

FIREBALL MAIL

Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc. Newsletter

March/April '09

WANTED



JIM HODGES

Photo by David Nance

REWARD



SWBMAI Photo Contest

Send us your photos showing area bluegrass fun! If we use your photo in the Fireball Mail you win a free SWBMAI t-shirt. Simply e-mail your photo file to fireballmaileditor@gmail.com. It's that easy.

FIREBALL MAIL

Volume 26 Issue 2

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 – George Reynolds, 608-957-1200, georgelreynolds@gmail.com

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

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

Treasurer – Jon Peik, jrpeik@yahoo.com

Attendant Board Members-

James Brocksmith, 414-803-7477, paxflyer@earthlink.net

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

Jim Knobloch, knobhill@chorus.net

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

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

Webmaster – Scott Knickelbine, swbmai@gmail.com

Member Volunteers: Debra Amesqua, Julie Cherney, John Fabke, Carolyn Hegeler, Mary Helmke, Dave Nance, Jon Peik, Chris Powers, Catherine Rhyner,

Board Meetings

The board usually meets the first Wednesday of each month, at 6:00 pm at the Bar Next Door, 232 E. Olin Ave., Madison, WI. If you would like to attend, contact a board member to be sure of the date, time and location; they are subject to site availability and holiday dates.

Board Meeting Minutes

The Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Music Association, Inc. board meeting's condensed minutes are available on line at www.swbmai.org. If you would like minutes mailed to you please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to SWBMAI Secretary Sharon Manion, 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

Member Band Schedules March / April 2009

March

- 7 *Oak Street Ramblers*, 8:00 – 10:30 pm Alchemy Cafe, 1980 Atwood Ave, Madison, WI FREE
- 13 *Monroe Crossing*, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Autumn Ridge Church, 3611 Salem Road SW, Rochester, MN \$15 / \$20
- 14 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 9:30 – 10:30 am, Northwoods Care Centre, 2250 Pearl St., Belvidere, IL FREE
- 14 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 1:30 – 2:30 pm, Maple Crest Care Centre, 4452 Squaw Prairie Rd., Belvidere, IL FREE
- 14 *Monroe Crossing*, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 1111 Main Street, Hopkins, MN \$12 / \$20 / \$24
- 14 *Tangled Roots*, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Lakeville Area Arts Center, 20965 Holyoke Ave., Lakeville, MN
- 15 *Monroe Crossing*, 4:00 – 7:00 pm, Woodlake Lutheran Church, 7525 Oliver Avenue South, Richfield, MN \$15
- 17 *SpareTime Bluegrass Band*, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, Roxbury Tavern, 8901 Hwy Y, Sauk City, WI FREE
- 19 *(This is the) Squirrel Hunters*, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, The Frequency, W. Main St., Madison, WI \$3 cover
- 27 *Monroe Crossing*, 7:00 – 10:00 pm, Chestnut Avenue Center for the Arts, 208 S. Chestnut Ave., Marshfield, WI Advance tickets: \$ 10 adults/ \$ 5 children,; \$ 12 / \$ 6 at the door
- 28 *Tangled Roots*, 8:00 – 11:00 pm, Oak Center General Store, 67011 Hwy 63, Lake City, MN Ticket price TBD

April

- 4 *Cream City*, 1:00 – 2:00 pm, Unitarian Church North, 13800 N. Port Washington Rd., Mequon, WI
- 4 *Turtle Creek Ramblers*, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, NorthPointe Terrace, 5601 East Rockton Rd., Roscoe, IL FREE
- 4 *Oak Street Ramblers*, 8:00 – 10:30 pm Alchemy Cafe, 1980 Atwood Ave, Madison, 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
- 16 *(This is the) Squirrel Hunters*, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, The Frequency, W. Main St., Madison, WI \$3 cover
- 17 *The High 48s*, 8:00 – 11:00 pm, The Lodge, 6967 Lake Forest Rd., Brainerd, MN \$9 in advance, \$12 day of show, \$6 for teens, & kids 12 & under free
- 18 *Round the Bend*, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, Habitat for Humanity of Dane County Restore's Annual Earthday Celebration, Dane County Restore, 208 Cottage Grove Rd., Madison, WI FREE
- 18 *Art Stevenson & High Water*, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, High Noon Saloon, 701 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI Sugar Maple Fundraiser, \$10 in advance \$12 at the door
- 19 *The High 48s*, 3:00 – 5:00 pm, The Sawmill Inn, 2301 S. Hwy 169, Grand Rapids, MN \$9 in advance, \$12 day of show, \$6 for teens, & kids age 12 & under free
- 19 *The High 48s*, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Paul Bunyan Play House, 314 Beltrami Ave., Benidji, MN \$9 in advance, \$12 day of show, \$6 for teens, & kids age 12 & under free

Current SWBMAI Member Bands

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

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

Cork n' Bottle Stringband – Greg Dierks; (608) 241-2430, www.bignew.com

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

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

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

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

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

Oak Street Ramblers – Jeff Schoen; kunklej@gmail.com

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

Sparetime Bluegrass Band – Bob Batyko; 608-575-9945, bob@sparetimebluegrass.com

Tangled Roots – Martin J. Marrone; 651-501-9735

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

(This is the) Squirrel Hunters – Brian Ray; dasspunk@gmail.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/>

SWBMAI Welcomes New Member Band: Truman's Ridge

Truman's Ridge is a bluegrass band formed last year and is based in Sycamore, Illinois. The band features Steve Sarver on 6-string guitar and lead vocals; Mark Fowler on mandolin and harmony vocals; Bruce Wallace on 5-string banjo and harmony vocals; and Doris Clayton on an upright bass known as Truman.

The band plays a fast-paced blend of traditional bluegrass, tradition-based original, and old-time gospel songs. They sing two and three part harmonies in the prairiegrass style.

Bruce fills in a bit more information: "Doris' bass is named Truman; it is from the 1890s and was played at the dance in Chicago honoring Harry Truman's nomination for Democratic candidate for president. My dad was raised on a farm that sits at the foot of Crawley's Ridge in Arkansas. So the band is named after the bass and where my dad was from.

I met Steve at a jam about three years ago. The band he was playing with needed a banjo player and he asked if I was interested. (We were jamming in one of the smaller rooms and after about a half hour he asked me 'Are you in a band? Do you want to be?' I remind him of this whenever his banjo jokes come too often.)

We played together in this band for about two years. About a year ago we decided we wanted to become more serious with our music and try for some festival work. We started looking for other people to form a band with. We met Mark in Springfield in the jam rooms. His energy levels were impressive as was his excellent mandolin playing. Doris had told Steve for years that if he ever decided to form his own band, she wanted to play bass for him.

In January of 2008 we started to seriously practice and play out. We played as many jams and open mics



as we could find. Last summer we played concerts in Dekalb, Yorkville, McHenry, and Genoa Illinois. We also performed at Midsummer in the Northwoods Bluegrass Festival in Manitowish Waters (with the Cajun Strangers) and at Two Rivers Bluegrass festival in northern Illinois.

We are going to be appearing at the 20th anniversary of Midsummer in the Northwoods Bluegrass Festival this year. We are in the middle of recording our first CD now. We just finished recording all of the songs this weekend and hope to have it mixed and ready to go in March. It contains 4 original numbers and a number of traditional bluegrass and gospel songs.

I played music in western Wisconsin (around Elroy) in the late 70's. When we played up at Manitowish Waters last summer, I remembered just what fun a good Wisconsin bluegrass crowd could be. That was a big reason we wanted to get involved in SWBMAI."

4269 W. Beltline Highway Suite B • Madison, WI 53711 • (608)442-0315 • www.laneslutherie.com

At the End of the Yellow Brick Road

Submitted by: Teresa Hayden

"You're not in Madison anymore," I whispered to myself. If only I had Toto for company! I gripped my fiddle case a little tighter and marched into the small corner grocery. At the front of the store, four men busied themselves setting up a circle of chairs and pulling instruments out of cases.

"Hello," said one.

"Are you here for the jam?"

"Um." Gulp. "Yes."

"Welcome!"

As I wove through the chairs, each man extended a hand, gave me a big smile, and said his name. It was a great start to my very first bluegrass jam in the Emerald City (as Seattle folks call this rain-soaked, evergreen metropolis).

I had just moved to Seattle from Madison in order to be close to my recently-married daughter. I hoped to find a congenial bluegrass community in my new home. The SWBMAI jams I'd attended had been wonderful. I remembered the camaraderie and enthusiasm of the Monday Night jams at the Bean.

Would I find something similar in my new city? Or would the jammers all be big-city superstars, playing way beyond my level? Would I know any of the songs? Would using song lyrics be frowned on? How would I know when I could jump in with a break or a harmony singing part?

Well, I've been to six different jams so far, and I'm here to tell you that you could probably walk

into any jam in Seattle and feel right at home. The musicians range from superb to beginner, and all are welcome. The jammers sit in a big, inclusive circle and the breaks are usually passed around clockwise. Many folks rely on written lyrics and anyone can try a harmony part. About half of the tunes are familiar to me.



But there are differences between the SWBMAI and Seattle bluegrass jams.. One difference is that the jams here don't give jammers access to a microphone. There are open mic events, where you can sign up for a ten minute slot, but I haven't yet seen a situation like the Bean or Riley Tavern (in winter), where you can jam for an audience and be easily heard.

Another difference is location. The SWBMAI jams are

often held in taverns. The Seattle jams occur in small shops (bakeries, coffee houses) or community centers. Several people host regular jams at their homes.

The biggest difference, I'm sorry to report, is the dearth of women musicians here in the Emerald City. At all the jams I've attended, about ninety per cent of the players are men. I am astounded, and plan to ask around as to why so few women.

Well, that's my report from the Seattle jam scene. It's a thriving and friendly bluegrass community. But I do miss you all . . .

You can drop Teresa a note at tdhayden@wisc.edu

Yellow Brick Road, Glass Mosaic © DeWayne Sessions, 2004

SWBMAI to present



Bill Evans and Megan Lynch

Banjo, Fiddle, Jam Workshops and Concert

Saturday, April 25, 2009

Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, 953 Jenifer St., Madison, WI

Banjo and Fiddle Workshops: 11:00-2:30
(half hour lunch break at 12:30)

WORT 89.9 FM

Jam Workshop: 3:30-5:30
(all bluegrass instruments)



For workshop registration form and fee info visit www.swbmai.org
OR Contact Julie Cherney: 608-260-2675 or cherney@uwalumni.com

Concert at 7:30pm – with Emcee Bill C. Malone

Advance Concert Tickets: \$13, at Spruce Tree Music, 851 E. Johnson St., Madison
OR Contact Julie Cherney: 608-260-2675 or cherney@uwalumni.com

Day of Show Concert Tickets: \$15/SWBMAI members; \$17/Non-members;
\$10/Students with student ID; Children under 12 FREE.

Go to www.SWBMAI.org/evanslynch and pay using your VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express or PayPal Account. Fast. Secure. Easy.

Bill Evans and Megan Lynch

Banjo, Fiddle, Jam Workshops and Concert

Saturday, April 25, 2009, Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, 953 Jenifer St., Madison, WI

Calling All Bluegrass Musicians!

This event is a wonderful opportunity not just for banjo and fiddle players. The 2-hour Jam Workshop with Bill and Megan will be great fun for mandolin, guitar, bass, Dobro, autoharp, harmonica, even spoons and washboard players. The more the merrier!

Workshop Registration Form

Please fill out the form below, indicating the package you want. Mail a check (made payable to "SWBMAI") to Julie Cherney, 1122 Curtis Ct., Madison, WI 53703.

Julie will contact you to confirm receipt of your check.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

To take advantage of the SWBMAI member fees, join now and add the membership fee (\$20/Individual; \$28/Family; \$12/Senior) to your workshop fee.

_____ SWBMAI Membership Fee (if applicable):

Fees for SWBMAI Members:

_____ Banjo Workshop/Jam Workshop/Concert: \$65

_____ Fiddle Workshop/Jam Workshop/Concert: \$65

_____ Banjo Workshop/Concert: \$45

_____ Fiddle Workshop/Concert: \$45

_____ Jam Workshop/Concert: \$35

Fees for Non-members:

\$75

\$75

\$55

\$55

\$45

TOTAL AMOUNT (Make check payable to "SWBMAI"): _____

Events Schedule: Banjo and Fiddle Workshops: 11:00-2:30 (half hour lunch break at 12:30)
Jam Workshop: 3:30-5:30 / Concert: 7:30-9:30

Advance Concert Tickets: \$13, contact Julie Cherney at 608-260-2675 or cherney@uwalumni.com (please reference "Bill Evans Concert"). Tickets will be held for you at the door.

Day of Show Concert Tickets: \$15/SWBMAI members; \$17/Non-members; \$10/Students with student ID; Children under 12 FREE. Visit www.swbmai.org for details.

Jams and Open Mic Events March / April 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)

Bluegrass Jam, The Bar Next Door, 222 E. Olin Ave. Madison, WI 6:00 -10:00 pm. No microphones or sign up sheet; (Info: 608-256-9430)

EVERY TUESDAY

Instructor-Led Jam Classes at The Bar Next Door, 222 E. Olin Ave., Madison, WI. SWBMAI sponsored instruction: 1st Tuesday Jon Peik 7:30 pm; 2nd Tuesday with Guest Instructor 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)

Emily's Restaurant, 8:00 -11:00 pm, 3747 Cedar Creek Rd., West Bend, WI. (Info: 262-677-0138 or www.emilysrestaurant.com)

1st THURSDAY

Ruby's Road House, 6:00 - 9:30 pm, free, Hwys 40 & 53, Bloomer, WI (Info: Larry Finseth, 715-926-5148)

1st & 3rd THURSDAY

Apple Holler Bluegrass Jam & BBQ, 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 NOTE: March gathering is held on the SECOND Friday

1st and 3rd FRIDAY

Bluegrass Jam, Harmony Bar, 2201 Atwood Ave., Madison, WI, 9:30 pm - midnight. Hosts: The Trails End String Band (Info: www.myspace.com/trailsendstringband)

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 SUNDAY

Note the changes! Mazo Bluegrass Jam, 3:00 - 6:00 pm, Sunday afternoon bluegrass & old-time country jam & pot-luck dinner Mazomanie Music Conservatory, 18 Marion St., Mazomanie, WI. Last jam of the season is March 29. (Info: Jim at 767-2920)

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

Jam and Open Mic, Orfordville American Legion, 12:00 - 6:00 pm. Full Bar. Food available. Dancers welcome! Orfordville, WI on Hwy 213 S. just south of Hwy 11. Host: Fritz and Donna Jaggi (Info: 608-897-4286)

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

1st AND 3rd SUNDAY

Traditional music jam, 3:00 - 5:00 pm, Willy Street Co-op, 1221 Williamson St., Madison, WI (Info: Reid Miller at 608-852-4524 or reid4dance@yahoo.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)

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 dlpeterson@mwt.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 and Concerts March / April 2009

March

- 6 Nelson Graham & Company, 8:00 – 10:30 pm, Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, 953 Jenifer St., Madison, WI The Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse is pleased to present Nelson Graham. Folk, country, originals, and old favorite tunes. www.nelsongraham.com. www.wildhoginthewoods.org
- 6 - 8 MBOTMA Winter Bluegrass Weekend, Minneapolis, MN. Bluegrass & Old-Time Music & Dance. Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, 3131 Campus Dr., (I-494 & Hwy 55). More than 40 groups plus dances, instrument exhibitors, workshops, & jam sessions. Info: 800-635-3037. www.MinnesotaBluegrass.org
- 6 - 8 Grass Seeds Bluegrass Music Academy. A multiple-day youth workshop for bluegrass players from age 8 to 18 held in conjunction with the MBOTMA Winter Bluegrass Weekend. Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, 3131 Campus Drive. Faculty to include the members of Special Consensus with Eric Christopher (The High 48s) on fiddle. \$75 registration fee includes admission to the Winter Bluegrass Weekend & the Special Consensus concert. 800-635-3037. www.MinnesotaBluegrass.org
- 13 Lovell Sisters Band, 7:30 -10:30 pm, Performing Arts Center, Middle High School, 2100 Bristol St., Middleton, WI A unique combination of bluegrass, country, & folk music featuring fine three part vocal harmonies & equally talented instrumental work. In 2005 the Lovell Sisters won the Prairie Home Companion National Teen Talent Contest. Tickets at Middleton Community Bank, State Bank of Cross Plains, & online. For more information call 829-9853 or visit www.friendspac.org
- 18 James King Band, 6:00 - 8:00 pm, The Frequency, 121 West Main St., Madison, WI James King is considered among the leading voices in traditional bluegrass, summoning timeless echoes of Appalachia with a voice that is equal parts urgent, yearning, and tender. Tickets are \$8 or \$10 at the door.
- 19 Charlie Sizemore Band, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Two Rivers High School, Hwy 42, Two Rivers, WI From Charlie's time with Ralph Stanley to today ... a voice smoother than 10-year old whiskey. Visit www.bluegrassbrad.org or call Brad Klabunde (920) 794-7258.
- 20 Robin Bullock House Concert, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, 5517 Comanche Way, Madison, WI. Interpreting the ancient melodies of the Celtic lands and their vigorous Appalachian descendants on acoustic guitar, cittern and mandolin. 2008 "Best Celtic Guitarist of the year." www.robinbullock.com. Contribution: \$15 and a dessert or evening snack. Hosted by Gene Becker & Kate Wade. Call (608) 455-1175.
- 20 -21 The Del McCoury Band, 7:30 – 10:00 pm, Stoughton Opera House, 381 E. Main St., Stoughton, WI. Friday, March 20, & Saturday, March 21 (SOLD OUT). www.delmcouryband.com. <http://stoughtonoperahouse.com>
- 27-29 Naperville Bluegrass Music Festival, Holiday Inn Select, 1801 N. Naper Blvd., Naperville, IL 15th Annual Naperville Bluegrass Music Festival. Call 217-243-3159 or visit www.bluegrassmidwest.com
- 28 Audie Blaylock & Redline, 6:00 – 11:00 pm, Dan Patch American Legion, 12375 Princeton Ave., Savage, MN (just outside of Minneapolis) Multiple Grammy & IBMA award nominee has been performing all his life with some of bluegrass music's most distinguished acts. www.audieblaylock.com. Tickets are \$14, \$16 day of show, teens \$8, kids 12 & under FREE! 800-635-3037 www.MinnesotaBluegrass.org

April

- 16 Nothin' Fancy, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Two Rivers High School, Hwy 42, Two Rivers, WI. Just Bluegrass entertainment at it's best! One of the most requested acts perfect for Brad's birthday show. Visit <http://www.bluegrassbrad.org> or call Brad Klabunde (920) 794-7258.
- 18 Jimbo Whaley & Greenbrier, 7:30 – 10:30 pm, Two Rivers High School, Hwy 42, Two Rivers, WI. A Concert series favorite from the very start! A member of the Dolly Pardon's Dixie Stampede and one of the best songwriters around. This is sure to be another memorable show! www.jimbowhaley.com. www.bluegrassbrad.org or call Brad Klabunde (920) 794-7258.
- 25 Bill Evans and Megan Lynch, 11:00 am – 10:00 pm, Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, 953 Jenifer St., Madison, WI. 11:00 am to 2:30 pm - Banjo Workshop with Bill Evans. 11:00 am to 2:30 pm - Fiddle Workshop with Megan Lynch. 3:30 - 5:30 pm - Instructional Jam (all bluegrass instruments welcome). 7:30 pm Evening Concert, with Emcee Bill Malone. Advance concert tickets \$13 at Spruce Tree Music in Madison or contact Julie Cherney at 608-260-2675. Tickets day of show: \$15 - SWBMAI members. \$17 - non-members. \$10 - students with ID Children under 12 FREE

SWBMAI Members Take a Break

Meet Debra Amesqua



As a young mother, many days Debra Amesqua could be found pushing her young daughter's stroller around Berkeley, CA while her husband was studying for his degree. It was during this time in her life that Debra says she found her "passion and her calling" when she spent eight months working for Steve Klein building guitars — even working on one for Joni Mitchell. But when the soon-to-be-renowned luthier relocated further north to Sonoma, Debra simply could not pull up stakes and join him.

One thing she realized at the time was how difficult it would be to make a living building guitars in the mid-'70s and early '80s. So when fate stepped in and introduced her to a career in fire service while she was still at a vo-tech school, she said she felt blessed.

She was born in Minnesota but raised in Florida so when she ended up working for the Tallahassee Fire Department it was a homecoming. In fact, she still owns a home there where Isabelle (her now-grown daughter) lives with her husband and children allowing room for Grandma to swoop in now and then to spend time with 9-year old Sidney Theresa and 6-year old Ethan Alton.

Music has always been part of her life. Debra grew up playing guitar and clarinet and even formed a band with her brothers. She was a music major at Florida State University. And it was the process of building a classical guitar that originally led her to meet Steve Klein during her California years. Because her Tallahassee work schedule rotation was based on ten days per month at the station, it left Debra time to develop an instrument repair business inside a local music shop.

Fours years ago Debra had the opportunity to pick up a 1918 Lyon and Healy mandolin. "I was sold." After all those years of guitar playing, Debra thought she'd be in pretty good shape to play the mandolin. Well, that was half right. Her left hand was in good shape but the right needed a lot of work to master that pick.

"Learning to play the mandolin was very different from the guitar. I am so thankful for the beginner's class that SWBMAI sponsors. I was petrified to learn to play; I was afraid of the pressure of sitting in a group. But everyone was so warmly welcoming. It was easy to learn to play because of that beginners' group."

Now that she was mastering the mandolin, Debra wanted a professional model instrument to play. She went looking for a vintage Lloyd Loar mandolin which was the type of mandolin that Bill Monroe used to play. But the cheapest she found was \$125,000 and some were as much as \$225,000.

"I thought to myself that I could build a pretty good shop for that kind of money! So I did. I didn't have any shop at all at home so I turned to StewMac ... Stewart MacDonald" (www.stewmac.com) whose tag line says they having everything for building and repairing stringed instruments.

"I bought a mandolin kit and as I walked through the process of building the mandolin I also bought the tool or part so that I could reproduce it when making another mandolin. I now own about 75% of the jigs and fixtures."

"Putting together a mandolin takes about two months to get it 'into the white' and another four to five weeks to apply the French polish. That needs time to cure and requires buffing until the finish sets up. The bridge and face are matched, the frets are adjusted, then the strings are set. The neck is the last thing — and one of the most important in building an instrument. I usually build to a medium height and feel. Then make final adjustments to a player's specific preferences."

"It usually takes one to two years for an instrument to settle in so the instrument must come back to the

shop a few times for scheduled adjustments."

"The first instrument I sold went to Ireland after the player had it only two weeks. He played it five to six hours a night, night-after-night for month-after-month in pubs all across Ireland. The mandolin went from my workshop environment where humidity is controlled at 43% to an island! But it didn't even have a crack when he brought it in for adjustments."

Debra builds her mandolins one at a time and has built five mandolins in the past few years with one new project on the table. But her goal is to work toward noted Australian luthier Steve Gilchrist's model of building twelve at a time. The Amesqua mandolins command \$4,500 excluding custom work. If you're interested in having one commissioned, please contact her by mail at 2402 Kendall Ave., Madison, WI 53726 or call 608-206-0116.

Build an Acoustic Guitar with Luthier Debra Amesqua June 6, 7, 11 & 18 - WoodCraft's Workshop - Madison

Luthier Debra Amesqua has an acoustic guitar building workshop slated to begin in June. The first two classes run from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm over one weekend; the final two classes are held Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Enrollment is limited to just four people and all kits must be ordered through Woodcraft to enable classroom instruction.

Each participant will have a recital-ready instrument by the end of the workshop. The class is designed to take a beginner/intermediate woodworker through the steps to make a steel string acoustic guitar from a kit. There are two wood species available: sapele or sycamore. Both models are on display at Woodcraft so stop by to see and play them!

You will learn the terminology and the techniques as well as focus on many of the specialized processes to complete your own personalized instrument. The process is broken down into small steps to familiarize the student with the construction of the neck including truss rod installation, fingerboard and fretting, abalone



Image Courtesy of U.S. Guitar Kits, Inc.

inlay and construction of the body including brace trimming/fitting, top installation, bridge gluing/alignment, purfling and final fit up of the neck to body joint using a bolt-on system.

Debra has built special jigs for use in class so the guitars will be completed in time to spend instruction time on the final top coat finishing. Workshops will be held in the on-site shop classroom at Woodcraft in the Westgate Mall just off the beltline in Madison.

No refunds or cancellations will be honored within two weeks of class start.

Woodcraft's \$675 fee includes your choice of two guitar kits (both of which are from U.S. Guitar Kits, Inc.) class instruction and use of Woodcraft's fully-equipped workshop.

Please note, Debra has generously offered to donate proceeds from her instructor fees back to SWBMAI! Class registration is on a first-come basis and is handled through Woodcraft either by phone (608) 273-8868 or in-person.

Bean Blossom Jamboree Foundation Update



Dear Friends, Donors, Supporters, and those with an interest in the BBJF,

It's hard to believe that another year has arrived and that we are in 2009! About this time in 2008 we began our discussions on forming the Bean Blossom Jamboree Foundation and successfully launched our efforts in May of 2008. We have had many reasons to celebrate our success in 2008, especially the success of nearly \$25,000.00 in funds that were pledged in June at the annual Summer Festival. Just prior to the Uncle Pen Days Festival in September, we officially received our Not for Profit 501 (c) 3 status from the Internal Revenue Service. By the end of 2008 we had pledged support of just under \$45,000 in merchandise sales, direct donations, and in-kind services. That was incredible given the current economy!

As we embark on our goals for 2009, we need to remember that our goal for 2008 was raising awareness. The money we raised in 2008 would not have served us well without the publicity and campaign efforts that occurred. The investment of your dollars in 2008 was successful, as people all over the world know about the BBJF! Just ask Shigo Nidea of Japan who recently donated \$5000.00 to our efforts. Thank you very much for your support in 2008! We wouldn't be where we are today without your efforts.

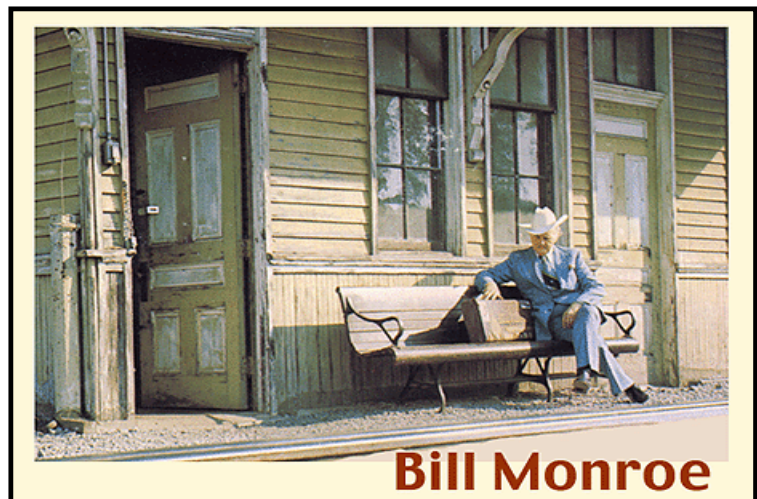
For 2009 we are committed to putting 100% of all raised dollars toward purchase of the music park by building on our 2008 efforts and hard work. We are using remaining 2008 funds to hire grant writers and researchers to explore alternative funding sources for our efforts. Your dollars are being used wisely to help raise awareness and garner more funds to help us purchase, preserve, and ultimately maintain in perpetuity the events that occur at the Bill Monroe Memorial Music Park and Campground.

I ask that you consider matching your 2008 Donation in 2009. Donor levels will be essentially the same for 2009 as in 2008. If you visit our web site at www.bbjfoundation.org, you can make a secure donation. Please consider supporting our cause for 2009! We need your help.

More information will be coming to you soon, including the 2008 Annual Report. If you still support our mission, vision, and goals, we need you to make this a reality.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish everyone the best for 2009 and we look forward to seeing you in June for the Festival!

Sincerely,
Steve Johnson MBA, MHS-CL
Board of Directors
Bean Blossom Jamboree Foundation Inc.
www.bbjfoundation.org



Coming to Madison! contributors: Carolyn Hegeler and Jean Knickelbine

In the next six months some amazing musicians will be in the Madison area. Mark your calendars and sign up for workshops now.

Saturday, April 25 – BILL EVANS & MEGAN LYNCH *Reminder:* Banjo, Fiddle, Jam Workshops and Concert Banjo and Fiddle workshops each limited to 15 participants. *Update:* Bill and Megan's new CD "Let's Do Something" has been released . . . Advance concert tickets \$13 at Spruce Tree Music in Madison . . . Keep your ears open for Bill Evans' interview with Bill Malone on WORT in mid-April. Sponsored by SWBMAI. Workshop registration form at www.swbmai.org where you can pay using VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express or your PayPal account. Or contact Julie Cherney at 608-260-2675.



Saturday, May 16 – SWBMAI JAMBOREE FUNDRAISER – Noon - 8:00 pm High Noon Saloon, Madison 2 hour open jam followed by Wooden Bridges, Truman's Ridge, Round the Bend, Oak Street Ramblers, Liberty Bluegrass, and Jefferson County (stage order as listed). Each group will do a 45 minute set starting every hour from 2:00. Kids under 12 free, SWBMAI members \$12 and non-members \$15.

Tuesday, June 2 – ALAN MUNDE 6:00 pm -9:00 pm Banjo Workshop at the Quarry Arts Building. Limit: 15 participants. Contact Carolyn Hegeler at (608) 238-6863 or chegeler@tds.net. Reference "Munde workshop."

Saturday, August 15 – GANDY DANCER FESTIVAL All day at The Promenade, Brodhead St. in Mazomanie. With the Kruger Brothers, Art Stevenson & High Water, Mama Digdown's Brass Band, Cris Plata & Extra Hot, Ken Lonquist Band, Redbirds. FREE TRAIN RIDES, lots of kids' activities, food vendors, bluegrass jam, model train exhibit, and more. Emcees Bill C. Malone and Chris Powers of WORT89.9Radio. Free. Rain or shine. Produced by Mid-Continent Railway Museum.

Sunday, August 16 – The KRUGER BROTHERS with PHILIP ZANON 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm Banjo, Guitar, Bass, Sound Tech Workshops at the Unitarian Meeting House Annex, Madison. Limit: 15 in each class. Contact Carolyn Hegeler at (608) 238-6863 or chegeler@tds.net. Reference "Kruger workshops." 7:00 pm Concert at High Noon Saloon, Madison. Workshops and concert sponsored by Mid-Continent Railway Museum.

**And Appearing Soon in a Mailbox Near You . . .
 . . . 2009 - 2010 SWBMAI Membership Renewal Notices!**

It's that time again. SWBMAI memberships run from April 1 to March 31 in order to coincide with our fiscal year. That means it's time to re-up. Renewals will be mailed by mid-March. Or go to www.swbmai.org/join/ and use VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express or your PayPal account. It's fast, easy and secure!

	Membership Rates	+ \$12 Jamboree Admission
Individual	\$ 24	\$ 36
Individual Senior	\$ 14	\$ 26
Family	\$ 34	\$58 (kids free)
Band	\$ 64	NA

SWBMAI's Revamped Instructor-Led Jam Classes Every Tuesday! Every Week!

SWBMAI has expanded the instructor-led jam class program and now features different instructors every Tuesday, every week, all year long. And the classes aren't all just for beginners anymore. The second Tuesday is geared specifically for seasoned players looking to polish their skills.

Private lessons usually cost about \$1 per minute. SWBMAI makes these group lessons available to everyone and anyone for a mere \$5 suggested instructor donation for a class that typically runs for over an hour! How? SWBMAI underwrites instruction costs for the first two Tuesdays of the month and has arranged for donated lesson time for the remaining Tuesdays. (Thanks Dave, Catherine and Mary.)

Classes are currently held in a private, upstairs, fireplace-lit room at The Bar Next Door, 222 E. Olin Ave. in Madison. But they are about to undergo some major renovations in a conversion to a steak house. During remodeling they may have to shift us next door to a private room in the Coliseum Bar which they also own. Staff will direct you.

Eventually we may have to find another location for our classes but we'll keep you posted. If you want to sign up for SWBMAI class notices including practice play lists, location changes and weather cancellations please go to: SWBMAIjamclass@gmail.com.

Listen. Play. Learn. The three basics of SWBMAI's strategic plan. We're working very hard to make opportunities available to people interested in bluegrass. Enjoy our latest efforts. And thanks for your membership dues which make it all possible.

1st Tuesday Jon Peik's
Beginners' Jam • 7:30 PM



2nd Tuesday Chris Powers'
Improving Players Jam • 7:00 PM



Jon Peik continues his popular class sessions and has laid the foundation for all SWBMAI jam

classes. He has been actively performing and recording with various bands since 1986. From blues and classic country to gospel and bluegrass, his playing is well rounded and tasteful. Jon is accomplished on guitar, mandolin, 5-string banjo, keyboard and acoustic bass. Jon is a founding and current member of the Nob Hill Boys and Above the Town. He teaches at Spruce Tree Music , Hartland Music and works as the music coordinator at his church.

Chris Powers sings and plays guitar, mandolin, bouzouki and mandola with the Old Tin Can String Band. He has been the band leader for the Madison string bands Twang City Bluegrass, Bluegrass Survivors and The Hardly Brothers. He teaches the course "Folk and Bluegrass Jam" for the UW-Extension, and regularly taught the "Folk Ensemble" classes at School of the Arts at Rhinelander. He also hosts a weekly radio show, the "Mud Acres Bluegrass Special" on WORT-FM. Chris says he looks forward to sharing ideas with the SWBMAI's Improving Players, to help them be better jammers and better all-around musicians.

3rd Tuesday David Nance's
Beginner's Jam • 8:00 PM



◀ Dave Nance may just be one of SWBMAI's leading Renaissance men. By day he is a hard-working attorney but in his free time you'll often find him immersed in his dual hobbies of music and photography. It has been written about Dave that if you "take one look at his (photo) work you will see why so-called 'hobbyists' are the most outstanding artists. Not because they are in it for a professional, monetary payoff, but because they truly love what they do. Dave is such an artist." He is also such a musician. Dave is self-taught and plays guitar, dobro, mandola and bass. He's a regular at many area jams and is a member of the Weary Traveler's Traveling Band. And if you want to take a peek at some of his photos go to: <http://webpages.charter.net/dnance/photos/>.

Mary Helmke and Catherine Rhyner agree that the beginner jam was a great and valuable experience for them. They feel any chance to practice (especially in a group setting) is a real benefit in preparing to join other area jams. According to Catherine, their instructor-led beginner session is "another chance to go out to play music and just jam, jam, jam. Everyone is welcome ... sit up front, sit in the back, you can play, lead, follow, sing or just hang. We don't care. We promise to keep the music going in a safe, coming-out, come-as-you-are environment. Please, come on down for a bit of the good old days."

4th Tuesday Catherine Rhyner and Mary Helmke's
Good Old Days Jam • 7:00 PM



◀ John Fabke specializes in the old-time instrumental and vocal styles on banjo, guitar and mandolin. He is a highly experienced instructor and has been involved in the "Bluegrass in the Schools" program. Fabke has appeared on a number of recordings in past years most notably with the award-winning Nob Hill Boys. Selected performances include "A Prairie Home Companion," NPR Clearwater Broadcast, Festival of Appalachian String Band Music as well as multiple appearances in New York City as well as local festivals and special events. John also hosts the weekly radio show Pastures of Plenty on WORT 89.9 FM.

Tuesday, May 12 John Fabke's
Improving Players Jam • 7:00 PM



A Message from the President

March 2009

I was going to title this "dreaming of Spring" but given that it's still early March in Wisconsin, I'd better save that for the next issue. I have been reflecting on how wonderful it is to have so much music to get us through the winter. I've happily whiled away recent frosty days and nights enjoying events such as the United Way Benefit, the Literacy Benefit, the Oak Street Ramblers at the Malt House, and picking by the fire on Monday night at the Bar next door. I encourage everybody to get out and see or play some music in the next few months, it'll be festival parking lot season before we know it.

I do want to use this opportunity to call a few items to your attention:

1. Bill Evans and Megan Lynch Workshops and Concert April 25th. Don't miss this opportunity to see and learn from two dynamic teachers/performers. And now you can pay using your VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express or PayPal Account. Go to www.SWBMAI.org/evanslynch. Fast. Secure. Easy.
2. SWBMAI Jamboree and Fundraiser on May 16th. We've got a great six band lineup in the works, as well as jamming and door prizes. I'll also use the opportunity to let you know about SWBMAI's fiscal plans for the coming year (don't worry, it'll be brief!)
3. Membership renewal. You'll see this shortly in a separate mailing. We're all feeling the pinch these days, but I encourage you to continue to support SWBMAI. Membership constitutes 50% of our annual operating budget and really lets us actively support Bluegrass in the community.

Finally, I'd like to ask you to join me in welcoming Julie Cherney and James Brocksmith to the SWBMAI board. You'll have the chance to hear more about them in a future issue, but the board and I are happy to have them! (And even with their addition, we're still taking nominations for additional board seats).

At your service,
George
georgelreynolds@gmail.com

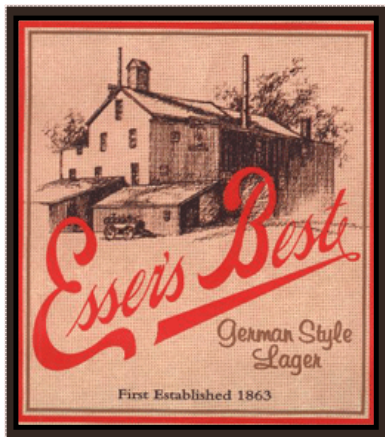
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**Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass
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P.O. Box 7761 Madison, WI 53707-7761

Attn: Fireball Mail



Yummy-Nummy!