

Correspondence: NIBGA, 1020 Wyandot Rd, Bucyrus, OH 44820 (260) 918-4790, news@nibga.com
Memberships: \$10 one, \$15 two w/one mailing, Published 2nd Sunday, Mailed 3rd Sunday monthly,
Next Jam: 1-5 PM, Feb 20, SW Conservation Club, 5703 Bluffton Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46899

President's Corner - Joe Steiner



As we start the new year, I am looking forward to the music it will bring.

Your board will be meeting over the winter, and one of our main topics of discussion will be determining how to safely hold our two festivals, and we will be seeking the guidance of the Noble County Health Department in that regard. Although we are very optimistic that we will return to holding two festivals in 2022, we still remain somewhat cautious as we monitor the applicable news reports.

We have received many inquiries about the bands that will be appearing, and we are actively working on that right now – we will have more information in upcoming newsletters, starting next month.

New Year's Day is always a time for resolutions, and one of my resolutions is to ensure we have a varied lineup. We are working hard to fill out the schedule with something that appeals to everyone with an interest in bluegrass music, from the roots of the music to the more progressive.

Another new year's resolution is to devote more time to music! Although winter has barely started, I'm already looking forward to spring, when we can pick outside again and attend festivals. In the meantime, though, I'm hoping to get to some more indoor jam sessions (safely distance, of course).

Unless something changes, the NIBGA jam sessions will be occurring as planned on the third Sundays of January, February, March, and April.

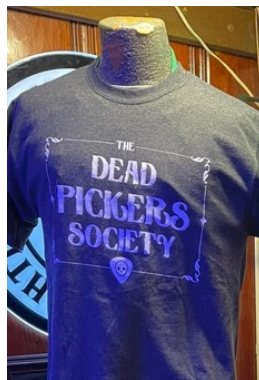
I hope to see you there!

Joe Steiner

If you are in the Fort Wayne area on the 3rd Sunday of the month, consider joining us for the monthly board meeting and jam session. It takes place at the Southwest Conservation Club, 5703 Bluffton Rd, Fort Wayne.

Jamming runs from noon until about 6:00 p.m. Food and beverages available for purchase. We've been having a good picking crowd and an appreciative audience. All acoustic instruments, no mics. We are trying a "jam with the band" starting with the February 20 jam. The featured band will be the **Dead Pickers Society**.

Please come out and join the fun!!



Dear Doctor Earl,

I notice that there are a lot of fiddle contests at various festivals and county fairs. I really enjoy going to them. But, I also enjoy going to banjo contests, and I notice there aren't as many of those around, at least, not around here. Why is that?

Signed, Contest Lover

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Dear Contest Lover,

I think fiddle contests tend to be more popular overall because they have been around longer. There were fiddle contests in the US as early as revolutionary war times, before the banjo was even established as a musical instrument. You see, there was a time -- I know it is hard to imagine -- when the world did not center around banjo players, and they were not worshipped like they are now.

Although many banjo players now concentrate on melody and improvisation, that really wasn't the case until Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys entered the picture. So, the fiddle was the obvious choice for folks wanting to make a show of pitting the best local talents against each other. I think fiddle contests still tend to be more popular, harkening back to those earlier times.

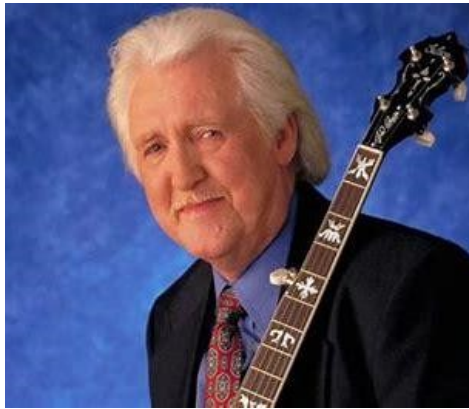
Another reason for the popularity of fiddle contests is that many youngsters have been exposed to violin music in school music programs, and the transition from the violin world to fiddling is a natural step for many. There aren't many banjo programs in schools... hmm, I wonder if we can do something about that. Maybe the good doctor should get working on that one.

Even though there may be more fiddle than banjo contests around, there are plenty of banjo contests, too. A quick check on any internet search engine will show several in many parts of the county. Of course, it doesn't hurt to mention to festival promoters and fair boards that'd you'd love to see a banjo competition along with their fiddle competition.

Now, start practicing so you will be ready to compete!!!



## Over Jordan



Just two months (to the day) of the passing of Sonny Osborne, we lost another of the truly great bluegrass banjo innovators when

**J.D. Crowe** passed away at 84 on December 24 following a bout with pneu-

monia. J. D., like Sonny, was there when the music was being “invented”. But, like Sonny, he was determined to make his own mark and take the music in new directions. He first became interested in bluegrass music after seeing Flatt and Scruggs when he was in his early teens, and he was soon playing banjo with Mac Wiseman and Jimmy Martin, appearing many times with Jimmy on the “Louisiana Hayride”.

His banjo break on the classic recording of Jimmy’s “You Don’t Know My Mind” is the consummate example of hard-driving Scruggs-style banjo and will live on forever as a cornerstone of the music we all love.

J.D. soon, however, went on to become a band leader in his own right during the 1960s with the “Kentucky Mountain Boys.” It was in the 1970s, with his group the “New South”, that he would change the course of bluegrass history.

Working with fellow trendsetters such as Tony Rice, Jerry Douglas, Bobby Slone, and Ricky Skaggs, J.D. helped pioneer the newgrass sound by bringing in elements of other genres, such as blues and rock. Many in bluegrass will instantly recognize Rounder 0044 as the eponymous New South album which opened up a new style of music which was undeniably bluegrass but yet widened both the scope and influence of the genre. Even today, it stands as a reference to those becoming involved in the music.

His soulful take on progressive material inspired many who followed after, including bluegrass and newgrass greats as well as the country rock bands of the 1970s and even many of the alternative country musicians of today. Nonetheless, some of J.D.’s best work was in the more traditional vein with the supergroup, Bluegrass Album Band, in the 1980s.

Through it all, J.D.’s playing was unmistakable because of his powerful right hand and the clean, crisp sound that every bluegrass banjo player tries to imitate. In 1983, he won a Grammy for best country instrumental

performance, and in 2003 he was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association Hall of Fame. He will be greatly missed, but he will live on forever through his influence on bluegrass music.



**Marcus Mullins**, 37, passed away on November 10, 2021 in Nashville, TN. Many club members will remember Marcus and his sister Megan, who were from Fort Wayne, because of their appearances at our festival in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The club also granted them scholarships during this time period to further their bluegrass education.



From age 5 on Marcus and Megan were playing 100-200 shows a year, accompanied by their father, Melvin. They toured all over the United States and the world - Canada, Germany, Poland, Japan. He was classically trained on violin and viola, but he was adept at many other instruments on which he was largely self-taught.

He was first chair Viola in the Fort Wayne Youth Symphony, and at age 14 he debuted on the Grand Ole Opry. He could also play any style of music: bluegrass, country, classical, jazz, Celtic, and many others. He was always the envy of his fellow musicians with his ability to become adept at any instrument or style with very little practice or rehearsal.

In addition to his prowess as an instrumentalist, he was also a fine lead singer, and he was training himself to sing and arrange harmony parts at a very young age. Marcus enlisted in the military at age 19, serving from 2003 to 2012 and concluding his service in Afghanistan.

He was buried with military honors at the Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery in Nashville.



## December/January Events

It is great to see so many events starting to happen again. However, please call ahead to make sure it is still on before you travel a distance.

### INDIANA

- 1<sup>st</sup> Thurs** Wakarusa Bluegrass Jamboree, Northwood Middle School, 301 N. Elkhart St, Wakarusa, IN 46573  
574-862-2200 6:30-9p  
Free *Established September 2000*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun** Northern Indiana Bluegrass jam and meeting, Southwest Conservation Club, 5703 Bluffton Rd, Fort Wayne, IN 46809  
noon-6p free all welcome, acoustic only instruments, food & beverages available
- Last Fri** Broadwalk Jam, Shipshewana, IN
- 02/11** Special Consensus; Sound & Spirit, Northminster Presbyterian Church, 1660 Kessler Blvd E Dr, Indianapolis, IN 46220 7p

### MICHIGAN

- Every Wed.** jam with Ron Hammon, Moose, 4043 Howe Rd, Grand Blanc, MI 48439 6:30-9p  
Ron - 810-309-0032
- Every Sun.** Bob's Barn Jamborees, 1417 Johnson St., Lake Odessa, MI 48849 616-374-8205  
3-4p show, 4:30-7p jam  
bobwarner40@gmail.com
- 1<sup>st</sup> Tues** Presbyterian Village 32001 Cherry Hill Road Westland, MI 7p  
313-617-4864
- 1<sup>st</sup> Sat** Manton Jamboree, Ranger room, Manton HS, 105 5th St, Manton, MI 6-9p  
lwestbrook17@hotmail.com
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat** Maumee Street Music Jam, First Presbyterian Church, 156 E. Maumee, Adrian, MI 49221 6p, use east side door, snack bar, Mullins 517-607-8085, Church 517-265-2168
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues** Presbyterian Village 32001 Cherry Hill Road Westland, MI 7p 313-617-4864

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun** Woldumar Nature Center, 5739 Old Lansing Rd., Lansing, MI 48917 2-5p \$5 donation  
517-505-2809
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sat** Michigan Bluegrass Assoc., Armstrong Middle School, 6161 Hopkins Dr., Flint, MI 48506 6p 810 736-5332
- 02/02** Lindsay McCaw: Old Time Fiddle by Ear; Elderly Instruments, 1100 N Washington Ave., Lansing, MI 48906 2-3:30p \$25  
517-372-7880
- 02/03** Aaron Jonah Lewis: Clawhammer Banjo Clinic; Elderly Instruments, 1100 N Washington Ave., Lansing, MI 48906 noon-1:30p \$25  
517-372-7880

### OHIO

- Every Tues** - FOMC jam, 1196 Ross Millville Rd, Millville, OH 45013 7-9p 419-568-1220
- Every Thur** - Open Bluegrass Jam; Bluegrass Picking Circle, Rambling House, 310 N Hudson St, Columbus OH 43202  
614-468-3217 6-8p free, acoustic, no mics
- Every Sat** - Dry Creek Cafe, 201 Columbus Rd, Mt Vernon, OH 43050 8-10p  
food available
- Opry barn** has suspended jams and shows
- 01/21** Slate Ridge; Byrne's Pub, 1248 W. Third Ave., Columbus, OH 43212 614-486-4722 7-9p
- 01/22** Slate Ridge; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 4 pm.
- 01/26** Sierra Hull; Newport Music Hall, 1722 N High St, Columbus, OH 43201 614-461-5483 6:30p (Note: Sierra appears with non bluegrass artists)
- 01/28-29** Back Up & Push, New Outlook, Caney Creek, Kevin Prater, Sideline; Blast Off Winter, Moon City Events Ctr, 1208 Lunar Dr, Wapakoneta, OH 45896 567-204-0929  
Music Fri 6p Sat 7p
- 01/29** 7 Mile Bluegrass Band; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143  
614-323-6938 4 pm.
- 01/30** The Kevin Prater Band bluegrass gospel concert; Wesley Community Chapel, 17333 Chapel Rd, Newcomerstown, OH 43832
- 02/05** Lonesome River Band, 7 Mile Bluegrass; Gaslight Theater Winter Bluegrass Series, 301 S Main St, Georgetown, OH 45121 7p
- 02/05** Chosen Road; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143  
614-323-6938 4 pm
- 02/12** Dry Branch Fire Squad; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143  
614-323-6938 4 pm
- 02/18** Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper; Methodist Church, 207 S. Court St., Marysville, OH 43040 937-642-4712 7:30p
- 02/19** Vertical Limit, Ohio Crossroads, Mitch Jr. Band; Shalersville Town Hall, 9090 OH-44, Ravenna, OH 44266 door 6p, music 7p
- 02/19** Junior Sisk; Sterling Bluegrass Concert, 26 E. Main St., Mt Sterling OH 43143 614-323-6938 4 pm



If you have events to post, please email [nl@nibga.com](mailto:nl@nibga.com) or submit on the Northern Indiana Bluegrass Association facebook page.

**Don't Forget Us! Last quarter, NIBGA received \$40.79 from AmazonSmiles**

Just sign into the **AMAZON SMILES** log in whenever you shop at Amazon. It automatically calculates .5% and sends it to NIBGA and it doesn't cost you a single cent. What could be better???

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**Next NIBGA Jam in Fort Wayne - Feb 20, 2022**



BanjoConfucius says:

If you are cold, get out your instrument and learn a new tune.

When you are done, you'll still be cold, but you'll know a new tune.



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