

Come Try the New NBCMS Normal!



We're enthusiastic! We're trying to be safe! We're trying to keep our community alive and thriving! We're having fun! We are trying to remember each other's names! We are getting together in ways that will remind you of the good ol' times you had jamming with people that you shared fun with! We're building!

Let's face it, except for a few valiant (but false) starts, it's been over 2 years since many of us have been together and sharing a closed space with each other. How are you feeling about what you've been through? Are you feeling that you want some of the comfortable and feel good things to return to your life?

There's a small and varied group of people that you know that are meeting at Pleasantview for weekly jams. They're not all there every week, but some of those faces that you remember are there trying to re-build the strength of this jamming club that gave so much joy to so many of us. If it's been a while for you, maybe it's something that you want to try on for size... you might remember that you like the fit...



“The NBCMS is a non-profit music society that promises to promote, present and preserve Bluegrass Music.”

On December 15, 2021 we found delight in welcoming Backporch Swing to the Pleasantview Stage, featuring Cam Neufeld (fiddle), Penny (guitar) and Jim (mandolin / guitar) Malmberg and Kevin Jacobsen (bass)

Terry Ruddy announces his hearty thanks to all of the volunteers that made the 2022 Casino such a huge success and introduces 3/4 of the Lonesome Ace Stringband (inside joke) -Max Malone on bass and Chris Coole on banjo.



Carolyn Hotte expresses her deep gratitude to all the volunteers that help the club out in so many ways and prepares to draw for the door prizes!

Our Christmas Show

*Cam Neufeld on fiddle
 Penny Malmberg guitar
 Jim Malmberg mandolin
 Kevin Jacobsen bass
 teasing us through a
 delightfully playful
 version of "You're a Mean
 One Mr. Grinch."*



After a hefty spell of nothing much musical, the NBCMS proudly hosted Backporch Swing in a hearty hallelujah for Christmas! The band consists of Penny Malmberg (guitar), Jim Malmberg (guitar, mandolin), Cam Neufeld (fiddle), and Kevin Jacobsen (bass). Penny was the voice of the band for the evening, she stated what everyone was feeling... it's great to be together to enjoy some live music!

Backporch Swing is a local band that loves Swing, Folk and Bluegrass. Kevin Jacobsen picks a groove you can feel on bass, Cam Neufeld dances around the melody on fiddle, Penny Malmberg lays down some solid rhythm tracks spiced up nicely with an occasional solo, Jim Malmberg fills the spaces on Mandolin with his rhythmic chop and tasteful solos, Penny and Jim provided smooth harmonies with an occasional 3rd part from Kevin.

The band delivered on some driving Bluegrass mixed with a couple of splendid Christmas classics and a jazzy prancing version kicked off by Jim Malmber of "You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch". The Grinch Christmas classic was a delightful surprise! Cam Neufeld drove the band on some rippin' fiddle tunes; Cherokee Shuffle, Kenny Baker's Road to Columbus, and Bill Monroe's Can't You Hear Me Callin'. Penny gifted a tune she wrote called We're Here for Love dedicated to her lost friends, especially Sandy. We closed the night with Silent Night and a wish for a loving Christmas.

Penny closed in saying "It was fun seeing faces we haven't seen for a while..."



Many of our regulars sitting in the comfortable Pleasantview Concert Venue (also known as the Community Hall) enjoying the comfortable 'friends down the road' spirit and the great music of Backporch Swing!

The Winter Jam

Most years our Workshop Director, the wonderful Anna Somerville, organizes some jam focussed events that provide very rewarding opportunities for participants to find their friends and a space to enjoy a peer based jam or two... We had a year off from jam camp thanks to the COVID illness situation that was affecting so many and the threat to our public health care system plus the fact that the older population was being hit so hard with the serious outcomes of this disease, the 2021 Winter Jam was cancelled. So the first actual event since 2020 was enjoyed by some 50 or so musicians that gathered in 4 separate locations at Camp He Ho Ha to play some marvellous acoustic music with each other.

There was a Bluegrass Jam, a Country Swing Jam, a Folk Music Jam, and one that shall not be named because I wasn't there (we were raising a litter of puppies!). Folks were free to move around to enjoy the different musical flavours.

As with every event at Camp He Ho Ha, the hospitality is something to be appreciated. The jamming locations are in spacious and comfortable rooms, this year accommodations were in 2 person rooms, and participants were cared for with wonderful meals that were shared in a bright and warm dining hall.

This was a very welcome event at the depths of the winter blahs (blues) that some are feeling at this time of year. Thank you everyone that made this such a great community event!

The logo that represents the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society is pictured to the right.

Over the past many years some of you may have noticed performers at our concerts and performers / instructors at our workshop, and folks from other Bluegrass clubs struggle just a bit with our name... Heck, our own Board Members have had this same struggle!

With this realization, our Board has decided to keep the logo and keep the branding that goes along with it, but to simplify our name to just the Northern Bluegrass Circle.

So anytime that you hear somebody talking about the Northern Bluegrass Circle - THAT'S US!

For official purposes the full name will stand but we now have an alias that hopefully everyone will appreciate and remember!



We Have a New Board!

Each year we hold our Annual General Meeting near the end of February. This meeting is an open meeting intended to welcome all members of the club to see and thank the Board Members from the previous year, receive an annual update on the Club, and to elect and welcome the new Board that will work together as a team to guide the Club through the coming year.

This is a time when one can toss their hat into the ring to help out and work with an experienced group of folks that are well intended to “promote, present and preserve Bluegrass Music” within our club, and to a broader community of people that come out to enjoy our concerts and workshops.

It seems that each year we’ve had some empty positions on our board but the Club operates nonetheless! Folks are welcome to step into these roles and can be brought into the Board when they identify themselves as wanting to join this fine team.

This year we are proud to announce the Northern Bluegrass Circle Board as:



President Carolyn Hotte

Vice President Terry Ruddy

Secretary Cameron Yule

Treasurer Maureen Winter

Front of House Director Terry Ruddy

Workshop Director Anna Somerville

Concert Director Darrell Roth

Membership Director Grant Symons

Newsletter Director Greg Winter

Website Director Daryl Reneau

Equipment Director vacant

Director at Large Kayla Hotte

Director at Large Rob Baker

Plus 2 Director at Large positions vacant -photo thanks to Joy Husel

Northern Bluegrass Circle and IBMA Update...



Our club became a lifetime member of the International Bluegrass Music Association some 20 odd years ago... Since then, we have not had much opportunity to provide financial assistance by way of donation to the IBMA. Our club has a lifetime membership rather than paying annual dues.

Our hard working President Carolyn Hotte is also a Board Member of the IBMA. At the last Northern Bluegrass Circle board meeting she shared details of the financial challenges of the IBMA and their initiative to assist up and coming artists with a grant that could be used to fund their ability to perform by subsidizing costs associated with travelling to various festivals.

Another story has emerged in parallel with this one as for the past many years, the much loved Darcy Whiteside has lead members of our club in the discovery of music and history through his program 'Bluegrass 101'. This program brought members together to jam a selected tune each week with the intent of increasing their musical knowledge and skills associated with playing and singing together. This great program has been on hold since Darcy has been suddenly challenged with health issues that became front and centre for him. Darcy's Facebook post on November 28, 2021 provided an update for the folks on Facebook.

The absence of Darcy's leadership in his weekly jam in the middle of COVID suddenly challenged the club to fill a deep void left in the regular activities each week. Carolyn stepped in to offer a new program on behalf of the club that she affectionately branded 'Jamming 101'. Carolyn donated her time to leading this new program each week and after many weeks and some time to discover how to enhance this new program, new jam leaders began to take the helm and lead a supportive and fun jamming experience for those in attendance.

At the most recent Board meeting, it was identified that Carolyn has been doing this out of kindness and the motion was made to pay Carolyn for providing her leadership in the Jamming 101 initiative. Carolyn stated that she would not accept the money but felt that a weekly amount should be offered to the jam leaders on a going forward basis.

As a Board, we recognized that Carolyn was passing on a significant sum of money. The natural evolution of this situation was to motion that our club make a donation to the IBMA to aide in funding this new program to assist new/emerging Bluegrass musicians to make their way to festivals and workshops with a significant awareness of our role from the IBMA. Thank-you Carolyn, and thank you Northern Bluegrass Circle Board for discovering and acting on yet another way that we can serve the mission of this club!



The Northern Bluegrass Circle is working to build and maintain strong hosting relationships with the Uptown Folk Club and the Arden Theatre!

Jamming Workshop



On December 4th, Penny & Jim Malmberg lead a workshop that was fun and informative. The workshop was titled SingPlayJam and the club members that attended shared the fundamentals of how to introduce a song in a Jam so that others are prepared to play along with a tune they're not familiar with. The workshop provided some examples of playing musical intros and outros to help others in the circle to understand the package of chordal tones that exist within the song and may possibly present the hook of the song as a sound that may instantly inform Jammers of what they're about to play and tastefully conclude the song that's been played. They touched on the structure of voice harmony for 2 and 3 part singing to create that rich sound that we so often hear especially in Bluegrass music. They also presented some etiquette pointers for Jammers to be able to tastefully accompany one who is singing or playing a solo or lead break within the tune.

The art of jamming is enriched when participating musicians are aware of the structure of the song for example "this is a I IV V song but the hook of the verse is a iii (minor) chord as the second chord that leads into the IV chord, then to a I V I progression. The chorus has a bridge that starts on the V and goes to the I then has a ii chord that leads back into the V before the hook melody I iii IV I V I is played to windup the chorus." We didn't start with this example of the structure of 'Old Home Place' but introducing this somewhat tricky tune in this manner allows other Jammers to understand what they need to prepare to play if they're not familiar with the song. It's also important to ask when one doesn't know about the tune... This manner of sharing information really emphasizes the importance of the Nashville Numbering System as a means of communicating with musicians.

Counting in the tune is an important part of setting the tempo that the groove is built on. Introducing the tune as a Waltz (3/4 time -a quarter note gets 1 beat and there's 3 beats to the bar or measure) or a 4/4 tune (quarter notes gets one beat with 4 beats to the bar) or cut time 2/4 (quarter note gets 1 beat and there's 2 beats to the bar). Counting in may be done by voice, foot taps, playing 'potatoes' (as shared by Noel McNaughton!) and the strong rhythmic groove of a good intro.

An intro may be as simple as a 15 11 (over 2 bars in 2/4 or 4/4 time, play the I to the V then I and I) or the intro may be hook of the melody, or perhaps the entire solo structure of the verse within the chordal frame. An outro is a tasteful conclusion to the song rather than just suddenly ending on the last note. The outro may be a tag or an instrumental playing of the hook that winds up on a chord run in the root of the tune.

Jamming is teamwork! Everyone plays together to lay down a solid groove with room in the sound for a vocalist to shine through when singing, or for a soloist to play during an instrumental portion of the tune. That sometimes means diminishing the loudness of play when a quieter voice or instrument is the focus of that portion of the tune. It may mean really digging in to accompany a bold instrumental presence at times too.

The Jamming workshop was valuable for me and really emphasized one of the most important teachings I've received in several experiences at other workshops. The statement is simple and was delivered by strong musicians that I respect deeply. I've heard this message stated in many ways by Greg Blake, Jim Hurst, John Lowell and others but I will forever remember the gravity of Steve Gulley in his soft voice as he taught our class at Camp He Ho Ha in the fall of 2019 when he said "It's all about the song" "everything that we do as musicians is in support of the spirit of the song..."

The Lonesome Ace Stringband Show!



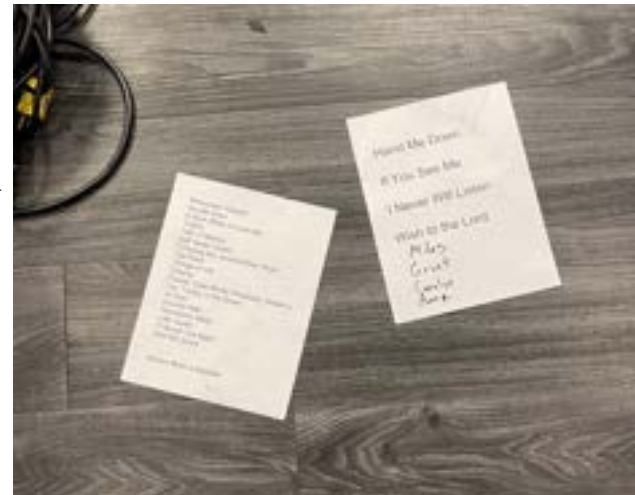
You may recall in the spring of 2020 that we were anxiously looking forward to the Lonesome Ace Stringband show. You may also recall that with all the craziness of Covid rampaging through the world, shows and festivals began dropping like flies. 'Postponed' became one of the buzz words of those 'unprecedented times'.

But on March 30th, we were pumped to get them back (well at least 3/4 of them -just a little inside joke... I think we all know that when 1 of 3 is missing all you have left is 2/3 which is what we got). The performance was missing a notable player, John Showman on fiddle was not able to join us that night as he was dealing with his own Covid illness. Nonetheless, "3/4" of the band -Chris Coole on banjo and Max Mallone (formerly Heineman) on bass put on a magical show filling the long empty void of absence from this premiere Old Tyme stringband.

When a 3 piece stringband is missing 1 piece -the fiddle- you might wonder 'how can they go on?' or 'I can't imagine they can pull off a good show'.

Simple fact is they put on a great show. Now I would never say that I would never miss John Showman but Chris and Max delivered a great show! Plus after travelling all day, getting checked into their accommodations, getting some food, getting unpacked, they still showed up early for their performance and stayed late to jam in the circle with those lucky lucky club souls that hung around to jam too.

There's many ways that members of this club can feel happy and fulfilled, attending this show was another one! Thank you so much Lonesome Ace Stringband you rock!



Festivals, Festivals, Festivals!

Kluane Mountain Bluegrass Festival

Yukon's Premiere Bluegrass Event

HAINES JUNCTION, JUNE 10-12, 2022

Music. Mountains. Magic.

Visit the land of the midnight sun, the place where rest takes a break!

<https://yukonbluegrass.com/lineup>

Fun times and wild mountain music will be had in Sundre, Alberta!

The lineup and more info for trip planning found at:

<https://foothillsbluegrass.com/shady-grove.html>



If you haven't been to B.C. for a while, or if you've never been to Vancouver Island, you owe it to yourself to visit Laketown Ranch in the beautiful mountainous region of Cowichan Valley for the Cowichan Valley Bluegrass Festival.

<https://cowichanbluegrass.com/lineup/>



Come visit the Ness Creek Site at Big River, Saskatchewan!

For Festival information, maps, lineup and more go to:

<https://northernlightsbluegrass.com/>

Checkout the lineup then get your tickets and come join us at Heritage Park in Stony Plain for the Blueberry Bluegrass Festival!

<https://blueberrybluegrass.com/line-up>



Northern Bluegrass Circle supports Fiddler's Roost!



Occasionally friends call upon friends.
 We do it in times of joy and in times of need.
 Friends are always there to help friends.

When Carolyn told us of the Fiddler's plight to raise funds to help in the Save the Fiddler's Roost Fund Raiser

the Board voted unanimously in favour of delivering a cheque to show our support. Then many of us joined them at a show of support put on by Calvin Vollrath's Country Swing Band. Late in the show, Calvin's band was joined by Alfie and Byron Myhre for an amazing 4 fiddle performance of Whiskey Before Breakfast.

Around Town: Friends of Bluegrass and a New YEG Venue



While many are struggling to get 5G's whenever they can, 2G's were more than enough on a beautiful warm sunny Sunday May 9th evening at the Backyard YEG. These 2 Grandfathers have been playing together for over 20 years.

When you can get reception like this who needs more G's?

Marc Ladouceur on the left and Bob Jahrig on the right cranked out tune after tune in the middle of busy downtown Edmonton without pause despite distractions.

If you haven't had the chance to love Bob Jahrig's songwriting, it's high time you did. You'll find that the tasteful lead guitar and mandolin on his recordings 'Tree Tops' and 'Colour of the Moon' is none other than Marc Ladouceur.



There's a funky new outdoor live music venue located in the heart of downtown Edmonton. That venue is called Backyard YEG and it's located on the northeast corner of 101st Street and 104th Avenue beneath the EPCOR building and the old CN Tower. It's family friendly with a great vibe. Dogs are welcome and there are lawn games for children. The bar serves premium beverages and there are classy washrooms at the east end of the 'yard'. There are often food trucks staged but on this night a BBQ was set up serving up a great Brat and big cheesy pretzels!

Grateful for a Casino...



On March 12th and 13th the Northern Bluegrass Circle volunteers staffed 2 busy Casino days and evenings at the Pure Casino location on Yellowhead Trail. The 4 shifts were busy with patrons, revenues for the Casino were high, and we had great volunteer teams that made each shift fun while helping the NBCMS to secure a major source of revenue for the club.

We're grateful to the Pure Casino group that operate the Yellowhead Casino. They provided veteran Casino Advisors that helped us to navigate the full and timely operation of the Casino. We did our best to ensure that the shifts ran smooth and were ready to assist in all aspects of operating the Casino. They provided great food, a comfortable volunteer "jamming friendly" lounge and great staff that made our jobs much easier.

Thank you to the AGLC for the casino profit opportunities. The way Casinos operate in the Province of Alberta allows non-profit groups like ours to receive significant revenues from our event with some criteria on how we use the monies. The bottom line is that much of the regular Northern Bluegrass Circle activities are funded directly by Casino monies. This is why the Casino and the roles of the club members in assuming volunteer duties are so important.

The Northern Bluegrass Circle extends our deepest thanks to the volunteers that made these 2 nights so successful:

Terry Ruddy (especially for his continuous work of planning, organizing and communicating with the AGLC)

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|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Sue Ferguson | Kinley Miller | Nial McKenna |
| Anna Somerville | Shauna Johnstone | Phyllis Findlay |
| Frank Omoe | Zach Daniel Robertson | Grant Symons |
| Jason Baldwin | Dieter Enders | Scott Degen |
| Carolyn Hotte | Blythe Nuttal | Darrell Roth |
| Cameron Yule | Donna Ingram | Daryl Reneau |
| Noel McNaughton | | Maureen Winter |
| Angeline Majeau | | Greg Winter |

MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR:



Teamwork has been central to my life’s work. I’ve had the opportunity to work with many teams, in a variety of capacities. Each team is different because of the role they fulfill and the people. Teams all experience shifts in dynamics which are realized when there are changes within the membership. Every single person on a team can make a difference.

The Northern Bluegrass Circle has a team that is responsible for ensuring that the vision the club was founded upon remains the focus of the club. That team is responsible for the week to week operations of the club and it’s fiscal management, for the future vision and the wellness of itself and the club.

Each person on the Board of this club provides a service to this team and works with the others to maintain the wellness of the club. For my small part, I’m proud to serve this team in a supportive capacity as the person that from time to time pulls together a newsletter. I receive kind comments and occasionally a pat on the back if I manage to hit the nail on the head as it were.

There are many members on this team that don’t get the same opportunity for reward as I do, so if you get a chance to express your appreciation for the work that they’re doing, please take the opportunity to say ‘Hi, I really appreciate what you’re doing for the club’. I know that small kindnesses go a long way. Because I have this opportunity, I’d like to say “Thank you to my team mates for the fine work you do for our club”.



Check this out! The Northern Bluegrass Circle is hosting a Musical Swap Meet. You can bring instruments, music books, disks, albums, books, etc. The event is Wednesday June 15th from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Tables can be purchased ahead for displaying your wares and you can bring your merchandise to the Pleasantview Community Hall at 6:00 pm to set up your display. Admission to the swap is \$5.00 per person and you will receive a BBQ’d something special with some chips. Bottled water and pop will be available for a \$1 per item fee. Come on out and see what might show up at the Swap! Questions? Contact Grant at gsymons68@icloud.com

CKUA’s The Bluegrass Hour -hosted by our very own Darcy Whiteside plays a classic mix of Bluegrass and Old Time music spanning approximately 60 years of the genres. “I try to introduce bands from all over the world... stuff you’ve never heard before but hopefully will enjoy.”

Darcy brings a variety of music coupled with an insightful focus on some of the history of this passion inspiring music.

The Bluegrass Hour can be heard Sundays 12 - 1 p.m. and Mondays 4 - 5 a.m. at 94.9 in Edmonton and area.

- Calgary 93.7
- Red Deer 107.7
- Edson 103.7 Hinton 102.5
- Whitecourt 107.1 Grande Prairie 100.9 Spirit River 99.5
- Peace River 96.9
- Athabasca 98.3 Fort McMurray 96.7 Lloydminster 97.5
- Canmore Bow Valley 104.3
- Drumheller Hanna 91.3 Medicine Hat 97.3 Lethbridge 99.3



FRIENDS OF BLUEGRASS



Myhre's Music

The NBCMS members enjoy a special and long standing relationship with a local music store... A cornerstone of acoustic and roots music in Edmonton... a family owned and operated store with family values that has served the Edmonton area since 1967! Myhre's Music has been a great supporter and promoter of the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society, for which we say THANKS!

Staff in the photo are left to right: Lydia Myhre, Catherine Robertson fiddle and violin luthier, daughter Haley, Byron Myhre, Alfie Myhre, Bob Potoniec, missing Thomas Slaymaker guitar luthier, George Back, and son Tanner Myhre.

Classified Ads

-the Annual Guitar (Instrument) Swap is coming up on June 15, 2022 at Pleasantview Community Hall. If you wish to purchase a table or to purchase an instrument or 2 come to the Hall at 17:00 (5:00 pm).

Thanks Contributors!

-Thanks to the Internet for photos and all the truths I could find...

-written by Greg Winter, edited by the lovely and talented EX-Principal Maureen Winter

What's the difference between a rock band and a bluegrass band? A rock band can play all day without tuning and a bluegrass band can tune all day without playing!

What's a good line to pick up a new partner at a music festival? "Hey baby, wanna folk?"

Two old guys sitting on a porch, one is pickin' on a banjo... his buddy says to him "Hey friend, if you keep pickin' at that thing, it'll never heal!"

-if you have an item you'd like to publish in the newsletter, please let Greg know by e-mail to: winski.greg.winter@gmail.com

each issue requires confirmation of your desire to re-publish your item.

