

Central

Texas Bluegrass

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IBMA Member

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GEOFF UNION

Picks, Happenings, and Releases



The **Bastrop Brewhouse** sits up the hill from the Colorado River in the heart of Bastrop's historical district. This month they have begun a new **Bluegrass Brunch** series on Sunday 10AM - 1PM. They'd like you to come out enjoy dinner and a brew on one of their multi-level decks or you can dine indoors and enjoy the scenic view of the river and beer garden. If that's not enough, they have horseshoes and washers in the beer garden.

<http://www.bastropbrewhouse.com/events/>



Dan Huckabee at **Musicians Workshop** in Austin has put together a pretty good package of 2 CD sets for learning to sing Bluegrass Harmonies. In August he was offering a buy one, get one free. Talk real nice to him and maybe he will extend that offer. Shucks, just buy the all three volume sets with just about every bluegrass standard you can think of. Take a look.

<http://www.musiciansworks.net/index.php/singing-harmony.html>



The Infamous Stringdusters are coming to Austin to play **Bass Concert Hall** at UT. The show is **Thursday, September 6th, at 8PM**. Local Austin band **Wood & Wire** will open. This is a great opportunity to hear some incredible musicians performing newgrass style bluegrass. The Grammy nominated band has **Andy Hall** (dobro), **Andy Falco** (guitar), **Jeremy Garrett** (fiddle), **Chris Pandolfi** (banjo) and **Travis Book** (bass). You are sure to hear licks and tricks that you may have never heard as these guys blister their fingers for you. Get tickets now!

<http://texasperformingarts.org/season/the-infamous-stringdusters-austin>



Below is the schedule for the Leander Bluegrass Festival on September 28-29 (see next page for flyer).

Friday, September 28, 7-8pm Geoff Union, 8-9pm The Upham Family Band, 9-10pm The Lost Pines.

Saturday, September 29, 6-7pm Piney Grove Ramblers, 7-8pm The Show and Tellers, 8-9pm The Bottom Dollar String Band, 9:15-11pm Posey Hill



One World Theater is once again bringing bluegrass to its phenomenal stage this month. **Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder** will perform on **Sunday, September 9th** for two shows. There's one at 6pm and another at 8:30pm. Ricky is a 14 time Grammy winner and shouldn't be missed.

While not exactly a bluegrass performance, banjoist extraordinaire **Bela Fleck** is teaming up with The Marcus Roberts Trio for an evening of jazz with banjo. The shows will be September 20th at 7pm & again at 8:30pm.

<http://www.oneworldtheatre.org/tickets.aspx>



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7pm-10pm & **Saturday, Sept 29th**
6pm-11pm

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**Leander Parks and
Recreation**



Meet a CTBA Member: Stephen Mangold

Introduce yourself. Tell us your name, a little bit about yourself, what city you live in, and why you joined CTBA.

Hi, my name is Stephen Mangold, but everyone calls me Steve. I was born in Kansas in 1945 two weeks before I would have been the very first baby boomer, moved to Texas in 1964. I am a semi-retired electrical engineer (U of H, 1968) having worked for the University of Texas the last part of my full time career. Now,

I'm learning to be a luthier; I have built a few instruments and am pleased with my progress.

Flatt & Scruggs got me interested in bluegrass (I still have their LP I bought in the '60s). But what got me hooked on playing bluegrass was watching Chubby Wise play at a festival somewhere in Louisiana back in the early '80's. I Moved to Austin in '83, listened to Dan Foster on KUT folkways, called him up and inquired about a good fiddle teacher. He introduced me to Morris Crowder, a member of the CTBA. Morris (now deceased, unfortunately) taught me some fiddle tunes (I was nearly 50 years old) and I joined the CTBA. I was a board member for several years in the '90's and started leading the Beginner Intermediate Group (B.I.G.) jam in late 90's. I'm glad to say that jam is still happening. I'm proud to say that I had a part in introducing a lot of jammers to bluegrass.

Do you play an instrument?

I primarily play the fiddle, play a pretty good stand up bass, and I can pick the mandolin and strum rhythm chords on the guitar and ukulele. I also pretend to sing! Even had someone once complement me on my singing!! Go figure..

What bluegrass artists do you like to listen to most?

Why Chubby, of course. I have almost every LP that Chubby recorded while with Stoneway in Houston. Also, fiddlers Kenny Baker and Vassar Clements. As for bands: Ricky Skaggs, Marty Stuart, Del McCoury, Larry Sparks, Stanley Brothers, Jim & Jesse, Doc Watson, The Dillards, et.al.

What's your all time favorite bluegrass song?

Impossible question. First one that comes to mind; Blue Moon of Kentucky. Chubby plays the heck out of that one.



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Bluegrass From The Edge: CBG Redux

By George Wilson

Off to Camp again... My singing and troublemaking companion, Brian, and I piled our stuff into his Prius on a sunny Saturday and headed to Lubbock. 400 miles = 7 hours, give or take. Climbing up the Caprock Escarpment onto the Llano Estacado, the biggest flat spot on earth(acc Brian), we go through the edge giant windmill farms. They are ideally set to take advantage wind that races across the prairie with nothing but fence posts to restrain it, impressive and an eyesore at the same time. Overnight at the Lubbock Embassy Suites (thank you HHonors program) and off to Levelland at the crack of noon on Sunday.

We'd received an e-mail saying we were to occupy the newly minted Tubb residence hall at South Plains College so we dutifully reported to same. We carried our instruments in to avoid the heat but soon carried them back out as we were sent packing back to the old residence facilities. We assumed our reputation preceded us but it turned out that the 2nd floor AC was on the fritz so half the group was sent back to the older girls dorms, North and South Sue. (Girl's dorms? Of course, lots of women campers and significant others who would not be caught dead in a boy's dorms.) This was an issue all week and the general consensus was the new dorms are nice but the old dorms have better jamming potential and are much closer to the classes. Be Green Paula, keep us in walking distance.

It was good to see everybody again, starting with Paula Carr. Joe Carr is the titular head of the camp but everybody knows Paula runs it. The split dorms had her harried but she got everybody in place with minimum fuss. There was no free lunch on Sunday so we headed to the Jalisco we saw just after turning off the Lubbock Highway. We knew it was authentic when we checked the menu - #11 Tejas Special made proof positive. While we were eating some friends from Tuscon rolled in to assuage their hunger.

They added a new 'no carry' class to the Camp this year: Songwriting. The instructor, Wil Maring, had her charges slaving away, always staying on beyond the normal session time. They all were very happy with the class, though one Okie sage noted, wryly, he felt he was "swimming in a sea of estrogen" in the female dominated class. She got them to really extend themselves and most of them performed in the student concert in some fashion based on what they covered in class. I toyed with taking the songwriting course but stuck with mandolin instead, daring to take the advanced class to get pushed.

Wish fulfilled – Steve Smith is a gifted instructor but I found myself feeling like I did in German



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class in college where understanding was mad-deningly close but around the corner. For about four hours a day I lost all concern of the world at large and was completely consumed by the mandolin. For me, that's what a vacation is all about – lifting life's burdens from my mind. I found satisfaction in the evening jams where the techniques I'd been working on since last year served me well.

While only the titular leader, it is certainly true that Joe Carr is the Master of Ceremonies for this event. A gifted humorist, everyone just hangs on waiting to hear what he is going to say next. I first met Joe a decade ago (2002) when I attended Camp Bluegrass for the first time. At that time he was using a cane but still performing.

Life intervened and I didn't get back until 2008 by which time his MS had forced him onto a powered scooter. Some people might have sunk into self pity but not Joe. He still teaches and he has thrown himself at publishing, producing volume after volume of very useful guitar and mandolin instruction material. This year the hot new book was his study on Bill Monroe's mandolin technique. I try to think about him any time I want to whine about some ache or pain. I also feel privileged to have seen one of the last performances of the Carr-Munde-White version of Country Gazette.

Since this is the Monroe centennial year and this was a Bluegrass camp, Bill Monroe was primary topic. Each day there were special Monroe related event. The highlight, for me, was Joe's discussion on the evolution of Bill's playing style. He used recordings, videos and kinescopes to bring the subject to life. So impressed by this we referenced it in our student concert performance (as the "Monsters of the Id", obviously a real group with our matching shirts). I remarked on how much I enjoyed that discussion and how fortunate we are to have recordings like that to show us how it was done. I went on to say "In a thousand years there may be routine flights to Altair but they will still have these recordings to study and emulate. There will be new groups formed to capture that sound and there will be audiences to listen, where surely someone will say..." To which Brian answers "That ain't the way Bill did it!"

Photo above is George Wilson on guitar and Brian Walker on Mandolin. Photo by Mike Reding.



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Learnin' a Little: Blues for Sara

Blues for Sara Key of Gmin

Written by Chuck Middleton, 5-string Banjo tuned GDGBbD

4/4

Measures 1-4: Measure 1 (0 0 0 1), Measure 2 (0 0 0 2), Measure 3 (0 0 0 3), Measure 4 (0 0 Sl 0 4). Fingering includes 3, 5, 2, 3, 3, 5, 2, 4, 3, 0, 0.

Measures 5-8: Measure 5 (Sl 0 0 0 6), Measure 6 (2 0 3 0 0 7), Measure 7 (Sl 0 2 4 4 8), Measure 8 (0 0 Po 0 0 0). Fingering includes 3, 5, 2, 3, 3, 5, 2, 4, 4, 0, 3, 2, 0.

2. Part B (No repeat)

Measures 9-12: Measure 9 (0 0 Po 0 0 10), Measure 10 (3 0 0 0 11), Measure 11 (0 0 0 0 12), Measure 12 (0 0 0 0). Fingering includes 3, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 2, 0, 3, 0, Sl, 0, 3, 5.

Measures 13-16: Measure 13 (0 0 0 0 13), Measure 14 (3 0 0 0 14), Measure 15 (0 0 0 0 15), Measure 16 (3 3 0 0). Fingering includes 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 2, 0, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 3.

Measures 17-20: Measure 17 (0 0 3 0 17), Measure 18 (3 0 0 0 18), Measure 19 (0 0 0 0 19), Measure 20 (0 1 1 0 20). Fingering includes 2, 2, 3, 3, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 2, 0, 3, 1, 1, 0, 0, 0.

Measures 21-24: Measure 21 (1 0 0 1 21), Measure 22 (3 3 0 0 22), Measure 23 (0 0 3 0 23), Measure 24 (2 5 5 4 24). Fingering includes 0, 0, 1, 3, 2, 2, 2, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 3, 5, 4, 5, 4, 4, 0, 5.

Part C

Blues for Sara - Key of Gmin

25 5 5 5 26 5 5 5 27 12 12 12 28 12 12 10

29 8 8 8 30 8 8 8 31 12 12 12 32 12 12 10

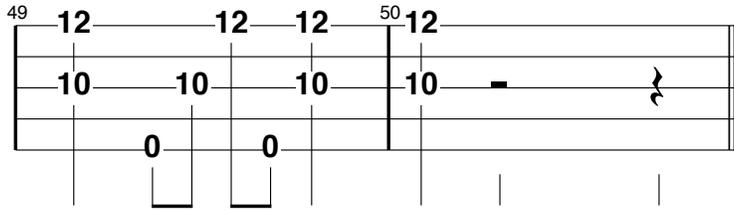
33 8 8 8 34 8 8 35 10 10 10 36 10 10 8

37 7 7 7 38 7 7 7 39 12 12 12 40 12 12 10

Ending

41 8 8 8 42 8 0 0 43 1 1 1 44 3 3 3

45 5 5 5 46 7 7 7 47 8 8 8 48 10 10 10



Here's a tab and notes about a tune I wrote about 10 years ago.

"Blues for Sara" is a 3-part tune I wrote in 2004 for my old girlfriend, Sara. The tune uses the G minor banjo tuning so it's in a minor key. It's played fairly fast for a blues tune. It uses a lot of descending arpeggios in the B part that really form the heart of the tune. The C part climbs up the neck and dances around between a few chord position ending with an ascending version of the arpeggios of the B part. The less said the better about the A part !

I have the TabEdit and pdf versions of this tune available for any interested pickers out there, feel free to send me a request at clydem@austin.rr.com.

*Enjoy
Chuck Middleton*



Artist Profile: Geoff Union

I had an opportunity to talk with one of Austin's great guitarist and songwriters this month. We met at Café Pacha at 4618 Burnet Road in Austin. Pache is a locally owned organic restaurant and coffee shop. Look for the big coffee mug on Burnet. It's about halfway between The Omlety and Upper Crust Bakery. Good people, good food, great coffee. I hope you enjoy the interview. My questions are in italics. - Tom Duplissey

You grew up in North Carolina and went to High School there.

I grew up in Fayetteville (NC). What I like to tell people is that I grew up in North Carolina but not in any of the cool parts. Fayetteville is in the eastern part of the state and it's a combination of agricultural supply town and part military. There's a huge military base there.

Ft Bragg.

Yes, 82nd Airborne, 101st Infantry, used to have the Green Beret's....

Was your father in the military?

No, well he was actually, but that was after WWII for a couple of years, but that wasn't why we grew up there. We moved there because my grandfather moved his business there for his own completely bizarre reasons. It was fun growing up there. Then I went to school in Connecticut at Wesleyan.

What was your major?

Music! I went there because I had a cousin that went there. She thought it was really cool so I went to check it out. I was young. I wanted to do something different. I wanted to get out of where I was. They were one of the early pioneers in Ethnomusicology. So their approach was different. Normally, you would study classical, music theory, but to them classical music was on an equal footing with all the other music of the world. They had people they had brought in from Africa, Asia, & India to teach. So I studied Experimental Jazz, West African and Indian music. All of which is really interesting but I didn't learn anything about the Music Business so other than it being really cool I didn't really learn anything practical. I studied theory on my own. It wasn't a requirement. Looking back on it I can't believe you can get a music degree anywhere without being forced to study theory.

What year was that?

It was '93 and I moved down here right after that. I knew I wanted to live in a music town but I didn't want to live in a big city like LA. I didn't want to live in Nashville. Even back then I liked bluegrass but my knowledge of it was Doc Watson and Old and In The Way. So I didn't want to live in



Nashville or New York. I had some friends that had been here. They really liked it and said that it was a cool city. I spent some time traveling after school and checked out some different towns. I came here and never left.

You hooked up with Billy (Bright) soon after that. Billy said in his interview that you were in a band called "Bakers Moonlight Caravan".

Yes. They (Billy) moved here in '95 or '96. I had been doing rock band stuff before that. I have a friend that I ran into about then. His name is Jim Harris. Jim has turned into a writing partner over the years. I lived with him and some other guys and girls on the east side. John Herndon is a friend of his. We went over to John's house one night to pick and Mike and Stuart were over there.

Mike McCarthy and Stuart Rose?

Yes. So that was the beginning of "Bakers Moonshine Caravan" band for about a year.

That was your first introduction of playing in a bluegrass band. Step back for just a minute. You played electric guitar before that. What kind of guitar did you play?

(laughing) At the time I had this old Mosrite Hollowbody. From going to school in Connecticut we used to go over to New York City all the time. I found this music shop...St Marks Place...where ever the hell that is...in one of the village areas I think. There was a guitar in there that was a maple Explorer body with a Stratocaster neck that someone had bolted onto it. The guy at the shop told me that it was a guitar that someone had made in the 70's to use as an experiment with preamp pickups. Back when they first started messing around with battery powered pickups. It had all this crazy stuff. It had all these transistors and switches. It had distortion switches. It had an EQ and enough single coil pickups on it that you could switch it around and get all these different sounds. So that's what I was playing. It was the heaviest damned guitar in the world.

That's funny. So you started playing acoustic with Mike and Stu and then how did you get hooked up with Billy.

Yes there was something in between that. Billy and Bryn started playing with Peter Rowan. They were gone a lot. I did a singer-songwriter duo thing with my buddy Michael Shay who is a cello player, guitar player, singer, and songwriter. We had a group called "Alive and Well". We did a CD in 1999 or 2000 and did some touring for a while. That was acoustic. I was playing my Martin. It wasn't bluegrass. We did a little stuff that was bouncy but it was singer-songwriter...all original stuff. I still have that CD and people seem to like it. I don't usually bring it out and try to sell it. Occasionally I'll give one to somebody. The cello thing is kind of cool.

Have you re-released any of that material on later CD's?

My song "Ferris Wheel" was on that CD. There's a version of that with cello and guitar on there.

"Ferris Wheel" is a great tune. Has anyone covered that song or any of your other material?

There's some guys in Oklahoma City that do some of my stuff (laughing). The band is the Tall Cotton String Band. I don't know if they are still together. We ran across them when we would drive up there and they would open for us. We got to know them pretty good. It was more of a jug band kind of thing but they eventually started covering "Moonshine Boogie" and "Ferris Wheel". There's a video of a guy on YouTube playing "Ferris Wheel" with his three or four year old daughter. There's no one on any kind of commercial level. There's some guys out in California that are some of Chojo's buddies that really like "Moonshine Boogie" and get together and jam it. Jeff Gavin showed me a really cool and far out version of "Moonshine Boogie" that he worked out that has some suspended chords and, I don't know, it sounds like a Crosby, Stills, & Nash version of the song. I really like it better than my version.

You had another band that played in the late 90's.

I was in this band called Bluegrass Drive-by.

That's it.

Brent Livingston, Scott Biram (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MhJNUbbBiU). That was a really fun...hmmm, I don't know...kind of a party bluegrass band. It's very similar to this Bluegrass Outfit thing that's going on right now (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpH04pfaHfc&feature=related>). Except that we might have actually had a couple of rehearsals (laughter). I was playing bass in that band. I was actually a bass player before I started playing guitar. I played electric bass. I never studied much on the upright but there was a point in time when I wasn't really doing much in town and I was trying to get some work. I saw an ad in the old Chronicle. I saw an ad where Don McAlister was looking for an upright bass player for his western swing thing. I could play the bass but had never tried upright before. I thought I could get that gig. So I found a cheap Kay in the paper. I bought that and called him. He hired me and I did about three gigs with him and then he fired me (laughter).

Around 2001 Billy and Bryn came back and "Two High String Band" got back together and in 2003 produced a CD. You were on that CD weren't you?

Yes. That was "In So Far As Much".

That's a great CD. Later you had a CD in 2008 "Big Sky Tonight". How did that CD come about?

That was kind of an aberration that I got into. Two High wasn't playing much and I had some songs lying around. It's a country record. Americana Country record. Drums, pedal steel, fiddle, electric guitar, Telecaster, but mostly on that album I'm playing acoustic guitar and singing. It's a cool album, there are some good songs on there.

All originals?

Yes. It's a different thing. I wanted to try to record the music but I also thought it would be a cool thing to try to do. I thought that country music was big in Texas and that I could get some work but once I started doing it, started really getting to know what the scene was and what everyone was doing, it kind of grossed me out severely.

Let's talk about your newest CD. The CD kicks off with a super song called "Devil's Card". That sets the tone for the CD. You've also got "Spirit of '94" which you've recorded before.

Yes, it's been on about three CDs.

Two High did it.



Yes, it was on the Bluegrass Burrito CD and it was on the live CD we did "Live at Fiddler's Green"...I think. I wanted to do it again because I felt like we could get a better version of it for two reasons. On the Burrito CD it was a little slow and its all melodic, no soloing on it, and my wife Christina sings with me when she's not in Grad School. We had worked up some versions of a lot of these songs where we were doing some duet stuff so that's where that came from. I wanted to get a good version of it with her singing on it too, duet style, little more upbeat.

"Devil's Card". Where did that come from?

That's one that Jim Harris and I co-wrote. He sends me lyrics all the time in email and that was one in particular I really liked. I

don't know what it is with the moonshine thing but I have "Moonshine Boogie", "Spirit of '94", and I saw something on the history channel about this Lewis Redmond character. I was real intrigued by that and thought that it might make a third leg to the moonshine trilogy. I started working on it and then I got in touch with Jim to see what he would shoot back at me. What he sent back was this whole "Devil's Card" thing that had nothing to do with Lewis Redmond or moonshine really but in his processing of it...well, there's a part of the Lewis Redmond story where the Federal Marshall's trick him into meeting at this house where he thinks there is going to be this big sale and they get into a gun fight and they shoot him, thinking that he is dead, they leave and...I guess he latched onto that part of that story and turned it into this thing with the Tommy gun. He likes to write about scenes from the 30's and 40's. He grew up outside of Houston so that imagery is in his songs. The reason we put it first on the CD, the way it kicks off, with the bass bump...that was all Billy's idea. I have to give him a lot of credit for the album because he produced it. Writing is one thing but he produced the entire thing had it all at his house. He had Ricky and Mark come up and cut their parts. He had some other great arrangement ideas so he definitely deserves a lot of credit for how good it sounds

What about "40 Years"?

"40 Years". Hmm, what can I say about that? It's definitely got some of the biblical reference in there, right? So I grew up Jewish. I'm not particularly religious right now. I grew up in it. I was raised with it. Then I got away from it. There was a time when I thought I might want to get back into it. After a while of trying I finally decided that I wasn't into it. It wasn't for me. Part of the song is my...well, I wouldn't say struggle, it wasn't that big of a deal, it was contemplation of that religion. I think by accident, by me calling it "40 Years", I was close to 40 when I had written it so it was a sort of weird metaphor for being 40 and being in some desert of contemplation, I don't know. I don't know what the hell it means.

"Half Past Zero" is an instrumental, with sort of a minor swing feel. How did that come together? Was it sort of a group effort or...

No, it was something that popped into my head at some point. It's definitely got that sort of Miles Davis, "So What" kind of a thing going on at the beginning. It's just a cool melody sort of like "Meat Glaze".

On the Two High CD?

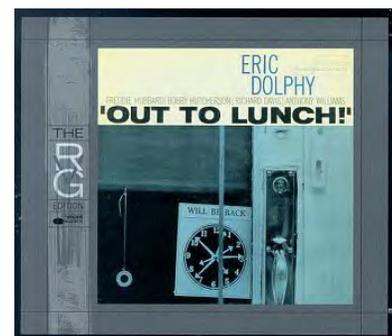
Yes, it's one of mine but we recorded it on the Moonshine Boogie CD. It's another kind of a minor swing "Dawgy" kind of a thing. That was back in 2006. "Half Past Zero" has the harmonic minor scale in it and the progression is pretty simple but the one minor (i), four minor (iv), and the five major chord (V) gives it that feel and the major seven chords in the B section kind of opens it up. I named it "Half Past zero" because there is a one of my favorite album covers. You know those old Blue Note album covers?

You bet.

They are so cool how they are laid out, the color schemes, and everything. There was one Eric Dolphy record called "Out to Lunch". It's got the five clock hands that are all pointing different directions so that made me think of "Half Past Zero".

You mentioned your Grandfather earlier. "Cold as Steel" is a reference to him isn't it?

Yes. Back in the Thirties my Grandfather worked for different steel companies in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Eventually got a job working for Bethlehem Steel. In West Virginia he was running a corrugating plant



with just a single corrugating machine, a barrel corrugating machine, which is a machine that has two giant barrels, one on top of the other, with teeth that you feed the metal through and it makes that corrugated shape. The story is that they were in Parkersburg and they were down by the Ohio River. Back then the river would flood every year, like all rivers did, and they would have to stop working and move the machine to get it out of the floodwaters. One year, the story goes, it was him, an assistant, and an accountant. One year the accountant says to him, you work all year making this stuff for these guys, you make a pretty good living, but you're working for them, they are making a big cut of what you make. The floods are every year so what if this year we pretend that the machine was destroyed in the flood and run off with it and go set up our own shop somewhere else (laughter). So that's what they did. So he moved the operation down to Fayetteville, North Carolina for these real bizarrish reasons that had to do with delivery of the coils of steel by train or by barge. I lived in Fayetteville. He lived in Fayetteville. He died in 1981 or something but I never knew him very well. He was a great businessman, real smart and sharp but had a totally non-existent personal life. He was not particularly outgoing. Obviously I owe a lot of who I am to him even though I never really had a relationship with him.

There's another instrumental, "Fanny at the Front Door".

I don't know if you can print what that one's about.

Alrighty then. Let's talk about your playing style. First, you play a Martin. What year?

It's not that old, it's like a '96. I think it was one of the first years they started making that "vintage style" where they moved the bracing around. I got it when I was playing with Mike and Stuart because I was playing this Takamine that I still have. Mike kind of convinced me to get a Martin. I didn't know much about acoustic guitars at the time, really I still don't, but he helped me out and pointed me in the right direction.

Is that your primary guitar?

Well, no. I play a Collings. I have a Collings D1A that I got when Brian Smith was working out there.

He's not working there anymore?

No. Brian and Laura moved to Ft Worth about two years ago. His wife, Laura, got a teaching job at Texas Christian so they moved up there. She's a Professor and he's up there teaching elementary school teaching fourth grade music or something like that. Playing the drums.

That's super. I'd like to ask you about your playing style. You're right hand is clean and strong. Are there particular exercises or practice methods that you used to develop your right hand techniques.

Yes there is. I played for a number of years without focusing on my right hand. I had a lot of left hand dexterity but there was a lot of coordination and power that I didn't have. I don't do it as much anymore but for a long time I would sit down with a metronome, set it down to 70 or 80 beats per minute and pick on one open string, with alternating up and down strokes, to the quarter note, right on the beat. Eventually I would double it so I was playing eighth notes and then I would double it so I was playing sixteenth notes. What the slow speed does for you is it teaches you timing and to be patient even when the tempo is fast. It's like lifting weights. It's like an endurance exercise. You're building up that down up motion by playing for a really long time. So I would do quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes on all the different strings, eventually increasing the tempo slightly. Then I would make up patterns that were all open strings, no left hand action at all. I would do that for maybe ten or fifteen minutes a day. I would try and think of patterns that reflected things that I play. I would take a lick that I have a habit of trying to play, that a lot of times I would flub, and I would just think about what my right hand was doing during that lick. I would figure that pattern out and practice it at a real slow speed until it was solid and then I would slowly build the speed up. The metronome thing to me is the most important thing you can do when you are practicing to de-

velop your technique. You can't slow your playing down without a metronome because we naturally want to play things up to speed right away. You need that thing to hold you back and to teach you timing and how to play in time. If you're patient enough with it then you'll get the strength.

Do you also teach?

I did for a while. I was pretty much a full time parent all last year. The year before that I was teaching quite a bit over at Fiddler's Green. I had a lot of students that weren't interested in flatpicking, they were just interested in playing the guitar. One of my problems was that I would give people way too much information and it would freak them out. Christina is learning mandolin right now and she's had some pointers from Ben and has been watching some DVDs. She wanted to take a lesson from Billy but Billy told her that as a beginner she doesn't really need a lot of lessons as much as she needs repetition of the basic concepts.

To get the muscle memory going.

Right and you need someone to point out where you can find those things but it takes repetition

You play guitar, bass, fiddle, mandolin, what else? Anything you set your mind to?

Yea right. Unfortunately I have sort of given up on the fiddle for a while. I sort of always get to the same spot where I'll start branching out and start trying to do something else or learn a different instrument, then my guitar playing starts to suffer so I go back and refocus on that. I really did enjoy the fiddle though and I want to get back into it. It is so cool to play the fiddle after playing the guitar forever. There is no sustain on the guitar. You have to keep playing with the flatpicking thing. There is a lot of space and phrasing that is very important but it's a lot of staccato picking. I just love how the fiddle has that one long bow or one double stop that gives great sustain.

Long notes. It's one of the great reasons for having a dobro or a fiddle in the band. They can give you those long notes as opposed to what the banjo and mandolin give you. Wow. This has been fun talking with you Geoff. Remind me. When is the CD Release Party?

The release party is September 19th at the Cactus. Hem and Haw is going to open for us. They'll do a short set and then we'll get going. We'll try to keep it an early night for everyone since it's a week night. We'll have fiddle and banjo for this gig and will have a five piece band

Who's playing banjo?

Matt Downing.

Awesome. And Fiddle?

Chojo just told me that he's going to be gone so I'm going to see if I can pull Mike Montgomery out of the Astro-physics lab.

Both are excellent fiddlers. That's a nice choice to have. You've got a web site that folks can go to at www.geoffunion.com You're CDs are all there I assume and are you also on CD Baby?

Yep and on iTunes now too.

Is "Cold as Steel" is on there already?

Yes.

So...what will be next?

Billy and I have been doing a trio with Steven Crow. In that group we do a lot of Billy's original stuff too. There are instrumentals as well as singing songs that are really cool. So, we're doing some different things.

Billy is world class man. I'm really glad to see that you guys have hooked up with Steven. He's a great guy and fantastic musician.

And he can sing a great baritone or tenor part. So yes, he's a really easy guy to get along with.

Bluegrass Outfit is another iteration of things you are doing. The band seems to show up out of nowhere and put on incredible performances.

It is what it is and I'm not sure what it is (laughter). It's a bunch of guys from different bands that get together and play standards at different places.

Thanks Geoff.

Thank you.

Geoff Union, "Cold as Steel" CD Release Party, September 19th at the Cactus Café on the UT Campus. Doors open at 8:00PM, tickets are \$10. Hem & Haw open at 8:30PM. Check it out. "Cold as Steel".

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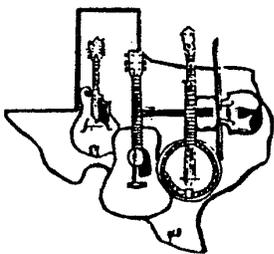
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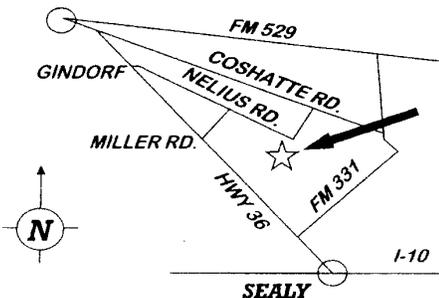
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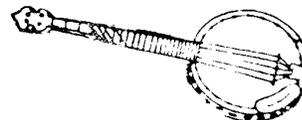
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Bay Area Bluegrass Association

BABA

Listing of Newsletter “Artist Profiles”, “Meet A Member”, & “Scholarship Recipients”

2010

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

Meet a Member

Thomas Chapmond

Stacy Holt

Barbara & David Brown

Eddie & Pat Zihlman

Ray Cargo

Al James

Tracy Sloan

Rixi Rosenberg

Artist Profile

Danny Barnes

Dan Huckabee

The Carper Family

The Lost Pines

Jeff Robertson

Gerald Jones

Chasing Blue

Jim Hurst

The Upham Family

Chris Hirsch

2011

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

Keith Davis

Gloria Brashaw

Jeff White

Bruce Mansbridge & Elaine Kant

Jerry & Carol Rabun

Doug & Sheryl Sultenfuss

Bryce Koslan

Chuck Middleton

Alan Corlew

Tom Duplissey

Jay Blincoe

The Schuttger Family

David Hamburger

Billy Bright

MilkDrive

Sierra Hull

Tom Ellis

Dennis McDaniel

Rolf & Beate Sieker

Doc Hamilton

Steve Smith

Phil Elliott

James Shelton

Eddie Collins

2012

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

Mike Moore

Duane Calvin

Bob Bourgeois

Mike Stroup

Coleman Stephens

George Rios

Mary Conn

Jim Shaffer

Stephen Mangold

The Lost Pines

Piney Grove Ramblers

Karen Abrahams

Christy & The Plowboys

Earl Scruggs Memorial

In Memory of Doug Dillard

Elliott & Janice Rogers

Austin Steamers

Geoff Union

Scholarship Recipients 2004 - Finn Lynch, **2005** - Christopher Quinters, **2006** - Amy Bell, **2007** - Riley Mathews, Jill Corley, Tyler Colley and Erika Richardson, **2009** - Bethany Rankin and Brett Hawthorne, **2010** - Adam Greer, John Peyton “JP” Shafer, and Devin Paynkewicz, **2011** - Josh, Aaron and Micah Upham & Susannah Armstrong, **2012** - Mandy Greer, Sam Armstrong

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512

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(512) 557-2939

Air Cargo

Ray Cargo
raybo@raylcargo.com

Alan Munde Gazette

Bill Honker
(214) 693-1620
bhonker@gmail.com

Allen Hurt & The Mountain Showmen

Allen Hurt (Sherman, TX)
(469) 236-4190
www.allenhurt.com

Austin Steamers

Joe Sundell
(501)416-4640
www.theaustinsteamers.com

Bee Creek Boys

Jim Umbarger
(512) 922-5786
info@beecreekboys.com

Better Late Than Never

Duane Calvin
(512) 835-0342

Blacktop Bend

George Rios
(512) 619-8536
blacktopbend@yahoo.com

Blue Creek String Band

Thomas Chapmond
tchapmond@gmail.com
(512) 791-3411

Blue Skyz Band

Mike Lester
(210) 913-9597
www.blueskyzband.com

Bluebonnet Pickers

Brooks Blake
(830) 798-1087

BuffaloGrass

Don Inbody
(512) 295-6977
don@inbody.net

Carper Family Band

Jenn Miori
carperfamilyband@gmail.com

Chasing Blue

(512) 963-7515
suzoleson@aol.com

Christy & the Plowboys

Christy Foster
(512) 452-6071
christyfoster@earthlink.net

David & Barbara Brown

361-985-9902 (Corpus Christi)
ddbrown@grandecom.net

Dueling Hearts

Wil Wilson
duelinghearts@att.net

Eddie Collins

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Flatlander Folk

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hemandhawmusic@gmail.com

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gunion@austin.rr.com

Randy's Rangers

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www.jrfnet.net/rr
sigi@sigi.us

Robertson County Line

Jeff Robertson
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jaydubya7@yahoo.com

Rod Moag and Texas Grass

Rod Moag
(512) 467-6825
rodmoag@texas.net

The Sieker Band

Rolf & Beate Sieker
(512) 733-2857
www.siekerband.com

Shawn Spiars

(512) 627-3921
www.banjohangout.org/my/sspiars
sspiars@gmail.com

String Beans

Mike Montgomery
mikemon@astro.as.utexas.edu

Joe Sundell & the Show & Tellers

Rebecca Patek
262-617-4152
ww.joesundellandtheshowandtellers.com/

Third Rail

Susannah Armstrong
936 870 7819
Thirddrailbluegrass@gmail.com

Steelhead String Band

Sharon Sandomirsky
ssandomirsky@austin.rr.com
(512) 619-8705

Upham Family Band

Tracie Upham
uphambluegrass@gmail.com

The Wimberley Bunch

Marilyn Lumia
(512) 557-2112
gus@vownet.net

Wires and Wood

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(210) 680-1889
daviddyer@sattx.rr.com

Woodstreet Bloodhounds

Robert Becker (Oak Park, IL)
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Field Creek is between Llano and Brady on Hwy 71, Info call Bill Tuckness 325 247 3223

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Contact: Rick Kirkland (President) (281) 488-2244

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5:30 PM The Badu House
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7:00 PM First Presbyterian Church
Contact: Jeff White (325) 248-4114

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Contact: Dave (512) 680-4433

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first Baptist Church - Medina, Tx, Call Linda Barton for info, 830 589 2486

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Contact: Ronald Medart (254) 865-6013 www.pearlbluegrass.com

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Danny Ray's Music, 12 Chisholm Trail, RR, Third Saturday 2:00 PM

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1st, 3rd, usually 5th Tuesday. 6:30 - 8:30, Grady's BBQ on Nakoma @ 281.
Contact: Sheryl - ssultenfuss(at)gmail.com

SHULENBURG

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Contact: Loretta Baumgarten (979) 743-4388 Camp@SchulenburgRVPark.com

WIMBERLEY

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Contact: Mike Bond



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Our members range from listeners and lovers of bluegrass music to world-class professional musicians who all have the same desire: to promote the music.

CTBA provides a link between clubs, restaurants, and other venues and Central Texas Bluegrass musicians.

CTBA sponsors jams, workshops, provides scholarships to needy musicians, donates to other non-profit organizations, supports radio stations that promote bluegrass music & musicians, and provide festival venues for our listeners and fans of bluegrass music to enjoy. KEEP ON PICKIN'

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Central Texas Bluegrass Association

P.O. Box 9816
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ctba@centraltexasbluegrass.org

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