



October 2008

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## Pickin' in the Pines

### *See You Next Year!*

*By Bill Vernieu, Rusty Tweed, Mike Falk*

Last month's Pickin' in the Pines Bluegrass and Acoustic Festival was a resounding success by all measures. There were great performances, not only by our headliners but from local bands too, such as Burnett Family Bluegrass, Muskellunge, the Knockabouts, Springfed Band, Traditional Blend, and Reno & Sheila McCormick. Chuck Cheesman had shows for the kids as well as a 'tweener' set on the main stage. Other 'tweeners' included Larry Peterson, Dave 'the Wave' Wayne, Bears & Bees, Corinne Diggins, Utah Green and many others. But it was the Carolina Chocolate Drops with our own Dom Flemons that stole the show. The response to their performance was so enthusiastic that their new fans nearly overwhelmed our merchandise table; in fact they sold all of the CDs they brought.

As described in Kari Usher's article in this newsletter, the dancing activities were well attended and provided a fine way to work off the calories accumulated after filling up on steak sandwiches, caramel corn, nuts, ribs and chicken, and other delightful treats. The Sandia Hots from New Mexico supplied the music, and caller

Richard Wilson supplied the instructions. The workshop stages were a huge hit and a great way to get some tips from the pros; see Lloyd Holdeman's article, next page.

We've calculated that the total number of weekend passes, single day tickets and kids' tickets was over 1600. As the campers know, the campground was filled to capacity with 300 tickets sold there. The campground activities included a big jam/birthday party/potluck bash at the 'Tiki Tent' as well as a well attended Sunday morning pancake breakfast - supplying much needed nourishment for the final day of pickin'.



Flagstaff's own *The Knockabouts* kicked off the 2008 Pickin' in the Pines Festival. *Photo credit: Fred Wojtkielewicz.*

Congrats to our Band Contest winners: 1st Place: Headline Bluegrass Band, from Phoenix, 2nd Place: Dorian Well from Tucson,

and 3rd Place: Shufflefoot, from Las Vegas. And thanks to the many participants that competed but didn't place; we hope to see you back next year and ready to take a shot at the big prize!

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# From the Workshop Stage

## *Pickin' in the Pines Educational Activities*

*By Lloyd Holdeman*

A person could get their money's worth for a 3-day pass to Pickin' in the Pines (\$65) and never go further than the Commercial building and the Workshop stage. In the last two years I've attended workshops conducted by Jens Kruger, John Reischman, Laurie Lewis, Todd Philips and many others. These big-name players often opt to teach from the steps leading up to the small stage. There you are...with world-class players, talking to you and conveying their knowledge as if in a personal conversation.

This year I had the good fortune of being double booked for my volunteer shift at the Workshop stage on Friday with Joe Sorren. Joe did most of the work, so I took notes at two workshops to share with FFOTM Newsletter readers.

Friday's first workshop at 1:00 was titled "Playing the Banjo with Drive, Tone and Power. Banjo pros Bill Evans (Hard Road) and Dale Brown (Sawmill Road) brought the 30 attendees to the basics of the Scruggs three-finger style banjo playing. Their emphasis was on the right hand, saying that is where the drive, tone, and power come from. Bill Evans talked about posture and instrument position. He said while sitting, the player should sit up straight, use the strap, and position the instrument in the same location as when standing. This will cut down on variations of the right hand position when practicing (sitting) and performing (standing). The headstock of the banjo should extend somewhat below the left shoulder. This makes it possible to establish a "perpendicular plane" with the thumb and two fingers of the right hand – the ideal position to address the strings. Relaxing the right shoulder is

the first step in right hand position. The forearm extends across the armrest and the wrist curves enough to allow the thumb and two fingers to hover above the strings. An imaginary line across the strings is the reference and the player positions the hand so the thumb can push and the fingers can pull the picks across the desired strings at a perpendicular striking angle. The picking motion should come from the knuckles rather than the smaller joints. The whole hand should stay relaxed as well as the shoulder and forearm.

Steve Smith, mandolin virtuoso from the "Steve Smith and Hard Road" band gave a workshop to mostly beginner players called "Progressive Mandolin/Traditional Roots". Steve emphasized a relaxed right shoulder and wrist also. He said to hold the pick loosely to prevent tension in the hand. He would play 16 bars of fast leads and chops and then have members of the crowd pull the pick from his hand to see how loosely he held it. For left hand technique he spoke of closed chords and how he visualizes getting his fingers in place on the lower strings (G and D strings) first, because they are usually the first struck in the chop. This also keeps all four fingers over the fret board and the fingers for the higher strings fall in place with less effort. On scales and arpeggios, Steve says he plays them all the time – every practice session, because the fluency he develops allows him to react during performances or jam sessions without having to devote excessive attention to where the notes are.

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# Living Traditions Presentations

By Kari Barton

Living Traditions Presentations is bringing two wonderful performances in the month of October! Both performances will take place in the Zane Grey Ballroom in the Hotel Weatherford in downtown Flagstaff.

The first concert is Sunday, October 12 with Paddy Keenan and John Walsh. Paddy Keenan is an Uilleann Piper from Ireland and was a founding member of The Bothy Band in the 1970s. He is world-renowned as one of the best pipers in the world. John Walsh also hails from Ireland and is a well-known guitarist currently living in New York City. Tickets are available at Cedar Music and from Kari Barton (Kari@LivingTraditionsPresentations.com). Advance tickets are \$20 with a \$2 discount to members of FFOTM and NACHS. ALL tickets are \$22 at the door. The show will start at 7pm with doors opening at 6:30. For more information, call 928-600-1365.

The second concert is Thursday, October 30, 2008 with Jim Malcolm. Jim was the lead vocalist of the Old Blind Dogs for nearly a decade and is now doing solo tours. He was named the new male voice of Scotland and has been the best singer-songwriter in Scotland several times. He played last year to a nearly sold out crowd and is excited to be performing once again at the Zane Grey Ballroom. Tickets are available at Cedar Music and through Kari Barton (Kari@LivingTraditionsPresentations.com). Advance tickets are \$20 with a \$2 discount to members of FFOTM and NACHS. ALL tickets are \$22 at the door. The show will start at 7pm with the doors opening at 6:30. For more information, call 928-600-1365.

# First Saturday Contra News

By Kari Usher

We had a great time at the Pickin' in the Pines Festival. Richard Wilson called the dances and the Sandia Hots provided the driving tunes to inspire us to float around the dance floor. We got to dance to traditional New Mexican music, there were dancers under 3 feet tall and taller than 6 feet at the community dance on Saturday afternoon, all laughing as they made arches for each of us to pass under. Saturday night we gave that dancefloor a good percussive workout. The waltz workshop on Sunday was well attended and folks got to try out their dancing styles with many different partners. Thanks you all for coming out and adding to this growing activity at the festival. We appreciate any suggestions for improving these activities; visit with Kris or Kari at an upcoming dance.

As we look ahead to the next few months there are some things for you to mark on your calendars. October we will head for Prescott to the Folk Festival the weekend of the 4th (when we usually dance at

Ashurst Hall.) They will have a big dance on that Saturday. We will be dancing on:

October 11th – Just Desserts will play and the caller will be Kari Usher  
November 1st – Finn McCool will play and caller TBA  
December 6th – Just Desserts will play and Deb Comly will be your caller for the Holiday Ball contra dance.  
January 3rd – Band and caller TBA  
February 7th – Just Desserts will play for the big WinterFest dance  
March 7th – Band TBA and Peg Hesley will be your caller.

So remember - no partner is needed to attend, all dances are taught, we dance to live music and we dance 7:30-11pm. There is a lesson at 7:30pm at Ashurst Hall on the NAU campus. This is an aerobic activity- so dress comfortably. The suggested donation is \$5 for FFOTM and students/\$7 for the rest.

See you on the dance floor!!

# Membership Update

*By Judy Henzler*

What a glorious summer we had and now Fall is upon us—all too soon for me! We had 35 renewing memberships and 6 new in the last 2 months, bringing our total membership to 262. Please take the time to check your mailing label to see if you need to renew your membership; you can use the form below or look for the letter inside. Thanks to

those supporting Flagstaff Friends of Traditional Music by keeping their membership up to date. If you want more information about Flagstaff Friends of Traditional Music, you can always contact me at 928-607-6067

## **New and Renewing Members**

Gene Balzer  
Ron Banfiel/Vicki Wallis  
Paul Beier/Maryann vanDrider  
Cabell Breckinridge  
Jerry/Sheila Brown  
Bart Brush  
Al Cacicedo  
Chuck Cheesman  
Murray Cullon  
Mike/Cynthia Davis  
Sue Donnelly  
Nancy Easter  
Lyn Edgar  
Maxine Eldredge  
Ethan/Susan Foster  
Mark Giger/Teri Nelson  
Grand Canyon Guitar Society  
Jeremiah/Katie Hampton  
Sheri/Terry Hartleben  
Lori Haselhorst  
Paul/Helen-Marie Holmgren

Beverly Hugg  
Dennis Hutchison  
Trish Jahnke/Dan Dagget  
Steve/Beth Jaynes  
George Lavorgna/Dee Singer  
Myron/Rachael Lieberman  
Brian Lomax  
Margaret Marshall  
Virginia Martin  
Boyce McClung  
Greg McGuffey/Anne Buhlig-McGuffey/Fionna  
Tony Norris  
Bethany Page  
June Reynolds  
Susan Smith  
Edward Smith/Mary Lou Fairweather  
Midge Steuber  
Steve Strider  
Walt/Nancy Taylor  
Dino/Jerry Thompson

## From the Workshop Stage - *continued*

There was certainly more information presented than I can put in a couple of paragraphs, and the perspectives I gathered that day didn't come only from the Workshop presenters. My volunteer shift-buddy Joe Sorren is the bass player for the Voluntary String Band. We talked bass, and Joe told me he takes the songs that he knows and plays them with a metronome for an hour a day in order to make sure he is really solid with the groove. He said bluegrass usually requires the bass to play slightly in front of the beat – to keep that forward moving feel. To play that way without speeding up the

tempo takes practice, and the practice is what enables him to do his job, which is to keep time for the band.

You can get your money's worth at Pickin' in the Pines without going any further than the Workshop stage. Of course if you partake in the rest of the Festival – three days of singing, dancing, picking, laying out on the green grass with your friends and watching and listening to some of the best music to be found anywhere ... that's bonus!

## Pickin' in the Pines - *continued*

Nearly 60 video clips of Pickin' in the Pines have been posted on YouTube.com (search for "Pickin in the Pines") including the band contests, tweeners, and Rhiannon Giddens (of Carolina Chocolate Drops) Gaelic Medley flat-footing workshop. Lots of pictures are popping up on various sites too; after a little searching you'll probably find yourself in a picture!

Thanks especially to our extraordinarily dedicated and talented Festival Directors: Darcy Falk, Susan Billingsley, Sheila Guida, Fred Wojtkielewicz., Michael Satterwhite, and Julie Sullivan; and a huge thanks to the over 100 volunteers who helped them and made the festival the great success that it was. And finally, thanks to you – all of you that attended this year's festival and previous year's as well. Your continued interest and support has put our festival on the map! Stay tuned...it won't long before we regroup and figure out how to make PIP '09 even better; and watch for announcements in the newsletter about how to get involved.



Dave Wayne plays a 'twener' at PIP '08. *Photo credit: Fred Wojtkielewicz.*

# Upcoming Events Calendar

October 4 - 5 ~ Sharlott Hall Folk Festival  
Prescott, AZ. Enjoy the best of Arizona acoustic music, including fiddle, banjo, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, dulcimer and singers, songwriters and storytellers. Six venues on the beautiful Museum grounds present concerts, workshops and dancing. <http://sharlot.org>

**October 4 - Beppe Gambetta**  
**Shooting Star Inn at 7:00 (see info in this newsletter.)**

October 6 - Sara Grey and Kieron Means, hosted by Bill Burke. Admission is \$10 / No Open Mic. See the FFP website for further details: <http://www.webari.com/ffp/>.

October 10 - 12 ~ 19th Annual Bluegrass Festival  
Logandale, NV. Lost Highway, Silverado, Marty Warburton Band, Red Desert Ramblers, Digger Davis & Tombstone, Just For Fun [www.snvbluegrass.com](http://www.snvbluegrass.com)

October 25 - 26 ~ 9th Annual Tucson Bluegrass Festival  
Tucson AZ. The Tohono O'odham Nation is hosting the festival at their Desert Diamond Casino. The festival is outdoors and will be staged in the beautiful plaza between the Casino and the Diamond Center. Featured bands are Dale Ann Bradley, Chris Stuart & Backcountry, Kirby Knob Boys, Sawmill Road, Burnett Family Band, Jam Pac Blues & Grass. Info: 520-296-1231 [www.desertbluegrass.org](http://www.desertbluegrass.org)

October 24, 25 and 26 - FAR-West Regional Folk Alliance Conference Mesa, Arizona. See [www.far-west.org](http://www.far-west.org) for details.

November 7 - Tony Furtado with Dave McGraw  
The Green Room, 15 N. Agassiz St., Flagstaff, Doors 8pm/Show 9pm, \$10 at the door.

November 14 - 16 ~ Four Corner States Bluegrass Festival  
Wickenburg, AZ. [www.wickenburgchamber.com](http://www.wickenburgchamber.com)

# Ongoing Events Calendar

First Tuesday from 8-11: Nolan McKelvey at The Wine Loft, upstairs at 17 N. San Francisco St. in downtown Flagstaff, 928-773-9463.

Second and fourth Tuesdays from 8-11: Voluntary String Band at The Wine Loft (see contact info above.)

Third Tuesday from 8-11: Major Swing at The Wine Loft (see contact info above.)

First Wednesday from 8-11: Wednesday Night Vintage Series with Tony Norris, at The Wine Loft (see contact info above.)

Second and Fourth Wednesdays from 8-11: The Mars Hillbillies at The Wine Loft (see contact info above.)

Third Wednesday from 8-11: Hootenanny, hosted by Jesse Anderson at the Wine Loft (see contact info above.)

Fifth Tuesday and Wednesday from 8-11: Karna Otten at the Wine Loft (see contact info above.)

Every Thursday – 7:00 pm: FFOTM Just Desserts contra dance band rehearsal. Open to anyone who wants to play or listen to contra dance music. Any instrument and playing ability is welcome. Rehearsal starts at 7:00pm at the home of Deb Comly and Mike Reddig, 1457 W. Meade. For more information call 774-5936.

First Friday of the month, 7:00 - 9:00 pm: FFOTM Jam at the Applesauce Teahouse, 203 S. San Francisco. Contact Rusty Tweed 774-5760.

Every first Saturday 7:30 pm FFOTM Contra Dance at Ashurst Hall on the NAU campus. Come on out for the 7:30 pre-dance lesson. Call Kris for more information 526-3020 or Judy at 214-7017.

Every Sunday 7:00 - 9:00 pm: Irish Session at Charlie's Pub and Grill, 23 N Leroux. Open to anyone who wants to play or listen to Irish traditional music. For more information contact Kari Barton at 600-1365 or Jay Ham at 699-8463.



## FFOTM MEMBERSHIP FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ new \_\_\_\_\_ renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone - Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Membership - \$12.00 per year

Family Membership - \$15.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership \$12

\_\_\_\_\_ Family Membership \$15

Make checks payable to FFOTM  
and mail to:

FFOTM  
P.O. Box 23366  
Flagstaff, AZ 86002  
FFOTM Membership Form

www.ffotm.net



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