



Bluegrassin'

Volume 27 Issue 2

March—April 2025

The Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association is a non-profit association dedicated to promoting, preserving and sharing our love of bluegrass music in a spirit of family and friendship.

Inside this issue:

	Page
President's Message	2
Spring Festival	4
Jam Photos	6
MRBA Announcements	7
Elderly Music	8
Grammy Awards	9
Rabbit In A Log	10
Bluegrass Tidbits	11

Upcoming Bluegrass

March 7: Yonder Mountain String Band, Wachholz College Center, Kalispell, 7:30pm

March 14: Release the Squirrels, Highland Brewery, Missoula, 6-8pm

March 15: MRBA Winter Jam, Masonic Lodge, 126 East Broadway, Missoula. Jam starts at 2pm, potluck at 6pm.

April 4-5: Glacier Fiddle Festival: Jam and registration 6pm, April 4. Contest 9-10am. April 5. Cornerstone Community Church, 1970 US Highway 93 North, Kalispell (across from Blue Moon)
<https://glacierfiddlefestival.blogspot.com/>

April 12: MRBA Spring Festival, Victor (see page 4)

Regular Jams & Shows:

Tuesday jams in Whitefish: North Valley Music School, 432 Spokane Avenue, Whitefish, 6-7:30pm. Call to RSVP—[\(406\) 862-8074](tel:4068628074))

Montana Oldtime Fiddlers: Third Sunday of the month, Buffalo Hill Terrace, Kalispell, 2:30-4:30pm

Missoula: Bluegrass Night at the Old Post Pub, Mondays, 6-8:30pm

Notes:

- 1) For ticket info & to confirm times, see venue websites
- 2) Send information about upcoming jams & band dates to newsletter editor

Bluegrass Birthdays (March-April)

1923-03-03 (Arthel) "Doc" Watson, American Grammy Award-winning bluegrass, folk, and blues guitarist, songwriter, and singer, born in Deep Gap, North Carolina (d. 2012)

1933-04-15 Roy Clark, American country and bluegrass singer, guitarist, and banjo player (Hee Haw, The Tonight Show), born in Meherrin, Virginia (d. 2018)

1952-04-13 Sam Bush, American progressive bluegrass mandolinist (New Grass Revival), born in Bowling Green, Kentucky

President's Message

Howdy,

We have been having lots of fun at the winter jams at the Masonic Lodge in Missoula. The crowds have been small, maybe 30 people, but we still had 3 separate jams going. The last jam for the winter will be on Saturday, March 15.

We just got the Victor Festival poster and band schedule done. Check it out in this issue. We have 16 bands this year, and Montana Standard from Bozeman will be kicking off the festival at 11am. Hold onto your hats, it's gonna be wild and crazy. Every man for himself! If your band needs a different time slot at the festival (see poster), please see if another band will swap slots with you, and let us know.

We will need lots of volunteers to help at the Festival, especially in the kitchen and at the ticket table. If you would like to help, contact Susan or Anne at the festival. Folks who want to are asked to bring desserts for resale.

That's all for now...

Your fearless leader (kind of)-- Mike

Yellowstone Bluegrass Association Update

The Yellowstone Bluegrass Association jams are no longer held at the Blue Creek Baptist Church in Billings, MT. We are currently trying to find an alternate location. Until then, anyone wanting to attend YBA jams can call Paddy or Scott for additional information:

Paddy: 406-861-0357

or

Scott: 406-861-3057

Thank you Scott

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association

PO Box 1306, Missoula, MT 59806

Website: www.mtbluegrass.com email: mrba@mtbluegrass.com

President - Mike Conroy, mikevconroy@gmail.com

Vice President - Dallas Olson

Secretary/Treasurer - Anne Merrifield, happy pasture9@gmail.com

Board Members - Tari Conroy, Kate McMahon, Randy Dollar, Jeff Campfield

Newsletter Editor - Kate McMahon, kate@appcom.net

MRBA Webmaster - TBD

Bluegrassin' is a bi-monthly publication of the **Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association**

Information printed in *Bluegrassin'* is at the discretion of the editor.

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association

**Got Something to sell?
Advertise in *Bluegrassin'*!**

*Full Page – \$25.00,
1/2 Page – \$15.00,
1/4 Page – \$10.00
Classified – \$5.00*

Contact:
Kate McMahon
kate@appcom.net
406-863-9255

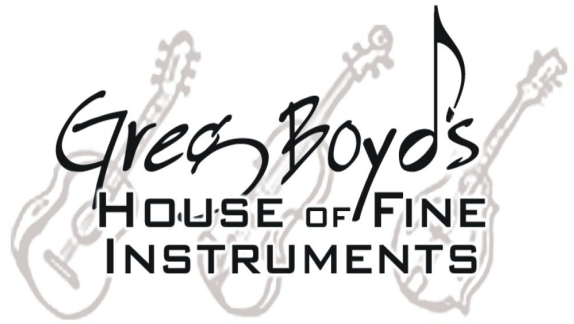
Get MRBA Newsletter by E-Mail

If you would like to get your newsletter delivered electronically via e-mail send a message to:

happypasture9@gmail.com

Electronic version has color photos & hyperlinks to websites.

(P.S.—It will help keep down printing and mailing costs for the Association.)



New Collings Guitars
New Roy Noble Guitars
New Bourgeois Guitars
Vintage Martin Guitars

Complete line of Picks, Strings
& other accessories

Best prices you'll find anywhere!

www.gregboyd.com

406/327-9925

**MONTANA ROCKIES BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION
Membership Application**

Date _____ Last Name _____ First Name _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone # _____
E-mail _____ Individual (\$10.00) ___ Family (\$15.00) ___

Do you want the newsletter delivered electronically? _____ YES _____ NO

Renewal _____ New Member _____

Please mail your application to: MRBA, PO Box 1306, Missoula, MT 59806

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association Bluegrass Festival and Fundraiser

Saturday April 12, 2025

Neely Center @ 150 S A Street, Victor, Mt

Starts 11:00 am until 7:00 pm



11:00– Montana Standard, Bozeman, Mt

11:30– Old Freight Road, Helena, Mt

12:00– Janelle Giralt / Star Chilson, Stevi, Mt

12:30– Horizon Bluegrass Band, Lemmon, SD

1:00– Jolley Family, Corvallis, Mt

1:30– Darby Sireens

2:00– Creekside Serenade, Florence, Mt

2:30– Blue Point, Missoula, Mt

3:00– 93 North, Salmon, Id

3:30– Kentucky Sky, Idaho Falls, Id

4:00– Mike & Tari Conroy- Conner, Mt

4:30– Foggy Mtn. Girls- Payson, Ut

5:00– Pinegrass- Missoula, Mt

5:30– Greg Boyd Band- Missoula, Mt

6:00– Muskrat Love, Missoula, Mt

6:30– A Well Beaten Path- Deerlodge, Mt

16 Bands!

Admission: non-members \$5.00 MRBA members: \$3.00 – children under 12 - free

More info: 406-821-3777 mtbluegrass.com

Or check us out on Facebook

WANTED - VOLUNTEERS MRBA Bluegrass Festival - April 12, 2025

We will need lots of volunteers to help at the festival, such as:

- Setup (come early) and cleanup (stay after)
- Front door table to help Anne collect entry fees, renew memberships, or sell merchandise
- Kitchen help during the event (bring a dessert for resale)
- Cashier for food sales
- Invite your Friends!

Thanks to all of the Spring Festival organizers, bands, and volunteers!



CLEARWATER COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS OROFINO, IDAHO

May 29th - June 1st, 2025

Headlining Band:
KENTUCKY SKY

Give a listen to Kentucky Sky on YouTube!

also featuring:

Wanigan, Monroe Bridge, Higher Ground, Roosevelt Road, Family Circle Band, and the Mountain Dew Boys!"

BRING LAWN CHAIRS

LewisClarkBluegrass.com  Lewis Clark Bluegrass Organization

LCBO PO Box 566 Clarkston WA 99403

Best of MRBA Winter Jam Photos

Believe it or not, we do not have any photos from the January/February winter jams to post for the newsletter. Instead, I thought you might enjoy some photos from winter jams in previous years.



2013 at Ruby's



2015 at Ruby's



2018 at Ruby's



2016 at Ruby's



2020 at the Masonic Lodge



2024 at the Masonic Lodge

ANNOUNCING MRBA - Youth Bluegrass Music Scholarships

Montana Rockies Bluegrass Association (MRBA) is pleased to announce an exciting new program! At the annual meeting, the membership agreed to sponsor a Youth Scholarship program for emerging bluegrass musicians.

What – Scholarship program to promote youth in bluegrass music. Scholarship is available to youth ages 5-18 who play an acoustic bluegrass instrument. Scholarship can be used to cover costs of lessons, music workshop, or travel expenses to a bluegrass festival.

Amount – \$400 per scholarship.

For more details and to apply for the scholarship, go to MRBA website or click on the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FTMNVCN>

ANNOUNCING MRBA Membership Promotion

At the annual meeting in December, the membership voted to adopt a new membership promotion! If current members get someone new to sign up, the *original MRBA member* gets a free membership for one year. To take advantage of this offer, download the membership form from the link below and send in one form for your renewal and another form for your friend.

<http://www.mtbluegrass.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Membership-Form.pdf>

Bluegrass Trivia

What do these three songs have in common?

Dooley

Katy Daley

Mountain Dew

Answer on page 11

A Trip to Elderly Music

(Arlene Wolf)

Last October, Cliff Simpson and I traveled to the midwest to visit family in Illinois and Michigan. Besides the beautiful fall colors, no way could we pass up the chance to go to Elderly Instruments in Lansing, Michigan. It is a place that makes you almost feel like you are going into a Martin shrine. You want to walk softly and talk lowly. But oh, the sounds of the instruments come through loud and clear.

My sis married a Michigan man, and I have been to the state many times. Probably 40+ years ago my brother-in-law knew I wanted to go to Elderly, so he and my sis and I headed out one morning to Lansing. I'm sure my little eyes were saucers as we walked into the store and saw rows and rows of instruments hanging in several rooms. After investigating the mandolins and banjos, admiring the fiddles and basses, the main guitar room waited.

Heaven!! Upper and lower Martins lined the entire room. Then I was playing (and still have) a New York handmade guitar, Reya Hirvella, that is a decent Martin copy. Other musicians played it, and it was good, but did not have the great low end of the Martin. In a hope and a dream, my first Martin was on my mind.



So I started to look at the Martins by rows, sticking mainly with D-18s and D-28s, but looking at them all. I would tell my brother-in-law which ones I was interested in on that row, and he would bring them to me one by one. It was a great system! I learned that I liked my guitar better than some Martins.....but oh, the Martins that were better were so very much better. My favorite was not only gorgeous with much inlay, but it sounded the very best of all. Price tag of \$3500.... Gulp. So I kept trying guitars, looking maybe for a second choice.

My sister at some point asked me, "Arlene, are you about ready to leave soon?" Oh no..... I turned to her and said, "Well, not really - I have half of a wall to go." She looked squarely at me and kindly said, "We have been in this room for FOUR HOURS, and I am ready for lunch!" I couldn't believe it, I know my jaw dropped....what a time warp room!! And what a patient sister.....and one who also got a good introduction to the obsession of music.

Elderly Instruments this past October was also almost magical. A beautiful 1930 Gibson PB-3 conversion pre-war resonator banjo, worth \$77,000, greeted us in the entryway. My goal for the trip was to have my mandolin and guitar appraised. The process was slick and easy, and we came in on a perfect day. They told me it might take a couple of hours, so Cliff and I looked at all rooms. Electric enthusiasts have a room, too. This time it was Cliff who spent time playing a few Martins and dreaming of his next guitar.

We didn't get bored, and in less than 1.5 hours the appraisals were complete. I was happy with them both. It once again validated the fine work of a once certified Martin repair friend who works on my instrumentsand who lives in Salmon. I love my instruments, both purchased from Gary Moore after his dad passed, as he got his dad's instruments, too. Now my instruments are properly insured, and we have another set of fun memories of an iconic music store.

If you get the chance, drive the highway and take the exit because you really should go there. You will be immersed in the culture of fine wood and stringed instruments. Elderly Instruments has fun merch, too – t-shirts, decals, cups, hats, etc. The folks who work there are knowledgeable and friendly. If it is from Martin, it is found there. Enjoy your visit, pick some fine instruments, and take some photos. Pick on!!

GRAMMY AWARDS



WINNER

Live Vol. 1 — Billy Strings

OTHER NOMINEES

I Built A World — Bronwyn Keith-Hynes

Songs of Love and Life — The Del McCoury Band

No Fear — Sister Sadie

Earl Jam — Tony Trischka

Dan Tyminski: Live From The Ryman — Dan Tyminski

Montana-Based Band at Wintergrass 2025

Montana-based band, Release the Squirrels, was busy at the annual Wintergrass Bluegrass Festival in Bellevue, WA, this year. They performed in the Montana Room, Banjo Room and Oregon Bluegrass Association Room. Looks like they are having a blast pickin and grinnin! Band members include Chad Fadley, Lydia Conway, Taylor Buckley, Kelly Buckley, And Steve Taft.

Thanks for bringing Montana bluegrass to the festival!



Rabbit In the Log

(Traditional Song)

The song **RABBIT IN A LOG** is an old-time bluegrass song. Its origins can be traced back to the Carter Family recording of “Gospel Ship” which has the same melody. Bashful Brother Oswald is sometimes credited with coming up with the lyrics for “Rabbit in the Log.” It was performed by the Prairie Ramblers on the Chicago radio station WLS—“National Barn Dance Program.” The Monroe Brothers (Charlie and Bill) recorded the tune around 1935 under the title “Feast Here Tonight.” The Ramblers’ version was a slow tempo, but traditional bluegrass bands play it at breakdown speeds with a “call and response” sequence in the chorus. The song has been recorded by Ralph Stanley, Ricky Skaggs, Doc Watson, June Carter Cash, Jim and Jesse, and many others. (Sources: Various Internet sites)

RABBIT IN THE LOG

G
There’s a rabbit in the log and I ain’t got my dog

D7

How will I get him I know

G

I’ll get me a briar and twist it in his hair

G D G

That way I’ll get him, I know

C

I know (yes I know)

G

I know (I surely know)

D7

That’s how I’ll get him, I know

G

I’ll get me a briar and twist it in his hair

G D G

That way I’ll get him, I know

I’ll build me a fire and I’ll cook that old hare
Roll him in the flames and make him brown
Have a feast here tonight while the moon’s shining bright
I’ll find me a place to lie down

To lie down (to lie down) to lie down (to lie down)

Find me a place to lie down

Have a feast here tonight while the moon’s shining bright

I’ll find me a place to lie down

I’m going down that track, no coat on my back
Soles on my shoes are nearly gone
A little ways ahead there’s an old farmer’s shed
That’s where I’ll rest my weary bones

Weary bones (weary bones) weary bones (your lazy bones)

That’s where I’ll rest my weary bones

A little ways ahead there’s an old farmer’s shed

That’s where I’ll rest my weary bones



**LISTEN.
LEARN.
INSPIRE.
SUPPORT.**

Montana's Only Nonprofit Community Music School offers:

Private Lessons and Group Classes for All Ages, Children's Choir, Weekly Acoustic Jam, Performing Ensembles, Workshops, and Summer Camps. Now Online. Scholarships Available.

Please call or visit us online. northvalleymusicschool.org | 406.862.8074



Bluegrass Tidbits

(by Kate McMahon)

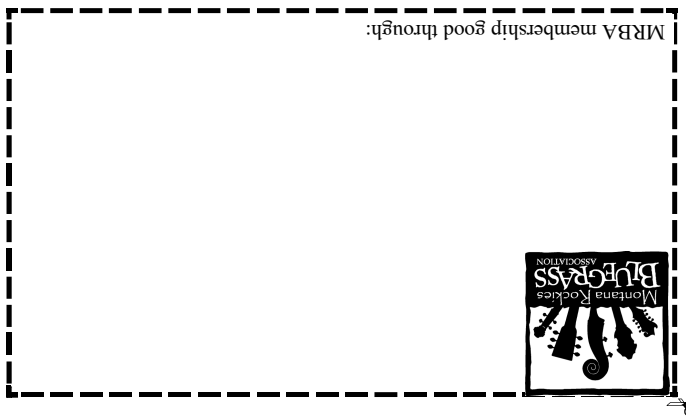
- The Missoula-based band, Lil Smokies, is releasing a new album in April. The album's single "Montana Flower" is available NOW on Americana Vibes. You can pre-order the album at: <https://www.thelilsmokies.net/>
- Looking for an opportunity to attend a bluegrass camp or workshop? Check out this website for a list of camps across the country. <https://bluegrassfoundation.org/camps-and-workshops/>
- The International Bluegrass Music Association is moving its annual "World of Bluegrass" event to Chattanooga, TN. The five-day IBMA World of Bluegrass event, scheduled for Sept. 16-20, 2025, will feature a convention, trade show, awards show, artist showcases across downtown, and a two-day live music festival with top bluegrass artists worldwide. <https://ibma.org/press-releases/ibma-announces-new-home-of-world-of-bluegrass-2025-2027/>
- Billy Strings' *Highway Prayers* reached No. 1 on *Billboard's* all-genre Top Album Sales survey dated Oct. 12. This marks the first time that bluegrass has boasted the top-selling album among all genres in 22 years. The *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack spent two weeks at No. 1 on Top Album Sales in March 2002.

Trivia Answer

All three songs have a theme about moonshine liquor.

ATTENTION:

We have set up the address label on your newsletter to be your membership card. Please clip it out and use it for proof of your membership to the MRBA.



PO Box 1306
Missoula, MT 59806

