

**AUSTIN AREA**

**CTBA**  
 • **Beginner/Intermed. Jam**  
 1st & 3rd Thursday 7-9 pm  
 Steve Mangold 512-345-6155  
 • **CTBA Jam Session**  
 Sunday at Artz Rib House  
 3-5 pm, 512-442-8283  
**ARTZ RIB HOUSE**  
 • **Live Bluegrass Show**  
 2330 S. Lamar, 6:00 pm  
 512-442-8283  
**AAAMS JAM**  
 Wed, Anderson Mill Baptist  
 Church, 10633 Lake Creek Pkwy  
 Dinner 5:30 (\$3) 6:30-8:30 pm,  
 259-7702- call to join for dinner  
 • **AFTM (Austin Friends of  
 Traditional Music) Contra Dance**  
 3rd Sat., Lutheran church at 3501  
 Red River 8-11 pm, \$7, 462-0511  
 • **AFTM Jam Session**  
 2nd Sun at Threadgill's South  
 Barton Springs & Riverside, 2pm  
**SMITHVILLE**  
 • **WayStation Opry**  
 1st Sat, 205 NE 2nd, 6 pm, Steve  
 Boatright, 512-272-8008  
**BRYAN/COLLEGE STATION**  
 • **Jam Session**  
 Monday: 6:00 to 8:00 pm  
 Buppy's Catering 979-690-6951  
 • **Jam Session and BG Show**  
 2nd Sat: Jam-4pm, Show-7pm  
 Wellborn Com. Ctr. 979-690-6951  
**CHRISMAN**  
 • **Jam**  
 3rd Sat: 7-10 pm

Chrisman Community Center  
 Don Cook 979-567-0573  
**CLEBURNE**  
 • **Show & Jam**  
 3rd Fri Cleburne Civic Center,  
 1501 W Henderson (Hwy 67) 7 pm,  
 \$3 www.geocities.com/ntbbbluegrass  
**COPPERAS COVE**  
 • **Jam**  
 Fri-VFW Post 8577 at 1506  
 Veterans Ave 7 pm  
 254-542-6710 wlangdon@hotmail.com  
**GARLAND**  
 • **Bluegrass on the Square**  
 Sat- March thru October between  
 Main and State Sts. at 6th, 7:30-  
 1 am Jim Miller 972-276-3197  
**GRANITE SHOALS**  
 • **Bluegrass and Gospel Jam**  
 Last Sat: 6:30-10:00 pm  
 706 Phillips Ranch Rd.  
 830-693-8408  
**THE GROVE**  
 • **Outside Pick**  
 General Store, 15 mi. west of  
 Temple on Hwy 36, 6 pm til...  
 M. Anderson 512-282-1215  
**HARWOOD**  
 • **Stage Show & Jam Session**  
 3rd Sat, 9 mi. E. of Luling,  
 Hwy 90, 2-9 pm,  
 Ben Buchanan 512-263-7193  
**LEAGUE CITY (BABA)**  
 • **Jam & Free Bluegrass Show**  
 3rd Sat: Jam 5pm, Show 6:30  
 Jan-Nov, League City Civic  
 Center, 300 W. Walker St.  
 713-990-5171

**PARIS**

• **Jam & Stage Show**  
 3rd Sat: Jam 5:00, Show 7:00  
 Chisum HS, Hwy 19 & 24, south  
 of Paris \$5-members \$6-others  
 Brenda Burks 903-784-8859  
**PEARL**  
 • **Jam & Stage Show**  
 1st Sat: Jam 12:00, Show 4:30  
 Hwy 183, 7 mi. south of Purmela  
 Ronald Medart 254-865-6013  
**ROCKNE**  
 • **Bluegrass/Country Jam**  
 1st Sat: 3pm til ..., 8 mi. S. of  
 Cedar Creek on FM 535  
**TOMBALL**  
 • **Spring Creek Club Jam/Show**  
 4th Sat: 5pm-jam, 7pm-show  
 Oklahoma Community Center,  
 NE of Tomball 281 376-2959  
**SAN ANTONIO**  
 • **Contra Dances**  
 3rd Sat: 7:30 pm, International  
 Folk Culture Center at Our  
 Lady of the Lake Univ.  
 512-434-6711, ext. 407  
**SOUR LAKE (Beaumont)**  
 • **Jam & Free Show**  
 Southeast Tx BG Music Assn  
 3rd Sat: 4pm, Elementary  
 School, Hwy 326 S.  
 Edy Mathews 409-755-0622  
**WIMBERLEY**  
 • **Bluegrass Jam**  
 Fri: 7-11 pm, Idle Wild Deli @  
 Poco Rio, 15395 R.R. #12, Alex  
 Martin - 512/847-0430.



**The Central Texas Bluegrass Association**  
**P.O. Box 9816**  
**Austin, TX 78766**

*Central Texas*  
**BLUEGRASS**  
*Bulletin*



VOLUME 25  
 NUMBER 4  
 APRIL 2003

**TOM, BRAD & ALICE**

PERFORM AT THE HOME OF TOM & ELIZABETH PITTMAN  
 SPONSORED BY THE AUSTIN FRIENDS OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC

CONCERT SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2003 8:00-10:00 P.M.  
 WORKSHOPS SATURDAY & SUNDAY AFTERNOONS:  
 INTERMEDIATE & ADVANCED FRAILED BANJO  
 BEGINNING, INT & ADVANCED FIDDLE

TBA are three masters of traditional southern music, who have combined their talents to perform a stunning mixture of early bluegrass and country, parlor, gospel, and old-time songs and tunes.

Tom Sauber, Brad Leftwich, and Alice Gerrard (TBA) are "musicians' musicians," known and respected by their peers for their skill, taste, and life-long devotion to the old-time and early bluegrass music they clearly love so well. Their stunning vocal harmonies over the bedrock of their instrumental work cover a range of emotion that can move you by turns to smiles, to dance, or to tears.

Simply put, Alice Gerrard is a talent of legendary status. In a career spanning some 40 years, she has known, learned from, and performed with many of the old-time and bluegrass greats and has in turn earned worldwide respect for her own important contributions to the music. Alice is particularly known for her groundbreaking collaboration with Appalachian singer Hazel Dickens during the 1960s and '70s.

Brad Leftwich is known for the purity of his sound and his devotion to tradition. Brad Leftwich has been sharing his love of old-time music with audiences for some 30 years. His virtuoso fiddling has been acclaimed by critics in such journals as Billboard, The Old-Time Herald, Bluegrass Unlimited, and Fiddler Magazine. He is also an accomplished banjo player and singer.

Tom Sauber has long held a reputation as one of the most influential old-time musicians in the western U.S. With his wider travels in recent years, fans farther east are learning why: he's a master musician in a variety of styles, a multi-instrumentalist (banjo, fiddle, guitar, and mandolin) and singer, well grounded in tradition, with a comprehensive grasp of style and an exceptional ability to teach.

For further info/reservations:  
 Elizabeth at 476-3991  
 esb@onr.com

Tickets are \$10  
 All proceeds go to the performers  
 Seating-reservation only  
 (limited to 40)  
 All events are held in  
 central Austin



**FREDERICKSBURG**

The March show was a great success. Despite some initial drizzle, about 350 folks showed up and enjoyed the show. The next show is May 17. Look for more info in next months Bulletin.

Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) budget cuts have wiped out artist support grants for this years Fredericksburg shows. This results in a \$300-\$500 loss for each show, or a total reduction of \$1500-\$2500.

Please help the CTBA & Gillespie County Historical Assoc. find sponsors to make up this difference. Any contacts you could make or suggestions of businesses that might be interested would help keep this series going.

**HOUSE CONCERT**

Peter McLaughlin and Chris Brashear perform at the home of Tom & Elizabeth Pittman on May 17, 2003. Look for more info in next month's Bulletin.

For further info/reservations:  
 Elizabeth at 476-3991  
 esb@onr.com

**THIS ISSUE**

- 1 ANNOUNCEMENTS
- 2 EDITORIAL THOUGHTS
- 2 CTBA BAND LISTINGS
- 3 CTBA BAND PROFILE
- 4 TEXAS BLUEGRASS-P1
- 5 TEXAS BLUEGRASS-P2
- 6 TEXAS BLUEGRASS-P3
- 7 OLD SETTLER'S FESTIVAL
- 8 FIRE ON THE STRINGS
- 9 RHAPSODY STREET
- 10 NEWS & NOTES
- 11 CALENDAR
- 12 AREA ONGOING EVENTS

For information on CTBA membership and activities, contact:  
**Central Texas Bluegrass Association**  
 P. O. Box 9816  
 Austin, Tx, 78766-9816  
 512-261-9440  
 email:ctba@centraltexasbluegrass.org  
 www.centraltexasbluegrass.org

CTBA is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501 (c) 3 Texas corporation

**RANDALL'S GOOD NEIGHBOR PROGRAM**

The CTBA number for this program is 9735. If you sign up, Randall's will donate a percentage of your purchases to the CTBA!

**OFFICERS**

- President**  
 John Hood  
 johnhood@grandecom.net  
 512-376-7767  
**Vice President**  
 Stephen Mangold  
 fiddle@samangold.com  
 512-345-6155  
**Treasurer**  
 Stephen Mangold  
**Secretary**  
 Russ Gunn  
 RAUS7070@aol.com

**DIRECTORS**

- Gordon Daugherty  
 cgdaugh@io.com  
 Jane Laughlin  
 mejanek@yahoo.com  
 Michael Scully  
 mfs@mail.utexas.edu  
 Trent Shepherd  
 trents@ev1.net  
 Steven Zimmet  
 thegarage@swbell.net

**COMMITTEES**

**Beginner/Intermediate Jam**

- Stephen Mangold  
**Membership**  
 Jacque Austin  
**Webmaster**  
 Shawn Spiars  
 sspiars@abac.com

**Central Texas Bluegrass Bulletin**

Editor: Steven Zimmet



**EDITORIAL THOUGHTS**

Thanks to Tom Pittman for allowing us to print his "Curtain Talk". Please support the Fredericksburg shows by coming to the show and by helping find sponsorship for this great series. Mark your calendars for Old Settler's. Happy picking and listening sez

**CTBA Artists and Bands BOOKING INFORMATION**

- Austin Lounge Lizards:** Tom Pittman 512-454-8254  
**Blackland Prairie Boys:** Clayton Elliott 512-898-2580  
**Blazing Bows:** Mary Hattersley 512-873-8925 blazingbows@lycos.com  
**Brazos Country Grass:** Gary Potter 979-690-6951 gdpotter@startel.net  
**Eddie Collins:** 512-836-8255 eddie@constant.com  
**Grazmatics:** Mike Landschoot 512-454-7343  
**Hard to Make a Living:** John Hood 512-376-7767 johnhood@grandecom.net  
**Ledbetters Band:** Spencer Drake 210-698-2601 kthdrak@cs.com  
**Manchaca All-Stars:** B. Buchanan 512-282-2756 manchacaallstars@email.com  
**New Life PraiseGrass:** S. Boatright 512-272-8008 scmboatright@msn.com  
**No Strings Attached:** Aubrey Skeen banjo6@earthlink.net  
**Onion Creek Crawdaddies:** Trent Shepherd 512-912-9216  
**Pet Rooster:** Jay Richardson 979-297-2709 5rs@quik.com  
**Shawn Spiars** 512-218-3928 sspiars@abac.com  
**Sieker Band:** Rolf and Beate Sieker 512-733-2857 thesiekers@aol.com  
**The Spurs of the Moment:** Joan Chisholm 512-847-1182  
**Wayfarers** Willa Porter 512-328-3058 wlbporter@aol.com  
**Max Zimmet:** 512-327-6023 thegarage@swbell.net

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MUST HAVE A CTBA BAND MEMBERSHIP TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS LISTING. IF YOU ALREADY ARE A CTBA MEMBER, SIMPLY SEND IN THE ADDITIONAL \$5.00 TO BECOME A CTBA BAND MEMBER.

**MONTHLY ADVERTISING RATES**

Full Page 7"x9"	\$30.00	1/4 page 3"x4"	\$12.50
1/2 Page 7"x4"	\$15.00	1/8 page 3.5"x2"	\$10.00

Take \$10.00 off above rates if you are a business member.  
 Copy deadline is the 15th of the month.  
 Publication on or about the 1st.  
 Contact the editor at thegarage@swbell.net for more information.

The Central Texas Bluegrass Bulletin is published monthly by the Central Texas Bluegrass Association. Members of CTBA receive the Bulletin as a member service of the Association. Subscription rate for additional copies and for non-members is \$15.00 per year. Contact the editor for advertising rates and information. Copyright © by Central Texas Bluegrass Association.

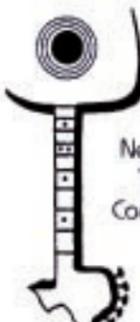
**Publisher's Copy Protective Clause:** Advertisers assume liability for all contents of advertisements and from any claims arising therefrom. We reserve the right to reject advertising for reasons of space availability or publication standards.

**LOCAL SHOWS**

- Apr 5: Grazmatics,** Artz Rib House\*  
**Apr 6: Blackland Prairie Boys,** Artz Rib House\*  
**Apr 11: Manchaca All-Stars,** Manchaca Firehall 7:30 PM  
**Apr 13: Manchaca All-Stars** Artz Rib House\*  
**Apr 19: Sieker Band,** Artz Rib House\*  
**Apr 26: Tennessee Valley Authority,** Artz Rib House\*  
**Apr 26: Elizabeth Brandshaw & the Double Eagle String Band,** Willa Porter & Wayfaring  
 The Palace Theater, Georgetown, TX 7:00 PM  
**Apr 27: Eddie Collins,** Artz Rib House\*

\*Artz Rib House: 2330 S. Lamar, Austin 512-442-8283

Please email (zimmet@skin-vein.com) or call (512-485-7700) the editor to have your show(s) listed.



**Guitar Tex**  
 Mark Waldrop  
 expert repair  
 New • Used  
 Trades &  
 Consignments  
 4330 McCullough  
 San Antonio, TX 78212  
**210-822-1595**  
 Weber Mandolins • Gold Tone Banjos  
 www.guitortex.com

**FESTIVALS & EVENTS**

- Apr 3-6: Oakdale Park Bluegrass Jamboree**  
 Glen Rose, TX 254-897-2321 www.oakdalepark.com  
**Apr 4-5: Triple Creek RV PK Gospel Weekend**  
 Woodville, TX 409-283-3642  
**Apr 11-13: XIT Heritage Bluegrass Festival,**  
 Littlefield, TX 806-622-2308  
**Apr 14-19: Monroe's RV Park Camp & Jam,**  
 Texarakana, TX 903-791-0342  
**Apr 16-19: Plum Creek Bluegrass Festival**  
 Dew, TX 936-336-3309  
**Apr 17-20: Old Settler's Music Festival, Camp Ben**  
 McCulloch, Driftwood, TX 512-370-4630  
 www.oldsettlersmusicfest.org  
**Apr 24-26: Triple Creek RV PK Bluegrass Weekend**  
 Woodville, TX 409-283-3642  
**Apr 24-27: Three Rivers Bluegrass Festival, Tres Rios**  
 River Ranch, Glen Rose, TX 254-897-4253  
**May 2-3: Triple Creek RV PK Gospel Weekend**  
 Woodville, TX 409-283-3642  
**May 2-3: Salmon Lake Park Fun Weekend**  
 Grapeland, TX 936-687-2594 info@salmonlakepark.com  
**May 16-18: Fire On The Strings Bluegrass Festival,**  
 Jellystone Park, Waller, TX 800-355-6928

Please contact venues for up to date information. Schedules change frequently.

**JOIN CTBA TODAY**

A one year membership includes a subscription to the Central Texas Bluegrass Bulletin.  
 Business membership includes a business card advertisement in each issue.  
 Band membership includes a Booking Info listing.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phones: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE NOTE THAT LISTENERS AND PICKERS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN**

- I can help with  Committee work  Festivals  Newsletter  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Note that the following amounts are the minimum contribution amounts.  
 Type of Membership:  New  Renewal  Individual (\$20)  Family (\$25)  Band (\$25)  
 Patron (\$30)  Business/Sustaining (\$50)  Student (\$15)  
 For Family, Band, and Patron Memberships, please append a list of the members of your family or band.  
 I do not want my name and contact information included in a CTBA Membership Directory or in the CTBA

mailing list, which may be exchanged with other music and arts related organizations.  
**Mail your check and application to: CTBA P. O. Box 9816, Austin, TX, 78766-9816**

Contributions to CTBA are tax deductible as allowed by Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501 (c) (5).



**DEERING**  
The Great American Banjo



**Eddie Adcock**  
If you appreciate owning the finest banjo money can buy, a Deering banjo is your best choice.

**DEERING** Quality Banjos  
Dept. CTBA, PO Box 1545,  
Lenon Grove, CA, USA 91946-1545

Free Catalog  
Call (800) 845-7791  
Deering, America's Favorite Banjo



**BANJO WORKSHOP**

A 5-String Bluegrass Banjo Workshop will be presented by Pinecastle Recording artist Ross Nickerson at Artz Ribhouse, April 13th from 1-5pm. For more information contact Angie Sumpter at angiesumpter@aol.com or call toll free 1-866-258-7159.

**GORDON'S BLUEGRASS TRIVIA QUIZ**  
Submitted by Gordon Daugherty

Who wrote the bluegrass classic "Dear Old Dixie"?

(a) Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs  
(b) Earl Scruggs  
(c) Dewitt "Snuffy" Jenkins  
(d) the Barnett brothers  
(e) I don't know  
\*\*\*\*\*

Probably (e). F and S copyrighted DOD in the early '50s. However, Scruggs was playing it before he met Flatt and did so auditioning for Monroe in late 1945. Growing up, Scruggs knew a banjo player named "Snuffy" Jenkins who started playing the song in about 1930, when Scruggs was 6 years old. Many early banjo stars thought Jenkins wrote the song (Don Reno, for example). In 1988, after playing the song almost 60 years, Jenkins said he learned it from the Barnett brothers, from next-door Polk County in western North Carolina.

(sources: Banjo Newsletter, Jun '89; America's Music: Bluegrass; Masters Of The 5-String Banjo)



**Roy Wilhite 512-244-3935**  
Music Instruction And Performance

Guitar, Bass Guitar, Song Writing, Mandolin, Voice  
Dulcimer, and Other Instruments. Acoustic or Electric

**SALMON LAKE PARK**  
*Where the Bluegrass is Best!*



**Floyd & Fannie Salmon** 936-687-2594  
936-687-4141  
Summer Afternoon  
Hours Only

P. O. Box 483 Grapeland, TX 75844



**Rick Star**  
Program Director

P.O. Box 8715 • Horseshoe Bay, TX 78657  
Phone: 830/598-9479 • Fax: 830/598-6534  
Cell: 512/636-7855 • Member Americana Music Assoc.

Restaurant **Artz RIB HOUSE** Catering



Art Blondin  
Zenobia Sutton

2330 South Lamar Blvd.  
Austin, Texas 78704  
(512) 442-8283  
Fax: (512) 442-9342

www.artzribhouse.citysearch.com  
e-mail: artzribhouse@juno.com



# THE LEDBETTER'S



"Kentucky Bluegrass from the Heart O' Texas" is the slogan of San Antonio's Ledbetters Bluegrass band. Beginning in 1988 as the husband and wife duo of Kathy and Spencer Drake, the Ledbetter's were officially launched when their brother-in-law, David (Uncle Dave) Reiff joined them to play upright bass in 1990. In 1991, fiddle player Larry Miller joined the group and in 1994 Jeff Long joined to play mandolin.

The Ledbetter's are progressive and enjoy crossing musical boundaries, however they are bluegrass through and through. Their enthusiasm for traditional songs by greats such as Monroe and Stanley is matched only by their love for the music. They might play an up-tempo bluegrass version of Roy Acuff's "Streamlined Cannon Ball", belt out a traditional instrumental such as "Cluck Old Hen", and then turn around and put Kathy's sweet voice to work on a contemporary number such as "He Never Did Return". They also regularly perform one of Larry's original songs "Mountain Of The Whispering Wind", a gripping and haunting mountain song.

The Ledbetters have one album to their credit entitled "Early Morning Train", three of the cuts on the album being co-written by Austin's very own Cara Cooke, including the title song. Cara also sings harmony vocals on several of the cuts including "Mountain Of The Whispering Wind". This song also features San Marcos native David Henry on dobro. David also helped produce the album.

The Ledbetters are no stranger to Austin area bluegrass folks. Through the years they have performed several times at the Zilker Park Spring Music Festival, CTBA Picnics, The Old Settlers Bluegrass Festival in Round Rock, Artz Rib House, and they have been regulars at the Manchaca Fire Station.

They have also covered quite a-bit of territory outside the Central Texas area during their twelve years of existence. Performances have ranged from the Texas Folklife Festival in San Antonio to the mountains of Cloudcroft New Mexico, "Springtime In The Rockies" Bluegrass Festival to the eastern mountains of Olive Hill, KY for the Carter County Shrine Club Bluegrass Festival and back to the flatlands of Dodge City KS for the annual "Sawlogs And Strings" Bluegrass Festival. On these trips they have shared billings with such bluegrass legends as Ralph Stanley, J.D.Crowe, Larry Sparks, The Osbourne Brothers, The Bluegrass Cardinals, Eddie Adcock and Charlie Louvin.

The Ledbetters Bluegrass Band promises to keep the sound of bluegrass music alive and well by playing "Kentucky Bluegrass From the Heart O' Texas!"

## TEXAS BLUEGRASS LEGACY

CURTAIN TALK AT THE PARAMOUNT THEATRE 2-16-03  
THOMAS PITTMAN

While Bluegrass may seem to many to be an ancient musical form, its entire history has elapsed during the lifetime of many in this room. Although the roots of bluegrass go back for centuries, even before the founding of this country, the first Bluegrass band was formed just after World War II when Bill Monroe added Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs to his Bluegrass Boys, along with Chubby Wise and Howard Watts, aka, Cedric Rainwater. Because Bill Monroe was already a member of the Grand Ole Opry, this new sound was exposed immediately over the airways to vast areas of the country, including Texas. The mountain and Piedmont areas of the South responded quickly by producing musicians and bands that approximated the fire and energy of the Bluegrass Boys. It was years before Monroe could appreciate this development as a tribute. For years he felt ripped off, even to the point of trying to keep the Stanley Brothers and Flatt and Scruggs off his record label and the Opry itself. Keep in mind that during the early years of Bluegrass, there was nothing recognized as Bluegrass music. What we now call Bluegrass was just called Country music, or more pejoratively, hillbilly music. It was played next to the more electrified forms of country music on the Grand Ole Opry stage as well as on their touring shows. The first use of "Bluegrass" as a musical genre does not seem to have happened until 1959.

Bluegrass spread more slowly outside the South, but it did not go unnoticed in Texas. Several factors contributed to the growth of Bluegrass in Texas. One was the Grand Ole Opry. In the days when there was only AM radio, and not that many stations, a clear channel signal from WSM in Nashville could bring the Grand Ole Opry to any part of Texas. Another factor that did not occur to me until I began to research this topic was the military. Carl Vinson's chairmanship of the House Armed Services Committee brought the pork home to his district, and along with that pork came tens of thousands of GI's, many of them from the South.

Musical considerations that made Texas fertile grounds for Bluegrass include a strong fiddle tradition and a general willingness to absorb musical influences of all sorts. Of the five instruments in the original Bluegrass band, four were commonly found in Western Swing bands: guitar, fiddle, mandolin and bass. Although these were played in slightly different styles, the instruments and the expertise to play them were readily available in Texas. The banjo proved to be more problematic. Buck White said that when he lived in Texas, the closest banjo players were in Duncan and Tahlequah Oklahoma. The desire to play Bluegrass was strong enough that they would drive great distances to get together for social picking, but the distances were prohibitive for any band formation.

Buck White got his first mandolin in 1949. Before that he had played mostly piano in Western dance bands. He did not, however, switch from the piano to the mandolin, but rather played guitar in the early versions of the family band. They moved from Wichita Falls to Ft. Smith AR in 1962 where he formed a band with his wife and daughters and Arlen Johnson and Ralph Thomas. They got wind of the first Bluegrass festival in Fincastle, VA in 1965 only after it was over, but they were there for the second one in 1966. The promoter, Carlton Haney, heard them in the camping area and put them on the show that same year. The rest is history. They eventually moved to Nashville where they still reside.

The Mayfield Bros., from Dimmitt, TX solved the banjo problem by simply omitting it. I never heard them, but Doc Hamilton tells me that they were as close to a Bluegrass sound as you could get without a banjo. Edd, Smokey and Herb Mayfield were descendent on both sides of the family from musicians from North Carolina. The Mayfields migrated from NC through Arkansas and eventually to West Texas. The Drakes, on the other side, migrated from the Hendersonville, NC area to several Texas destinations before settling in West Texas. The Mayfield parents met in the Wichita Falls area. Both families had strong musical histories, and it was natural that the Mayfield Bros. should form a band. They played at a jamboree in Lubbock every Saturday night from 1948 to 1950 as well as occasional visits to the Louisiana Hayride. It was there that Bill Monroe heard them and hired Edd away to become the first Bluegrass Boy from Texas. He played with Monroe on 3 different occasions. The first was for about a year beginning in 1952 until, Herb says, he was "starved out." It should be noted that Rock and Roll in general, and Elvis in particular, had a devastating effect on Mr. Monroe's bottom line for many years, starting about this time. Mayfield

-continued-

PRO TOOLS | HD

AVALON  
PURE CLASS A

We Understand  
Bluegrass Music  
Recording...

- Two Rooms
- Complete Renovation with over \$100k in new equipment
- Friendly staff and engineers
- ProTools and Digital Performer Platforms
- From concept to final CDs - a complete service provider.
- Located in San Antonio - central to all players in Texas.
- Extremely competitive rates



(210) 342-0421

[www.rhapsodystreet.com](http://www.rhapsodystreet.com)

# FIRE ON THE STRINGS BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

Presented by: The Bay Area Bluegrass Association



## Featuring

Louisiana Grass

Sandy Creek

LoneStar Bluegrass Band

Common Tyme

Pet Rooster

The Bluegrass Solution

White Dove

TEXAS STATE BANJO CHAMPIONSHIP 2003  
And  
TEXAS FLATPICKING CHAMPIONSHIP 2003

Saturday Only



### CO-SPONSORED BY:

Fuller's Vintage Guitar

Gibson Instruments

Pawless Guitars

Allen Banjo Company

Hickory Hollow Restaurants

Lazy E Custom Leather

Texan RV

(Formerly Pyne Rv  
Sales & Rentals)



**PAWLESS**  
Hand made acoustic guitars

### Contact:

Barbara Monroe  
281-993-1620  
Email: bam1007@juno.com

Betty Robertson  
281-879-9441

Held at:



**JELLYSTONE PARK**  
CAMP-RESORT WALLER, TEXAS

SWIMMING POOL  
PLAYGROUND  
PETTING ZOO  
4 1/2 ACRE FISHING LAKE  
MINATURE GOLF  
HAY RIDES  
PANCAKE BREAKFAST  
CHILDREN'S THEATRE  
TENNIS  
VOLLEYBALL COURT  
GAME ROOM  
HOT SHOWERS

### Festival Prices:

Adults  
Friday \$10  
Sat. \$15  
Sun. \$5.00  
WkEnd \$25  
Kids 12 &  
Under  
\$3 Day  
\$5 Wkend

### View our website:

www.bayareabluegrass.org  
Email bam1007@juno.com

For Reservations Call:  
**1-800-355-6928**



returned to the Bluegrass Boys in 1954 and recorded "The First Whippoorwill" and "Christmas Time's A'Coming." Once again he was starved out but returned in 1956. In April of 1958 he recorded the "I Saw the Light" album and died of leukemia on the road with Monroe in July of 1958 at the age of 28.

The Mayfields, according to Alan Munde, were a tremendous influence on the Lubbock rock & roll scene, especially on Buddy Holly and Sonny Curtis, who was distantly related by marriage to the Mayfields.

The first name that comes up as a banjo player in Texas, or at least in North Texas, was Eddie Shelton. Born in Tennessee and raised in the Dallas area, he returned to Texas from the Dayton, Ohio area where he had been employed by National Cash Register. Upon returning to Texas he formed a group called the Stone Mountain Boys with Mitchell Land, Tootie Williams and Lonnie Kraft. They were proficient enough that they won the band contest at the second Bill Monroe Bluegrass Festival at Bean Blossom, IN in 1968. Shelton put out records with the Stone Mountain Boys as well as at least one under his own name. He continued to play with the Leon Valley Bluegrass until his death a couple of years ago. It is hard to overestimate the influence of Eddie Shelton on banjo playing in Texas. He was mentor to both Alan Munde and Danny Barnes, both of whom went on to become banjo instructors, so his influence carries on geometrically, beyond his death, through them.

Many of you in the Austin Bluegrass community are familiar with Doc Hamilton, who lived and played in the Austin area on more than one occasion. If you have seen him in the past 15 years or so, it was likely as a fiddler or mandolin player, but you may be surprised, as I was, to find out that he played his first Bluegrass as a banjo player. He had been a Chet Atkins style guitar player prior to that, but was encouraged to try banjo because of the shortage of banjo players at that time and because of his demonstrated dexterity with fingerpicks. Virgil Bryant, who had played banjo with Jimmy Martin on the Louisiana Hayride in Shreveport, was his early mentor on banjo. Through military assignments he hooked up with Buck White before White left Texas, and then again in Arkansas. Through an assignment with NASA he spent time in Houston where he played and recorded with Bill Northcut. Northcut was a Texas fiddler who also sold and repaired fiddle in the Houston area. Together they recorded an album on the Stoneway label. Stoneway was owned by R.M. Stone, who also put out records by Erle Garner, Chubby Wise and Paul Buskirk.

A common thread amongst all of the stories related so far is that of traveling great distances to assemble the necessary ingredients for a Bluegrass band. Such was not the case in Austin where there was a complete bluegrass band beginning in 1953. Jim Barr moved to Austin from South Carolina as a result of a military assignment in 1949. By 1953 he had put together the Texas Bluegrass Boys with Leon Campbell, Harold Franks and Lonnie Leighton. They changed the name to Grassfire in 1960 evidently to accommodate the addition of Jim's daughter Sherry on guitar and vocals and Ginger Evans on Bass. They managed to hold things together for 31 years, playing their last gig in 1984.

Their early gigs were from the period when Bluegrass had no identity other than Country, or hillbilly music. They played high schools, pizza parlors, parades, and many times opened for touring Opry acts at the Palmer auditorium. There they opened shows that included Ernest Tubb, Kitty Wells, Hank Snow, Bill Monroe, Jim & Jesse and Johnnie and Jack. They also recorded 4 LP albums.

Strictly speaking, Alan Munde and Byron Berline were from Oklahoma, but there was considerable cultural miscegenation across the Red River in the early days, and Munde has since become a naturalized Texas citizen. Berline played with Eddie Shelton sometimes, and Munde filled in when Shelton was unavailable. Munde went to Nashville for two years beginning in 1969 to play with Jimmy Martin, then Berline and Munde went to Los Angeles to form the first incarnation of Country Gazette in 1972. Both returned to Oklahoma but in 1986 Munde moved to Levelland, TX to join the faculty of South Plains, TX. More on this later.

I arrived in Texas in November of 1974 to find a fair amount of bluegrass, mostly centered around the Austin Friends of Traditional Music meetings at the Split Rail. The most visible bluegrass at that time in Austin was the Alfalfa Bros., which included Dennis McDaniel on mandolin, and a rotating cast of other members including Wyatt Deitrick, Jimmy Kubecka, Mark Maniscalco, Marshall Wilborn and Ed Bradfield among others. There were other musicians and aggregations accumulating in town around that time, and in 1978 the Central Texas Bluegrass Association was formed. There is an excellent history of the CTBA in the current edition of the CTBA newsletter written by Ken Brown. In fact, upon reading such a complete and detailed history it became clear to me that Ken Brown should be giving this talk, not me.

I don't know when it was formed, but the Bay Area Bluegrass Association in the Houston area has been around for many years. They put on a great festival near Hempstead every year and host the Texas Banjo championship.

During the 70's and 80's banjo players started piling up in San Antonio. At one time there was a band consisting of 5 great banjo players: Mark Maniscalco, Bill Holden, Lang Scruggs, Bill Holden and Don Van Winkle. I never saw them, so I don't know which one got to play the banjo. The most enduring band from San Antonio has been TVA, which consists of Hank Harrison on mandolin and a rotating cast of

-Curtain Talk continued-

other players. They won the Bluegrass band contest at the Kerrville Bluegrass Festival pretty much every year they were eligible.

Speaking of festivals, there are several long running festivals in Texas: McKinney, Sheppard and Glen Rose as well as Bluegrass festivals that came and went in Kerrville and Nagadoches. The big festival nowadays is the Old Settler's Festival in Dripping Springs. It is not strictly a Bluegrass festival, but they feature many of the most prominent Bluegrass touring acts.

Texas continues to produce some of the finest Bluegrass musicians. I am sometimes privileged to substitute for Larry Monroe on a KUT radio show called "Texas Radio." While I try to play material that would appeal to his regular audience, I also try to play some material that is outside the usual scope of Larry's interest and expertise. That would include Bluegrass. A surprising number of the top Bluegrass bands have Texas connections including:

Charlie Waller - Country Gentlemen- Henderson, TX

III Tyme Out- Russell Moore- Pasadena, TX

Hot Rize- Charles Sawtelle- Austin, TX

Lynn Morris Band- Lynn Morris- Lamesa, TX

Marshall Wilborn, Austin, TX

Country Gazette- Alan Munde and Joe Carr

Bad Livers

Peter Rowan who owns a house in Medina, TX

Longview- Marshall Wilborne

Karl Shifflet & Big Country

Dixie Chicks- Emily and Martie Erwin who played with the Blue Night Express in Dallas and Natalie Maines from Lubbock. They had the biggest selling album in any genre last year that had bluegrass cut on it, Li'l Jack Slade.

Texas may not be the most prominent state in Bluegrass music, but it certainly holds its own with most. I can think of one area in which Texas does seem to be the leader, and that is that of Bluegrass education. While East Tennessee State offers a few courses in Bluegrass, South Plains College in Levelland is the only college there is that has a degree program in Bluegrass and Commercial Country Music. Their alumni include some of the more successful musicians in Bluegrass today. They include:

Ron Block/ Alison Krauss

Mike Bub/ Del McCoury Band

Stewart Duncan/ Nashville Bluegrass Band

Jed Hughes/ Patty Loveless & Down from the Mountain

Natalie Maines/ Dixie Chicks

In addition to their residential studies, they also have a line of video lessons. As best I can tell, the biggest vendor of Bluegrass instruction videos is Homespun, from Woodstock, NY, but most of the rest come from Texas. In addition to the Texas Music in Video series from South Plains College there is Slim Richey's Ridgerunner courses out of Wimberly, and one other outfit from right here in Austin.

I would like to thank Texas Folklife Resources for recognizing the vital and continuing contributions of Bluegrass music to our rich musical heritage here in Texas, and for bringing Buck White and his family here tonight.

I would also like to thank those that assisted in the preparation of this talk. When I agreed to do it, I thought I'd just tell what I know. Then it occurred to me that I didn't really know all that much. So I decided to contact those who did. I am deeply indebted to Buck

White, Alan Munde, Doc Hamilton, Jim Barr and Herb and Dorothy Mayfield. I recognize that the topic of Bluegrass in Texas is more deserving of a book than a 15 minute talk, so I know there was more left out than was included. I freely acknowledge that there are many localities, time periods and musicians that were omitted, but I hope I hit the high spots at least.

I will close with a quote from Doc Hamilton. "Whatever music is still left in me, I owe it to Buck White."

**Editor's Note:** This article was contributed and copyrighted by Tom Pittman, 2003.

16TH ANNUAL  
**OLD SETTLER'S  
MUSIC FESTIVAL**  
★ APRIL 17-20, 2003 ★  
SALT LICK BBQ PAVILION  
CAMP BEN McCULLOCH  
FEATURING  
**YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND**  
(KINFOLK CELEBRATION)  
**DEL McCOURY BAND - PATTY GRIFFIN**  
**PETER ROWAN - VASSAR CLEMENTS**  
**FRED EAGLESMITH - RAILROAD EARTH**  
**WAYBACKS - TONY FURTADO BAND**  
**JERRY DOUGLAS BAND**  
(WITH BRYAN SUTTON, GABE WITCHER & LARRY ATAMANUIK)  
**RUTHIE FOSTER - TWO HIGH STRING BAND - BLUE MERLE**  
**SOUTH AUSTIN JUG BAND - CAROLINE HERRING**  
**MIKE WILLIAMS - COOPER'S UNCLE - ALISON BROWN**  
**ONION CREEK CRAWDADDIES - THE GREENCARDS**  
**THE SPURS OF THE MOMENT - REEL TIME TRAVELERS**  
**SLIM RITCHEY'S DREAM BAND - PURLY GATES**  
**SHELLY KING - SHOAL CREEK MUDSTOMPERS**  
**DAVID HAMBURGER & MIKE GRIGONI**  
**GOOD NEWS BAND - MARY GAUTHIER**  
**OPEN MIC WITH MICHAEL KEARNEY**  
**EGG HUNT WITH THE EASTER BUNNY**

THE VERY BEST BLUEGRASS,  
AMERICANA AND TEXAS  
ROOTS MUSIC ON FOUR  
STAGES, HELD AT THE HEIGHT  
OF WILDFLOWER SEASON.  
ON-SITE CAMPING, KIDS'  
ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE  
WORKSHOPS, OPEN MIC,  
CRAFTS, FOOD AND MORE!

OLD SETTLER'S  
MUSIC FESTIVAL  
Austin - Texas

SAVE MONEY - BUY EARLY  
TICKETS ON SALE NOW  
HOTLINE: 512-370-4630  
WWW.OLDSETTLERSMUSICFEST.ORG

107.1  
K45R

statesman.com

WBS4  
KNVA

