

Volume 1 March 2010

Bluegrass Bulletin



Official newsletter of the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society

Welcome to the 2010-11 Executive and Board of Directors



Photo by Doug Reid

Back Row Left to Right: Anna Somerville, Secretary; Linda Saboe, Newsletter; Carolyn Hotte, President & Entertainment; Terry Ruddy, Vice President & Advertising; Shawn Robinson, Website & Bob Whaling, Equipment.

Front Row Left to Right Arlene Eberhardt, Treasurer; Ron Mercer, Workshop & Paul Hnytka, Hospitality.



www.bluegrassnorth.com



Articles submitted to Bluegrass Bulletin (BB) may be edited, however, care is taken to preserve the writer's intent. Photographs may be cropped, but are not otherwise altered.

We welcome written articles and Photos. Unfortunately, BB does not have the space to publish all material submitted



It is Time to Renew Your Membership

Memberships have expired as of March 1, 2010

To renew your membership drop by the jam or

mail the enclosed application and membership fee.



Presidents Message by Carolyn Hotte



Photo by Doug Reid

Thank you to all that supported NBCMS by attending the February 10th AGM and special thanks to Kayla Hotte and Erin Kushniruk for sitting at the front table; Les Eberhardt for facilitating the election and Karen Jones and Anna Somerville for volunteering to count ballots. We have a great club and I'm proud to be a member. Sadly the turn out for the meeting was very poor and discouraging. We are a "member's club" and we all must share a responsibility and play a role in what the club does. It is not unreasonable to expect members to attend one or two meetings a year to support the Executive and Board of Directors and other volunteers who work so tirelessly for the club and music we love. One wonders how we can get 200 participants to a member and volunteer appreciation barbecue and Christmas party and only a handful to an annual general meeting! Now that I got that off my chest and as we begin a new executive term please be aware that the minutes from this AGM and all other executive meetings are in the binder at the front table of Wednesday's jam. I encourage you to read them. Also, our executive meetings are always open for you to attend and are held the second Wednesday of the month downstairs at 7:00 pm.

At the AGM each executive member gave a brief report of their duties over the past year followed by an open discussion and the election of a new executive and board of directors. We welcome new members Shawn Robinson, Website Director and Anna Somerville, Secretary to the board and wish Randy Mabbutt,

Noel McNaughton and Cindy Pearce best of luck with their future endeavours. Terry Ruddy remains Vice-President and adds Advertising Director to his duties. As in the previous year Arlene Eberhardt serves as Treasurer, Bob Whaling is Equipment Director, Paul Hnytka is the Hospitality and Volunteer Director, Linda Saboe is the Newsletter Director, Ron Mercer remains the Workshop Director and I will stay on as President and Entertainment Director. Thank you to the new or returning and past board members your dedication to the NBCMS is outstanding and I for one appreciate it very much. The Membership Director position is vacant at this time. If you would like to take on or assist with this position please let anyone of us know and please don't hesitate to ask if you require any further information.

It's time to renew your Memberships as all memberships expired March 1st. We are delighted and thankful to our sponsors for their continued support. Member discounts will remain the same at Acoustic Music Shop (10%), Avenue Guitars (no GST on accessories) and Myhre's Music (10% off non-sale items).

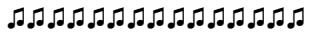
We have some great concerts and events coming up. More details are inside this newsletter and a quick summary of our upcoming events is on the last page of this newsletter.

We will be hosting a Casino the last quarter of this year and will need volunteers. We have not received the date yet usually we receive this information in May. We will keep you posted.

Keep on Jammin'

Publisher
Carolyn Hotte
(780)922-4204
hottecarolyn@hotmail.com

Visit us online at
www.bluegrassnorth.com

The deadline for the next newsletter is June 2 2010

The Bluegrass Bulletin is published four times a year to provide information and recognition to NBCMS members



Editors
Linda Saboe
(780)476-0949
lsaboe@telus.net
Sue Decker
Sheila Hallett
Kayla Hotte
Ron Pidskalny
Doug Reid
Submit items to
lsaboe@telus.net



Photo by Doug Reid

Jim Harrison & Audrey Ady

Bluegrass Music Jam Every Wednesday at 6:45 PM

Pleasantview Community Hall-10860-57 Avenue

Facilitated Jam the first Wednesday of every Month

Editorial Page

Membership Directors Report by Anyone can, nobody will, how can we have a club?



Photo by Linda Saboe

This position is emptier than the seats were at the AGM! How can a 'members' club survive without a membership? If you are unwilling or able to serve as the director please consider how you can contribute to this position. Are you willing to organize volunteers to sit at the door at Wednesdays' jam; are you willing to sit at the door for an hour on Wednesday night; are you prepared to promote the club at our events (this means packing, taking and

setting up and returning to the club membership forms, newsletters and information brochures); are you willing to manage the membership list and generate mail out labels for the newsletter? Without an active and involved membership a club cannot survive. Please consider joining your executive and board of directors in preserving, promoting and presenting Bluegrass music. Contact any member of the Executive or Board of Directors at the Wednesday jam.

News, Celebrations & Contests

Once again the editorial team has worked hard to provide our readers with information about our members and what has or is happening within the local Bluegrass community. We hope you enjoy reading this bulletin as much as we enjoyed preparing it for you. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated team of fine writers. Those of you who were at the Christmas Party would have noticed that we are not too bad at singing the songs we write either-but you can read more about that in Sheila Halletts' column.

Did you know that 2011 year will mark the NBCMS 15 year anniversary? We would like to document some of our history and many accomplishments in a newsletter and planning must start early. Do you have any early photos, or stories or bits of information you would like to share? If so please contact

me at the jam or via e mail lsaboe@telus.net. Our 15th year promises to be full of surprises watch for them. It is coming!

Monroe Says:

"We are having a Contest!"



The NBCMS annual barbecue is in May. We will run a contest to match the pet to the owner with an actual great prize to the first person to match them correctly. Please submit two photos; one of yourself and one of your pet (past or present) along with your name and the pets name by April 30 to Linda or to Kayla Hotte at the jam or email your photos to lsaboe@telus.net. Should be a fun contest. (Linda can scan your photos if you do not have electronic images.)

**Give something
back to your
Bluegrass
Community.
Volunteer for the
membership
director position or
assume some of the
duties**

It's Coming



**'Share your
Talent; join in this
celebration of the
arts'**



A band member of the Calder Cuties performs at one of the 2009 Creative Age Festival Art Cafes. Photo by Epic Photography.

Creative Age Festival June 8th–16th Edmonton, Alberta by Sheila Hallett



Photo by Doug Reid

'Share your Talent; join in this celebration of the arts'. June 7-13 is Seniors' Week in Alberta and Edmonton celebrates with the Creative Age Festival. Tuesday June 8th the Festival is kicked off at City Hall with fantastic entertainment by some of the City's

talented older adults.

Plans are underway for Arts Cafes which will take place during the week and Festival organizers want to hear from you if the idea of entertaining a crowd appeals to you. In years past acts were booked for every 20 minutes during the 2-hour Arts Cafe. Last year the cafes all took place at Central Lions Senior Centre—this year the location has yet to be determined. Bands, choirs, dance troupes,

singers, storytellers—let us know what you and your friends can perform.

The remainder of the week will feature film screenings, seniors theatre workshops, a symposium focused on the health values of creative arts involvement, and displays of the creative achievements of seniors. If you don't perform in front of crowds, perhaps your talent lies in painting, or drawing or sculpting, or other crafts such as woodworks that you'd like to show in a public venue.

There will be many other opportunities for you to become involved so stay tuned. You can visit the Festival website at

www.creativeagefestival.ca for updates. The Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council is the main host organization for the Festival @ 780-423-5635.

I'm a Drifter by Sue Decker Photos by Sue Decker



Cindy Cashdollar & Sue

A songwriter has two jobs: 1. write, and 2. live life so she has something to write about. I recently spent 2 weeks in and around La Grange, Texas (yes, the same place named in the ZZ Top song).

I billed the trip as a songwriting retreat but couldn't be certain

whether the muse would join me in the Lone Star State. I wrote a fair bit but most of it was leading me toward one song ("I'm a Drifter"), so that was the extent of job #1. I was fortunate to borrow a dobro and a guitar through contacts of the B & B owner. It was great to not have to schlep any instruments across the border but I missed my own dobro for sure.

When I wasn't playing and writing, I set out to fulfill job #2. Most days, I explored one of the small towns in the area (about an hour east of Austin). Once again, music was my passport, giving me access to meeting people at concerts, jamming, and perusing music stores. At the music store in Schulenburg, I was given a history lesson of the outlaws and shootings in the town. Plus, I got the low down on a nearby town called Moravia where the really bad dudes used to hang out because it was over the county line and the "law" were too afraid to go there. So, the only logical thing to do was to take a side trip to Moravia. The oldest store in Texas (it's really

just a bar now) is pretty much all that's there. The looks I got from the bartender prompted me to high-tail it out of there. Thankfully, that was the only cool response I got from people. But hey, I think there's a bluegrass song in there somewhere!

I found a fun jam in Moulton at an old bank converted to a bar (is there a pattern here?) We were stranded there when a train broke down at the only highway crossing out of town. I thought it would make for a good song if we had to stay the night but we just kept jamming a little longer and the train got moving. I also jammed with some local people I met at a concert. And oh the concerts . . . great shows capped off with a house concert featuring Cindy Cashdollar. I got to chat with her a bit and check out her gorgeous new resonator guitar up close. She was joined by Steve James, an acoustic blues institution in Austin. I picked up so much watching Cindy play from 5 feet away, it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I'm done drifting for a little while, time for the pen and paper to catch up.



Down at the Jam By Sue Decker

Photos by Sue except where noted

What is your favourite bluegrass band or CD or who is your favourite Bluegrass musician?



Photo by Doug Reid



Joshua: "Dueling banjos from *Deliverance*"

Dianne: "My goodness me . . . I like Danny Paisley and Ken Orrick from *Lost Highway*. All of them are so good it's hard to choose."



Evelyn: "IIIrd Tyme Out, Four Chords of Wood, Long Way Home; I like the old favorites, the old Bill Monroe."



Steven: "I really like the Blue Canyon Boys . . . and Matt Hotte"



Bill: "Woodbend, they're good. I just saw them the other night."



Meet the New NBCMS Secretary 'Anna Somerville' by Sheila Hallett



Photo by Doug Reid

I love the friendly atmosphere of the club, where we share a commitment to the Bluegrass style of music

How long have you been playing bluegrass?

I have enjoyed playing Bluegrass for 11 years. I was introduced to it at the Fiddlers Roost. Bernie and Willie were very helpful and coaxed me along. Everyone in the circle was encouraging and I never looked back.

What instrument did you play first (and do you play any other instruments?)

I came playing guitar not knowing how to use a pick. I quickly learned how to use a pick when David Ward & I started the bluegrass band Lonesome & Then Some. My latest interest is in the mandolin. Ron Mercer gave me one on loan so I could attend the 2009 Bluegrass Camp at HE Ho Ha. After spending a few weeks with Rob Baker I was hooked and have recently purchased my first mandolin. With a little help from the mandolin enthusiasts at the club, I purchased a 1924 Gibson snakehead.

How long have you been involved with NBCMS?

I joined right away 11 years ago. I started out as a folk music singer at the Fiddlers Roost where I met the members of my first Bluegrass Band Lonesome & Then Some. When an opening on the radio show "Prairie Picking" opened up I joined Rob Baker as a co host. Working with Rob was nothing but fun! I continue to perform bluegrass as well as a folk music.

What do you like about the club?

I love the friendly atmosphere, at the club, where we share a commitment to the bluegrass style of music. I always am made to feel welcome when I arrive at a NBCMS event.

What prompted you to get involved with the board?

Being involved on the board is the best way I can show my

appreciation for the world of music the members of the club have introduced me to.

Do you have any hopes or dreams for the club or your position on board?

My intention is to play a supportive role in helping the club achieve its desired goals. I appreciate the friendship and support offered to me by the NBMCS members and will do what I can to advance the very elements that attracted me to the club.

My favourite moment in the circle is when someone who has sat back finally takes a turn. Watching them reminds me how alive I felt when I first got up the nerve to started singing and playing in the circle. I still get nervous and am thankful for that. In the circle, I'm not thinking about what I did that day or what I'm going to be doing. I have no cares and no plans. I just want to play and listen and watch.

Meet the New NBCMS Web Site Director `Shawn Robinson` by Sheila Hallett



Photo by Doug Reid

How long have you been playing bluegrass?

About 6 years. I was taking guitar lessons at Acoustic music and my instructor suggested some flat picking tunes. It was completely new to me, but I learned Old Joe Clark and Red Haired Boy before I even knew it was 'bluegrass'.

What instrument did you play first (and do you play any other instruments?)

Guitar. I play a Blueridge BR-160, D'Addario Phosphor Bronze EJ-17 strings and use 1.0mm Blue Dunlop tortex picks, but don't currently carry any endorsements. :) I pick an old Hohner 5 string banjo, in the closet at home.

How long have you been involved with NBCMS?

I've been coming out to the jam and camps for about 5 years, since my sister-in-law, Hannah Goa, dragged me to my first slow jam.

What do you like about the

club?

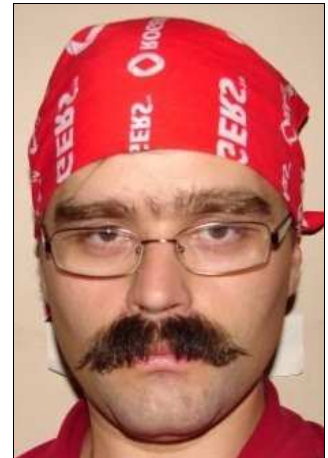
I am still in awe of walking into the jam and seeing so many talented musicians of all skill levels getting together to just play for fun!

What prompted you to get involved with the board?

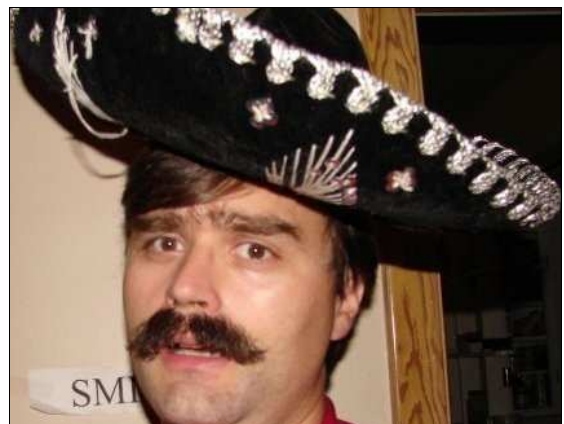
Linda threatened me? Cornered me? That and I've enjoyed the club being there so much over the years, and would like to contribute.

Do you have any hopes or dreams for the club or your position on board?

I'm taking over the position of Website Director from Noel McNaughton, who's done a great job keeping things organized and updated. I'd like to get some member feedback on the website, on what works and what doesn't work for people and use that feedback to improve the website. I'm also keen to contribute constructive opinions on day to day matters of the club.



I am still in awe of walking into the jam and seeing so many talented musicians of all skill levels getting together to play just for fun



Shawn is a man of many hats and moustaches! Photos from his facebook page unless otherwise marked.

More Microphone Technique by Kevin Jacobson

All Photos in this article by Kevin Jacobson

Welcome to part three of my two part series on microphone use in the bluegrass world. This part is geared primarily to those people that attend the bluegrass jam on Wednesday nights, at which a small sound system is used to help everyone hear. As you've probably figured out, it doesn't always work that well: some people still can't hear, and there is often a problem with feedback (that horrible squeal). This article should help understand what you can do with mikes to make the jam work a little better. This information is also useful for stage performances.

A Little More Background on Mikes

The first two articles addressed the single bluegrass mike technique, in which a band crowds around a single condenser mike. This type of mike is very sensitive so that it picks up sounds about six to twelve inches away. Another miking technique is called "close miking". As the name suggests the performer is much closer to the mike, which is more suitable when you use multiple mikes and there are speakers nearby. Fig. 1 shows the two mikes used in the jam circle and for close miking on-stage. The AKG D-880 mike is a typical dynamic vocal mike, having a mesh windscreen to help stop pops from your plosives ("p" and "b" sounds and the like). The smaller Audio-Technica AT3528 (a condenser mike) is used as an instrument mike so it only has a thin foam windscreen on it. The vocal mike is designed to work best on vocals, but it can also be used reasonably well on instruments. The instrument mike doesn't work very well on vocals because of the lack of windscreen.

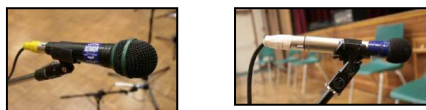


Fig. 1. Left: AKG D-880 vocal mike. Right: Audio-Technica AT3528 instrument mike.

How to Use the Mikes

A big difference between the single mike and these mikes is their sensitivity. These mikes are less sensitive, so you have to be much closer to get enough signal through the sound system. For vocals, your mouth should gener-

ally be within two inches of the mike. Some people put their lips right on the mike, but that's not really necessary, and you might be a little squeamish tasting someone else's lip gloss. For the instrument mike, get it as close to the instrument as possible without interfering with your playing. The key message here is: **get close!** Why is that? Well, if you're too far away, the mike won't pick up enough, and then the volume control on the system has to be turned up so you can be heard. Too much volume can cause that annoying feedback squeal from the system.

Remember also that your performance technique remains very important (and possibly even more so) when you're using a sound system. Sound system technology can only do so much, so you have to learn to work the system. Some people naturally have loud voices and some don't, some people play really loudly and some don't. If you are of the quieter variety, it will help if you work on projecting your voice or instrument and you need to get quite close to the mike. If you are pretty loud already, you don't need to get as close to the mike. Usually the guitar is the quietest instrument, so it's important make sure it's properly miked, especially when the guitar is leading a song. If your instrument is pretty loud and you can't hear someone else, try playing quieter rather than turning up the volume on that person.

Mike Positioning

Mike positioning for vocals is fairly simple – directly in front of your mouth and singing fairly straight into the mike. Some people recommend tilting the mike up a little bit. Fig. 2 shows a few examples of good and bad vocal mike technique.



Fig. 2a. Good! Very close to the mike, and fairly straight into the mike. If your voice projects well, you can back off a little.

Sound system
technology can
only do so much

You have to learn
to work the
system



Fig. 2b. Bad vocal mike technique. This is way too far away.



Fig. 2c. Bad! The mike is pointing too high, and Linda has turned away from the mike.

Miking a stringed instrument is a little trickier because precise placement of the mike can change the volume and tone quite a lot. Different instruments may sound quite different too. If you place the mike close to the strings, you'll get mostly string sound. That's not necessarily a problem, because you will hear good attack and articulation. However, it might be a little bright and tinny sounding. Placing the mike directly on the body of the instrument might be warm and woody sounding, but possibly too boomy. The trick is to find a good compromise. Generally you need to get quite close to the mike with a guitar because it is the quietest instrument. Fig. 3 shows some guitar placement options.



Fig. 3a. Guitar placement: mike pointing at the fretboard where the neck meets the body can work quite well. A bright sound results.



Fig. 3b. Guitar placement: mike pointing at the wood below the fretboard can give a nice blend of strings and wood and leave lots of room for strumming.



Fig. 3c. Guitar placement: mike pointing at the sound hole is often too boomy and “woofy” due to the air rushing out.

Mike placement on a mandolin is shown in Fig. 4. It's a small instrument, so mostly you try to get close with enough room for your picking hand. Since the mandolin is usually fairly loud, you may not even have to get very close, except perhaps for breaks.



Fig. 4. Mandolin: mike placement here gives a good blend of strings and body with room for your picking hand.

Miking a banjo is similar: try to get a good blend of body and string, leaving room for your picking (Fig. 5). Banjo is also quite loud, so you don't have to get too close.



Fig. 5a. Banjo placement: a nice blend of body and strings with room for your picking hand.



Fig. 5b. Banjo placement: um, yeah this probably is best, all things considered.

**Be Sure to read
more microphone
technique**

**Do's and Don'ts
on the next page**

More Microphone Technique by Kevin Jacobson- A Few Tips



Photo by Claudia Bolli

Do

- **Get close** to the mike – about two inches for vocals, as close as possible with the instrument mike.
- **Point the mike** more directly towards your mouth or your instrument.
- Keep the backs of the mikes pointed towards the speakers.
- Get the mikes positioned comfortably before you start the song. If not, you will probably forget about it and start to move away during the song. It will help if you sit normally, and move the mikes to you, rather than trying to squirm over to them while you're playing.
- Try to project your voice and your instrument a little more.
- Make sure the guitarist leading the song is well heard.
- Guitarists will likely have to stay quite close to the mike.

- Listen carefully and adjust your volume and mike position to blend in with the rest of the group.
- If you are a loud player or singer, you can back off from the mike a little.
- Move closer to the mike for instrumental breaks, and back off for rhythm.
- Experiment with mike position and listen carefully to the result.
- Play and sing with confidence.
- If you see someone not well positioned with the mike, help them out by moving the mike for them.

Don't

- Point the mikes at the speakers.
- Move the mikes too close to the speakers.
- Sing into the side of the mike – it's not very sensitive there. Rely entirely on the sound system.
- Be afraid of the mike.

Check out Kevin's
website

www.cavemusic.ca

And watch him perform
live with Back Porch

Swing

www.backporchswing.ca

Well Done Bernie & the Fiddler's Roost by Linda Saboe

On Family Day, Bernie McClellan's Fiddler's Roost offered a very special treat for the patrons who filled the place. The Monday night jam started early with a short set by "Woodbend Bluegrass Band". This band has been together in its current configuration for a year and their hard work has paid off with a fine performance of traditional bluegrass and Country music. Watch for them at Blueberry Bluegrass Festival!

A host of well known and respected local country music legends including some members of Alberta Country Legends (Joyce Smith, Bev Munro and Alfie Myhre) were also there. What a treat to see and hear these greats' perform alongside many of the Fiddler's Roost regulars. The backup music provided for any who requested it was outstanding and the performers were a joy and inspiration to watch.

Bernie is a long time avid supporter of amateur musicians and the Fiddler's Roost was the first home of the NBCMS. Check out his website www.fiddlersroost.ca for days and times of jams and open stages.



Bernie McClellan photo by
Tracy Kolenchuk



Photo by Erin Kushniruk

The new Woodbend performs at the Fiddlers Roost
Ron Mercer, Jessi Jo Charles, Les Eberhardt, Jean
Coates & Terry Lawson

Our Members Upcoming Events & in the News

The Kayla & Erin Show



Erin Kushniruk and Kayla Hotte

Editors note

Kayla Hotte and Erin Kushniruk met as young children at the NBCMS. Both received support, encouragement and opportunity from their families and friends. The NBCMS funded vocal training with Donna Lee Randon, and provided opportunity for them to perform as Shortgrass. They have each received NBCMS sponsorship to attend Sorrento's BC Bluegrass Workshop and now they are out on their own! This is their show, produced, promoted and performed by the lovely ladies! Plan to attend!

THE KAYLA & ERIN SHOW
 Playin' & Swingin'
 and a whole lot of singin'
Thursday June 3, 2010
The ARtery
9539 Jasper Ave
Doors 7:30 PM
Tickets \$10 at the Door
Need more information?
Look us up on facebook!

Hotte Show Print 2010



Do you know of an acoustic open stage
 Is your bluegrass band playing some-
 where local? Let us know we could put
 the announcement here.

A Bluegrass Bulletin Editor and club photographer Doug Reid with his mother Shirley. Edmonton Oilers Fans and season seat holders since 1985. Photo appeared in the March 3 Edmonton Journal .



NBCMS Celebrates Christmas 2009 by Sheila Hallett Photos by Doug Reid



Photo by Doug Reid

Good food and good music brought the NBCMS clan together days before Christmas to share glad tidings.

A packed house enjoyed a catered turkey supper before Kayla Hotte and Erin Kushniruk took to the stage to play a 20-minute set. The duo have been Bluegrass buddies since they were in elementary school and there they were, two beautiful young women who play like pros and sing like angels together. The NBCMS newsletter crew of Linda Saboe, Sue Decker,

Carolyn and Kayla Hotte, Doug Reid, Ron Pidskalney and Sheila Hallett shared a few laughs as they performed a variation of Jimmie Brown the Newsboy and Joy to the World (custom-made lyrics written by every member of the crew). Thanks to Ken Hotte for his fine bass work. The writer's group wore antlers which added to the ambience and the Board of NBCMS carried on the tradition by donning the antlers as each member took turns leading a song before they sang We Wish You a Merry Christmas. Club Hospitality Director Paul Hyntka said it was the first time his kids have ever seen him play and sing

on stage—a proud moment for Paul.

The stage was then open for club members and their friends to share a few tunes with the crowd. A good time was had by all. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to get the hall ready and organize all the food and refreshments. It was a festive way for club friends to wish each other a joyous holiday season before the club took a two-week break from the hall jam.

**The NBCMS
newsletter crew
performed
custom made
lyrics written by
every member of
the crew**

Your Newsletter Team



Ron Pidskalney, Doug Reid, Kayla Hotte, Carolyn Hotte, Sue Decker, Linda Saboe, Sheila Hallett and Ken Hotte on Bass



Marg Miller



Paul Hnytko

Your Executive & Board of Directors



Cindy Pearce, Paul Hnytko, Linda Saboe Carolyn Hotte, Bob Whaling, Randy Mabbutt, Ron Mercer, Noel McNaughton, Terry Ruddy





Traditional Music: The Difference between Bluegrass, Old Time and Celtic

Thanks to: Toby Adobe & Moby Adobe, Edward I. Pollak, Ph.D., Bill Knowlton & Tony Becker*

Bluegrass songs are about God, mother and the girl who did me wrong. If the girl isn't dead by the third verse, it ain't Bluegrass.

The Music

Old Time and Celtic songs are about whiskey, food and struggle. Bluegrass songs are about God, mother and the girl who did me wrong. If the girl isn't dead by the third verse, it ain't Bluegrass. If everyone dies, it is Celtic. Old Time and Celtic bands have nonsense names like 'Flogging Molly' 'Fruit Jar Drinkers' and 'Skillet Lickers' while Bluegrass bands have serious gender-specific name like 'Bluegrass Boys,' 'Clinch Mountain Boys' and 'Backwoods Babes'. The most common Old Time keys are major and minor with only 5 notes (modal). Bluegrass uses these, plus Mixolydian and Dorian modes, and a Celtic band adds Lydian and Phrygian modes. A Bluegrass band has between 1 and 3 singers who are singing about an octave above their natural vocal range. Some Old Time and Celtic bands have no singers at all. If a Celtic band has a singer, it is usually either 1. a bewhiskered ex sailor, or 2. a petite soprano. A Bluegrass band has a vocal orchestrator who arranges three part harmonies. In an Old Time band, anyone who feels like it can sing or make comments during the performance. In a Celtic band, anyone who speaks during a performance gets 'the look', and songs are preceded a call for silence and a detailed explanation of their cultural significance. Bluegrass tunes & songs last 3 minutes. Old Time and Celtic tunes & songs can be any length, and sometimes last all night.

The Instruments

Banjo:

A Celtic banjo is small and quiet. An Old Time banjo is open-backed, with an old towel (probably never washed) stuffed in the back to dampen sound. A Bluegrass banjo has a resonator to make it louder. A Celtic banjo weighs 4 pounds, an Old Time banjo weighs 5 pounds, towel included and a Bluegrass banjo weighs 40 pounds. A Bluegrass banjo player has had spinal fusion surgery on all his vertebrae, and therefore stands very straight. If an Old Time banjo player stands, he slouches. A Celtic banjo player remains seated to maintain stability while cross-picking as fast as possible. An

Old Time banjo player can lose 3 right-hand fingers and 2 left-hand fingers in an industrial accident without affecting his performance. A Celtic banjo player has a brace to relieve his carpal tunnel syndrome. A Celtic banjo has only 4 strings. A Bluegrass banjo has five strings and needs 24 frets. An Old Time banjo needs no more than 5 frets, and some don't need any. A Celtic banjo player flat picks everything. A Bluegrass banjo player puts jewelry on his fingertips to play. An Old Time banjo player puts super glue on his fingernails to strengthen them. Never shake hands with an Old Time banjo player while he's fussing with his nails.

Fiddle:

Celtic and Bluegrass fiddles are tuned GDAE. An Old Time fiddle can be in a hundred different tunings. Old Time fiddlers seldom use more than two fingers of their left hand, and uses tunings that maximize the number of open strings played. Celtic and Bluegrass fiddlers study 7th position fingering patterns with Isaac Stern, and take pride in never playing an open string. Celtic fiddlers only play open strings to imitate the bagpipes. An Old Time fiddle player can make dogs howl & incapacitate people suffering from sciatic nerve damage. An Old Time fiddle player only uses a quarter of his bow. The rest is just wasted. The Bluegrass fiddler paid \$10,000 for his fiddle at the Violin Shop in Nashville. The Celtic fiddler inherited his fiddle from his mothers 2nd cousin in County Clare. The Old Time fiddler got his for \$15 at a yard sale.

Guitar:

An Old Time guitarist knows the major chords in G and C, and owns a capo for A and D. A Bluegrass guitarist can play in E-flat without a capo. The fanciest chord an Old Time guitarist needs is an A to insert between the G and the D7 chord. A Bluegrass or Celtic guitarist needs to know C#aug+7-4. A Celtic guitarist keeps his picks in his pocket. Old Time guitarists stash extra picks under a rubber band around the top of the peg head. Bluegrass guitarists

Traditional Music: The Difference between Bluegrass, Old Time and Celtic (continued)

would never cover any part of the peg head that might obscure the gilded label of their \$3,000 guitar.

Mandolin:

It's possible to have an Old Time or Celtic band without a mandolin. Mandolin players spend half their time tuning their mandolin and the other half of their time playing their mandolin out of tune. Old Time and Celtic mandolin players use 'A' model instruments (pear shaped) by obscure makers. Bluegrass mandolin players use 'F' model Gibsons that cost \$100 per decibel.

Bass:

A Celtic band never has a bass, while a Bluegrass band always has a bass. An old, Old Time band doesn't have a bass, but new time Old Time bands seem to need one for reasons that are unclear. A Bluegrass bass starts playing with the band on the first note. An Old Time bass, if present, starts sometime after the rest of the band has run through the tune once depending on the players blood alcohol content. A Bluegrass bass is polished and shiny. An Old Time bass is often used as yard furniture.

Other Instruments

It is not possible to have a Celtic band without a tin whistle or Bodhran (hand drum) if not several too many of each. Old Time and Bluegrass bands never have either. A Bluegrass band might have a Dobro. An Old Time band might have anything that makes noise including: a tambourine, jaw harp, didgeridoo, harmonica, conga, wash tub bass, miscellaneous rattles & shakers, a 1 gallon jug (empty), or a lap (mountain) dulcimer or a hammered dulcimer. In a Celtic band, it's the musicians that are hammered.

Instrumentation:

Except for the guitar, all the instruments in a Celtic band play the melody all the time. In an Old Time band, anyone can play either melody or accompaniment at any time. In Bluegrass bands one instrument at a time solos, and every else plays accompaniment. Bluegrass bands have carefully mapped-out choreography due to the need to for solo breaks. If Old Time and Celtic band members move around, they tend to run into each other. Because of this problem, Old Time and Celtic often sit down when performing, while a Bluegrass band always stands. Because they're sitting, Old Time and Celtic bands have the stamina to play for a square or contra dance. The audience claps after each Bluegrass solo break. If anyone

talks or claps near an Old Time or Celtic band, it confuses them, even after the tune is over.

Personalities Stage Presence

Bluegrass band members wear uniforms, such as blue polyester suits with gray Stetson hats. Old Time bands wear jeans, sandals, work shirts and caps from seed companies. Celtic bands wear tour tee-shirts with plaid touring caps. All this headwear covers bald spots. Chicks in Bluegrass bands have big hair and Kevlar undergarments. Chicks in Old Time bands jiggle nicely under their overalls. There are no Chicks in Celtic bands, only Lassies with long skirts and lacey, high collars and Wenches in apple-dumplings-on-a-shelf bodices and leather mini-skirts. A Bluegrass band tells terrible jokes while tuning. An Old Time band tells terrible jokes without bothering to tune. Bluegrass band members never smile. Old Time band members will smile if you give them a drink. A Celtic band is too busy drinking to smile, tune or tell jokes. Celtic musicians eat fish and chips, Bluegrass musicians eat barbecue ribs, and Old Time musicians eat tofu. Bluegrass musicians have mild high frequency hearing loss from standing near the banjo player. Old Time musicians have moderate high frequency hearing loss from sitting near the fiddler. Celtic musicians have advanced hearing loss from playing in small pubs with all those fiddles, banjos, tin whistles and bodhrans.

Festivals

A Celtic band travels in an actual Greyhound bus with marginal air conditioning and then catches a ride from the bus stop to the festival anyway they can. A Bluegrass band travels in an old converted Greyhound bus that idles in the parking lot all weekend with the air conditioner running full blast, fuming the county with diesel exhaust. The Celtic Band has their name on their instrument cases and a banner for their Easy-Up. The bluegrass band's name and Inspirational Statement are painted on both the side and front of the bus in script lettering. An Old Time band travels in a rusted-out 1965 VW microbus that blows an engine in North Nowhere, Nebraska. They don't have an Easy-Up, and it's pretty evident that their vehicles don't have air conditioning. Bluegrass bumper stickers are in red, white and blue and have stars and/or stripes on them. Celtic bumper stickers display banners and slogans from the old country. Old Time bumper stickers don't make any sense (e.g. 'Gid is My Co-Pilot?) Bluegrass players stay on the bus and Celtic musicians at the nearest Motel 6 while Old Time musicians camp in the parking lot.

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Winter Jam Camp 2010 by Doug Reid all photos by Doug Reid



Photo by Carolyn Hotte

The camp started out Friday night with everyone getting settled into their rooms and tuning up, before supper. After supper there was a band scramble to get everyone into the weekend festivities. The Loonie Toon cartoon character printed on your double-sided nametag signified members in your band, and afforded everyone the opportunity to catch the names of other weekenders. As usual, there were several areas for jamming, along with the private rooms, which weren't so private as everyone had their doors open for jamming most of the time. The jamming seemed to peter out a little sooner than in past years though, as 2:00 to 2:30 am was the limit for most.

Saturday brought more jamming through the morning and afternoon. Later on there was a 'Bluesy G Runs for Guitar' workshop in the 7-8 Lounge, which was put

on by Judd Vanderzalm.

Saturday night was the first of what I hope is many to come "Bluegrass Game Show". The game was sort of like "Jeopardy" where two teams had to pick the category and then answer the question in a short time frame. The categories were: **Murder Ballads, Banjo Jokes, Who Am I, Song Lyrics, Who Is The Boss, Know Your Instrument, and Name Dropping**. If a team couldn't answer the question, the other team got the opportunity and if they couldn't answer correctly, it was directed to the audience. The audience was quite knowledgeable, getting all the answers correct when asked.

Ron Mercer was up to his usual tricks as host and in directing the process. He was dressed spectacularly (as usual) in a bowler hat, fluffy shirt, suspenders and open fly pants. He was embarrassed a bit upon finding out that his barn door was open.

Action was so hot and heavy at times that they had a gong to end the question period. Banjo Jokes was the most popular category which kept everyone in stitches laughing. At the end of the game, the winners receive a wonderful trophy, which was held up in victory along with a winning smile. Later on, everyone got out their instruments for the evenings jamming.

On Sunday, there was the usual gospel jam before breakfast, and after breakfast there was another band scramble. There were many memorable moments during this scramble. A couple of them were the now famous mandolin playing by Les Eberhardt, and the wonderful singing of Eva Foote.

It was nice to see all the old face, not that they are all old (ok some were), along with some new ones. It was a great time for music, friendship, fun and laughter and I look forward to next years Winter Jam Weekend.

Our game show host



Left to right the winners: Carol Newlove, a Past President; Carolyn Hotte, President and Mike Vautour



Defeated left to right: Terry Ruddy, Vice President, Pat Guidera, Past President and Ken Hotte, the 1st man. "How does this duck call work?"



Marion deSequin



Jeanette Erickson



Colleen Whaling



Al Preston



Eva Foote



Ian Johnston



Shawn Robinson



Diana Stanford



Les Eberhardt



Doug Reid, Carolyn Hotte, Lee Foote, Mike Vautour, Judd Vanderzalm



Ken Hotte



Patricia Wood, Brian Jackson, Don Lecky



Sharon Stapley



Brian Ficht



Leigh Greenough



Ed Potter



Doug Reid



Lonesome River Band & Bix Mix Boys by Doug Reid Photos by Doug Reid

The Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society proudly presented the **Lonesome River Band** on February 26, 2010, at the Provincial Museum, with the **Bix Mix Boys** opening for them. There was quite a crowd on a night that saw lots of action in the Olympics in Vancouver. It was well worth missing the Olympics though, as the gold was right here.

The opening act **The Bix Mix Boys** started out the night and got everyone going. The band consists of **Darcy Whiteside** on banjo and vocals, **Logan Sarchfield** on guitar and vocals, **Terry Nadasdi** on mandolin and vocals and **Jim Storey** on bass. They played a number of original tunes during their set, one of them being Darcy's '**Ballad of Bill Miner**'. They also did a rendition of **Gordon Lightfoot's 'Did She Mention My Name'**, with both of these tunes being on their latest CD. It was good to see the fellows on stage again and if you missed this concert, they will be playing at the Blueberry Bluegrass Festival this year.

After a short break, the **Lonesome River Band** took to the stage. This band has been around for 28 years and one of the most popular bands on the bluegrass festival circuit. It consists of **Sammy Shelor** on banjo, **Andy Ball** on mandolin and vocals, **Mike Anglin** on bass, **Brandon Rickman** on guitar and

vocals and **Mike Hartgrove** on fiddle. The band played some of their tunes from their latest CD such as '**Wires and Wood**', and a pretty ballad called '**Flowers**'. The band also played a few of Brandon's own tunes, with my favourite being '**I Bought Her a Dog**'. Unfortunately, the band didn't have any merchandise to sell at the break, as all their CD's got stopped at the Canadian border and were not available, although Brandon did have a few of his own for sale. You can hear them on line at www.lonesomeriverband.com, and also purchase their latest CD through the links.

Before the band started up again Sheila Hallett, who was the MC for the evening, presented Sammy with a gold metal on behalf of the IOC, otherwise known in bluegrass circles as the International Ovation Committee. The metal was for Long and Short Track Speed Picking. The band sure would have got some of my hard earned gold too if there merchandise was available. Their sound is great to listen to, and I was happy they kept the tunes coming fast and furious, which got them a well deserved standing ovation. I hope to see them again soon around our neck of the woods.



Sheila Hallett presents Sammy with *IOC* Gold

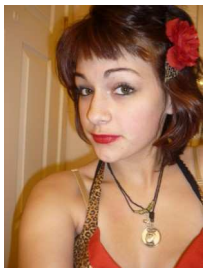


Jim Storey, Logan Sarchfield, Terry Nadasdi, Darcy Whiteside



Mike Hartgrove, Sammy Shelor, Brandon Rickman, Andy Ball, Mike Anglin

A Moment With Terry Ruddy by Kayla Hotte



I got the opportunity to interview our Vice President and Advertising Director Terry Ruddy. He is both interesting and kind-hearted. This is what he shared with me.

Q: What first brought you to the jam?

A: I had heard about it for 3 or 4 months and decided one night to come down and see what it was all about.

Q: You play the bass now; do you have an interest in learning any other instruments?

A: Yes I do, but I haven't decided what instruments yet.

Q: Where do you see the club in 5 years?

A: I would think that we would be more visual, have a greater membership and we would continue to have more concerts; attracting the bigger names.

Q: Typically, the Vice President is in training for the President's position. Do you see presidency in your future?

A: It's being considered.

Q: What kind of music did you listen to when you were younger?

A: Country and Western. In my teenage years Rock n' Roll, but I always migrated back to Country and Western.

[Terry proceeded to tell me about when he was young and Rock n' Roll was first coming out. He also told me about when he used to babysit and get to hear his favourite radio show that played country and western music.]

Q: What's your favourite bluegrass band?

A: I like the Spinney Brothers. The Downtown Mountain Boys were great. James King is excellent.

Terry's band Long Way Home will be the opening act for the Four Chords of Wood concert on April 24th. I heard them last year at the Member and Volunteer Appreciation night and I am looking forward to hearing them again.



Photo by Doug Reid

Terry's band

Long Way Home is

the opening act

for the Four

Chords of Wood

Concert April 24

A Definition of Bluegrass submitted by Terry Lawson



Lyle Lovett gave a great definition of Bluegrass music at his concert on Saturday night.

"Bluegrass music is the "dark side" of Country music. In Country music she will break your heart. In Bluegrass music she will break your heart and burn your house down"



News From the Entertainment Director by Carolyn Hotte



I know this!

I hope you were able to attend the Lonesome River Band Concert it was fantastic. These professional and talented musicians are a joy to watch and listen to. Unfortunately their CD's didn't arrive in time but they

can be ordered on-line from their website www.lonesomerivwerband.com or www.amazon.ca. The Bix Mix Boys did a fine job warming up the audience. There were just over 200 in the audience not bad since the Olympics were on many of our minds. It was a great feeling to be part of the crowd during the intermission when we were able to catch the last few minutes of the hockey game the cheers and enthusiasm was felt by all. We are using a new venue for a couple concerts this spring. Our choice venue the Royal Alberta Museum Theatre was unavailable. The Stencil Hall at Taylor College & Seminary seats 220 people I'm confident that it will work well for some of our concerts. Please come out and see for yourself.

Photo by Doug Reid

STENCIL HALL
TAYLOR COLLEGE & SEMINARY
11525-23 Ave Edmonton

SPECIAL CONSENSUS



DOORS
7:30 PM
SHOW
8:00 PM

SATURDAY MARCH 20
Presented by **NORTHERN BLUEGRASS CIRCLE MUSIC SOCIETY**

NBCMS Members \$20 * Non-Members \$25

Tickets available on-line www.tixonthesquare.ca
Charge by phone toll-free 1-877-888-1757
Other ticket outlets are posted on our website and at the Door (if not sold out)

www.bluegrassnorth.com

© Hotte Show Print 2010

THE SPECIAL CONSENSUS, from Nashville, is a four person acoustic bluegrass band that performs original compositions, traditional bluegrass standards and songs from other musical genres. As a result of this musical diversity, The Special Consensus has performed at the most traditional bluegrass festivals and at more diverse festivals and fairs. This will be a great concert your sure to enjoy! Opening act is Edmonton's own Cabin Fever

we are hosting two
concerts in March
because Special C is
coming through town and
it would be a shame if we
missed the opportunity to
present a great
International Bluegrass
Band

NORTHERN BLUEGRASS CIRCLE MUSIC SOCIETY PRESENTS

SPINNEY BROTHERS



DOORS
7:30 PM
SHOW
8:00 PM

SATURDAY MARCH 27
ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM THEATRE
12845-102 Ave Edmonton

NBCMS Members \$20 * Non-Members \$25

Tickets available on-line www.tixonthesquare.ca
Charge by phone toll-free 1-877-888-1757
Other ticket outlets are posted on our website and at the Door (if not sold out)

www.bluegrassnorth.com

© Hotte Show Print 2010

From the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia, the Spinney Brothers showcase a tight brother duet vocal style. The cornerstone of their musical identity is the sound of traditional, southern-flavoured bluegrass music. The first generation bluegrass legends have been an important musical influence, yet their music is equally shaped by their personal lives and local heritage. By incorporating original material, the Spinney Brothers effortlessly intertwine the past with the present and you are sure to be entertained. Opening up the show is the Blue Grass Orphans from Three Hills

News From the Entertainment Director by Carolyn Hotte

**NORTHERN BLUEGRASS CIRCLE
MUSIC SOCIETY PRESENTS**



FOUR CHORDS OF WOOD
SATURDAY APRIL 24
DOORS 7:30 PM * SHOW 8:00 PM

STENCIL HALL
TAYLOR COLLEGE & SEMINARY
11525-23 Ave Edmonton

NBCMS Members \$20 * Non-Members \$25

Tickets available *online www.tixonthesquare.ca
Charge by phone toll-free 1-877-888-1757
Other ticket outlets are posted on our website
and at the Door (if not sold out)

www.bluegrassnorth.com

© Hotte Show Print 2010 10

Four Chords of Wood is an energetic group of talented performers based on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Known for their love of hard driving Bluegrass music, FCOW's music comprises rich vocal harmonies and strong instrumental accompaniment. They are a band that appreciates the roots and traditions of Bluegrass both from the performers and audience's perspective. They gather around a single microphone, lay down solid rhythm and dress it up with passionate lead vocals, tight harmonies and exciting instrumental solos.

Expect to be entertained!

Opening up the show is home grown talent Long Way Home.

All NBCMS Concert Tickets are available at:



Service charges may apply

On-line www.tixonthesquare.ca

Charge by phone toll free 1-877-888-1757

Myhre's Music 8735-118 Ave.

NBCMS Wednesday Night Jam

At the door if not sold out.

All concert tickets cost
\$20 for members
\$25 for non-members

News From the Workshop Director by Ron Mercer



Photo by Doug Reid

Fall Workshop 2010

I have taken lots of your suggestions and changed the format for this workshop a bit. We will be having the bands perform right at Camp He Ho Ha during the weekend so that our out-of-townners get a chance to see them in action. There will be more chances to jam in smaller groups for intermediate players with the camp instructors instead of cramming 100 people into the George Kidd lounge. Also, there will be a few different classes offered:

For all you creative people, **Bluegrass Songwriting**, taught by the incomparable Jenny Lester, covers how to write a hit song that people will sing around jam circles forever!

Vocal Styling's, instructed by Laura Boosinger (North Carolina) will focus on the different stacking arrangements of our bluegrass pioneers.

An **Appalachian Music** class for bluegrass roots people who like to strum, dance, sing and play old time

fiddle tunes. The teachers of this class are two sisters (Leela & Ellie Grace) from North Carolina, whom I saw at a house concert and they literally blew me away with their performance. They play all the bluegrass instruments, know their Appalachian history and can dance like nothing you have ever seen. This is how Bill Monroe started out, I'm sure.

I'll have the 2010 workshop brochures out as soon as I can.

Winter Jam 2010

Well there were 40 of us musicians at Camp He Ho Ha in January. What an excellent time we had! Lots of jamming, laughing and learning new tunes. Some of the highlights were the Bluegrass Game Show (wow, that Carolyn Hotte is smart!) and the Sunday morning Gospel Band Scramble. People would have paid big \$\$\$ to see that performance. Plan to attend next year.

A Message from the Hospitality & Volunteer Director by Paul Hnytka



Photo by Carolyn Hotte

The large number of events NBCMS hosts is possible because of volunteer workers. Volunteers are the heart and soul of non-profit societies. We need members with their many and varied skills to step up and take part in achieving our mission and in the planning, organizing and hosting of our many functions. So, young, old, middle aged, what-ever your abilities, give some serious thought as to what you can do for your organization.

Hey and by the way, if you have any recommendations as to who should be Volunteer of the Year, there will be a Suggestion Container at the jams and Concerts and any of the Directors will be happy to take your suggestions. . May the good Lord bless and keep you till we Jam again.

Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something.

Author Unknown

2010 Member and Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue Wednesday May 19th



Wednesday, May 19, 2010. Food served from 6:00 -7:30 PM at Pleasantview Community Hall. Everybody must receive an advance ticket by May 12, 2010. Tickets are available at the Wednesday night jam or contact Paul Hnytka by email paul@bluegrassnorth.com or by phone 780-908-5320. Members are free, non-members \$25.00. All who plan to attend MUST HAVE A TICKET BY MAY 16.

This NBCMS event includes announcement of the volunteer of the year, entertainment, jamming, draws and fun for all!

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not. ~Dr. Seuss



Volunteer of The Year Award Nominations



May 19th we will host our Annual Volunteer & Membership Appreciation BBQ. This is a catered event and advanced tickets are required. Who will be the 2010/2011 volunteer of the year? Nominations accepted at the Jam until May 12th

We cannot do great things; only small things with great love. Mother Teresa



Grassifieds Members can Place your
FREE ad here. Email to Isaboe@telus.net

Support the businesses that support the Circle!



Photo by Doug Reid

DO YOU LOVE TO SING?

Enhance your self-confidence and
singing/speaking skills with

PRIVATE SINGING LESSONS!

Ages 9 to 90: Beginners & Experienced

CONTACT: DONNA LEE RANDON

at 780-478-3242,

Located in Royal Gardens
(close to Southgate Area)

Donna Lee's sensitive and gentle personality creates an atmosphere of acceptance and trust in which persons can learn and grow.

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SHOP**

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(780)433-3545

10% off all regular priced items
Card must be presented

**MYHRES
MUSIC**

8735 - 118 AVE.
(780)477-1586

10% off all non-sale accessories
Card must be produced

**AVENUE
GUITARS**

10550 - 82 AVE.
(780)448-4827

No GST on Accessories
Card must be produced

NBCMS

Preserves

Promotes

Presents

Bluegrass Music



Music Merit Awards



June 15th is the deadline for the Music Merit Award. Each fiscal year the NBCMS Executive allocates \$2000.00 to the NBCMS Music Merit Award fund. Distribution of these funds will occur once per year in June. Applications are available to download from our website and on the front table at the jam.



Our mission is to Preserve Promote and Present Bluegrass Music

Executive

President and Events Director

Carolyn Hotte
(780)922-4204
hottecarolyn@hotmail.com

Vice President

Terry Ruddy

Treasurer

Arlene Eberhardt

Secretary

Anna Somerville

Directors

Workshop

Ron Mercer
(780)488-5256
coates.mercer@interbaun.com

Advertising

Terry Ruddy

Website

Shawn Robinson

Hospitality

Paul Hnytko

Equipment

Bob Whaling

Membership

Vacant

Newsletter

Linda Saboe
linda@idaredbluegrass.com

You may contact any board member via email from the contact us page of www.bluegrassnorth.com

Upcoming NBCMS Events

March 20: Special Consensus at Stencil Hall, Taylor College & Seminary 11525-23 Avenue
Doors 7:30 PM Concert 8:00 PM

March 27: Spinney Brothers at Royal Alberta Museum Theatre 12845-102 Avenue
Doors 7:30 PM Concert 8:00 PM

April 24: Four Chords of Wood at Stencil Hall, Taylor College & Seminary 11525-23 Avenue
Doors 7:30 PM Concert 8:00 PM

May 12: Deadline for nomination of **volunteer of the year**. Deadline for obtaining BBQ tickets

May 19: Catered Event **Volunteer & Member Appreciation BBQ** at Pleasantview Community Hall 10860-57 Ave Doors 5:30 PM .
Members free Non Members \$25
Advance tickets required. You must get your ticket by May 12.

May 19: Announce **volunteer of the year**

June 15: Deadline for application for NBCMS **Music Merit Awards**

Bluegrass Music Jam Every Wednesday at 6:45 PM

Pleasantview Community Hall-10860-57 Avenue

Facilitated Jam the first Wednesday of every Month

Board Meeting second Wednesday of every Month

Open Stage Band Scramble last Wednesday of every month

