

“Bluegrass Clippings”

July—August 2004

“BI-Monthly publication of the “YELLOWSTONE BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION”

President—Mike Rolison
Vice President—Mark Harmila
Sec.-Treas.—Terry Indreland
Board Members—Trent Indreland
Steve Smith
W. James Smith
Stan Moser
Newsletter Editor—Rick Wingerter

PRAIRIE WINDS CAFE

The bands playing on Saturday mornings at the Prairie Winds Café are scheduled to play from 9am-12 noon. It is not a jam session.

2004 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

YBA Scrapbook!
Please send any new or old YBA related photos, news clippings and other items to Mike Rolison for inclusion in a YBA scrapbook.

If your group is going to be playing anywhere, please let Rick Wingerter know and he'll get it in the newsletter. He's looking for any kind of news related to Bluegrass and Bluegrass Artists.

RALPH STANLEY

**WITH HIS CLINCH MOUNTAIN BOYS
& VERY SPECIAL GUEST**

BRENNEN LEIGH

FRIDAY, JULY 16

ALBERTA BAIR THEATER

BILLINGS

TICKETS AT

THE ALBERTA BAIR BOX OFFICE,
METRAPARK, 7 RIMROCK MALL
CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK
PHONE TOLL FREE (877) 321-2074
LOCAL (406) 256-6052
OR www.TICKETS.com

The voice of
O' Brother Where Art Thou
& *Down From The Mountain*

Rolling Stone—
“A master performer
Without an expiration date....”

NPR's Fresh Air---
...easily the most eminent
bluegrass singer in the world

Round Barn in Red Lodge

Peter Ostroushko and Arkadiy Yushin.

Sat, July 10 at 8:00 pm, Sun, July 11 at 7:00 pm

Peter is one of the finest
mandolin and fiddle players in the world today.

Dinner /Show \$23.50, Show only \$14.

Please call 446-1197 for reservations.

From The President, Mike Rolison

I just got off the phone with Rick Wingerter. He called to inform me, if I'm going to have an article in this July/ August newsletter, I'd better get off my you know what and get it into him. Well I'm off my you know what now, so here goes...

Why do I procrastinate? For the last two weeks I have thought about writing an article for this newsletter but as you can infer, till now I've not gotten beyond the thinking of it. Often times when I procrastinate, I miss out on something I had been looking forward to, and I could just kick myself for missing out on it.

Now, why am I writing about this? Because I don't think that I'm the only procrastinator in our organization. We all procrastinate to some extent and procrastination can be a killer to any organization's well laid plans.

Is there a new song you've been thinking about learning? Have you been thinking about singing for the first time at a Friday night jam? Playing for folks at the Hospital/Retirement home? Starting a band? Inviting a friend to the jam? Taking voice or instrument lessons? Volunteering your services to the Red Lodge Festival committee? Or like me thinking about an article for the newsletter? Well, get off your you know what and do it now. You'll be glad you did.

Your Picking Partner,
Mike Rolison

Jam Etiquette

1. Before joining an existing jam, listen to a tune or two in the background. Join in if you think you can keep up, and that the jam will benefit from you and your instrument. Make sure your instrument is in tune.
2. The purpose of jamming is to make bluegrass music and have fun. It is not to play as loud as you can, as fast as you can, or to show off how good a player you are. Listen to others in the jam, and make sure you blend into the music and/or singing.
3. Don't hog the jam. Give everyone a chance to play. Be supportive.
4. When it's your turn to pick a tune, let everyone know the name of the tune, the key, and if there are any odd unusual chord progressions, timing or rhythm issues. It's best and most rewarding to do tunes in generally accepted keys. Songs, however, are done in the key selected by the singer. If capos are being put on or taken off between tunes, wait a few seconds for people to recheck their tuning. Pick a tempo that suits the tune and the jam.
5. If you don't want to take a break on a particular tune, make it obvious, such as by stepping back out of the circle, and letting the person on your left know. No one wants to start their break half way through.
6. If you can't hear a break or the words of a song, you are playing too loudly. Tone is every bit as important as volume. If the volume is getting "up there" on a particular tune, don't play ...work on your harmony singing skills or listening skills.
7. Listen for the rhythm of the tune or song, get in the groove AND STICK WITH IT.
8. Don't have your eyes glued to your instrument. Look around, communicate with your eyes.
9. **Listen, Listen, Listen.**

Sidebar: Encyclopedia WordIQ.com Definition: Bluegrass music

Bluegrass music is a form of American roots music with its own roots in the Irish traditional music and Scottish traditional music of immigrants from the British Isles (particularly the Scots-Irish immigrants of Appalachia), as well as the music of African-American slaves. It was this tradition that A.P. Carter used and collected for the songs played and written by the Carter Family. Bluegrass songs are played with each melody instrument switching off playing the melody each time through, while the others revert to backing. This is in contrast to Old-time music, in which all instruments play the melody together, when indeed they are playing together rather than solo. The bluegrass style was invented in the first half of the 20th century by mandolinist Bill Monroe and named for his band, the Blue Grass Boys, formed in 1939.

Monroe's 1945-48 band, which featured banjo player Earl Scruggs, singer/guitarist Lester Flatt, fiddler Chubby Wise and bassist Cedric Rainwater, created the definitive sound and instrumental configuration that remains the model to this day. Unlike mainstream country music, bluegrass continues to rely on acoustic stringed instruments. The fiddle, banjo, acoustic guitar or folk guitar, mandolin, and upright bass are sometimes joined by the dobro (also known as a resophonic guitar), and a bass guitar is occasionally substituted for the upright bass.

Hansen Music **1819 Grand Avenue**

Stop in and see the field of guitars waiting to be harvested by bluegrass musicians. Also in stock, things to chase away winter blues—(and most sane people)—banjos, Mandolins, harmonicas, and even cool picks!

Check out the new web site for the store:
<http://www.hansenmusic.net/>

Prairie Winds Café

**A little bluegrass with your eggs
Bacon and hot coffee**

**Every Saturday morning
From 9am 'til Noon**

"Steep Canyon Rangers"

The "Steep Canyon Rangers" from Ashville, NC, to perform in Billings on July 8th, 8 PM at Cisel Hall at MSU-B. The "Rangers" are an up and coming Bluegrass group mixing traditional Bluegrass and "New Grass." They will be in Billings on their way to the Bitterroot Festival.

Contact Jim Smith at 446-2114 (h) or 671-6289 (cell). Tickets will be \$10.
You can hear a sampling of the "Rangers" on their website, www.steepcanyon.com .
Make plans to attend this concert. You won't regret it

"Lost Highway"

"Lost Highway" from Riverside CA, will be playing in Billings July 20th, 8PM at Cisel Hall. The members of Lost Highway are united in their love and respect for traditional bluegrass and their commitment to ensembleship. With their unforgettable trio harmonies, instrumental prowess and relaxed, friendly stage manner, they are sure to be a hit.

Tickets will be \$10. Come and support these Great Bluegrass groups coming to Billings

King of Bluegrass Diagnosed with Cancer

Jimmy Martin, commonly known as the King of Bluegrass, has been diagnosed with bladder cancer. Martin began his radiation treatments on Monday, March 22, 2004.

It is reported that he will receive at least twenty treatments in all. Jimmy Martin was a guitarist for Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys and continued to play bluegrass with his band, The Sunny Mountain Boys. He is honored by most of the bluegrass community and is a Bluegrass Hall of Fame member. Jimmy Martin has been a controversial character in the world of bluegrass during his long career. He had just finished work on the sound track to the film, King of Bluegrass: The Life and Times of Jimmy Martin.

Want to send well wishes? Send cards and letters to Jimmy Martin, P.O. Box 646, Hermitage, TN 37076.

Bluegrass Group Seeks Monroe Mandolin

The Bill Monroe Foundation hopes to raise about \$1 million to buy the famous bluegrass musician's favorite mandolin from his son. The foundation, which oversaw restoration of Monroe's home in Rosine, wants the 1923 Gibson as a centerpiece for a Monroe museum. Foundation executive director Campbell Mercer must raise the money by Oct. 26, the deadline set by Monroe's son, James, who lives near Nashville, Tenn. The foundation has agreed to pay \$1.125 million. Payments have cut the amount owed to about \$975,000. Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame and the Gibson company are also interested, Mercer said recently. The foundation had hoped for state support, but declining revenues and the Legislature's inability to enact a budget for the next fiscal year stymied that hope. The foundation is now selling shares in the mandolin at \$25 each to raise the money. (AP)

Artist Spotlight
Cherokee Bob
(Mandolin player extraordinaire)

When Bob was seven years old he picked cotton to buy himself a guitar. He used to sit and watch his uncles play their guitars and he would sit right in the middle of them and watch how they would change chords. He says when it would get late at night they would get tired of him and they'd all head home. They would play every Saturday night until he finally got it right.

When he turned fourteen he would play on the radio for one half hour every morning from 6:00 until 6:30. They would have five bands on Saturday. When they built the television station WROM, he had a half hour show on Saturday night. Later on he joined the Log Cabin Boys, they played allover Georgia and Alabama. A year after that he joined Georgia Grass. He played with them for about five years. Then he joined the group Southern Sounds, he played the upright bass with them for another six years.

About that time he received a call from the group Modern Sounds Of Bluegrass. They asked him to come and play bass with them. They played at Knott's Berry Farms in LA.

Then Bob met a man named Jr. Sample. Jr. was the person responsible for getting Bob on the Hee-Haw show. He spent thirteen years playing bass on the popular television show.

Then Bob decided to move to Montana, where he met a lot of good people and enjoys playing bluegrass (and any other kind of music) with them.

Bob says, "Love you all, Thanks for letting me sit in with you guys, and thank you to Jim Bradley for taking him to the jams.

Send your story to Rick Wingerter and we'll try to get it into the newsletter.
416 Hillview Lane, Billings, Montana 59101
or email him at, rwingerter@montana.net

Bluegrass Gospel at St. Olaf

There will be a **Bluegrass Gospel Service** at the historic St Olaf Lutheran Church at 1 PM on August 22,2004. Pastor W James Smith will conduct the service. Following the service, there will be an open jam session and coffee in the basement of the church. St. Olaf Church is about 6 miles SW of Cooney Reservoir where Red Lodge Creek and Volney Creek join.

Everyone is invited, Contact Trent or Terry Indreland for details.

Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder!
BEARTRAP Music & Art Festival
July 24 & 25, 2004 Casper, Wyoming
Saturday, July 24th. For Information: Clearchannel Radio
1.307.266.5252 TICKETS: \$20

J. D. CROWE

James Dee Crowe, popularly known as J.D. Crowe, has been playing banjo and bluegrass music for over 45 years. He grew up in Lexington, Kentucky, where he still lives, and began learning the Earl Scruggs style of banjo picking at age 13.

While still a teenager, he became the banjo player for Jimmy Martin and Sunny Mountain Boys in the mid-1950's and Jimmy taught him to sing the baritone line in trios as well. He is heard on more than 45 of Martin's recordings, many of them bluegrass classics ("You Don't Know My Mind," "Ocean of Diamonds," "Rock Hearts,") He became a master of hard driving, straightforward banjo playing and has become somewhat of a legend in the bluegrass world.

As a second generation bluegrass instrumentalist, he formed The Kentucky Mountain Boys in the sixties to play a steady gig at the Holiday Inn in Lexington. Early members of the band included Doyle Lawson, Larry Rice, Bobby Sloan, and Red Allen. As his band sound developed into a more contemporary style, it became the breeding ground for many of today's bluegrass musical leaders, including Tony Rice, Jerry Douglas, and Ricky Skaggs. In 1971 he changed the band name to J.D. Crowe and the New South which featured flawless picking and close harmony singing. The New South's releases on Rounder Records are still in print and are recognized as some of the most important recordings in bluegrass today.

**Does your band want to play at the Red Lodge Bluegrass Festival August 27th & 28th ?
Please contact w. James Smith or Terry Indreland
For details as early as possible.
Don't be left out and miss all the fun! ! !**

FUN!!! FUN!!! FUN!!!

**Open Jam at the Laurel Pizza Hut
Last Tuesday of every Month 7PM - ?**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOSPEL

12 Bluegrass Gospel songs written and produced by Rick Wingerter

Featuring artists from all over the U.S. and Canada
Including; The Marksmen, The Staffords, Chris Wetch
Russ and Becky Jeffers, DJ Manason and Nick Alberty

CD's \$10.00 each plus \$2.00 S&H
Mail check or money order to:
Rick Wingerter 416 Hillview Lane Billings, MT 59101
www.wingnut.net/loralea/htm

2nd Annual Red Lodge Bluegrass Festival

Plans are moving along for the 2nd Annual Red Lodge Bluegrass Festival to be held Friday evening, August 27th from 7PM to 10 PM and Saturday, August 28th from 10 AM to 10 PM at the Red Lodge Rodeo Grounds. Once again, the festival will be a fund raising event for the Red Lodge Fire Dept and Emergency Medical Services equipment fund. Last year we raised nearly \$1000 for the fund and we hope to increase that this year.

Unlike last year, there will not be a free concert on Friday night. The festival will begin Friday evening at 7 PM and will feature the "Greasy Beans" from Ashville, NC. Those unfamiliar with the "Beans" will be in for a treat. They are a young band which has captured the essence of early Bluegrass and Old Time Music. They appeared last fall at the Round Barn to a packed house. I was so impressed that I arranged for them to be the main act on Friday evening and Saturday morning. They are eager to be back in Montana. (Most of them fly fish so it wasn't too hard to get them out here again!) The Beans will be joined by two of our local groups, "Cold Frosty Morning" and "Elk River Ramblers" on Friday evening.

"Open Road" from Denver, CO will be the featured band for Saturday afternoon and evening. The local groups who have confirmed appearance on Saturday include the "Rambling Laurels", "Southbound", "Borderline", the "Sagegrass Ramblers" from Miles City, and a new group from the YBA, "Bluegrass Junction" Also, tentatively scheduled will be the "Gospel Messengers" from Cody and "Whitebird Express". Some "feelers" have been received from bands in Riverton, Wyoming and Helena. It looks like a good line up and we are starting to get both regional and national recognition.

Some changes to the festival this year will include the elimination of the dinner break and the addition of a beer garden outside the arena and separate from it. Sam Hoffman of Red Lodge Ales has graciously arranged to donate \$1 From each beer sold to the FD/EMS Equipment fund and has extended a line of credit to cover some of the festival costs. We are also offering spaces for vendors of music-related products for a modest fee.

Once again, we will be needing help from all YBA members and friends to help sell advertising, put up posters in their area, distribute flyers and be part of the staff during the festival. If you can help, contact me or Terry Indreland. With the help and the support of YBA, it should be another great festival.

And next year, who knows. maybe Dr Ralph Stanley!
Well, we can always hope!

w. James Smith