

The Northern Grass



Steve McCain - Editor



Special points of interest:

- Association News
- Bluegrass In Northern Kentucky
- Concert Information
- Upcoming Events

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Winter Issue

January, 2013

Going On 9 years By Steve McCain

Hello Folks! Happy New year to everyone. If you can believe it, we as an association are turning 9 years old in 2013. It seems like just yesterday, we were picking Bluegrass music out in the parking lot of the GMC dealership on rt. 18.

In those days I was taking banjo lessons and looking for someone to pick with or at least watch to see what the heck I was suppose to do.

By chance, I heard about this jam that was just getting started and would be a lot better than my basement!

Many of the faces that I met during that first year, I have become great friends with, some we have unfortunately lost but always hope we will see again.

NKBMA has always been An outlet for anyone who just can't get enough Bluegrass by listening to it on the radio.

As we grew, our association started our first adventure of running a big time festival. Our first attempt was a one day concert held in the parking lot of the Richwood flea market. Our vision of keeping Bluegrass alive in this area had to grow. The next year we moved our festival to Sparta Kentucky "Pickin' For Memory" where we would hold a three day festival with a lot of great local talent and some big names too.

Our jam sessions have moved from the dealership, to the Super bowl in Erlanger, the Mason hall in Hebron (Still there with Gene Thompson) and to our current location at Willis Music

in Florence Ky. Some of the same faces from the beginning are still making their way each 4th Friday at the jam.

Our association has put on and supported more concerts and festivals over these past years than I can count. We traveled from Grant County to Clay City, Sparta to Red Lick and a lot of places in between.

We just recently joined forces with WoodSongs to help bring Bluegrass to people through other medias.

I believe we are keeping true to our mission of keeping Bluegrass music alive in this area.

I expect the music to continue and the friendships to continue to grow hopefully for many years to come.

We look forward to seeing all of our members this coming year. Let's make it one to remember!

From Our President Mrs. Myrna Murphy

IT SEAMS THAT SADNESS WILL TOUCH EVERYONE MANY TIMES IN OUR LIFETIME. GARY PICKETT PASSED AWAY ON JAN. 3RD. HE LOVED HIS BLUEGRASS MUSIC AND HIS FAVORITE BANDS. HE WAS ALWAYS A FRIEND TO EVERYONE AND MADE FRIENDS EASILY. HE WILL BE MISSED. NKBMA WILL BE HAVING A BENEFIT IN HIS HONOR. WE WILL

LET EVERYONE KNOW WHERE AND WHEN.

THE 2012 CHRISTMAS PARTY AT WILLIS WAS A SUCCESS. GREAT MUSIC AND LOTS OF DELICIOUS FOOD. THE BAD WEATHER HELD OFF UNTIL IT WAS OVER. GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL.

MYRNA MURPHY





Mr. Gary Pickett

1942—2013

“Gary was one of those rare people that absolutely knew the secret of life.”

Gary Pickett - Everyone's Friend by Steve McCain

This past month, we have had to say good bye to a few of our good friends. Gary Pickett was one of those men. If I had to describe Gary in one word it would be dedicated. Gary was dedicated to his wife Judy, his children, and his grand children, some of the most important things in life. But Gary didn't stop there. Add to this our country as he served in the US Navy and he served our community in any way possible.

Gary was a long running member of the NKBMA serving as Vice President with me and advisor for many years. I can't

remember a time when if there was a need in the NKBMA, Gary and Judy were not there. Gary's support, humor and friendship will dearly be missed.

Ron Simmons, our current Vice President could not have said it any better:

“Every human being's future is determined to go forward or otherwise, when this life is over, through his or her personal Covenant with God. No

man, woman, dogma or government can stand in the way of that moment. I will miss Gary as a wonderful friend and devoted fan of our music. He wished he could play on a stage with the musicians who did. I hope to be a good enough man who someday can stand next to Gary on the final stage of life and get as much accolade as he will from the most loving “Critic and Judge” of all.

I can assure you he “is” a finer man than I am a musician.

Gary's wealth was vast because he counted his Faith, wife Judy, family and friends, not his wallet or bank account. I will miss this gentle man and hope you think of him from time to time because whether you knew him well or not at all.....he was your friend and mine.

Rest in Peace Gary, and say a good word for your family and friends now that you are on that stage playing whatever you want in ANY KEY!”

Ron Simmons

Vice President NKBMA

Gary was one of those rare people that absolutely knew

the secret of life. Fill your life with more friends than money because when the chips are down, the friends will be around a lot longer than the money will.

While Gary was taken from us way to soon, he knew what his job was while he was here. If our society ever stands a chance of getting better, our children need an example of what it means to be a man. Be faithful, supportive and dedicated to what you believe in. Gary fit the bill in every sense of the word.

The world won't be the same without you Gary, but it will be a better place because of you.

God bless you and your family.

Steve McCain

Former President,
News Editor,
and Friend
NKBMA



Located across from the Florence Mall and next to H.H.Gregg on Mall Road, our Florence Superstore has it all. Store manager Rick Fuchs brings years of service and experience to meet your every need. Our Florence location also features a 24 track digital recording studio and performance center in addition to the Kate Young Music Makers studios and lesson center.

7567 Mall Road

Florence, Ky. 41042

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Click It To Get It!!

Get all the latest NKBMA news, calendar updates, local events and more. All this is right at your finger tips!

Roy Conner, A rare voice that will be missed by Ron Simmons

Once again our community has lost a great friend. **Roy Connor** passed away in his sleep and moved on to see his creator. Roy was so unique in my mind because of his God given talents, that I can only marvel at still. If there was a Bluegrass song he didn't know, it probably had never been sung. If there was a fine instrument whose workmanship he didn't admire (and try to buy), it probably wasn't worth owning.

If there was a voice that could make banjo players drop to their knees in respect for the sheer power, **it was his**. These attributes were all Roy Connor. When we kidded him about it, he just grinned, which by the way he did a lot too.

Lightning isn't likely to hit the same place twice in such a short interval, but it has. "Isn't supposed to" and "just did" are about probability and reality.

Roy and Gary fought the inevitable with all the strength they had. In the end we should all take note that as humans and Christians the journey does not end here. Rhonda Vincent asks in a song sung to Bill Monroe, "Is the grass any bluer on the other side"? I'll bet it is for those two.

Roy....Gary.... we miss you, love you, and thank God for letting us borrow them for these years. See you down the road.

Ron Simmons

Vice President NKBMA

I attended the monthly jam session this past month and saw an out pouring of love for Roy Conner and for the music he loved. Song after song was dedicated to Roy. As you listened, you could hear Roy singing the same songs as he did so many times.

Roy was a part of our NKBMA family and will be painfully missed .As we continue on, we can only thank him for bringing that special voice and supporting Bluegrass music as he did.

Steve McCain

NKBMA News Editor



Right - Roy Conner with his friend
Kenny Daily.
Rare to see the two apart.



Roy at one of the many concerts or jams he
played at with the NKBMA

NKBMA Business News

- ◇ **MEMBERSHIP DUES** ARE \$10.00 FOR SINGLE, \$12.00 FOR COUPLES AND \$22.00 FOR BANDS THROUGH JANUARY 31TH 2013. STARTING ON FEB.1ST, 2013 DUES WILL GO TO REGULAR PRICE OF \$12.00 FOR SINGLE, \$15.00 FOR COUPLE AND \$25.00 FOR A BAND.
- ◇ 2013 NKBMA BOARD OF OFFICERS - **PRESIDENT** - MYRNA MURPHY - **VICE PRESIDENT**—RON SIMMONS - **SECRETARY** - JIM MOORE - **TREASURER** - GENE THOMPSON - **SENIOR ADVISORS** - JACKIE BOWLING, LUTHER HENSLEY, PAM MESSER
- ◇ **GARY PICKETT MEMORIAL CONCERT - MARCH 24TH 2013** - LOCATED AT THE RED BARN - TIME WILL BE 2:00PM TO TBD - FLYER WITH DIRECTIONS TO RED BARN AND MORE DETAILS ON BANDS PLAYING TO FOLLOW. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS VERY SPECIAL EVENT.
- ◇ NEXT NKBMA BOARD MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 6TH 2013 AT WILLIS MUSIC ON MALL RD. IN FLORENCE KY. MEETING STARTS AT 6:30 AND NORMALLY LAST UNTIL 8:00. NKBMA MEMBERS ARE MOR THAN WELCOME TO ATTEND.

Appalachian Festival 2013 by Ron Simmons

“The best way to find out if they brought anything of interest with them, is to listen”

We in the Greater Cincinnati Area are the gateway to (and from) that eastern mountain range known as the Appalachian Mountains. From before Daniel Boone and the Cumberland Gap, to our region 2013, much of who we were, are and will be is because of the migration from that region. We here in Cincinnati are a living history lesson. We are the sons and daughters of Native Americans, Americans of African descent, and European settlers who came from that region to find land, freedom, prosperity, in general a life that the mountains could no longer provide for them personally.

The best way to find out if they brought anything of interest with them, is to listen to the sounds of Appalachia as told in letters, poetry, songs and storytelling. Please join us for the Culture Fest Program, see attachment. It may about you.

Just a quick reminder of the Mother’s Day Weekend Appalachian Festival at Old Coney Island, May 10th, 11th, & 12th. **MORE INFO?** CHECK OUT - <http://www.appalachianfestival.org/>

Put it on your calendars. I’ll be there so you might just as well be there too.

Thoughts and Prayers



- Don Brautigam - In Hospice - Brother to Myrna Murphy
- The Conner family as they morn the loss of Roy.
- The Pickett Family as they morn the loss of Gary.
- United States Armed Forces
- The leaders of our country

OPEN JAMS

GENE THOMPSON JAM - HEBRON MASONIC LODGE. 1ST FRIDAY OF EACH MTH. **CLOSED FEB. 1ST** DUE TO LARRY SPARKS CONCERT - RE-OPEN MARCH 1ST. Contact Gene Thompson at 859- 689-7431

RUSSELL TURNER JAM - 2nd FRIDAY EACH MONTH - LOCATION - 6TH AND PARK STREEN NEWPORT, KY - CONTACT RUSSELL TURNER AT rturn@zoomtown.com

LUTHER HENSLEY BLUEGRASS JAM - - 3rd TUESDAY EACH MONTH - CLARYVILLE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, ALEXANDRIA, KY.

BLUEGRASS STYLE MUSIC LESSONS

Fiddle
Mandolin

Guitar
Banjo

1740 Adams Rd, Cincinnati, OH
Northern Kentucky University, Cold Springs, KY
Immanuel Church, Lakeside Park, KY
513-607-1874 fotmc@iglou.com

theSoundWorkshop

RECORDING STUDIO

Located within Willis Music on Mall Rd. in Florence. Contact Rick Hopkins for all your music recording needs at phone #

513-607-9855 or visit their website at www.soundworkshop.net

Winter Blues

Let's start the year off right with some good Bluegrass music from the legendary Larry Sparks! On Friday, February 1st, Willis Music, Wood Songs and supported by the NKBMA will play host to an evening of great traditional Bluegrass music.

Mr. Sparks is no stranger to the NKBMA as we have seen him on our stage before at our Sparta festival a few years back.



Date - February 1st

Location - Willis Music on Mall Rd. Florence.

Cost - \$20.00 per person

Time - Doors open 6:00pm

Show starts - 7:00pm

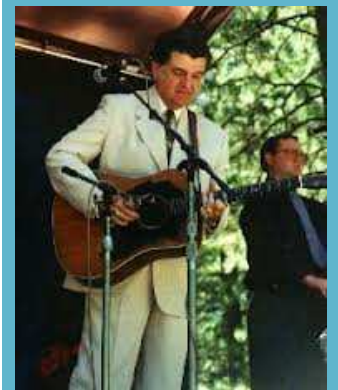
LARRY SPARKS !

Larry, whose career started with Ralph Stanley later moved on to create his own name in Bluegrass.

In a business that always tries to change something to make it better or appeal to a larger crowd, Larry has always strived as he says, "keep it real". In other words, come out with new songs but keep that traditional sound that everyone loves.

If you need to kick the winter blues, do it with some great Bluegrass music and Larry Sparks!

Don't miss this special show !



The Northern Kentucky
Bluegrass Music
Association

NKBMA
PO Box 133
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Got Bluegrass News?

Send it my way to hit the next
newsletter to the attention of
Steve McCain
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Visit Us On The Web
www.nkbma.com

The Northern Kentucky Bluegrass Association is headquartered in Florence Kentucky, and serves its members while fostering, maintaining, and promoting the tradition and well being of Bluegrass music.

The Northern Kentucky area encompasses the northern part of Kentucky, southwestern Ohio (Cincinnati) and southeastern Indiana.

The Association started with 26 members and is growing with new members all the time. The Association supports and endorses the IBMA, Kentucky Friends of Bluegrass and the Louisville Bluegrass Music Association.

A bi-monthly newsletter is produced and mailed to each of its members with information on Bluegrass events in the area and general Association information.

The Northern Kentucky Bluegrass Music Association supports a number of events throughout the year to further support Bluegrass music in our area.

Bi-weekly jam sessions that let people play and listen to the music they love. Various concerts and fund raising events are held throughout the year to help raise money for our association.

Appearances in local schools upon request by the school to introduce this traditional style of music to young minds. For more information on this service, contact Gene Thompson at 859-689-7431

