.

Board Meeting Minutes

The Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc. board meeting minutes are available on line at www.swbmai.org/swbmai-board-minutes/. If you would like minutes mailed to you please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to SWBMAI, P.O. Box 7761, Madison, WI 53707.

Fireball Mail

Please let us know whether you want e-mail delivery or mail delivery of your newsletter. E-mail newsletters are in color and arrive sooner than the B&W mailed version. Please tell us when renewing your membership or e-mail Sharon Manion at smdw@charter.net.

MICHAEL BEST
& FRIEDRICH LLP

SWBMAI Tuesday Night Bluegrass Music Instruction at The Hotel Ruby Marie in Madison

2nd Tuesdays for Experienced Players

The instructor-led bluegrass jam class has a new home at the Hotel Ruby Marie! Located almost right next door to the Essen Haus in downtown Madison, the hotel is an historic building that first received its hotel license in 1873 and was primarily used as a railroad hotel. After switching ownership and names over the decades, the building has still retained its beautiful turn-of-the-century architecture, a feature that adds to the distinctiveness of the Hotel Ruby Marie.

The instructor-led bluegrass classes are held in the Germania Collectibles Shop on the first floor. Although you can see the Germania through the expansive windows on Wilson Street, the best way to enter is through the adjacent Up North Bar off of the spacious back parking lot. The staff will happily point the way.

Food is available for carry out at the Ruby Marie's sister businesses: The Essen Haus, the Come Back In and the Up North Bar. The Up North is a former railroad saloon

INSTRUCTOR LED BLUEGRASS JAM CLASS



Hosted by The Southern Wisconsin
Bluegrass Music Association Inc.
www.swbmaiorg

HOTEL RUBY MARIE • GERMANIA PARLOR
524 EAST WILSON ST. • MADISON
\$5 Instructor Donation Requested

Every Tuesday! Every Week! All Year Long!			
1 st Tuesdays	Beginners Jam	Jon Peik	7:30 pm
2 nd Tuesdays	Improving Players Jam	Chris Powers	7:00 pm
3 rd Tuesdays	Beginners Jam	David Nance	8:00 pm
4 th Tuesdays	Good Old Days Jam	Mary Helmke and Catherine Rhyner	7:00 pm
5 th Tuesdays	Beginners Jam	Ellis Bauman	7:00 pm

Beginners' Classes All Other Weeks

from decades long past. It offers pizza, herb and cheese stuffed bruschetta, free peanuts in the shell as well as free popcorn. They also run happy hour drink specials from 3:00 - 7:00 including \$3 pints and \$2.75 rails. After 7:00, there is a different \$2 liquor special each day as well as a \$3 beer special.

The Come Back In has a mostly American menu including soup, salad, sandwiches, pasta, fish, seafood and steak. Or you can order a taste of Germany from the famous Essen Haus which was chosen by the Food Network as one of the best bars in the nation. The bustling beer

hall offers everything from weinersnetzel to strudel. Both restaurants' menus can be found at: www.essen-haus.com/menus.htm.

The search for a location to hold the classes was a difficult one largely due to the fact SWBMAI was looking for meeting space that was free of charge. Please patronize our host's businesses by at least buying a soda on class night in thanks for their generosity in letting us use their space.

www.chordie.com

If you're looking for the lyrics and chords to a bluegrass, country or folk tune, you should start your search on Chordie. It includes lyrics, chord charts and tabs for nearly a quarter million songs, including most of the bluegrass standards. But the site doesn't stop there; it allows you to manipulate and collect songs to meet your needs, so you can generate a custom song-book with all your favorites.

- Songs are searchable by title and composer.
- You can quickly transpose a song to any key .
- Chordie will show you chords for most bluegrass instruments, including, guitar, banjo, mandolin, and even ukulele.
- Collect your songs into any number of custom, printable song books.
- Songs print with graphical chord grids and tunings.
- Browse your songs from your smart phone.
- Share songbooks with friends and family.

Thicker'n Fiddlers in Hell



Estate of Marc Chagall

Submitted by Wayne Erbsen ©2009

Throughout its long and spicy history, the fiddle has been both loved and loathed. In early frontier days fiddlers were held in the highest esteem, even above doctors, lawyers, and politicians. It was a lone fiddler who held sway at community dances, which were the most popular form of entertainment in early America. Without the fiddler, there simply was no dance. A pioneer community that could boast having a fiddler was the envy of all, and a skilled fiddler was always in demand to play for community gatherings, such as barn dances, log rollings, cornshuckings and bean stringings. Fiddle contests existed as early as 1736, when fiddlers in Hanover County, Virginia, competed against each other with the winner taking home a fine violin.

In a strange twist of fate, despite their high ranking in the community, fiddle players were often among the most despised members of society. Fire-and-brimstone preachers accused fiddlers of walking hand in hand with the devil himself. From many a Sunday morning pulpit, congregations were warned that "the devil rides

the fiddle bow" and that the fiddle was "the devil's stalking horse." Banished from the church, some distraught fiddlers were driven to burn their fiddles or bust them over a white oak stump.

Even in death, fiddlers were seldom allowed to enter either heaven or hell, but instead were sent to a place called Fiddlers Green. According to Ozark folklorist Vance Randolph, Fiddler's Green was to be found seven miles on the other side of Hell. Originally, it was reserved for fiddlers, but later they started letting in sailors, peddlers, tinkers, a few cowpokes and even a thin smattering of old soldiers.

They didn't call a fiddle "the devil's box" entirely for nuthin'. In some ways, fiddlers had only themselves to blame for their sullied reputation. Their penchant for strong drink while playing for rowdy dances certainly didn't help their standing in the community. Nor did their superstition of keeping a rattlesnake rattle inside their fiddle make them popular with the genteel set. Even worse, some fiddlers defied America's work ethic and "fiddled their time away." A casual look at some common and not so common expressions will show you that fiddlers have had a somewhat sullied reputation:

- The devil's riding horse (a fiddle).
- To fiddle (to trifle or to make mindless movements with the hands)
- Fiddle on a broomstick (nonsense).
- Fiddlededee (nonsense).
- Those who dance must pay the fiddler (suffer the consequence).
- Drunk as a fiddler's clerk (drunk).
- Drunk as a fiddler's bitch (even drunker).

Adding to the fiddlers' unsavory reputation is his long association with the devil. In *Popular Beliefs and Superstitions of North Carolina* we discover the best method of learning the fiddle.

"Before sunrise on five mornings, and take a fiddle and go into the country until you come to one of the main roads or to a crossroads. On the fifth morning you will meet a man also carrying a fiddle. He will teach you to play. He is the devil."

If you lived in Illinois and wanted to play the fiddle, here's what you would do:

Thicker'n Fiddlers in Hell (continued)

"If you want to learn to play the fiddle, go on a dark night at 12:00 o'clock to the forks of a road. Sit down with your fiddle over your shoulder just like you were going to play. While you are sitting there a big black snake will crawl by you with his head up in the air. Don't get scared. The snake will go up the road and turn around and a big man with a fiddle will come back down the road and stand by you and play three or four pieces on his fiddle. Then he will disappear and you can go home and play any piece on the fiddle you want. I knew a man in Missouri that did this and he was the best fiddler in the state."

The popular fiddle tune "Devil's Dream" was supposedly taught to a fiddler by the devil himself. We can only guess at the origin of such American fiddle tunes as "Devil in the Strawstack."

Throughout history, fiddlers not only cavorted with the devil, but also had numerous unpleasant encounters with the hangman. Folklorist Alan Lomax wrote that Wilkes County, NC native Tom Dula apparently played his fiddle while sitting on his coffin on the way to the gallows singing the ballad that was later called "Tom Dooley."

Going back in history we find many references to fiddlers who played their last tune just before the hangman cinched up the knot around their neck. In a 1965 article entitled "Fiddler's Farewell," folklorist D.K. Wilgus describes how numerous fiddlers played their last tune on the gallows. The first in a long line of hanged fiddlers was a Scottish gypsy named James McPherson who was executed November 16, 1700. Just before his execution he played a "rant" or dirge on his favorite violin and offered it to anyone in the crowd that would think well of him. Since there were no takers, McPherson then busted the fiddle and tossed it into the freshly dug grave that was waiting next to the gallows. Another tale says that the condemned man played the tune now known as "McPherson's Farewell" and then promised to give his fiddle to anyone who would play the tune at his funeral. When no one came forward, he dashed the fiddle over the hangman's head.

For many years I've been playing a tune called "Hangman's Reel," which I learned from the late fiddler Albert Hash, of Whitetop, Virginia. According to this legend, a fiddler was about to be hung. While waiting for his execution he could see workers constructing the gallows outside his jailhouse cell. Just then the prisoner noticed an old fiddle hanging on the jailhouse wall. He called the jailor over and claimed to be the best fiddler in those parts. After a heated argument, they made a wager. If the condemned man would get up on the gallows before his execution and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that he was the best fiddler, he would be set free. Otherwise, he would get the noose. The jailer gave the prisoner the fiddle to practice on and left him alone in his cell.

Unbeknownst to the jailer, the condemned man had never even touched a fiddle in his life, but he decided this was his best chance at freedom. You can bet he practiced that night. When morning came, the prisoner was escorted to the gallows where he expertly played the tune now known as "Hangman's Reel." Unfortunately, history forgot to record if he was set free or instead received the "suspended sentence" he so richly deserved. Nevertheless, it makes a darn good story!

Parts of this article are taken from the book Old-Time Fiddle for the Complete Ignoramus! by Wayne Erbsen. Available from Native Ground Books & Music, 109 Bell Road, Asheville, NC 28805, (828) 299-7031; www.nativeground.com email: banjo@nativeground.com



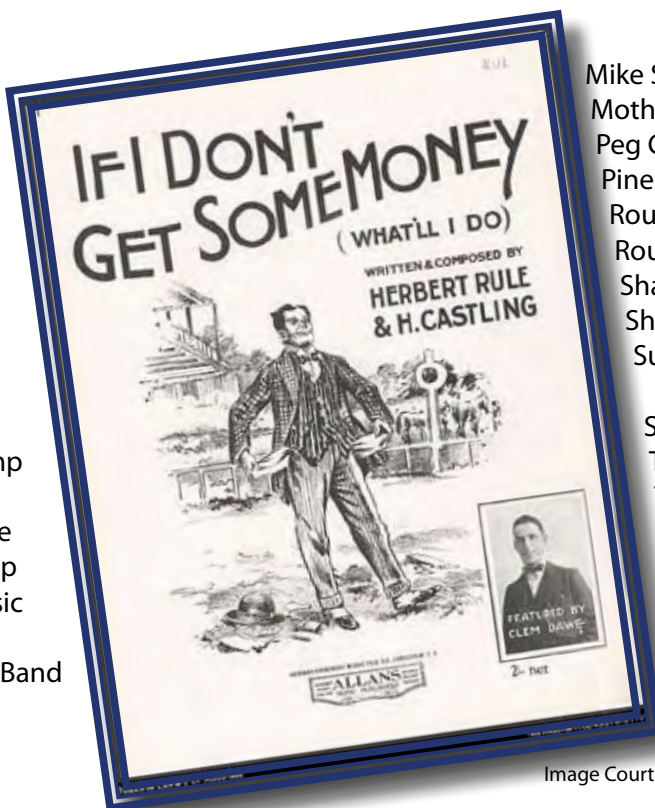
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SWBMAI Bluegrass Jamboree Annual Fundraiser Brings in \$1,983

Thanks for all who came out to the High Noon Saloon for our annual fundraiser and helped keep bluegrass alive in Wisconsin. The monies raised are a huge portion of our operating budget which you can find at www.swbmai.org/swbmai-board-minutes/. The crowd was almost exactly half made up of members and half made up of people who just wanted to come out for a day of great bluegrass music provided by some of our member bands: Wooden Bridges, Truman's Ridge, Round the Bend, Oak Street Ramblers, Liberty Bluegrass, and Jefferson County. The winner of the big advanced-ticket raffle for the \$650 scholarship to the Door County Bluegrass Camp was Jerald Ketchum of Pawpaw, Illinois. Congratulations Jerald — we're sure you'll have a great time at camp! In addition, two valuable hand-made wall hangings, donated by local artist Sharon Manion, were sold at a silent auction. Catherine Rhyner outbid all comers for the "Poppy" wall quilt, and Randy Wilson went home with the "Bird of Paradise" wall quilt. Thanks again to the local musicians, SWBMAI members and area businesses who donated all the fabulous raffle prizes:

Above the Town Bluegrass
Bill Evans & Megan Lynch
Bill Malone
Brooklyn Bluegrass Festival
Bruce Nichols
Cafe Zoma
Carolyn Hegeler
Chris Wagoner
Company of Thieves Coffee Shop
Cork & Bottle Liquor Store
Door County Bluegrass Camp
Escape Coffee House
Flatrock Bluegrass Jamboree
Food Fight Restaurant Group
International Bluegrass Music Museum
Jefferson County Bluegrass Band
Jim Roberts
Jon Peik
Junior's Banjo Farm
Liberty Bluegrass Band
Madison Music Co.
Madison Music Crossroads Coffeehouse



Mike Schmidt
Mother Fool's Coffee House
Peg Cullen
Pinycastle Records
Rounder Records
Rounder Records
Sharon Manion
Shauncey Ali
Sugar Maple Traditional Music Festival
Suzie Haas
Tex Tubb's Taco Palace
The High 48s
The Shoe Box
Truman's Ridge
Ward-Brodt Music
Wildwood Productions
Willy Street Co-op

Image Courtesy the National Library of Australia

SWBMAI Member Benefits Travel With You

Reach your destination a little cheaper! Rental car discounts available through our IBMA membership:



Avis Rentals: Avis Worldwide Discount Number T461500.
For reservations or information - Log-on to Avis.com or call Avis Reservations at:
1-800-331-1212.



Budget Rentals: Budget Discount number (BCD) Z863000.
For reservations or information - Log-on to Budget.com or call Budget Reservations at:
1-800-527-0700.

Mid-Continent Railway Museum

is proud to sponsor the third annual Gandy Dancer Festival celebrating Wisconsin's railway heritage with an event that features first class family entertainment. Maintaining this free, family-friendly event is also the museum's way of saying "thank you" to everyone who supported us following the devastating floods of June 2008. While we regret that economic conditions forced the cancellation of train rides at this year's festival, we are proud to offer a line-up of outstanding music and activities of interest to all ages.



GANDY DANCER FESTIVAL

RAILROAD DISPLAY
at Mazomanie Regional
Heritage Center

HAY WAGON RIDES
for all ages

KIDS' ACTIVITIES
hula hoops, mini-train rides

YOUTH STAGE
featuring

Mazomanie performers

OPEN STUDIO
at Center for Movement Arts

FOOD & BEVERAGES
on Brodhead Street

JUGGLING
by Jacob Mills

**GANDY DANCER
DEMONSTRATION**

MUSIC ON THE MAIN STAGE

- 11am: **ART STEVENSON & HIGH WATER** (Gospel)
 12:30pm: **MAMA DIGDOWN'S BRASS BAND** (New Orleans style)
 2pm: **KEN LONNQUIST BAND** (Originals & Bluegrass)
 3:30pm: **ART STEVENSON & HIGH WATER** (Bluegrass)
 5pm: **CRIS PLATA & EXTRA HOT** (Tex-Mex)

Emceed by
**BILL C.
MALONE**

6:30pm: **THE KRUGER BROTHERS**

SECOND TENT

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**CHRISTOPHER
POWERS**

Music especially for kids
**KEN LONNQUIST
BAND**

**BLUEGRASS
JAM**
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KRUGER BROTHERS**
Greet the headliners in person

SATURDAY, AUG. 15 - THE PROMENADE

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**DANE COUNTY
CULTURAL
AFFAIRS
COMMISSION**

WORT 89.9 FM

EXTRA! EXTRA! SUNDAY, AUG. 16

**AFTERNOON
WORKSHOPS**

First Unitarian Society, Madison
Information: 608-238-6863

THE KRUGER BROTHERS

**EVENING
PERFORMANCE**

High Noon Saloon, Madison
Tickets at www.high-noon.com

midcontinent.org

Jams and Open Mic Events July / August 2009

EVERY MONDAY

Bluegrass, Folk & Traditional Country Jam and Open Mic, Dry Bean Saloon, 6:30 - 10:30 pm, 5264 Verona Rd., Madison, WI Host: Dave Bacholl (Info: 608-906-6036)

EVERY TUESDAY

Instructor-Led Jam Classes at The Hotel Ruby Marie, Germania Parlor, 524 East Wilson St., Madison, WI. SWBMAI sponsored instruction: 1st Tuesday Jon Peik 7:30 pm; 2nd Tuesday with Chris Powers 7:00 pm; 3rd Tuesday with David Nance 8:00 pm; 4th Tuesday with Catherine Rhyner and Mary Helmke 7:00 pm; 5th Tuesday with Guest Instructor 7:00 pm. \$5.00 instructor donation. (Info: Ellis Bauman, 608-257-2431)

2nd and 4th TUESDAY

FIXX Coffee House Bluegrass Jam, 3558 E. Sivyver Ave., St. Francis, WI 7:00 - 10:00 PM. One 30 minute open mic set before jam. (Info: 414-803-7477 Host: James Brocksmith)

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Northland Ballroom, 8:00 - 11:00 pm, N10103 Hwy 49 between Rosholt and Iola, WI. Hosted by Art Stevenson, Dale Reichert and Jim Prideaux. (Info: 715-677-3491 or visit www.highwatermusic.com/northland_ballroom.htm)

1st & 3rd THURSDAY

Apple Holler Bluegrass Jam & BBQ, 6:00 - 9:00 pm; Apple Holler Restaurant/ Orchard, 5006 S. Sylvania Ave., Sturtevant, WI (Info: www.appleholler.com or call 1-800-238-3629)

1st FRIDAY

Kenosha Folk Hootenany, 7:00 - 10:00 pm, Anderson Arts Center informal gathering in an old Lake Michigan mansion, 121 66th. St., Kenosha WI

2nd FRIDAY

Ron's Old-Time Jam, Black Earth Bank, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, (lower level meeting room) Black Earth, WI. Host: Ron Poast (Info: 608-767-2553) www.ragtime88.com/swotfa

3rd FRIDAY

Acoustic Open Mic, Crossroads Coffeehouse, 7:00 - 9:30 pm, 2020 Main St, Cross Plains, WI. Info: joesnare@tds.net or call Mary at the Crossroads, 608-798-2080) Host: Joe Snare

EVERY OTHER SATURDAY

Spirits, 735 S Watertown St, Waupun 11:00 am - 2:30 pm. All playing abilities welcome. (Info: Jeff Smith 920-324-3977)

1st SATURDAY

Riley Tavern, 2:00 pm, 8205 Klevenville-Riley Rd., Verona, WI Take CTH PD to CTH J turn north on CTH J. Between Mt. Horeb & Verona. Host: Archie Lowman (Info: 608-845-9150)

Waukesha Church of Christ, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, 2816 Madison St., Waukesha, WI. Host: Pastor Greg (Info: 262-470-3644)

2nd SATURDAY

R.H. Landmark Saloon, 3:00 - 6:30 pm, 138 S. Main St. Jefferson, WI. Host: John Short (Info: 920-563-7441)

Spring Green General Store, 3:00 - 6:00 pm, 137 S. Albany St., Spring Green, WI. Host: Paul Bentzen, Doug Lloyd and Michael Connors (Info: 608-588-7070)

EVERY OTHER SUNDAY

Old Time Acoustic Jam, Alchemy Cafe, 1980 Atwood Ave., Madison 5:00 - 7:00 pm (Info: Scott Knickelbine scottk@lcs-impact.com)

1st SUNDAY

Life Spring Coffee Shop, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, 7578 Hwy 51, Minocqua WI Host: Rich Gadow (Info: 715-588-9498) www.headforthedome.com

2nd SUNDAY

Hazelhurst (Yawkey) Town Hall, 1:00 - 5:00 pm, Hwy 51, Hazelhurst, WI. Host: Keith Justice (Info: 715-356-3793)

BBMA Bluegrass Jam, 2:00 - 5:00 pm, Borders Books, River Point Shopping Center, 8705 N. Port Washington, Fox Point, WI (Info: 414-540-1427 www.badgerlandbluegrass.org)

NEW! Old Time Jam On The Farm, Sun, July 12, 5:00 - 7:00 pm, 2099 County Road E, Blue Mounds SWBMAI member Terri Schmit hosts this front-porch old-time jam on The Gourd Guy farm in Blue Mounds. This is an inaugural jam with may become monthly if there's enough interest, so grab your fiddle, banjo, mando, tin whistle or whatever ya got and come play some tunes! (Info: thegourdgirl@yahoo.com)

3rd SUNDAY

The Lake Country Jam, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Good Harvest Market community room. 1850 Meadow Lane, Pewaukee, WI. www.goodharvestmarket.com/classes_events/Calendar_of_Events_Classes_Workshops_and_tours.html

4th SUNDAY

Viroqua Bluegrass & Gospel Music Association Bluegrass Jam, 1:30 - 4:30 pm, Park View Ct, Viroqua, WI (Info: 608-637-3820 dlpeter@mw.net www.viroquabluegrass.com)

Acoustic Jam, The Attic, 2:00 - 4:00 pm, 730 Bodart Street, Green Bay (Info: www.theatticbooks.com or 920-855-2627)

Festivals, Workshops, Camps and Concerts

Submitted in Part by Carolyn Hegeler

- JULY 10-12 7th Annual Traditional Bluegrass and Gospel Music Festival, Vernon County Fairgrounds, Viroqua, WI.
Info: www.viroquabluegrass.com
- 11 10th Archie Fest Bluegrass Festival, Mondeaux Dam Lodge, near Medford, WI. Info: www.mondeauxdamlodge.com
- 24-26 20th Midsummer in the Northwoods Bluegrass Festival, Cozy Cove Tavern and Campground, Manitowish Waters, WI. Info: 715-543-2166.
- 24-26 28th Annual Bluegrass Festival, Strawberry Point, IA. Info: www.strawberrypoint.com/Bluegrass/bluegrass.htm
- 31-1 Sugar Maple Festival, Lake Farm County Park, 4330 Libby Road, Madison, WI Featuring headliner JD Crowe & the New South, Tickets \$14-\$30, Info: www.sugarmaplefest.org **SWBMAI Supported!**
- AUGUST 2-7 Door County Bluegrass Camp, Wagon Wheel Resort, Ellison Bay, WI. Instrumental skill focus for the experienced beginner through the advanced player. Workshops include songwriting, music theory, harmony singing, chart reading and writing. Info: 920-839-2777, www.violynn.com/index.htm **SWBMAI Supported!**
- 8 Little Falls Bluegrass Gospel Festival, 1272 44th Avenue, Amery, WI
- 7-9 Shawano Folk Festival, Shawano, WI. Info: www.shawanofestival.com
- 6-9 MBOTMA Festival, Richmond, MN Info: www.minnesotabluegrass.org
- 14-15 12th LarryFest, LarryFest Grounds, S2096 - 24 Valley Rd., LaFarge, WI. Advance tickets (\$50) available online; no tickets sold at the gate again this year. Info: www.kvama.org/index.php .
- 15 3rd Gandy Dancer Festival, Brodhead Street, Mazomanie, WI. FREE. Family-friendly event; 6 bands; bluegrass jam, model train exhibit. Info: www.midcontinent.org **SWBMAI Supported!**
- 16 The Kruger Brothers with Philip Zanon 1:00 - 4:00 pm; Banjo, Guitar, Bass, Sound Tech Workshops, Unitarian Meeting House Annex, Madison. \$60. Limit: 15. Info: Carolyn Hegeler 608-238-6863 or chegeler@tds.net
- 16 The Kruger Brothers in Concert, 7:00 pm; The High Noon Saloon, 701 E. Washington Ave., Madison. Tickets (\$15/Advance and \$18/Door) can be purchased at the High Noon Saloon, online at www.high-noon.com, and at the Gandy Dancer Festival in downtown Mazomanie on Saturday, August 15
- 16 Bluegrass at the Village Festival, Pioneer Village, 4880 County Hwy I, Saukville, WI
- 21-23 Chippewa Valley Gospel & Bluegrass Festival, Bruce, WI. Info: www.bluegrassbruce.com
- 22 Bluegrass for Hunger Festival, Apple Holler Restaurant/Orchard, 5006 S. Sylvania Ave., Sturtevant, WI (Info: www.appleholler.com or call 1-800-238-3629)
- 27-29 26th Annual Two Rivers Bluegrass Jam, NW of Rockford north of IL 75 on Harrison Road, Harrison, IL. FREE admission, camping \$5-\$10 per night (Info: 815-335-2592 or email vmgain@yahoo.com)
- 28-29 Northland Bluegrass Festival, Rosholt, WI
- 28-30 5th Porcupine Mountains Music Festival, Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, Ontonagon, MI. Over 30 artists including Charlie Parr. \$30-\$90. Info: www.porkiesfestival.org
- 28-29 Northland Bluegrass Festival, Rosholt, WI. Info: www.highwatermusic.com
- 28-30 Randy Elmore Fiddle Workshop, Monches Mill House, Hwy E, W301 N9430, Hartland, WI. Info: 505-270-3546



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Alan Munde Imparts Banjo Wisdom

by Julie Cherney

Playing and getting proficient at an instrument as an adult is a challenge. First of all, there's the time factor. Jobs, families, keeping up a house all impinge on valuable practice time. Additionally, excuses NOT to practice abound...I'm too tired, can't miss the Tonight Show now that Conan O'Brien is the host, need to walk the dog, kid, ferret, etc. So when a world renowned musician comes to town as an instructor, sign up for the class and get ready for a big boost in motivation! That's what I did when Alan Munde rolled into Madison in early June and I'm glad I did!

Alan has performed with a laundry list of astounding musicians. In addition to playing in the Country Gazette since its inception with fiddle phenom Byron Berline, he's collaborated with Roland White,



the importance of fundamentals, proper finger positioning and keeping the rhythm because, "it holds everything together. Without it, the wheels fall off!" Pages of hand-outs were ours to keep filled with tablature, in-depth explanations of concepts he taught and tips galore. On top of that, Alan left plenty of time to entertain questions, of which there were plenty due to the multi-level make-up of the students. I was impressed with his ability to answer so eloquently...and on the fly! The evening ended with a wonderful performance with the Nob Hill Boys, featuring Alan on banjo.

Workshops are a great way to keep the musical juices flowing. And to be able to be under the tutelage of a great bluegrass musician like Alan Munde energizes and inspires. So take advantage of the next bluegrass maestro who comes to town. You'll be glad you did!



Clarence White, Gene Wooten, and Sam Bush, just to scratch the surface. Additionally, he has been an instructor at the Bluegrass and Country Music Program at South Plains College, teaches at the Midwest Banjo Camp and other camps throughout the country as well as holds workshops. With teaching credentials so impressive, I felt very fortunate to be his student, if only for one night.

Alan's musical talent and teaching experience shined in our classroom at the Quarry Arts building. His laid back style and ability to simplify complex musical theory through brilliant analogy engaged and enlightened us. I heard many "ahas!" and "Now I get it!" Moreover, he explained



Current SWBMAI Member Bands

Above the Town – Jerry Loughney; 262-510-1128, jerry@abovethetown.com

Alzen Family Bluegrass Band – Brad Alzen; 715-749-3977, bwalzen@pressenter.com

Art Stevenson & High Water – Art Stevenson; 715-884-6996, artstevenson@tds.net

Big Cedar – Marty Burch (262) 338-6954 or Keith Keehn; 262-338-0538, mdrbears@aol.com

Cream City Bluegrass and Gospel Music – Harvey Riekoff; 262-497-3024, tjbanjo@wi.rr.com, <http://creamcitybluegrass.net>

Down From The Hills – Pat Downing; 608 527-2472, downhome@tds.net

Eleike – Michael Bell; 608-238-2223, mike@michaelmbell.net, www.michaelmbell.net/eleike-presskit.htm

The Henhouse Prowlers – Ryan Hinshaw; 847-924-5298, contact@henhouseprowlers.com

The High 48s– Eric Christopher; 651-271-4392, eric@thehigh48s.com

Jefferson County Bluegrass Band – Dale Ward; 608-712-8054, <http://jeffersoncountybluegrass.com>

Liberty Bluegrass Band – James Brocksmith; 414-803-7477, www.libertybluegrass.com

Monroe Crossing – Art Blackburn; 763-213-1349, art@monroecrossing.com

New Bad Habits – Chirps Smith; chirpsdot@aol.com

Northern Comfort – Tony Hozeny; 608-215-7676, thozeny46@sbcglobal.net

Oak Street Ramblers – Jeff Schoen; 608-669-3991, kunklej@gmail.com

'Round the Bend – Fred Newmann; 608-238-6863, fnewmann@wisc.edu

Spare Time Bluegrass Band – Bobby Batyko; 608-575-9945, bbatyko1@tds.net

Tangled Roots – Marty Marrone; 651-295-1376, marty@tangledrootsbluegrass.com

Truman's Ridge – Bruce Wallace; 815-603-1441, trumansridge@yahoo.com

Turtle Creek Ramblers – Dave & Michelle Wilson; 608-361-0770, www.turtlecreekramblers.com

Wooden Bridges Bluegrass Band – Rich Schwartz; 262-719-3549, <http://home.wi.rr.com/woodenbridges/>

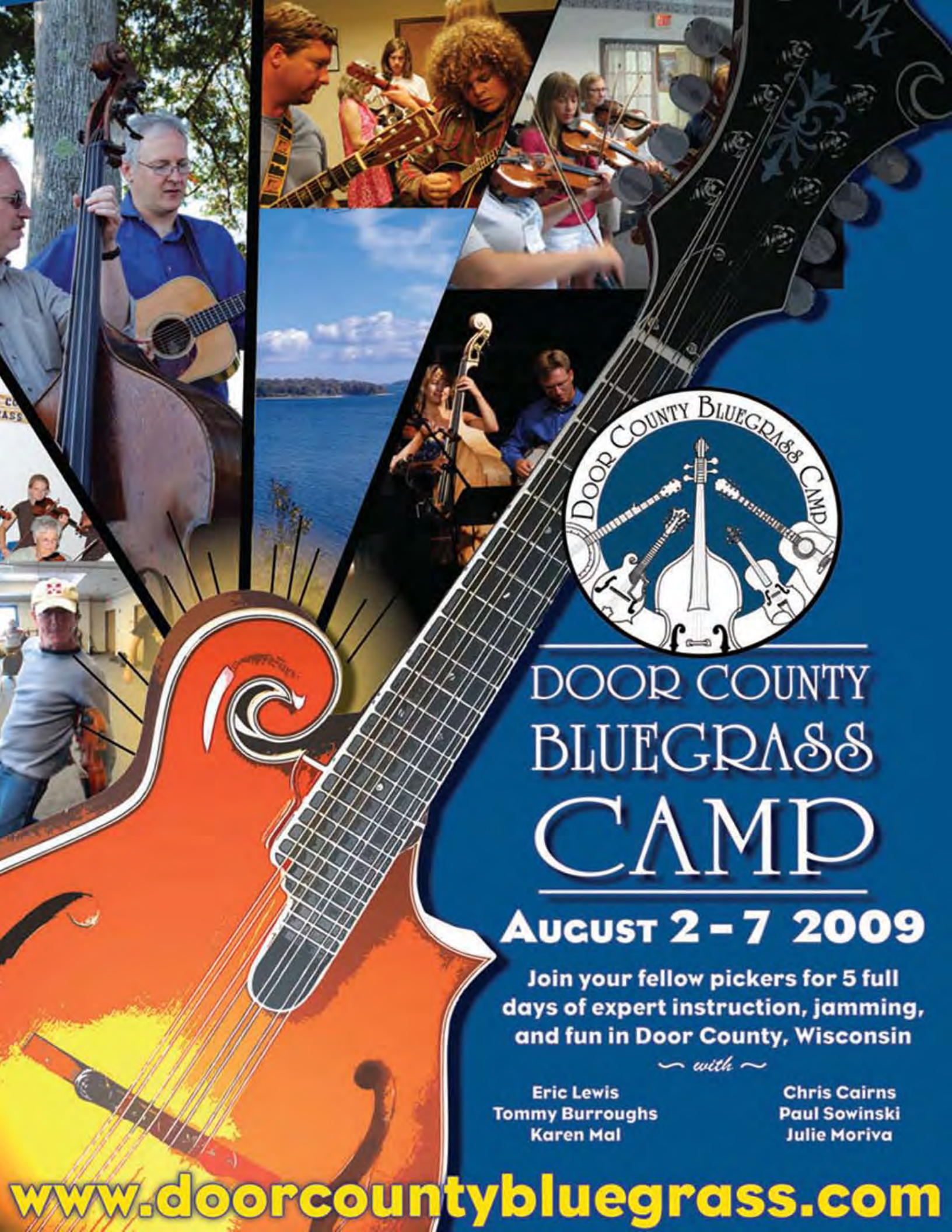
Member Band Schedules July / August 2009

July

- 9 *The Henhouse Prowlers*, 9:00 pm, High Noon Saloon, 701 East Washington Ave, Madison, WI \$6
- 10 *Liberty Bluegrass Band*, 3:45 – 6:15 pm, Bastille Days, Cathedral Square Park, Milwaukee, WI. FREE
- 11 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 9:30 – 10:30 am, Northwoods Care Centre, 2250 Pearl St., Belvidere, IL FREE
- 11 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 1:30 – 2:30 pm, Maple Crest Care Centre, 4452 Squaw Prairie Rd., Belvidere, IL FREE
- 12 *Liberty Bluegrass Band*, 1:30 – 3:00 pm, Lions Legend Park, 8050 S. Legend Drive, Franklin, WI FREE
- 12 *'Round the Bend* - 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Veterans Memorial Park, 12th Street & Hwy 11, Brodhead, WI FREE
- 16 *Big Cedar*, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, Music in the Park, Kewaskum, WI FREE
- 18 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, NorthPointe Terrace, 5601 East Rockton Rd., Roscoe, IL FREE
- 18 *Liberty Bluegrass Band* - 9:30 – 11:30 pm, Delafield Brewhaus, 3832 Hillside Drive, Delafield, WI
- 20 *Oak Street Ramblers*, 7:30 – 10:00 pm, The Malt House, 2609 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI FREE
- 24-25 *Truman's Ridge*, 20th Annual Midsummer in the Northwoods Bluegrass Festival, Cozy Cove Tavern and Campground (also known as the World Loppet Lodge), 32 N. Hwy 51, Manitowish Waters, WI Cost TBD
- 24-26 *Big Cedar* - Strawberry Point Bluegrass Festival, Strawberry Point, IA FREE - \$25
- 31 *Liberty Bluegrass Band's "2009 Big Apple Tour"* 7:30 – 8:30 pm, The Living Room, 154 Ludlow, New York, NY

August

- 1 *Liberty Bluegrass Band's "2009 Big Apple Tour"* 9:00 pm – Midnight, Jalopy, 315 Columbia Street, Brooklyn, NY
 - 1 *Oak Street Ramblers*, 9:00 pm Alchemy Cafe, 1980 Atwood Ave, Madison, WI FREE
 - 3 *Monroe Crossing*, 7:30 – 10:00 pm, Old Log Theater, 5185 Meadville Street, Greenwood, MN
 - 6 *Monroe Crossing*, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, Kandiyohi County Fairgrounds, Willmar, MN
 - 8 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 9:30 – 10:30 am, Northwoods Care Centre, 2250 Pearl St., Belvidere, IL FREE
 - 8 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 1:30 – 2:30 pm, Maple Crest Care Centre, 4452 Squaw Prairie Rd., Belvidere, IL FREE
 - 8 *Monroe Crossing*, 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm, Little Falls Bluegrass Gospel Festival, 1272 44th Avenue, Amery, WI
 - 10 *Monroe Crossing*, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Music in the Park at Antigo City Park, Antigo, WI FREE
 - 13 *Art Stevenson and High Water*, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, McMillan Memorial Library, 490 East Grand Ave., Wi Rapids, WI
 - 14 *Monroe Crossing*, 7:00 – 10:00 pm, Community Bluegrass and Gospel Concert, 505 Holdt Street SW, Battle Lake, MN
 - 14 *Art Stevenson and Highwater*, LarryFest, S2096 - 24 Valley Rd., LaFarge, WI
 - 15 *Art Stevenson and Highwater*, Gandy Dancer Festival, Westland Promenade, Brodhead Street, Mazomanie, WI FREE
 - 15 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, NorthPointe Terrace, 5601 East Rockton Rd., Roscoe, IL
 - 15 *Monroe Crossing*, 6:30 – 9:00 pm, Top Hat Theatre, Ulen, MN
 - 16 *Big Cedar*, Bluegrass at the Village Festival, Pioneer Village, 4880 County Hwy I, Saukville, WI
 - 16 *Monroe Crossing*, Noon – 3:00 pm, Carlton County Fairgrounds, Barnum, MN
 - 17 *Oak Street Ramblers*, 7:30 – 10:00 pm, The Malt House, 2609 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI FREE
 - 28-29 *Art Stevenson and Highwater*, Northland Bluegrass Festival, Rosholt, WI
-



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Kruger Brothers Workshops and Concert Sunday, August 16, 2009

by Carolyn Hegeler

The Mid-Continent Railway Museum is proud to offer banjo, guitar, bass, and sound technology workshops and a concert by the 2009 Gandy Dancer Festival headliner the Kruger Brothers, on Sunday, August 16 in Madison. Winner of the National Endowment for the Arts Artistic Excellence Award, the Swiss-born Kruger Brothers have delighted audiences worldwide with their music, which combines elements of bluegrass, classical, country and European folk. (www.krugerbros.com.) The workshops and concert are supported by SWBMAI and WORT89.9FM.

The Kruger Brothers will give the four workshops on Sunday, August 16, from 1:00 -4:00 pm at the Unitarian Meeting House Annex, 900 University Bay Drive, Madison. Workshop fee is \$60. To register contact Carolyn Hegeler (608-238-6863 or chegeler@tds.net).

CONCERT. Following the workshops, the Kruger Brothers will perform at 7:00 pm at the High Noon Saloon, 701 E. Washington Ave., Madison. Tickets (\$15/Advance and \$18/Door) can be purchased at the High Noon Saloon, online at www.high-noon.com, and at the Gandy Dancer Festival in downtown Mazomanie on Saturday, August 15.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS.

Banjo Workshop with Jens Kruger: Open to all players, but with a focus on Intermediate to Advanced players, Jens will cover: (1) Composing for the Banjo; (2) Playing Outside of Bluegrass (New Sounds on the Banjo: Expand

Your Tonal Palette); (3) A Visual Approach to Music Theory and Chords on the Banjo; (4) Melody Development.

Guitar Workshop with Uwe Kruger: Open to all players, but with a focus on Beginning to Intermediate students, Uwe will cover a wide range of topics: (1) Chord Formations; (2) Rhythmical Structures; (3) Left and Right Hand

Technique; (4) Cross-Picking; (5) Warm-Up Exercises; and (6) Lead Guitar.

Bass Workshop with Joel Landsberg: Open to all players, but with a focus on Advanced-Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced players, Joel will address (1) Playing the Bass in a Band Setting; (2) Techniques for Good Tone Reproduction; (3) Backing Up Soloists and Singers; (4) Being Comfortable with Your Instrument; and (5) Walking Bass Lines.

Sound Technology Workshop, with Phillip Zanon: Phillip has worked with

the Kruger Brothers since 1995. From 1989-1995 he studied Acoustics at the Swiss Institute of Technology in Zurich to become an Electrical Engineer. He chose a career in acoustic music designing and operating live and studio sound systems. The workshop will cover common issues faced by bluegrass and other acoustic bands, based on interests of participants: (1) Equipment Choices; (2) Stage Set-Ups (Including Band Choreography); (3) Achieving Proper Mix in Monitors and Mains; (4) Avoiding Feedback; and (5) Achieving Appropriate Volume for Instruments and Vocals in Different Environments.

Visit www.midcontinent.org.



Beth Graham's Surprise 93rd Birthday Party Packs Them in at the Dry Bean

The dining room at the Dry Bean Saloon was jammed with musicians, friends, well-wishers, grandchildren and great-grandchildren as Beth Graham celebrated her 93rd Birthday on June 29th. The surprise party, organized by her daughters Sue and Patty, drew more than 100 attendees to the Monday night jam, including many seldom-seen musicians and generations of the Graham family.

Beth, the relentlessly photo-snapping bluegrass supporter who's been a fixture at the jam for years, was seldom in her seat as she greeted party goers. Among the musical highlights: a special performance from Andy Struthers and Mary Stetson of Cream City, and a delightfully ludicrous rendition of "The Chicken Song" by fiddler Sid Boersma which had the entire room laughing along.

For the record, Sid had to sing the Chicken Song. It's one of Beth's very favorites.



Photo by Fey Ferrington

The Fireball Mail is a publication of the Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc. Visit our web site at www.swbmai.org

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Music Association Inc.**

P.O. Box 7761 Madison, WI 53707-7761

Attn: Fireball Mail



Young bluegrass Abby Hopkins confidently shared the stage with long-time talents at the last Orfordville jam of the season. That girl can sing, too!