

**How long have you been a volunteer with MBOTMA?**

Since Winter Weekend 2017—that was also the first MBOTMA event I ever attended too.

**What current volunteer role(s) do you have with MBOTMA?**

Manager of Minnesota Americana-Roots Music Contests since 2018, Volunteer Coordinator, member of Diversity Committee (Committee start is pending)

**What MBOTMA volunteer role(s) have you held in the past?**

Ooh, this and that...basically anything the Event Manager or committee chairs have thrown at me :-). This includes being a member of the Membership Committee, promoting new member recruitment and member renewals (May 2017 to Feb. 2018), Front Gate Coordinator for August Festival 2018 and 2019, and MC Coordinator for Bluegrass Winter Weekend 2020. I've also worked shifts at various events at the merch and ticketing tables, or doing post-event cleanup.

**How long have you been part of MBOTMA and what brought you into the organization?**

I've been part of MBOTMA since Winter Weekend 2017. I have been a fan of bluegrass/old-time music since my teens, and in 2016, started learning the banjo (first time learning an instrument no less!). During a visit to the Homestead Pickin' Parlor, I spotted the Minnesota Bluegrass magazine and was thrilled to find an organization holding festivals/ events around this music. I wasted no time and dived right in.

**Why are you a MBOTMA volunteer?**

Beyond my own enjoyment of them, I think bluegrass and old-time music are an incredibly important part of American culture and history, and I love being able to support MBOTMA's mission statement "To preserve and promote" those genres. Also, the community (staff, volunteers, etc.) is incredibly welcoming and supportive. I didn't know a soul when I came to my first event, but the people I've had the privilege to work with and or



befriend are a big part of why I (and others) keep coming back. Come for the music, stay for the community?

**Do you have a favorite festival or activity at a festival?**

Ooo, that's a tough one. August Fest is super fun because you get to stay overnight with friends at El Rancho. Winter Weekend always has such well-planned stage shows, dances, workshops, and other activities. Aaand, the Americana-Roots Contests at the State Fair are great, because it's an opportunity to bring completely new faces (both performers and audience) into the community. Can't pick just one!

**How has being a volunteer impacted you?**

I've made friends and met a lot of lovely people who are committed to community service/volunteerism. Working for MBOTMA has presented one new experience after another, and they've all been great opportunities for both personal and professional growth.

**What are some of your hobbies and interests?**

I'm learning the banjo and mandolin (albeit slooowly), and am a stilt performer in the local puppet theatre community. Also, I volunteer or am employed with various nonprofits (mainly arts and advocacy), and advocate for criminal justice reform.

**Do you have a fun story about being a volunteer or about MBOTMA that you'd like to share?**

Oh, "fun." Well, there was the time I was Front Gate Coordinator at August Fest 2019. The days get long because you have

to open the gate before 8:00a and close it out around midnight. Well, on Sunday, the last day of the festival, I was up bright and early again, ready to set up materials (tickets, cash box, etc.). But when I got outside, lo and behold, my golf cart was missing! I used it to get materials/volunteers back and forth from the gate. Had I left the keys in it? I know I left my purse in the dash. Oh no, my purse! I immediately called Matt Johnson, Event Manager at the time. He said he would drive around looking for it, but first came by the camper I was staying in. He arrived and gave me the news. The cart was...kitty-corner to my camper...parked behind another vehicle. Exactly where I had left it (very intentionally) the night before, after dropping a festival attendee off near their car...but had totally forgotten. Ha! Yup, those days get long.

**What occupation did you have or do you have now?**

Support Manager for a web services agency that works with nonprofit clients. I do project management and manage maintenance services.

**What's a fun fact about you?**

I once forgot where I parked a golf cart.  
**What would you tell a new MBOTMA member/volunteer?**  
Do it! You'll get more out of it than you put in. :-)