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Memberships: \$10 one, \$15 two w/one mailing, Published 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, Mailed 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday monthly,  
Next Jam: 1-5 PM, Oct 17, SW Conservation Club, 5703 Bluffton Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46899

## President's Corner - Joe Steiner



Hey folks, let's get ready to have a bluegrass festival! Boy is it great to be able to say that!

COVID-19 sure hit the bluegrass world hard, but it looks like we are finally on the other side of things. While it pained the NIBGA board to cancel three festivals, it sure will be good to be back in the fall.

While we still have some uncertainty, and are being somewhat cautious in our approach as we get going again, we are going to have a festival. And we will be featuring some of the bands that would have been appearing if we had been able to hold events in 2020. Hopefully, we will be able to feature some of the other bands from our ill-fated 2020 festivals in 2022. We will see what fall 2021 brings, and plan from there.

Most folks I know have been hit personally by COVID-19, losing friends and family over the course of the last year-and-a-half. And, of course, it was difficult financially for artists as the bluegrass world, and arts in general, were thrown many curve balls as events dried up. Some were forced to move on to other things in life. Nothing can compensate for these things.

But, as I mentioned last month, every cloud has a silver lining, and, I guess, in this one, that lining is an increased appreciation of the wonderful world of music festivals and jam sessions. We also found many folks exploring the online world to increased advantage in sharing music instruction and performance; but we still have all been itching to get back to sharing this great music of ours in person, with an increased appreciation of our bluegrass festival world.

There were notes in the last newsletter, and in this one, about bands that will be appearing at the fall Tri-State Festival in 2021, and there will be additional notes on bands in the next couple newsletters. And, of course, in addition to great bands, there will be jamming at the Tri-State Festival.

I can't wait to see you all in the fall – I sure have missed you! Let's pick!

If you look up [The Alex Leach Band](#) on the web, you'll probably find a promotional photo of them in 60s/70s garb standing in front of a VW bus. How much cooler can you get than that?!

Well, actually that's just the start of the cool emanating from this fine young group. They are the epitome of hard driving bluegrass, centered around Alex's crisp lead vocal work, wrapped with driving harmonies featur-

ing Alex's wife Miranda (who also contributes some lead vocal work). Cool!

They are also on top of things in all the instrumental categories, from Alex's rhythm and lead guitar (obviously inspired by Larry Sparks), through driving mandolin and banjo work from Joshua Gooding and Brandon Masure, respectively, to the solid bass work of JT Coleman. Cool!

Until they performed at the spring 2019 Tri-State Bluegrass Festival, I was not very familiar with [That Dalton Gang](#). But, as I've written before in these pages, I was really impressed with them at the festival, not only for their top-notch musicianship and stage presence, but also for their excellent job of connecting with the kids at the Tri-State Youth Bluegrass Academy.

Instrumentally, they sizzle in every corner, with hot solos from Mason Ruble on banjo, Cheyenne Dalton on mandolin, and Jimmy Meyer on guitar. And, building on Wyatt Harmon's rock-solid bass line, they are the very definition of precision when setting up a syncopated rhythm groove.

Vocally, they have both a top-notch female lead in Cheyenne and an equally strong male lead in Jimmy, but, they also feature a level of power and expression in their harmonies that really sets them apart.

I'm not the only one blown away by this group, and that was evidenced when they took home **8 awards** at the SPBGMA MidWest Bluegrass Music Awards on January 10 & 11, 2020:

- ◆ Album of the Year
- ◆ Instrumental Group of the Year
- ◆ Band of the Year
- ◆ Bass Player of the Year
- ◆ Banjo Player of the Year
- ◆ Mandolin Player of the Year
- ◆ Female Vocalist of the Year
- ◆ Entertainer of the Year

Of course, I'm really excited that we'll get another chance to see them at Tri-State again in 2021 on the Saturday and Sunday shows.

## BUZZ ON THE BANDS, Continued

And you can top that all off with a pleasant and energetic stage demeanor. Cool!

With their sound self-described as "new retro", Alex and company acknowledge musical influences from sources as diverse as the Beach Boys and Porter Wagoner, but there can be no doubt they play bluegrass. Rock-solid bluegrass.

Alex may be familiar to some folks from his stint playing banjo with Ralph Stanly II, with whom he ap-

peared on the Grand Ole Opry in 2014. I have no doubt that you will agree it was time for him to step out on his own when you catch the Alex Leach Band at Tri-State.

I think their own web site says it best: "the Alex Leach Band is the sound of a new generation. Their new traditional style brings the respect, honor, and feel from music of the good ol' days and mixes it with an updated twist."

Stay tuned for more band bios next month!

## NIBGA Club History

*This article was written by Don McFarland for the newsletter back in the late 1980s.*

### PARKIN' LOT PICKERS' DREAM

After a trying week of frustration, you decide Friday morning that you need to get away from it all, so you load up your instruments, ice down a cooler of Pepsi (or whatever) and place it in its favored spot in the camper and head out for your favorite Bluegrass Festival.

You arrive early enough to find your dream spot (which you have reserved ahead of time) ready and waiting. You pull in, survey the surroundings, make sure there is room for the awning and a good jam session should the occasion arise, walk back and check the levels to make sure the refrigerator won't defrost which you lit before departing, - Ah yes, just right! - and so you walk back and shut down the old power plant and proceed with the normal ritual on arrival.

First to the cooler for a cold Pepsi (or whatever), step outside under a beautiful blanket of blue with the sun shining down flooding the entire countryside with its warmth and beauty. Next comes the electric hookup. As luck would have it you discover one very near the camper outlet and you don't even have to unroll your drop cord. Then comes the awning. With it in place and the lawn chair out it's time for another cold Pepsi (or whatever). With the cooler of Pepsi (or whatever) resting in its usual location next to your favorite lawn chair it's then time to sit and unwind a little before touring the grounds and visiting with other early arrivals.

After the mandatory tour (it's part of the ritual) of the grounds you decide it's time to head back for a snack and another cold Pepsi (or whatever) and relax before starting the festivities.

By this time the sun has begun to work its way toward the western horizon and the light of day begins to fade and a light breeze comes up blowing gently through the trees with the rustle of the leaves playing an ever familiar melody, then the deep sweet voice of a Martin flat top guitar spreads softly over the entire area to be joined by vocals of heavenly harmonies. Very soon the bright strong tone of a Gibson five string is heard followed by mandolin, fiddle and the ever familiar loud barking doghouse bass. The moment has arrived. Within minutes a jam session of the high lonesome sound unique to the Bluegrass Music world has evolved. The crowd grows as fans and friends gather around and stand in awe at the beautiful natural sounds emitted from the ever familiar faces of instruments known to our world of Bluegrass Musicians, a scene that will be repeated in many places in the park and countless thousands of parks throughout the nation every weekend all summer long.

Make your dreams come true by attending all your favorite festivals this year. Don't forget to entice your friends along.

Till next month, keep on pickin'. D.W. McFarland President, N.I.B.G.A.

## Events

Until things get back to normal, we are just listing events that have been brought to our attention. Please let me know if you have something we can include. Email News@NIBGA.com. Please contact venues before driving there.

### INDIANA

- 07/02** Joe Mullins & Radio Ramblers; Union County Bicentennial Bluegrass Night, Union County HS, 410 Patriot Blvd, Liberty, IN 47353 8p
- 07/09** Del McCoury; Blue Gate, 105 E Middlebury St., Shipshewana, IN 46565 888-447-4725 8p
- 07/17** Cornfield & Crossroads, Winding Creek Friends; Rustic Barn at Hopewell, 2238 North 500 E Urbana, IN 46990 6:45-10p \$15
- 07/24** Cornfield & Crossroads ; Hamilton County Courthouse Lawn, corner of 9th and Logan St, Noblesville, IN 6-8p

### MICHIGAN

- 07/02-04** WMBMA, Camp/jam; Kent County Fairgrounds, 225 S. Hudson, Lowell, MI 49331 free, camp \$25/night
- 07/23-31** Fast Track, Clay Hess with Ron Block, Kyle Jarvis III<sup>rd</sup> Generation, Harbourtown, Edgar Loudermill, Caleb Daugherty Band, Larry Efaw & The Bluegrass Mountaineers, New Outlook, Out of the Blue, That Dalton Gang; Marshall BGF, Calhoun County Fairgrounds, 720 Fair St, Marshall, MI 49068 marshallbluegrassfestival@gmail.com 269-788-2597

\$60+\$15/day camping, gate tickets only, daily tickets available

### OHIO

- 07/03** Custom Made Bluegrass; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 \$15
- 07/06** Tony Hale and Blackwater; Concert in the Park, N. Amphitheater. 195 Tamarack Trail, Springboro OH 45066 , 7-9pm
- 07/08-10** Larry Efaw, Caleb Daugherty (country), Harbourtown, New Outlook, Michigan Mafia, Ottawa County Bluegrass, Crabgrass, Kyle Jarvis, Bootleg (country); Norwalk, OH Festival, Huron County Fairgrounds, 940 Fair Rd, Norwalk, OH 44857 440-213-8358 \$50 gate \$40 by 7/1, camp \$15/day daily \$25
- 07/09** Vernon McIntyre's Appalachian Grass; Butler County Bluegrass Association, 5113 Huston Rd, Collinsville, OH 45004 937-417-8488 7-9p
- 07/10** Joe Mullins & Radio Ramblers; Crystal Dinner Concert Event, 50 Riffel Rd, Wooster, OH 44691 330-620-6739 5pm dinner, 6pm show \$45 inclusive dinner & show

**07/10** Family Sowell; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 \$15

**07/15** Joe Mullins & Radio Ramblers; Clinton County Fairgrounds, 958 W Main St, Wilmington, OH 45177 4p

**07/16** FastTrack; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 \$20 Doors open @5 pm music starts @6 pm.

**07/21** Bridge County Bluegrass; Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center Verandah Concert, 1337 Hayes Ave, Spiegel Grove, Fremont, OH 43420-2701 6:30-8pm

**07/24** Tony Hale & Blackwater; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 \$10

**07/28-31** 30+ top national talents; MACC, Cardinal Center Campground, 616 State Route 61, Marengo, OH 43334

**07/31** Berachah Valley; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 \$10



**Thank you** to the members that signed up to be Patrons for 2021! As of this printing, the following people have signed up as Patrons to support their favorite bluegrass association:

Wayne Boltz  
Kevin Chriss  
Verl Dasher  
Mary Day  
Bryan & Stephanie Dray  
Julie Goldsmith & Jim Geise  
Jerry & Sioux McLane  
Ian Oliveros

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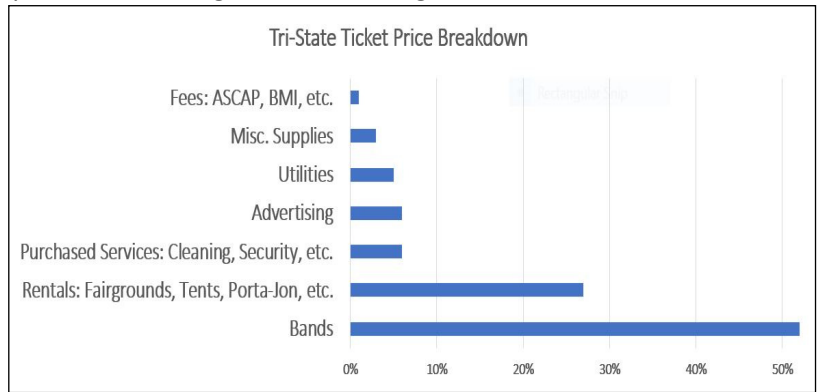
Please be sure to thank these people for supporting the association and keeping bluegrass alive and healthy in the tri state area.

## Isn't the Fairgrounds Rent-Free? By Jim Winger

While at lunch wearing my new patron t-shirt, I was stopped by a person at a nearby table that asked about the Labor Day festival. During the discussion, the gentleman asked why the prices were so high "since the fairgrounds is rent free, is it not?"

I explained the costs, including fairground rent, utilities such as water, sewer and electric, security, tents, porta-jons and, of course, the band costs. He was amazed that it took so much money to put on the festival. He had no idea of the costs involved. He thanked me for the explanation and said that, indeed, the ticket prices were very reasonable.

Note that the total costs of the festival are paid by the attendees. NIBGA does not receive any outside help or grants for these expenses. Here is a breakdown of how your ticket price is spent. Note that there isn't usually any profit...we only charge enough to cover our expenses.



## Reminders

### Corporate matching gifts

Some companies will match your charitable monetary gifts. If you donate in 2021 to NIBGA, please check with your current (or previous, if retired) employer to see if they will match your contribution.

NIBGA is a 501(c) (3) organization. Our Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 35-1424100. Individual and corporate donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

**Next NIBGA Jam - Oct 17, 2021**

Northern Indiana Bluegrass Association  
5034 Wapiti Court  
Fort Wayne, IN 46804-4946



If your name and address are not correct, please notify us so that our records are up-to-date. Call (260) 918-4790