



December 2023

Minnesota *Bluegrass*



Bill Cagley

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December 2023
Vol. 49
No. 11

Newsstand: \$3
Subscription: \$35

Mission Statement:
To preserve and promote bluegrass and
old-time stringband music
in and around the State of Minnesota.

www.minnesotabluegrass.org

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Deadline for submissions:

The 1st of the month preceding publication

Submit content: editor@minnesotabluegrass.org

Advertising rates/sizes available at:

www.minnesotabluegrass.org/Magazine

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From the President

I just got home from Fall Jam a few hours ago, and wow, what a success it was -- well attended and packed with great workshops, jams and performances. Congratulations and many thanks to the Fall Jam committee for their vision and energy in planning and executing this wonderful event, with the capable support of our Interim Administrator Ross Willits and key volunteers.

The committee asked the Board for a significant increase in this year's event budget to allow for booking more talent. It looks as if their vision has paid off in excitement, attendance and revenue.

Much appreciation goes out to Fall Jam committee chair Tom Peschges, who has told us this may be his last year in that role. We definitely hope to keep him involved, one way or another. Tom has championed a songwriter focus in recent years, and bringing in IBMA Songwriter of the Year Tim Stafford for this year's sold-out workshop was quite a coup.

Our partnership with the Great Minnesota Uke Gathering (GMUG) for this event continues to contribute significantly to its success and energy, and we thank their committee, volunteers and many attendees.

Improved technology helped streamline our ticket and merchandise sales. Our healthy fund balance allowed us to upgrade our tablets and credit-card processing equipment. A new scanner for the merch department sped up transactions and allowed coordinator Kristina Hess and her volunteers to more easily track inventory. Volunteer tech advisor Nate Hess has provided helpful guidance in making these purchases.

Switching our online ticket-sales vendor in 2023 got rid of extra fees for advance ticket purchases, and that surely played a part (along with the great Fall Jam lineup) in tripling our advance sales this year.

Board election results will be announced about one week into December. I appreciate the work our current board members have done this year. They are all committed to MBOTMA's success. I look forward to working alongside new and returning board members in 2024.

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Become a Member

The Minnesota Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Association is open to everyone. Our members include people who love to listen to music and people who love to make music. As a member, you'll be invited to participate in bluegrass and old-time music events and celebrations. You'll receive discounted prices on admission to events and merchandise, and you'll receive a subscription to *Minnesota Bluegrass* magazine.

Becoming a member of MBOTMA is easy and affordable. Your membership will not only nurture your own interests, but will help to ensure that the bluegrass and old-time music tradition is sustained and grows in Minnesota.

Individual \$35	Includes <i>Minnesota Bluegrass</i> , events discounts for one person, and a free classified ad.
Family \$50	Includes <i>Minnesota Bluegrass</i> , events discounts and a free classified ad.
Band \$75	Includes <i>Minnesota Bluegrass</i> , advance booking information for MBOTMA events, a free classified ad, and listings in the MBOTMA member band directory in print and on our website.
Bronze Level \$100	Includes <i>Minnesota Bluegrass</i> , first-class postage, events discounts, and a free classified ad.
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or download a membership form.
Call 601-651-3694 for details
or if you would like to join by phone.

Funding for Minnesota Bluegrass is provided in part by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and private donors



Minnesota Bluegrass Calendar of Events

Concerts and events presented or supported by
the Minnesota Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Association



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support Grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund.

Complete Info/Tickets at: www.minnesotabluegrass.org

**MBOTMA
Annual Meeting
via Zoom
Tuesday
December 19, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84040737515?pwd=RjBPT3N2UFdleG01dkFRZUFxNWQ3dz09>

Meeting ID: 840 4073 7515

Passcode: 848967

www.minnesotabluegrass.org/Annual-Meeting-2023

March 1-3, 2024 - Friday-Sunday

**Minnesota Bluegrass
Winter Weekend**

Crowne Plaza Minneapolis West Hotel
Plymouth, MN

Presented by the MN Bluegrass & Old-Time Music Assn

**Minnesota Bluegrass
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**From the President -
continued from page 3**

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Zoom at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, December 19. The Zoom information is available elsewhere in this issue and will also be sent out via email. We hope to see you there. Thank you for your support for this wonderful organization.

Penny Hillemann

44th Annual

Minnesota *Bluegrass* Winter Weekend

March 1-3
2024
Crowne Plaza Minneapolis West
Plymouth, MN

A Festival of Bluegrass & Old-Time Music and Dance

3 Stages with 40 Bands
Jamming -25+ hours of Workshops
Old-Time Dance - Exhibitors
Grass Seeds Music Academy
Headliners and Bands TBA



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Grass Clippings

Hennepin County Library Releases 7th Streaming Music Collection

Along with public libraries in music city hotbeds like Seattle, Austin and Nashville, Hennepin County Library worked with the Madison-based MUSI-Cat company to create a music streaming and download service just for Minnesota. Called MNspin, the service accepts contributions from musicians and makes their music available worldwide on the library's website. MNspin has just released its 2023 collection of music. This year's selection includes 105 new albums, growing the collection to more than 600 albums across 14 genres including bluegrass, country and Americana.

MNspin connects Minnesota artists with new audiences and offers listeners an ad-free exploration of the rich, diverse Minnesota music scene. Anyone can stream from the platform, and library cardholders can download songs for free.

"We have been so pleased by the enthusiastic reception MnSpin has received, and by the benefit to our participating musicians," said Lois Langer Thompson, Hennepin County Library's former director. "We hope that by participating in our rich and diverse local music scene, we will continue our work to make the library inclusive and welcoming to more people in our community and beyond."

On MNspin, listeners can discover music by familiar bluegrass, country and Americana artists such as Bob Bovee, Becky Schlegel, AJ Srubas and Rina Rossi, Mother Banjo, Phil Nusbaum, Adam Keisling, the High 48s, No Man's String Band and King Wilkie's Dream. "I've done quite a bit of outreach to MBOT-MA artists, including speaking to the Board, meeting musicians at events like

the Winter Weekend and Laughing Waters Festival and guesting on Phil Nusbaums's Bluegrass Saturday Morning Jazz 88 radio show," says Minneapolis Central librarian Jeff Radford. "It's been a really positive—and fun--experience working directly with artists to advise them on the submission process and offering a helping hand with technology we use."

"What makes MNspin unique is our focus on Minnesota artists," Radford continued. "We're like SoundCloud or Spotify, but just for Minnesota! We spend a lot of time going out into the community, building relationships, leveraging partnerships and developing programming. We've sponsored shows in collaboration with organizations like the Minnesota Music Coalition, and venues like the Hook and Ladder Theater and Lounge. Music is a way to share ideas, and that's core function of public libraries – providing access to a broad spectrum of ideas."

Hennepin County Library launched MNspin in 2017. Each spring, the Library holds a statewide call for artists to submit a track from an album or ep produced in the past five years. Submissions are reviewed by a panel of prominent local music influencers and library staff with strong connections within the Minnesota music scene. Individuals on the curation panel bring eclectic tastes, backgrounds and broad areas of musical interest. Working together, they evaluated a record number of 450+ contributions this past year, whittling them down in terms of quality and genre allocation to fit the 2023 budget available for MNspin. Once selected, artists are asked to upload the rest of their album/ep, which must be at least ten minutes in length and contain four songs.

This year's community curators are:

Andrea Swensson-Andrea is an author, podcast host, and music journalist in Minneapolis. She hosts the Official

Prince Podcast and has contributed music journalism to numerous publications including NPR Music, Pitchfork, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, City Pages, and The Current, where she previously hosted The Local Show.

Jessica Paxton-Jessica is an afternoon DJ on 89.3 The Current, where she also hosts the weekly specialty show "Teenage Kicks," showcasing classic post-punk and new wave music from the late 70s to early 90s. Paxton lends a hand at the historic Parkway Theater in Minneapolis, where she's booked live music, comedy, films, podcasts and author events since the venue reopened in September 2018.

Jessica Diabazzio- Jessica joined the University of Minnesota Libraries in 2018, and her portfolio includes instruction, reference, outreach, and public services at the University of Minnesota Music Library.

Paul Dice-Paul studied composition at the Boston Conservatory of Music with Joel Kabakov, privately in Boston with John Adams, with Lou Harrison at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in Florida and at Harrison's home in California.

Michael Johnson (Michaelton)- Michael has been professionally active for over a decade as a versatile producer, vocalist and DJ. He brings a wide breadth of experience in hip-hop, electronic, ambient, jazz and classical music.

Chadwick "Niles" Phillips- "Niles" is an artist and renaissance man who is the founder of The Avant Garde, a music and entertainment company that produces concerts featuring Twin Cities artists of color within the genres of neo-soul/R&B, spoken-word poetry, conscious hip-hop, live instrumentalists and visual artists.

Desdamona, Ross-Desdamona is an international award-winning spoken word and hip-hop artist who has been performing, teaching and producing solo and collaborative work for over 20 years.

She has been awarded five Minnesota Music Awards and three MSAB Artist Initiative grants to create projects featuring some of the Twin Cities' most influential artists.

"Participating in MNspin as a curator was a ton of fun," said curator Abbazio. "As someone who loves discovering new bands and artists but who's new-ish to Minnesota, I hadn't had the opportunity to explore the amazing music landscape of our state before participating in this fantastic project. I was thrilled to learn about albums from the Plucked Up String Band, Texas Toast and so many other musical groups through my work with MNspin, and I've been playing their music on repeat ever since!"

Loretta Simonet of MBOTMA's singer-songwriter member duo Curtis and Loretta mentions how MNspin is an opportunity for artists as well. "Having two of our albums selected for this unique ser-

vice has been very valuable.... It has greatly expanded our exposure, reaching many more potential audience members and concert presenters than we ever could on our own. It has gotten us two great gigs at Peavey Plaza in downtown Minneapolis, during the summer concert series co-presented by MNspin and Green Minneapolis. We can't express our appreciation to MNspin highly enough! We've both loved libraries since we were children, and Hennepin County Library has gone above and beyond, with this wonderful innovation called MNspin."

Selected artists sign a license agreement and receive \$200 from the Friends of Hennepin County Library to make their album available. They're asked to sign a two-year contract to let the Library make their music available on MNspin, but they retain all their rights.

Discover MNspin's robust Minnesota music collection and start listening by

visiting www.hclib.org/mnspin.

About Hennepin County Library

Hennepin County Library is a national leader of library service, innovation and excellence. Our 41 libraries, website and outreach services serve 1.2 million county residents over 611 square miles.

Our mission is to inspire, facilitate, and celebrate lifelong learning. Shaped by the information needs and aspirations of our residents, we envision the library as a shared space for enrichment and connection.

Library services are an important part of thriving and interconnected communities. We believe that every Hennepin County resident should have a library card and use it regularly.

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GRASS LAND JAM

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FEATURING THE MAIN STAGE ACTS
FROM MBOTMA FESTIVAL!

SATURDAYS
AT 9:30 P.M.



pioneer
public television

Cover Story:

Bill Cagley

by Jon Garon

Jon: First off, I just want to say it's been a lot of fun getting to know you over these years and also to pick with you. You've been a mainstay at MBOTMA for many years. How did you get started with the organization?

Bill: I moved up from Iowa in 1984 and I hit the ground running. I was immediately accepted into the association and I was well-received. Let's just say that.

Jon: You and I play a lot of the same stuff, other than the 3500 fiddle tunes, you know – so what interested you in this kind of music in the first place?

Bill: Well, being from Iowa, I've always liked country music and old-time music. Doc Watson was one of my first, real heroes. And of course, Norman Blake. Norman and Doc both played fiddle tunes on the guitar, and I thought, whoa, that's pretty cool. So, I took it just a step farther and started to learn every fiddle tune written or ever thought of. Yeah, it's been "berry berry" good to me.

Jon: So, where did you grow up in Iowa?

BILL: I was born in Waterloo, Iowa. Then moved up to Cedar Falls to live with the hippies. Then I moved to Iowa City where I really learned. I really got to pick with some of the big power pickers - Bob Black, Al Murphy. They were all very good to me. I mean they would spend hours with me. And this is when I was in my early 20s. I didn't start playing the guitar till I was 18 years old, almost ancient, but I hit the ground running so to speak, and like I said, they were very good to me.

Jon: Was your family musical?

Bill: Not really. We listened to a lot

of music all the time, we had all the records and of course on TV, we'd watch the Johnny Cash show, the Porter Wagoner show, you know, all those, all the shows you could watch on TV that had music in them and of course, we had the record player.

Jon: That was my next question.



Bill Cagley

When I learned, all we had was a record player. I'd have to keep moving that needle back.

Was that the same for you?

Bill: Yeah, I tried. You know, how they say to turn it down to 16 speed and try to learn but geez, it's too slow. The notes were like a mile wide and I couldn't do it. I would just imitate it. That's why, when I started to learn from Norman Blake and Doc Watson, I would listen to it and think I had it exactly - oh, yeah, man. That's it. I'd play it for a while, and then go back and realize that's not what they're doing. But yet, it was their flavor in my style.

Jon: Did you have any formal training?

Bill: No, not at all. Somebody asked me if I could read music and I said, well not enough to hurt me, and so I can just read music to decipher. If there's a book, I can look at it and kind of figure it out.

Jon: You obviously had a lot of Doc Watson influence in your playing - who else influenced you other than Doc and Norman?

Bill: I like Grandpa Jones and I love old-time music. You know, the early pioneers of the Grand Ole Opry, Stringbean and Grandpa Jones, and things like that.

Jon: Is guitar your only instrument?

Bill: I play other things, and back when I had a whole lot of time, you know, I played old-time banjo. I played mandolin. I was a pretty good autoharp player, but you know, once you start working a lot, and I had a family, you can't live in the guitar case anymore. I had to kind of narrow it down. And guitar is just like an endless thing anyway.

Jon: You do both fingerpicking and flatpicking - Doc did that also and he isn't really considered a bluegrass artist, can you comment on that?

Bill: I'm in the same boat, I can't really pigeonhole myself because I don't really play bluegrass per se - they say do you play bluegrass guitar and I say well, mine's more of an old-time take on it because I figured Doc Watson was more of an old-time player. He kind of played straight melody and if anything, he copied the fiddle and I kind of do that same thing too, although now everybody gets so fancy with so many notes and I just don't hear that. I play what I hear. And I just don't hear all the notes that are the modern style. Mine is more of an old-time thing.

Jon: I understand that. What bands have you played in or are you currently playing with? I know you do mostly solo work.

Bill: I do a lot of solo stuff, yes. I've been a full time musician since 1987. When I started, my first bluegrass band was way back in 1979 with Phil Nusbaum. We called ourselves the Zoo Go-rillas. If you never heard of them, I understand. In Iowa City, I was in a really wonderful band with Guy Drollinger, Bob Black, and Mary Lotta. We called it Calliope, and I was proud of that. It was just a wonderful sound. Guy played hammered dulcimer, Bob on banjo, Mary on cello and guitar. Just had a wonderful sound. I moved up to Minnesota and the thing about Iowa, you know, nobody expects you to get paid. I didn't like that. So, I moved up here and I realized that you could work, you could do that. But you get more than two people in on it and then some people say, "well, I can't do that gig", or "I don't want to do that" or "I don't want to drive that far." Well, if you want anything done, do it yourself. I realized that quickly and realized I could do a solo. I did work with a hammer dulcimer player Stu Janis. We were called Greenwood Tree and played kind of Irish or Celtic flavor. I was proud of that too. I've always liked to play with Tom Schaefer. He's in my unofficial band. Right now, he plays with me and Lee Bjorndal and we call ourselves Pete's Pool Hall.

Jon: Why is it called Pete's Pool Hall?

Bill: Well, whenever I answer the phone and I know who it is with caller

ID (I used to do this to my daughter all the time), I'd say, "Pete's Pool Hall." It was Lee's suggestion to name the band. Schae-



Calliope: Mary Lotta, Bill, Bob Black, Guy Drollinger

fer is always good to pick with and I pick with Tom as much as possible. Most of my work these days is journeyman work.

I mean it's not the glory stuff, you



Bill, Alan Murphy

know? I'm a plumber of the music world. You got a backyard barbecue? I'll play it. You got a wedding? I'll play it. I'm work-

ing all the time.

I've been working with Fred Keller for about a year now. He writes truly wonderful songs about Minnesota history. Fred plays mandolin and handles it right well. We call ourselves the Skally Line. We perform at libraries, historic sites, town celebrations etc.

Jon: You also do a lot of children's shows, correct?

Bill: I used to but I've kind of cut that out. That's hard work. But for years, I did a really good kid show. And oh yeah, anywhere - you name it; county fairs, Oliver Kelley Farm, apple orchards. If someone hired us for a festival, I'd always call them up and say, you give me an extra 150 bucks and I'll do a great kids show. I did it a lot. But you know, I'm getting a little older now, Jon, and that's hard work.

Jon: Tell me what's hard about it?

Bill: Well, it's physical. You have to really keep their attention to keep a child engrossed for 45 minutes. You have to have such concentration because kids aren't polite. If they don't like it or if they ain't with you, they're gone. I always was very proud of the fact that I could keep them, I could keep them for 45 minutes or an hour. But you know, you got to be in practice too. I don't do as many kids shows any more. I can still throw in the occasional kids song but not like I used to.

Jon: I saw your Martin 1956 D-21 when it was at Carl Meine's repair shop here in La Crosse. What a train

wreck! What happened?

Bill: Well, I fell on it.

Jon: Oh really?

Bill: I'll never forget it. It was February 9th, 2019, it had glazed ice the night before. I was actually at my daughter's apartment and I was coming down these cement steps and it hadn't been shoveled or anything. My feet went out from under me. I always use a canvas case and fell back on that sucker. The sound of that was just heartbreaking. Oh, I knew it. I didn't open the case right away but when I did open the case it was like oh man, this is my baby. This is my buddy. We were joined at the hip and people always say, well did you get hurt? I said heck no I fell on a guitar! Carl did such a good job on that - it took a year and like three thousand dollars but it was worth every penny of it.

Jon: Oh yeah. He is a master luthier. No question. Talk about the guitar you've had over the years. I think I remember a 55 D-18 I sold for you once.

Bill: Well, I'm actually very monogamous. I've played the same Martin 1956 D-21 for years. Over the years I've found that when I've got a little money, I buy something, and if I need a little money, I sell something. So, I've had awesome, beautiful guitars over the years. My first guitar, my first Martin anyway, was a 1975 D-18.

And then oh, I've had a 1958 D-18. My current guitar is a 1956 D-18, which is, in my opinion, one of the best in the west and one of the best guitars I've ever had. My back up guitar is a 1960 D 21.

Jon: Speaking of luthiers. You have a special friendship with Lloyd LaPlant so, talk about that a little bit...

Bill: It's like he's everybody's Dad or Grandpa and he's just a good buddy. He'll sit in a tune jam and play tunes for hours and hours. There's only a few of them

around that I consider a bona fide tune freak, and Lloyd is one of them. I just enjoy picking with Lloyd. He likes to play



Bob Douglas, Bill

rhythm guitar for fiddle tunes. But I like him to get out that mandolin and play the tunes with me. I've spent many hours doing that with Lloyd.

Jon: Well, I'm guessing between you

fiddle tunes; I know a lot of parlor tunes just below the surface, the ones that not everybody knows.

Jon: I came to flat-picking quite late in my guitar career. I'm not really a bluegrass guy. I can fake my way through a Tony Rice solo, if I have to. Doc really didn't play a huge amount of pentatonic stuff. For all the younger generation, of course, Tony was their main influence. You know, like Clay Hess and everybody else. That's a different kind of music that I'm used to playing, I really understand.

You did a great record with Bob Black and Tom Schaefer and Sandy Njoes a few years back. How did that transpire?

Bill: Well, the first one we did was in 1992. Bob would come up from Iowa City, and he, Tom Schaefer and I would just love to pick, just pick, pick, pick. Tom got us into the Sioux River Folk Festival, and we had to have something to sell. The first one was called *"Cool Picking and Hot Tunes"* and it's out of print now.

We recorded it with a friend of ours, Peter Engh, and we did it in Tom's house. Peter had this one microphone which had two little microphones in it - one that did a figure eight and one that did a semi-circle. It looked like a big "announcer" microphone. He set it in the middle of us and then, after the

first take, he came out of the other room and said, "Okay, Bill you move back about six inches, and Tom, you move forward six inches." And that's how we mixed it, but it's still one of my favorite ones. Then a few years back, we wanted to do another one. We recorded it with Dakota Dave Hull and it was put on Copper Creek and



Tom Schaefer, Bill

and Lloyd, you know every fiddle tune every written, would you say that's true? Except for maybe "Three Rabbits Under a Log."

Bill: (Laughs) Well, let's just say we know a lot of tunes except for some of the bluegrass tunes, like the Bill Monroe tunes. But we're on the subject of obscure

it's also a good one. But, my favorite is still that live recording.

Jon: Have you done any other recordings?

Bill: Oh yeah. Greenwood Tree – we probably have seven recordings. I've been on other people's recordings, I'm on three or four of Sherwin Linton's recordings. He's an old country singer - his big national hit back in 1962 was called "Cotton King."

Jon: Is he still alive?

Bill: Oh yeah, still around.

Jon: Wow, still working.

Bill: Even though he just had the hit in '62, he's still touring all over the Midwest at VFWs and fairs. He just the hardest working guy.

Jon: You also teach - at least you did teach. I remember taking a flat picking lesson from you myself at The Podium many years ago. Are you still teaching?

Bill: Well, Jon you broke me of teaching, okay? (laughs) Actually, that's another thing that's hard work. I'd much rather perform. I do like to teach, but now I've narrowed it down to workshops and festivals and things like that. I'm not opposed to doing a lesson at my house if someone is in need. But I don't want to work with any shops anymore.

Jon: I was going to say I only teach when I do workshops, and also and I have found it difficult to teach fingerpicking. It's like skiing. You have to learn how to snowplow before you can learn how to parallel. It's tough to get beyond the thumb movement initially and jokingly I say, "well, play an E chord, take your thumb pick and play the sixth string and the fourth string alternately and then call me back in three years."

Bill: It's true. You got to get that and

keep it rolling. People want to feel like they're still in control and to play well, but you have to let go, like you're free falling. You step away and it's almost like you're looking back at yourself. I know that sounds funny and it's like you're listening



Bill, Sandy Njoes, Bob Black, Tom Schaefer



Stu Janis, Bill

to a CD, you have to let go, you know, let it happen.

Jon: As an example, Clay Hess is really one of the greatest guitarists in the world - certainly in bluegrass music. That

way he just goes into kind of a trance, he doesn't think about anything – it's just free thinking.

Bill: Yeah, I can see that and not only is he a great flatpicker but he can fingerpick too and he's just tasty, he can do it all. He is a great picker, he could do a lounge act! He could do anything.

Jon: He told me one time that Leon Rhodes said to him, you play like me. Just let your fingers decide wherever they want to go.

Do you like fingerpicking or flatpicking more than the other?

Bill: I wish I could just travel around and play fiddle tunes all the time, but I can't. When I do a solo show, I fingerpick a lot and I love it. I love fingerpicking. And when I sit at home with the guitar in my lap, I'm fingerpicking. And I'd

like to consider myself a songster. I don't know a lot of instrumental fingerpicking. I know some, but my big thing is songs. I play instrumental leads to my songs. I make the guitar sing the song and that's, you know, to me that's a feat in itself.

Jon: You know when I learned to play, I learned to fingerpick to accompany myself.

Bill: Yeah. The flatpicking is okay if I do simple leads, like Carter family. I just can't keep my own rhythm, you know. It's tough to keep that rhythm rolling, when you're the only one,

Jon: Yeah, that's right. Next question, how many fiddle tunes have the word "Rabbit" in the title – do you know that?

Bill: I don't know. I know there's a lot of them though.

Jon: Okay, fingerpicking isn't really a part of bluegrass so much. Although Lester Flatt used the thumb pick and there's plenty of videos with Earl Scruggs fingerpicking the guitar? How do you feel about its place in the world of

MBOTMA?

Bill: Wayne Henderson uses a thumb pick and two finger picks. When he picks, he's going back and forth, between the thumb and forefinger. You can't tell that he's not using the flat pick. I've spent some time picking with Wayne. He's a great picker and a great guy. When it comes to a bluegrass band, a modern bluegrass band, I'm not sure if fingerpicking would cut that, you know. If you like Doc Watson, you do the Deep River Blues. Doc Watson was like a solo folk festival. He played all of the greats - Delmore Brothers, Merle Travis, Carter Family, Jimmy Rogers, Bob Dylan - he just played so many different styles and that's what I do. My style of front man is also like Doc's. People like to hear about the song you're doing. I'm not afraid to talk to the crowd and let them know where the song came from and things like that. I was definitely influenced by Doc Watson's stage presence.

Jon: What advice would you give young players?

Bill: How young? How beginning? If you're a raw beginner, just don't stop. I mean for the first year it's like I must be stupid. You know? I can't do this. Four sausages on a stump! You just can't do it. But there's a point where you get past that. It ain't work anymore. That's the point you live for.

But you have to play every day. You can't just play once a week. You won't get any better. You just have to. You have to like it enough to really have it be important.

Jon: What's the most important thing you consider when you do a workshop?

Bill: Rhythm is a very important thing. Listening to other players is very important. Pick direction is king.

Although just the other day, I was watching that video of Clay Hess and Chris Thile jamming from 1998.

I was watching both of their picking hands and it's like they don't follow any rules. If anybody watches me, they'll see that my hand is like a metronome.

You can just set your watch by my right arm. It's always in time with the music. It worked for me although some people I know, like Alan Murphy, when he plays guitar that pick has no rhyme or reason. It's up down, down up - it doesn't matter, but it sure sounds good coming out. But for me, it made more sense to go down with the beat, up on the offbeat. Unless I'm crosspicking, but that's another topic.

Jon: What are your plans for the future?

Bill: They're going to have to pry that guitar out of my cold clammy hands. Even when I'm not working, I'm picking. That's what I do. It's my enjoyment. I'm going to pick until I can't. You know, my fingers are getting arthritic more and more every day, my shoulder I can hardly move, but as long as I can, I'm going to do it.

Jon: Okay, again, it's been really fun for me to find a kindred spirit in the world of acoustic guitar music. I thank you for sharing your talents with me. Thanks again, Bill!



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Building a Bluegrass Community: A History of the Minnesota Bluegrass and Old-Time Music Association

Chapter 5: The Influence of MBOTMA

A Project Paper by Digger Henry DeRusha

Editor's note: Digger Henry DeRusha is a Minnesota native and student at East Tennessee State University. This is Chapter Five of six parts to be presented over the next few months. Numbers in parenthesis refer to the page number of the cited work or book.

In its forty-six years of existence, MBOTMA has been promoting and expanding the bluegrass scene in Minnesota. The organization has initiated and funded multiple festivals each year, kept a youth program steadily growing for two decades, solidified the shift from “old country” to more traditional bluegrass in Minnesota, and helped the state produce more professional-level bluegrass musicians.

The Grass Seeds Academy

While I was coding my interviews for this project, the term “Grass Seeds” came up frequently. I went to MBOTMA’s website and found that it was the organization’s program for young musicians. The description there explains that the “program is designed for youth ages 8-18” to “learn about jamming etiquette, ensemble playing, how to play back-up, how to take a lead break, plus singing lead and harmony vocals.” In my email interview with Max Etling, a professional bluegrass musician from Minnesota and a graduate of ETSU’s Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Roots Music Studies program, he told me that the Grass Seeds Academy was a significant influence for him. He stated that the Academy “is a class they [MBOTMA] offer at their Winter Weekend that teaches kids/young teens how to play in a bluegrass band. I was a student in it for two years and was able to learn things rang-

ing from different instruments’ roles in a band, to how to sing harmony.”

During my interview with Becky Buller, she spoke about the benefits that the Grass Seeds program has to offer, even though it started after she was grown. She listed three reasons that it is an important program, saying that it helps to “keep the young folks involved and excited about bluegrass music in general, to pass this music on for it to continue to be living and vibrant. But also, those are going to be future leaders within MBOTMA.” These comments prompted me to focus on researching the Grass Seeds Academy further and reach out to the people involved in making it happen. After reading an article by Ellen Stanley in the April 2018 issue of *Minnesota Bluegrass*, I found out that the current organizer is Eric Christopher, fiddle player for the Minneapolis-based bluegrass band The High 48s. The article states that throughout the year, the band members participate in “individual instruction, classroom performances and jam camps” and the Grass Seeds program allows them another “opportunity to mentor young players” (9). Following a quick web search, I found his email address and wrote to ask for his input about the Grass Seeds. In his response, he recommended that I contact Sandi Pidel, the original founder of the program, and gave me her email address.

I wrote to Sandi with an explanation of my project, and she got back to me with her account of having an idea to start a youth program and the process of bringing it to life. It was in 2002 that Sandi took her then nine-year-old daughter to the Grey Fox Festival in New York “because of the kids’ program they offered.” Her daughter had such an enjoyable experience that Sandi decided she would try to find a way to bring such an experience

to the bluegrass community back home in Minnesota. As a longtime member of MBOTMA, she contacted the executive director, Jed Malischke, and found that he was enthusiastic about the idea. The first Grass Seeds event took place in March of 2003 at MBOTMA’s Winter Bluegrass Weekend. In her written account of the early years of the Academy, Sandi recalled: My main goal was to provide an age-appropriate, welcoming atmosphere so these kids could connect with each other and just have fun playing music. No pressure, no competition, no auditioning, no adults. I knew if I could make that happen, the kids would take it from there. My hope was that friendships would form and they would get together and play at or in between festivals, or at least have someone to buddy up with at the adult jams. My other goal was to expose our “community” to these kids in hopes that they would be welcomed into jams and find mentors. All these things happened.

Sandi ran the Grass Seeds program for thirteen years before handing it over to The High 48s, who had been involved as instructors for several years. In the April 2018 edition of *Minnesota Bluegrass*, MBOTMA’s monthly publication, Stanley’s article about The High 48s states, “During the Winter Bluegrass Weekend, they meet with the students for one session Friday night, two sessions on Saturday and one session Sunday morning. The kids then have the opportunity to show us all what they have learned with a concert on Sunday at 1:00” (9).

The program has been a positive venture for the Minnesota bluegrass community, and it arguably would not have been possible without MBOTMA. Lifelong Minnesota bluegrass performer and MBOTMA member Kim Monson told Phil Nusbaum in their March 2010 inter-

view that “There’s more and more kids coming up in the community, and if there weren’t places like MBOTMA, you’re not going to have the Grass Seeds Academy, and those kinds of things that start kids out young and continue on the traditions of bluegrass and old-time music.” The MBOTMA website’s Grass Seeds page states that their “goal is to keep the registration fee as low as possible and the quality of instruction as high as possible.” Because the fee for each three-day workshop is just eighty-five dollars per student, “tuition alone does not cover the cost of the program,” and donations are encouraged “to help keep this valuable program alive.” As the Academy has been in operation for twenty years, the donation system seems to have worked well. Local musicians in the area recognize the importance of having an accessible program that provides an opportunity for young pickers to learn how to jam, take solos, sing harmony, and work on their bluegrass repertoire in a fun, friendly setting.

Before MBOTMA existed, musicians such as Rick and Bebe Allen had ideas for reaching out to the local youth, but they did not have the backing of an organization with the resources to make such a program successful. When Sandi Pidel had the idea to bring a youth program to the Minnesota bluegrass scene, she was able to contact MBOTMA and utilize their resources to build and promote the program in less than a year (Pidel). The majority of my interviews and Phil Nusbaum’s research mention the Grass Seeds program and how beneficial it has been for drawing in younger generations of bluegrass musicians. Subsequently, the level of bluegrass musicianship in Minnesota has been on the rise. As Kim Monson told me in our 2019 interview at her home in Duluth, Minnesota, “It’s just amazing; a lot of those kids have gone on to become really great, fast pickers.”

After the program continued to demonstrate growth for several years, it became apparent that a secondary course would be necessary for the older teenagers who had been playing and learning as they grew up. Sandi Pidel wrote in her response to my questions, “Kids kept coming back year after year. It soon became

very clear that the older, more experienced kids needed a different experience. Their skills had developed beyond what the younger kids could handle, and they needed a different social atmosphere. GS2 was the answer.” GS2, started in 2013, is for students between ages fourteen and eighteen who have a “good working knowledge of common chords and scales,” as well as “familiarity with ensemble playing.” There is a jam session on the Friday night for any students who are interested in participating in GS2, and the instructors select the top ten to spend the rest of the weekend in that class. Pidel added that as some of the students were becoming more advanced and reaching the age of eighteen, she “began asking some of them to come and help the instructors and to learn how to teach.” Illustrating the success of the Grass Seeds program, many of the students continue to participate until they become young instructors and professional players themselves.

Professional Minnesota Musicians

Another significant influence of MBOTMA is that it has helped bluegrass musicians from Minnesota advance their skills and even pursue higher learning in the genre, often reaching a professional level. The organization has made it possible to live in Minnesota and still immerse oneself in bluegrass music year-round by attending festivals, jam sessions, and workshops. The networking opportunities and lifelong friendships that musicians find through MBOTMA are invaluable. In a statement featured on the MBOTMA website, Max Etling said,

“I attended college at East Tennessee State University (as so many MBOTMA kids have and continue to do so) from 2014-2018 and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Country Music Studies. I don’t think that if I hadn’t had such a great experience with the Grass Seeds Academy that I would have continued to pursue music in the direction that I have. I am still friends with many of the people that I met my first year at the Academy and even went to college with them! I will always be thankful for MBOTMA and the Grass Seeds Academy and their continued support of young musicians!”

MBOTMA Festivals and Events

Before MBOTMA, there were no organized bluegrass festivals in Minnesota. Now the annual MBOTMA festivals give bluegrass enthusiasts multiple chances each year to hear new and old bluegrass bands from around the country and play music with fellow bluegrass friends and musicians. Early bluegrass pioneers from the state did not have those opportunities, nor the backing or funding from an organization that could make them happen. Phil Nusbaum asked Marv Menzel if, prior to the bluegrass festival movement, there were any opportunities for “a total immersion experience in bluegrass music” in Minnesota. Marv recalled:

“I don’t think so. It was the festival phenomenon that allowed that to happen. I don’t think there was anything before that. People would get together in their own homes, or perhaps their little social circle, of people that enjoyed the music, but not en masse, and I think that’s been a healthy thing.”

Through my research, it is evident that MBOTMA has influenced many bluegrass musicians and continues to do so by putting on festivals and programs that nurture the shared love of bluegrass. When Phil Nusbaum asked Tommy Andersen on March 9, 2010 if he had ever felt that there was a bluegrass scene in the Twin Cities area, Tommy replied, “Well, if there was, I didn’t know about it until the bluegrass organization started up.” A few days later, as Phil and Art Bjornjeld wrapped up their interview, Art thanked “all the people in the Association (MBOTMA) that have really worked so hard... to keep this going.” He ended by commenting, “When I go to other communities, sometimes I miss what we have here. We’ve got a wonderful bluegrass music scene and traditional music scene in the Twin Cities, and we’re fortunate to have it.”

Through these interviews, it is evident that MBOTMA has been keeping bluegrass music alive in Minnesota and nurturing musicians at every level. It is through the efforts of volunteers and bluegrass enthusiasts that the bluegrass music scene has grown into the thriving community it is today.

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Bluegrass Saturday Morning

By Phil Nusbaum

The Next Few Months

It happens every year. The summer we in our northern clime really love, really gets in gear in July. That's when the outdoor events really pick up, including big events such as bluegrass festivals and the Minnesota State Fair; and small ones such as backyard get-togethers. Once the juggernaut is in motion, it's hard to stop, and who really wants to? The surge continues when everything moves inside in fall. There's Thanksgiving, then the year-end holidays, and once those are over, it's as if there were a collective sigh, a great slowdown.

As far as Bluegrass Saturday Morning, throughout the part of the year when the windows are open all the time, the show serves as the accompaniment to pancakes-for-breakfast, and as the sound track to garage sales. The December 23 show will be a mostly Christmas music edition, with a little holiday season music the week or two leading up to it. On Saturday December 30, we'll play the highlights of the annual bluegrass music awards ceremonies as presented by the International Bluegrass Music Association. The ceremonies were recorded late last September at the IBMA's World of Bluegrass event.

I attended World of Bluegrass in 2023, and set up a recorder at the "DJ taping session." At the table I hosted several bluegrass artists who talked about the creative processes behind some of their songs. We'll play the interviews collected from artists with the songs referenced by the artists during the 11:30am segments during Bluegrass Saturday Morning. I think the period beginning after New Year's Day is a good time of year to put the collection of World of Bluegrass interviews on the show. As things settle down dramatically once January comes, there might be a greater chance that listeners focus on the perspectives expressed by the artists. These interviews are little "thought pieces." On Jazz88 generally, and on Bluegrass Saturday Morning particularly, shows not only present music, but place music in contexts, creating narratives that enrich the radio listening experience.

We'll be keeping on with Gems of Bluegrass, and of course we'll continue pumping out "the new stuff, the old stuff and the hard stuff."

The Fund Drive

The Jazz88 fall on-air fund drive was over in mid-October,

and things are back to normal. The overall feeling I received regarding the drive was that it was perking along nicely. Of course, we always accept donations at www.jazz88.fm, regardless of the time of year. The response to Bluegrass Saturday Morning seemed good, and as usual we had our hot stretches and our cold ones. As far as a hot stretch, the fifth hour of the show on October 14 seemed to be some kind of peak experience. Thanks to Robbi Podrug and Pete Lee, community volunteers who delivered credible pitches encouraging support, and to KBEM staffers Danny Sigelman and Peter Solomon for keeping everything grounded.

Most of all, thanks to our listeners who once again are supplying what it takes to continue the unique mission of Jazz88.

Personal Performance Notes

Catch the 6-piece Double Down Daredevils (www.doubledownbluegrass.com) at Hobgoblin Music in Red Wing, Saturday, December 2 at 7pm. DDD is also on tap at Badger Hill Brewing in Shakopee on December 10. This issue of the magazine might arrive early enough to catch the Daredevils at the Badger Hill Brewery in Shakopee, 2-5 PM on Sunday November 26.

The Eclectics trio (www.eclecticsbluegrass.com) plays Friday December 8 at 7PM at The New York Mills Regional Cultural Center. The trio will present special concert segments about Fiddling Kenny Baker, and about "the blues in bluegrass music." For updates, the new website is www.eclecticsbluegrass.com. Catch the trio on December 16 at the Lund's and Byerly's on Ford Parkway in Saint Paul, 6-8pm.

Weekly Playlists, Listen Online

To stream KBEM programming, at www.jazz88.fm, click on "listen live." Bluegrass Saturday Morning playlists are located at www.jazz88.fm. At the top of the home page on the right-hand side, select "playlists." Then click on the desired date.

Don't Forget the Archive

It's great that Bluegrass Saturday Morning is five hours long. It's hard to catch the whole thing from beginning to end, but you can catch missed portions or listen more than once by going to the KBEM-FM archive at www.jazz88.fm. Shows remain in the KBEM-FM archive for 2 weeks.



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318: The 318 Café, 318 Water Street, Excelsior, 952-401-7902, www.three-eighteen.com

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AST: Aster Cafe, 125 SE Main St, Mpls, 612-379-3138, www.astercafe.com

BTC: Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua, Bayfield, WI, 888-244-8368, www.bigtop.org

CED: Cedar Cultural Center, 416 Cedar Ave S, Mpls, 612-338-2674, www.thecedar.org

CJ: Celtic Junction, 836 Prior Ave, St Paul, 651-330-4685, www.thecelticjunction.com

CSC: Crooners Supper Club, 6161 Hwy 65 NE, Fridley, 763-760-0062

DAK: The Dakota, 1010 Nicollet Mall, Mpls, 612-332-1010, www.dakotacooks.com

EAG: Eagles Club, 2507 E 25th St, Mpls, 612-729-4469, www.Mplseagles34.org

FITZ: Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E Exchange St, St Paul, 651-290-1200, www.thefitzgeraldtheater.com

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GKb: Grand Kabaret, 210 N Minnesota St, New Ulm, 507-359-9222, www.thegrandnewulm.com

HOB: The Loft at Hobgoblin Music, 920 State Hwy 19, Red Wing, 877-866-3936, www.stoneyend.com

H&L: The Hook & Ladder Theater, 3010 Minnehaha Ave, Mpls, 612-345-7166, www.thehookmpls.com

ICEH: The Ice House, 2528 Nicollet Ave S, Mpls, 612-276-6523

L&L: Leo & Leona's, W1436 State Road 33, Bangor, WI, 608-452-3637

MER: Merlins Rest, 3601 E Lake St, Mpls, 612-216-2419

WB: Waldmann Brewery, 445 Smith Ave, St Paul, 651-222-1857

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Dec 8 - Friday

Hastings Art Center

216 4th St E, Hastings, MN
651-437-4320, 7:30pm

Pert Near Sandstone Them Coulee Boys Humbird

Dec 2 - Saturday

First Avenue Mainroom
701 1st Ave N, Mpls, MN
7:30pm

Richard Kriehn w/ AJ Srubas & Rina Rossi

Dec 8 - Friday

The 318 Café

318 Water Street, Excelsior, MN,
952-401-7902

www.three-eighteen.com

Monroe Crossing A Bluegrass Christmas

Dec 12 - Tuesday

Crooners Supper Club
6161 Hwy 65 NE
Fridley, MN
763-760-0062

11/24 - Friday

- Legacy, Charlie's Irish Pub, 101 Water St, Stillwater, 7pm
- Bob Bovee, Focal Point, Maplewood, MO, 8pm
- Phil Berbig, GKb, 7pm

11/25 - Saturday

- Legacy, Charlie's Irish Pub, 101 Water St, Stillwater, 7pm
- Switched At Birth, MER, 7:30pm
- Lehto and Wright, Washington Square Bar & Grill, 4736 Washington Square,

White Bear Lake, 3pm

11/26 - Sunday

- The Double Down Daredevils, Badger Hill Brewing, 2805 Winners Circle Dr, Shakopee, 12pm
- Mother Banjo Band - Vinyl Release Show, DAK, 10th Anniversary, 7pm
- Roe Family Singers, Hell's Kitchen, 80 S 9th St, Mpls, 10am

11/27 - Monday

- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm

11/28 - Tuesday

- Curtis & Loretta, Holiday Under Glass Series, Crystal Court, IDS Buiding, downtown Mpls, 12pm
- Leo Kottke, Ordway Theater, 345 Washington St, St Paul, 651-224-4222, 7:30pm

11/29 - Wednesday

- Lenz & Frenz, 331C, 9:30pm

11/30 - Thursday

- John Kerns, 318, 9pm

12/1 - Friday

- Becky Schlegel & The High 48's,

Classified Ads

Older fiddler and mandolinist looking for older guitarist (beg./ intermediate) to jam with and possible duo. I live in the Twin Cities. Contact greensteinviolin@aol.com.

- Bluegrass Christmas, 318, 8pm
 - The Gated Community, Paperbacks, AST, 9pm
 - Barbaro Album Release Concert, CED, 8pm
 - Cassie and Maggie In Concert, CJ, 7:30pm
 - The Jugsluggers, Contented Cow, 302 Divison St S, Northfield, 7:00 PM
 - John Gorka, First Presbyterian Church, 340 5th Ave S, St Cloud, granitecityfolk.org, 7pm
 - Pert Near Sandstone & Them Coulee Boys, Mankato Brewery, 1119 Center St, North Mankato, 7pm
 - Monroe Crossing, North Branch High School, 38175 Grand Ave, North Branch, 7pm
 - Fish Heads Facebook Live Foodshelf Concert, 6pm
- 12/2 - Saturday**
- Orkestar Bez Ime with Ukrainian Village Band, CED, 8pm
 - Double Down Daredevils, HOB, 7pm
 - Pert Near Sandstone / Them Coulee Boys / Humbird, First Avenue Mainroom, 701 1st Ave N Mpls, 7:30pm
 - Claudia Schmidt, GINK, 7:30pm
 - The Double Down Daredevils, HOB, 7pm
 - Monroe Crossing, Lakeville Area Arts Center, 20965 Holyoke Ave, Lakeville, 7:30pm
 - Inland Seas, MER, 7pm
 - Becky Schlegel and The High 48s - A Very Merry Bluegrass Christmas, State Theatre, Zumbrota, 7:30pm
- 12/3 - Sunday**
- Corpse Reviver, 331C, 3pm
 - Swing Brunch with Patty and the Buttons, AST, 11am
 - Brunch with The Eclectics, ICEH, 11am
 - Daddy Squeeze, Waldmann Brewery, 445 Smith Ave, St Paul, 651-222-1857,



Fein Violins
 1850 Grand Avenue
 Saint Paul MN 55105
mail@fineviolins.com
 Call 651.228.0783
 Text 651.373.1300

- 7:30pm
- 12/4 - Monday**
- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm
- 12/5 - Tuesday**
- A Blue Christmas with Tim Sparks & Phil Heywood, CSC, 6:30pm
 - A Bluegrass Christmas with Monroe Crossing, CSC, 7:30pm
- 12/6 - Wednesday**
- Pat Donohue and the Prairie All Stars Christmas Show, CSC, 7pm
- 12/7 - Thursday**

- Rupert Wates, 318, 8pm
 - Sue Scott's Island of Discarded Women with Mary Kunesch and Jaspar Lepak, CSC, 7:30pm
 - Curtis & Loretta, Holiday Open House at Hooper-Bowler-Hillstrom House, 410 N Cedar St, Belle Plaine, 6pm
 - The Jugsluggers, Wooden Ship Brewery, 3300 W 44th St, Mpls, 6pm
- 12/8 - Friday**
- Cajun Crawfish Hotdish, Lund's/

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Byerlys MEZZ, Ford Parkway, St. Paul, 6pm

- Richard Kriehn w/ A J Srubas & Rina Rossi, 318, 8pm
- Legacy, Charlie's Irish Pub, 101 Water St, Stillwater, 7pm
- The Jugsluggers, Contented Cow, 302 Divison St S, Northfield, 7pm
- Eli Gardiner, GKb, 7pm
- Becky Schlegel and The High 48s - A Very Merry Bluegrass Christmas, Hastings Art Center, 216 4th St E, Hastings, 651-437-4320, 7:30pm
- The Eclectics, New York Mills Regional Cultural Center, 24 N Main Ave, New York Mills, MN, 7:30pm
- Katie McMahon's Celtic Christmas, The O'Shaughnessy at St Catherine University, 2004 Randolph Ave, St Paul, 7:30pm

12/9 - Saturday

- Michael Monroe "Wintersong", 318, 8pm
- Holidays with The High 48s, Blattner Energy Arts Theatre, 30 Forest Ave, Albany, 320-845-5060, 7pm
- Legacy, Charlie's Irish Pub, 101 Water St, Stillwater, 7pm
- Monroe Crossing, Chisholm Baptist Church, 5001 Hwy 5, Chisholm, 7pm
- The Beau Baker Band, Roots Cellar Music Series, University Baptist Church, 1219 University Ave SE, Mpls, 612-331-1768, 7pm
- Classical Guitarathon, Sundin Music

Hall, Hamline University, 1531 Hewitt Ave, St Paul, mnguitar.org, 7:30pm

- RavensFire, Taco JED, 808 Broadway Ave S, Rochester, 7pm

12/10 - Sunday

- The DonJuans Christmas Show, 318, 8pm
- Swing Brunch with Patty and the Buttons, AST, 11am
- Double Down Daredevils, Badger Hill Brewing, 2805 Winners Circle Dr, Shakopee, 1pm
- Monroe Crossing, Braham Event Center, 655 8th St SW Braham, 3pm
- Red Hot Brunch with The Red Hot Django Peppers, ICEH, 11am

12/11 - Monday

- Pop Wagner Trio, 331C, 6pm
- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm

12/13 - Wednesday

- Lonesome Dan Kase, 331C, 9:30pm
- The Barefoot Movement Holiday Show, CED, 7:30pm
- Monroe Crossing, Grace Lutheran Church, US Hwy 59, Erhard, 7pm

12/14 - Thursday

- Billy Johnson & Angie Gislayson Sis and Bro Holiday Show, 318, 8pm
- Monroe Crossing, Old Log Theater, 5185 Meadville St Excelsior, 7:30pm

12/15 - Friday

- The Jugsluggers, 10K Brewing, 2005 2nd Ave, Anoka, 7pm
- Rupert Wates, BDD, 7:30pm
- Jeffrey Foucault and Pieta Brown,

CED, 8pm

- Monroe Crossing, Pioneer Place, 22 Fifth Ave So St Cloud, 7:30pm
- Fish Heads Facebook Live Foodshelf Concert, 6pm

12/16 - Saturday

- 2 Girls & A Boy w/ Richard Kriehn Christmas, 318, 8pm
- Double Down Daredevils, Lund's/ Byerlys MEZZ, Ford Parkway, St. Paul, 6pm
- The Jugsluggers, Aegir Brewing, 19050 Industrial Blvd NW, Elk River, 6pm
- Curtis & Loretta Holiday Music, Art's House Gallery, 127 N Main St, River Falls, WI, 12pm
- Tom Peschges Music, Badger Hill Brewing, 2805 Winners Circle Dr, Shakopee, 2 pm
- Suzy Plays Guitar, MER, 7:30pm

12/17 - Sunday

- Minnesota Mandolin Concert, Landmark Center, St Paul, 1pm
- Simple Gifts with Billy McLaughlin, Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave S, Mpls, 612-822-8080, 7pm

12/18 - Monday

- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm

12/19 - Tuesday

- Bullypulpit Bluegrass, Mankato Brewery, 119 Center St, North Mankato, 6pm

12/20 - Wednesday

- Deb Harley & Friends Holiday Show,

*Ask not what
Minnesota
Bluegrass
can do for you,
but what you
can do for
Minnesota
Bluegrass*

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go for a Song!**



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318, 8pm

- Sweet Rhubarb & Barrel Flash, AST, 8pm

12/21 - Thursday

- Longest Night Music Festival, New York Mills Cultural Center, 24 N Main Ave, New York Mills, 218-385-3339, 7pm

12/22 - Friday

- The Jugluggers, Contented Cow, 302 Divison St S, Northfield, 7pm
- Yuletide Sweater Ball with Pistol Whippin' Party Penguins with Maygen & The Birdwatcher, and Steam Machine, H&L, 7:30pm
- The Fish Heads, Sir Benedicts Tavern, 805 E Superior St, Duluth, 218-728-1192, 6pm

12/23 - Saturday

- Ali Gray's Christmas Eve Show, 318, 8pm

12/24 - Sunday

- Swing Brunch with Patty and the Buttons, AST, 11am

12/27 - Wednesday

- Clay Borrell, 318, 8pm
- Lenz & Frenz, 331C, 9:30pm
- Swing Brunch with Patty and the Buttons, AST, 11am

12/28 - Thursday

- Mark Schirmacher w/ Bark Point, 318, 8pm
- Tom Peschges Music, Badger Hill Brewing, 2805 Winners Circle Dr, Shakopee, 7:00 PM

12/29 - Friday

- Fish Heads Facebook Live Foodshelf Concert, 6pm

12/30 - Saturday

- Michael Shynes & The Long Way Home Trio, 318, 8pm

12/31 - Sunday

- Swing Brunch with Patty and the Buttons, AST, 11am
- Monroe Crossing, SHL, 7:30pm
- Flour City Doughboys, TAP, 8pm

1/1 - Monday

- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm

1/4 - Thursday

- Clouds So Swift, Shoreview Senior Living, 4710 Cumberland St, St Paul, 3pm

1/5 - Friday

- Pete Nelson, BDD, 7:30pm

1/6 - Saturday

- Inland Seas, MER, 7:30pm
- Scottie Miller featuring Cierra Alise Hill, The Widespot, 611 Broadway

Ave, Wabasha, WI, 715-448-0536, 7pm

1/7 - Sunday

- Corpse Reviver, 331C, 3pm
- Daddy Squeeze, Waldmann Brewery, 445 Smith Ave, St Paul, 651-222-1857, 7:30pm

1/8 - Monday

- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm

1/10 - Wednesday

- The Transcendental Bluegrass Band, Carbone's Pizzeria, 4705 Cedar Ave S, Mpls, 7pm
- The Hot Dish Band, The Finnish Bistro, 2264 Como Ave, St Paul, 6:30 pm

1/12 - Friday

- Gentlemen Dreadnought, Junior's Restaurant & Tap House, 414 S Main St, River Falls, WI, 7pm
- Fish Heads Facebook Live Foodshelf Concert, 6pm

1/13 - Saturday

- Bob Bovee, GINK, 7:30 PM
- Suzy Plays Guitar, MER, 7:30pm

1/14 - Sunday

- Emmy Woods, 331C, 7pm

1/15 - Monday

- Roe Family Singers, 331C, 8pm
- Buffalo Galaxy, 7th Street Entry, N 7th St, Mpls, 8:00 pm



Brotherhood of Birds - 2023 Fall Jam - Photo by Joan Guilfoyle



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Tom Gray, Eddie Adcock, Martha Adcock - August Festival 2016 - Photo by Doug Lohman