

The Northern Grass

Steve McCain - News Editor

Summer
Edition

Northern Kentucky Bluegrass Music Association

June
2012

Keeping Bluegrass Music Alive In The Northern Kentucky Area



Bluegrass Festival Season!

By Steve McCain



Hello NKBMA members!

It's that time of the year again where the Bluegrass music is playing, the campers are tuned up and we are in it hot and heavy! Temperatures are already soaring and I know the festivals are going to be great this year! I wanted to get the festivals and dates out there for you to be ready. The following are what I could find in the tri-state area for June and July:

Kentucky

- ◆ June 1st and 2nd - Bardstown Bluegrass Festival, Bardstown Ky. - 7840 High Grove Rd. Cox's Creek, Ky. Call at - 502-252- 9004.
- ◆ June 7th - 10th - Festival of the Bluegrass—Ky. Horse Park Camp ground in Lexington Ky. Contact —Roy Cornett @ 859-253-0806.
- ◆ June 21– 23 - Rudyfest, Grayson Ky. Carter Co. Fairgrounds - Contact info. - 606-315-1417
- ◆ June 21 - 23—Renfro Valley Backwoods Bluegrass Festival - Mt. Vernon Ky. - Contact info. - 800-765-7464
- ◆ June - 28– 30 Harlan Bluegrass Festival - Southeast Ky. Comm. & Tech. College - Contact 606-753-4106
- ◆ June 28– 30 ROMP - Owensboro, Ky -Contact 270-926-7891
- ◆ July - 26 to 28 - Irvine, Ky - Red Lick Bluegrass Festival - Contact - 606-723-4623

Indiana

- ◆ May 31 - June 2nd - Bean Blossom, John Hart Memorial Bluegrass Festival - Bill Monroe Music Park and Campground - Contact - 314-315-3670
- ◆ June 8 - 10 - Wakarusa Bluegrass Festival - Wakarusa, Indiana - Contact - 574-862-2807
- ◆ July 6– 7 Cedar Valley Bluegrass Festival - Derby, Indiana—Contact - 812-836-2311
- ◆ July 13—14 - Sheridan Bluegrass Fever, Sheridan Indiana - Contact - 317-758-5845
- ◆ July 26 - 28 - Bean Blossom, Gospel Bluegrass Festival - Contact - 334-469-5677

Ohio

- ◆ June - 7– 9 - Bluegrass in the hills - Hopedale, Ohio - Contact - 740-391-5631
- ◆ June 15 - 16 - Poston Lake Bluegrass Festival - Guysville, Ohio - Contact—304-422-6956
- ◆ June 15 - 16 - Bluegrass Festival, Nova Ohio - Contact 419-359-1363
- ◆ July - 12-14 - Central Ohio Bluegrass Festival - Croton, Ohio - Contact - 740-965-2877
- ◆ July 12-14 - Bluegrass in the hills - Hopedale, Ohio - Contact - 740-391-5631
- ◆ July 13 - 14 - Bluegrass in the Grove - Bucyrus, Ohio - Contact - 419-562-4363
- ◆ July 20 - 21 - Bluegrass Festival, Nova Ohio - Contact 419-359-1363

If you are in these areas during your travels this summer, stop by and check them out. Your support of these festivals will help insure they continue into the future. Make sure you call the numbers provided for any last minute changes or cancelations.

Have a great summer!
Steve



Willis Music and WoodSongs

Karl Shifflet Band along with Tommy Brown and County Line Grass Review by Steve McCain

Hi there folks! I'm telling you, if you missed the Karl Shifflet Band and Tommy Brown concert at Willis Music on April 21st you missed one of the best concerts that has been put on by Willis Music and WoodSongs Coffeehouse!

Every concert that I attended over the winter months have been fabulous but the attendance has been less than favorable. I was not sure what to expect when I got to Willis but I knew Karl and Tommy normally draw a bigger crowd. Well, I about fell over when I walked in the doors. Every seat was just about filled. The room was filled from one wall to the other. Our Co-Secretary Jackie Bowling reported that the attendance was at 122 Bluegrass fans! The largest attendance recorded to date. That was amazing!

Karl and Tommy did not let these folks down. They both played two sets and the music was great. Normally the crowd will go down after the second set but I noticed there was only a slight change from when the concert started.

Karl and his band almost put you back in time. With their dress of wing tip shoes, pinstripe suits and the skillful use of the one microphone in the center of the stage, they make you feel like your watching one of the old radio shows in the past. The whole show was a well orchestrated treat for the eyes and ears.

Tommy and his group as always leaves the audience with wanting more. I have listened to Tommy play for years now and his songs never get old. His Ralph Stanley style of hard driving banjo music keep the toes a tappin' and the hands a clappin'

All concerts are video recorded by WoodSongs and sold at Willis Music. In a long series of WoodSongs events between 2011 and 2012, this would be a concert you will want to add to your collection.



Karl Shifflet and the Big Country Show putting on a great show

The almost room capacity crowd enjoying the show at Willis Music



Your advertising will not only be sent out in 6 newsletters a year, the newsletter is also posted on the NKBMA website for all to view. Please contact Steve McCain at gmccain@fuse.net for more info.

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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



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.

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Florence, Ky. 41042
859-525-6050



Steve Bonafel performing on stage at the 2012 Appalachian Festival



Visitors to the NKBMA booth at the Appalachian Festival had a chance each day to enter a raffle to win some NKBMA stuff

Bluegrass Events Sponsored or Supported By the Northern Kentucky Bluegrass Music Association

NKBMA Monthly Board Meeting
Willis Music on Mall Rd. Starts at 6:00

1st Wed of each month

Russell Turner Bluegrass Jam
6th and Park Street Newport, Ky.
Contact Russell Turner at rturn02@zoomtown.com

2nd Friday each month

Luther Hensley Bluegrass Jam
Claryville Knights of Columbus, Alexandria, Ky.
Featured band each month
Contact Luther Hensley at 859-635-9450 or Jim Deaton 859-760-4483

3rd Tuesday each month

NKBMA Monthly Bluegrass Jam
Willis Music - Mall Road Florence, Ky
Contact Rick Fuchs at Willis Music 859-525-6050

4th Friday each month

Richwood Opry Country and Bluegrass Music
10915 Dixie Highway Walton, Ky. 859-474-0554
Check website for current schedules www.richwoodopry.com

Once a month

The Famous Old Time Music Company- Everything you need in Bluegrass music!
20322 SR 33 Wapakoneta, OH - 419-568-1220 or 513-607-1874
Check out their website at www.fotmc.com

NKBMA - Mini-Festival!
All the fun of a Bluegrass festival in one day and under roof!
at the Calvin A Perry Center in Alexandria, Ky.
Crafts, Food and Bluegrass Music All Day!
For more information check out our website at www.nkbma.com

Scheduled for September 22 2012

Lesson learned at Clay City

By Ron Simmons

Steve McCain asked me to say something about the Clay City Festival that would be newsworthy for the Newsletter. I said sure, but I'll tell you quite frankly this article is for musicians especially. First and foremost, as everyone is aware, every gig is not the same for many reasons, but the worst reason is because you just weren't mentally ready.

That said, we of "My Favorite Bluegrass Band", Bud, Barry, Tom, Phil (our newest member) and myself, did our first set in a haze that would make a Pittsburg steel mill proud. To admit this is realizing that as good as we sometimes think we get or could get, there is more to this music thing than just "Looking Marvelous". Just like any other form of work, the preparation for it is absolutely the key to getting it right. We thought we were there. We were wrong. The lesson is burned in our minds.

As for the festival, the weather was great and the rather small crowd that was there was as always, very kind. They had competition from a big festival in London, Ky. We did make up for our apparent sleep-walk in the first set and ripped a fine second set. Even Gene Thompson came and helped sing tenor on our encore song. We owed the patrons that improvement. One thing that is very apparent is that some festivals are losing their sparkle and attendance is getting harder to come by.

We as musicians need to fully realize that more than ever our "A game" must be given every time we play this special music called Bluegrass. If it loses popularity for any reason it is a shame. It must never, however, have to accept poor effort or performers who are not their sharpest.

Last year I watched a group on Thursday evening at the festival in Georgetown, Ohio who were truly just goofing off through their set. It angered me because I knew what they were capable of. In retrospect for them and us and all performers who were not doing what our audiences paid for.....I apologize and hope with all my heart we are given another chance to make your clapping hands sore. Keep the music and the faith in those that perform the music alive and well, please. Until then we'll be practicing for you. When MFBGB hits the Festival of the Bluegrass in Georgetown/Lexington Kentucky this year on the 9th of June, we'll be ready. The audience deserves it.

Ron Simmons
MFBGB

The NKBMA at the Appalachian Festival May 5th Weekend

The NKBMA spent the weekend at the Appalachian Festival held at Old Coney in Ohio on May 3rd, 4th and 5th. Our small band of volunteers who love to spread the word of Bluegrass set up a booth and spent the weekend greeting people and letting them know how the NKBMA supports Bluegrass in our community.

Especially satisfying to our group is on Friday, just about every school in the local area bring their kids to the Appalachian festival to help them learn about the Appalachian way of life.

Our group have the Bluegrass instruments laid out on the tables for the kids to look at and learn about. Jack Willis and his wife Emma help with this every year and said the kids are always excited and interested to learn about Bluegrass. If we light a spark about this music in these young minds, we will have done our jobs.

Our own Ron Simmons has joined the crew that puts on the Appalachian every year and they do a great job. I'm sure Ron will be a valued addition to this group. We look forward to next year.



Jack Willis, Emma Willis and Ron Simmons manning the booth on Friday evening after a long day



Luther Hensley, Gene Thompson, Jim Deaton and Jacking Bowling playing a tune and greeting the kids



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NKBMA MINI-FESTIVAL

September 22, 2012

Calvin A Perry Community Center
Alexandria, Kentucky

Great Bluegrass Music All Day from bands like
Larry Reece and New Clover
My Favorite Bluegrass Band
Diamond Head Mountain
Missy Werner Band
Licking Valley Bluegrass

**Pre-Sale Tickets for
\$10.00 thru 9/1/12
Price after 9/1/12
\$12.00 for NKBMA
members
\$15.00 non-members**

**Doors Open
11:00am
Music Starts
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The latest Scoop



- Sources have it that Mr. Phil Lawrence is now playing mandolin for the group My Favorite Bluegrass Band. Don't forget to check them out at Festival of the Bluegrass at Kentucky Horse Park campground this year!

The Day The Music Died

By Steve McCain

Most of us have heard of the song American Pie which tells the story of The Day the Music Died. On February 3rd 1959, three famous rock musicians, Buddy Holly, Richie Valens and JP “The Big Bopper” Richardson died after their small plane crashed in a Wisconsin cornfield.

With much less drama but the same heartfelt impact, the Bluegrass community experienced a loss over the past few months that affected everyone involved with Bluegrass music.

While the deaths of Earl Scruggs, Douglas Dillard and Doc Watson didn't make the evening news or make the top story on the Entertainment programs, for those who love music we will always remember these great patriarchs of a music called Bluegrass.

If you are a Banjo player, you will always be indebted to Earl Scruggs. He basically invented the three finger picking style that we are all taught today. I think every picker alive has a copy of Earl's teaching methods on the banjo. If you don't, you should.

I started listening to Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs at a young age and that banjo sound got burned in my brain for life, I just loved it! My banjo teacher Jeff Roberts told me once the way he learned to play Banjo was to take that same album and play it on it slowest speed over and over until he was able to capture the picking roles that Earl was playing.



Earl Scruggs
1924 –2012



Doc Watson
1923 –2012



Douglas Dillard
1937—2012

Earl and his partner Lester Flatt would keep Bluegrass music in the limelight with their hits like the “Ballad of Jed Clampett” and “Foggy Mountain Breakdown” as the theme to the Bonnie and Clyde motion picture.

Douglas Dillard, banjo player for the Dillards would also capture the heart of America as part of the beloved mountain band on the Andy Griffith Show called the Darlings. While these guys would never crack a smile as they were playing on the show, they always put a smile on my face and made me think, I got to learn how to do that!



As part of the Dillards, Douglas became an inspiration for many of the Bluegrass musicians known today.

On May, 29th we just lost Doc Watson as well. Doc, who was blinded at the age of 1 year, mastered his art to become one of the most sought after flatpickers in the business. Doc again, became an inspiration to future musicians but also to others who were handicapped with blindness. There was certainly no handicap in his playing.

As a banjo player, I am deeply saddened by the loss of these great musicians but also grateful for the fact that because of them, the music didn't really die but will live on forever.

I can only imagine a heavenly Bluegrass band playing with greats like Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt and Jimmy Martin just jamming away and up walks Earl, Doc and Douglas asking, you boys mind if we join in? What a day that must have been!

Steve

NKBMA Membership Bands

Our current member Bluegrass bands are some of the best in the area. Please consider hiring them for your special events! Bluegrass pickers need fed, too!

- Diamond Head Mountain – 859-635-3684
- Larry Reese & The New Clover Band - 513-543-9320
- The New Godspeed – 859-322-8416
- Tony Holt & Wildwood Valley Boys Band - 812-654-3778
- Crossroads – 859-689-7431
- Licking Valley Bluegrass – 859-356-9241
- Steve Bonafel & One Iota - 859-635-9374
- Ma Crow & the Lady Slippers – 513-861-6785
- Missy Werner Band – 513-678-6426
- The Herald Bluegrass Tradition - 859-466-6271
- My Favorite Bluegrass Band – 513-553-6115
- Retread Bluegrass Band – 513-793-6477
- Tommy Brown & County Line Grass – 502-594-0962
- Vernon McIntyre's Appalachian Grass – 419-568-1220



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