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Memberships: \$10 one, \$15 two w/one mailing, Published 2nd Sunday, Mailed 3rd Sunday monthly,
Next Jam: 1-5 PM, Oct 19, SW Conservation Club, 5703 Bluffton Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46899

President's Corner - Joe Steiner



By the time you read this, the NIBGA board will be planning their arrival at the Noble County Fairgrounds, and it won't be long before things will start buzzing as folks begin arriving for the fall Tri-State Bluegrass festival.

As I reflect upon this festival and our 49th season, I'm reminded of the time, in 1998 or 1999, that Jim and Linda Winger made a visit to the studio at WLFC (University of Findlay, Findlay, Ohio) where I was broadcasting my weekly radio show. We discussed Tri-State, then "only" 32 or 33 years old. When we discussed the lineup, program, and workshops, I was impressed enough to ask, "You're going to tell me now that this event must surely cost an arm and a leg."

Of course, they said that, on the contrary, Tri-State is an affordable, family-friendly event. The same is true today. And, although the WLFC studio has moved three times since then, Tri-State is still in the same location at the Noble County Fairgrounds. Much has changed over almost thirty years since that day, which roughly coincides with the beginning of my involvement with NIBGA.

But, the homegrown spirit of bluegrass music has stayed the same. As I reflect on the longevity of bluegrass music, I realize that any form of artistic expression must have room to change and grow - bluegrass music included. The attendees at the Debutants' Hoot Camp a couple weeks ago weren't even alive when Jim and Linda visited WLFC, but today they are helping to grow the music that Jim, Linda, and the rest of NIBGA have been espousing all these years.

When I look at the great lineup we have at the fall festival, I think about the depth of bluegrass music, spanning everything from the traditional grass of Sammy Adkins all the way out and around through the more modern sounds of groups like My Brother's Keeper. This music will continue to grow, and young folks like those at Hoot Camp will grow it. But the music is all still, and always will be, grounded in the same homegrown spirit.

I liken this to the effect of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on our world. When I look at graphics that AI generates, or read stories that AI crafts, I sometimes notice things that don't quite fit for those who are familiar and comfortable with the subject matter AI addresses. We might see instruments whose sizes are out of proportion or facts that don't quite fit with actual history. But, does AI capture the right spirit? Does it help evoke the feelings that we want? Maybe AI frees us from some of the chains that reality uses to hold us down.

Who would think of putting a cello on a bluegrass poster? AI might. Does a cello belong in bluegrass? The Debutants think so. And I agree - as the music grows, it becomes what we make of it. We could maybe argue whether at some point the music becomes "newgrass" or something else instead of bluegrass. But I don't want

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Over Jordan

Jay A. Winger 1963-2025

Jay suffered a fatal heart attack on August 9. He was eagerly looking forward to seeing all his bluegrass friends at the upcoming Tri-State Festival. Many of you may remember chatting with him as he drove the "Bluegrass Taxi" at past festivals. His enthusiasm for being part of the team that makes our events so special was unmistakable.

He especially loved collecting band title posters right after each group finished performing, hurrying to get them signed by the musicians. The walls of his apartment were proudly covered with these autographed posters — each one a memory of the music and people he loved.

As parents, we can say that losing a son is one of the hardest things in life. He is dearly missed. ~ Jim & Linda Winger

From sister Julie Winger's facebook post: *I am saddened to share that my older brother, Jay, passed away on Saturday at 9:06 p.m. Jay had a very strong will to live but his heart was not able to recover this time. He was surrounded by his parents, siblings, nieces, and nephews, and was undoubtedly received into the arms of our Lord.*

We are grateful to God, Megan Argueta, and Parkview Health, for the additional two years of time we had to spend with Jay. It was not wasted.



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Continued

to. I want to spend some time enjoying this great music, in all its ever-growing varieties. And that's what I'm going to do in a couple weeks – see you at Tri-State!

Joe

P.S. We'll see some new faces and some old faces at Tri-State. As I was drafting this column, I became aware of one face that we won't see this fall. Jim and Linda Winger's son, Jay, passed away August 9. Many folks knew Jay as the dedicated taxi driver who would transport folks back and forth to the stage area during the festival. Jay will be greatly missed and I'm sure many folks will join me in remembering Jim, Linda, and the entire Winger family in thoughts and prayers.

Debutants' Hoot Camp was a "Jammtastic" Success

The first inaugural Debutant's Hoot Camp was a wonderful week of musical workshops and guided jam sessions! 45 young musicians from Fort Wayne, Warsaw, Kendallville, and surrounding areas began the week as strangers and ended as friends and musical collaborators. Hosted by the Community Arts Academy at PFW and sponsored by the Northern Indiana Bluegrass Association under its 501 (c)(3) nonprofit umbrella, Hoot Camp included students ages 10-18 from absolute beginner to advanced skill levels. Each student began the day with their instrument specific teacher.

Walking around the music center it was easy to hear Sean Hoffman and Lauren Blair coaching their young fiddlers. With Jon Swain and Kenny Taylor leading the guitar players, Lynn Nicholson coaching the mandolins, Ellen Coplin teaching the cellos and Michael Earl Newsome guiding the banjo students, Bluegrass music was floating through the halls!

Students learned two traditional tunes, and three Debutants originals as well as taking classes in improvisation, how to join a jam session, songwriting, and harmony singing.

To conclude the week of camp students eagerly tuned up their instruments for a final concert side-by-side with Debutants on the Baker Street Centre stage. With a packed house of over 300 attendees the room was crackling with enthusiasm! The young musicians performed the traditional tune Old Joe Clark with solos. They then sang and played their own rendition of Little Liza Jane complete with their newly composed verses. Ending with three favorite Debutants songs they then turned the stage over to their camp teachers and sang and danced to an hour of music.



"We are so thrilled and grateful for a full week of musical opportunities for youth made possible by our community of supportive musicians in the Northern Indiana Bluegrass Association. Keep your eye out for some new faces at festivals and jam sessions from Debutants Hoot Camp."

Ellen Coplin and Sean Hoffman
Debutants' Hoot Camp directors



Upcoming Events - confirm event status before leaving home

Due to space constraints, this listing doesn't include the regularly scheduled jams. Those can still be found on the website at BluegrassUSA.net. Please check the website for updates to the events and the jams.

INDIANA

09/05-06 Moma Said String Band, Booze Hounds Bluegrass, various non-bluegrass; Harmony Valley Music Festival, Valley Branch Retreat, 2620 Valley Branch Rd, Nashville, **IN** 47448

09/12-14 Blue Holler, Westside Revelers, Steve Scott & Brothers, Colt Adams, Bahler & Golden Age, Middle Road, Medicinal Bluegrass, Barrel Scrapers, Booze Hounds, Full Measure, Crossroads; Central Ind. Bluegrass BGF, Chief Lafontain Saddle Club, 915N CR 200W, Huntington, **IN** 46750 765-669-0011

09/20 Ma Crow & Company; Opry Barn, 19189 Pennington Rd, Metamora, **IN** 47030 metamoramusic@gmail.com

09/24 Booze Hounds Bluegrass; Jam, Duke's Indy, 2352 SW St, Indianapolis, Duke's Indy 2352 South West Street Indianapolis, **IN**, 46225 7-10:30p

09/25-27 Booze Hounds Bluegrass, Peter Rowan with Sam Grisman Project, Armchair Boogie x2, Grandpa's Cough Medicine, Henhouse Prowlers, Kyle Tuttle Banjo, Chicago Farmer, Chain Station, Front Porch, Debutants x2, New Old Cavalry, The Hammer and The Hatchet, Fun Dunns, 65 North Pickers, Low Landers, Cody Heckin Williams, Tim Pike, Jess & the Hired Hands, Avocado Chic, Father Kentucky, Nolan Strupeck & Luke & Maria; First City Music Festival, 411 Willow St. Vincennes, **IN** 47591

MICHIGAN

09/04 Schlitz Creek; Dock at Bayview on Gull Lake, 12504 D Ave E Richland, **MI** 49083 269-731-4911 6-9p

09/05 Gibson Brothers; The Ark, 316 S. Main St, Ann Arbor, **MI** 48104 \$29

09/06 Alison Krauss & Union Station; Michigan Lottery Amphitheatre at Freedom Hill, Sterling Heights, **MI**

09/11 Molly Tuttle, Town Mountain & Cecilia Castleman; Masonic Theatre, 500 Temple St, Detroit, **MI** 48201 8p \$50.47-\$66.82

09/12 Schlitz Creek; Squirrel Hollow Golf Club Concert, 12111 Helmer Road South, Battle Creek, **MI** 49015 7-9p

09/19-20 Cedar Creek, Ottawa County Bluegrass Band, Forked Run, The Williams Family, Blue Water Ramblers, Schlitz Creek; West Michigan BGF, St. Louis Church of God Campground, 8489 N. Bagley Rd., St. Louis, **MI** 48880 269-806-8561 Adv: \$30 Camping: \$25-\$30 per night

09/21 Jacob Jolliff Band; Centre for the Arts, 114 S. Monroe St. Monroe, **MI** 48161

OHIO

09/05 Slate Ridge; Byrne's Pub, 1248 W. Third Ave., Columbus, **OH** 43212, 614-486-4722, 7-9p

09/06 My Brothers Keeper; Clifton Opera House, 5 S Clay St, Clifton, **OH** 45316 937-767-1767 7p

09/06 The Goldsberrys; Edison Brewing Company, 785 Science Blvd, Columbus, **OH** 43230 6-7 pm

09/07 Alison Krauss & Union Station; Jacobs Pavilion at Nautica, 2014 Sycamore St, Cleveland, **OH** 44113

09/07 The Goldsberrys; Rivervibes 2025, 5637 Emmons Rd., Oregona, **OH** 45054 11:30 am-2:15 pm

09/11-13 Northwest Territory, My Brother's Keeper, Kevin Prater, Larry Efaw, Kentucky Just Us, DownRiver Collective, David Mayfield Parade, The Country Gentleman Show, David Parmley, Little Roy & Lizzy, Authentic Unlimited, Breaking Grass; Mohican BGF,

22462 Wally Rd, Glenmont, **OH** 44628 740-599-6741

09/12 Molly Tuttle, Town Mountain; Globe Iron, 2320 Center St, Cleveland, **OH** 44113 8p

09/12 Gipson & Fitz; Byrne's Pub, 1248 W. Third Ave., Columbus, **OH** 43212, 614-486-4722, 7-9p

09/12-13 W Authentic Unlimited, Southern Legacy, The Kody Norris Show, Hammertowne, Union Town, Crabgrass, Hillbilly Tradition and The Possum Creek Ramblers; Walnut Hills Farm BGF, 9085 Adams Rd, Huber Heights, **OH** 45424 937-673-3342 free entry and camping!

09/12-13 Slippery Creek, The Tillers, Larry Efaw, Hillbilly Chic, TBA; 1499 Greenbush-Cobb Rd, Williamsburg, **OH** 45176

09/16 Joe Mullins; Bible Baptist, 55 Megan Dr, Wilmington, **OH** 45177 6p

09/16 Mark Whitt; Clifton Opera House, 5 S Clay St, Clifton, **OH** 45316 937-767-1767 7p

09/18 The Steeldrivers; Kuss Auditorium, 300 S Fountain Ave, Springfield, **OH** 45506 7:30 pm

09/19 Wood Pickets; Byrne's Pub, 1248 W. Third Ave., Columbus, **OH** 43212, 614-486-4722 7-9p

09/24 Sierra Hull; Kent Stage, 175 E Main St, Kent, **OH** 44240 6:30

09/26 Waverly Run, Mike Mitchell Band and Kevin Prater Band; 3 Bridges, 132 Scioto St, Portsmouth, **OH** 45662 Free

09/28 Joe Mullins; Caesar Ford Park, 520 S Stringtown Rd, Xenia, **OH** 45385 2p

09/26 Darren Nicholson, Steve Ludwig; Pennyroyal Opera House, 139 Fair Ave, Quaker City, **OH** 43773 7p



Current 2025 NIBGA Patrons Thank you!

Thank-You to everyone that signed up to be a Patron so far for 2025... YOU are helping to keep bluegrass alive in the Tri-State area! I am so thankful for all of the **NEW** Patrons this year, and for the continuing support of previous Patrons. When you see someone wearing a Patron t-shirt (no matter WHICH year), please tell them "thank you!".

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* **New Patrons** Thank you very much!



NIBGA activities are made possible in part by Arts United, the Indiana Arts Commission, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Northern Indiana Bluegrass Association
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September 2025

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