



Central Texas Bluegrass Association

Bluegrass Bulletin

Serving the Central Texas bluegrass community since 1978

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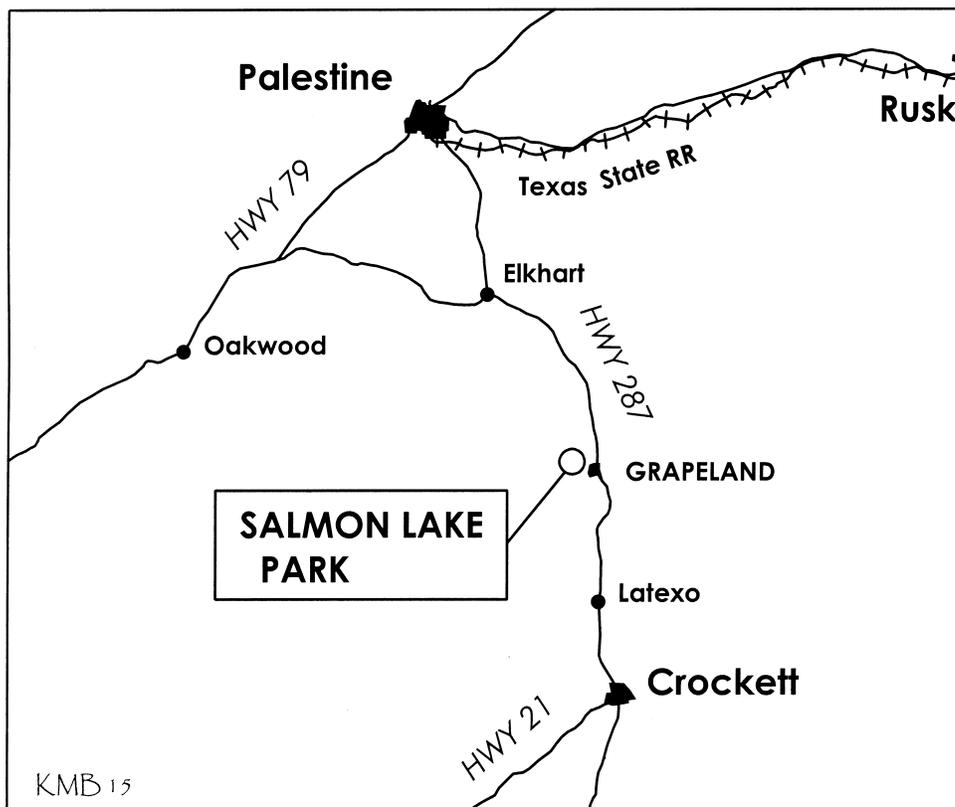
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August 2016

40th Annual Labor Day Festival at Salmon Lake Lake!

Hard to believe, but it's only four weeks until the big Labor Day festival at Salmon Lake Park in **Grapeland** (September 1-4). This piney woods festival draws pickers from Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Austin, and has generally been one of the best jamming festivals in Texas. There are a couple of air-conditioned buildings that are open for jamming during the day, and if you're lucky enough to score one of the many rental cabins scattered around the





Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys at Armadillo World Headquarters, Austin, March 24, 1978. Photo by K. Brown.

August birthdays: Barry Bales, Alan Bibey, Audie Blaylock, Alison Brown, John Cowan, J. D. Crowe, Ben Eldridge, Ed Ferris, Aubrey Holt, Jerry Holt, Kenny Ingram, Jimmy Martin, Steve Martin, Corey Piatt, Marc Pruett, Ola Belle Reed, Benny Sims, Herschel Sizemore, Carter Stanley, Beth Stevens, Jeff White, Jeanette Williams.

CTBA board meeting: Sunday, August 14, 3 PM at Hill's Café (board meetings are open to all CTBA members).

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park, or know somebody who has rented one, you can jam just about any time. At night, you'll find pickers jamming at the blacksmith shop, under the pavilion at the vendors' area, or scattered along the porches in the center of the ghost town.

Salmon Lake Park covers about 50 acres and is partly wooded and partly open pasture. There are about 450 RV hookups (30 and 50 amp) and the larger rigs are arrayed in the open sections, but there are some shaded spaces in wooded areas, for tent camping and smaller RVs or popup trailers that can negotiate the scattered trees. There is always a large contingent of RV campers here on the Labor Day weekend. The centerpiece of the park is the large, springfed lake east of the stage area, with a diving platform at the dam and picnic pavilions on both sides. There are 21 rental cabins scattered on both side of the lake, although these are usually reserved long before the festival starts. On the hill overlooking the stage is a large, concrete-floored pavilion for record tables and other festival vendors, and food trailers are parked along the road east of the pavilion. In a building (the "Saloon") overlooking the lake, a temporary Mexican restaurant is set up for each festival. Next door is a small building where ice cream, ice, and other supplies can be purchased.

The stage area is in the creek bottom, and the creek, fed by drainage from the lake, actually runs under the stage. The audience area is completely shaded by towering sweetgum trees, and the sound engineer's booth is perched up in some of these trees facing the stage. The grounds are East Texas sand that dries quickly if there's a rain shower.

This year's lineup features some familiar acts that have often appeared here or at Coushatta Ranch: **The Little Roy and Lizzie Show**, the **Farm Hands**, the **Marksmen**, and **Goldwing Express**. There are also some bands from the Houston area: the **Sabine River Bend Band**, **Southern Style**, and the **Mike Stroup Trio**, and the **Lonestar Bluegrass Band**.

Lori King and Junction 63 are from the Iowa-Missouri region. Lori (upright bass, Joe King (guitar), Kevin Amburgey (mando), Mark Hargrove (banjo) constitute the band with Chuck Millar (fiddle) guesting on occasion.

Also on the bill is **Catahoula Drive**, from Louisiana, one of my favorite hard-driving traditional bluegrass bands. Don't miss these guys!

And finally, one of our own CTBA member bands, Randy Collier's **Texas Honeybees** will also take the stage.



These porches are often filled with pickers after dark at Salmon Lake. Photo by K. Brown.



The 2016 CTBA scholarship winners. Left to right: Jamie Stubblefield, CTBA president; Logan Pausewang, Mikaela Pausewang, Derek Pausewang; Leslie Collier, scholarship chair.

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Hydrate Your Instruments!

Last month, a reader pointed out the importance of pickers hydrating themselves at festivals. Well, that applies to instruments, too. It's that time of year when we've had a persistent high-pressure cell over Texas forever, and that means potentially low humidity (even if it doesn't feel like it). Air conditioners extract moisture from the air. Guitars, mandos, and fiddles need to be hydrated (banjos and dobros, not so much). Keep a moist hydrator in your case. I don't recommend leaving your instrument out on a stand this time of year. I keep mine in the case, with the case cover zipped up. I dunno how you hydrate an upright bass. A garden hose, maybe? It's hard to be a crack instrumentalist with a cracked instrument.

Jerry Douglas Band Tours Texas

The Jerry Douglas Band is touring Texas. It's not bluegrass, but hey, it's Jerry!

Thursday, **August 11**, 9:30 PM, McGonigal's Mucky Duck, 2425 Norfolk St., Houston 77098; \$20 advance, \$22 at door; (713) 528-9999.

Friday, **August 12**, Kessler Theater, 1230 West Davis St., Dallas 75208; doors open 7 PM, show 8 PM; tickets \$24-36; (214) 272-8346.

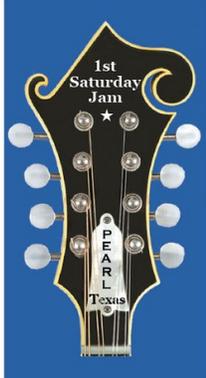
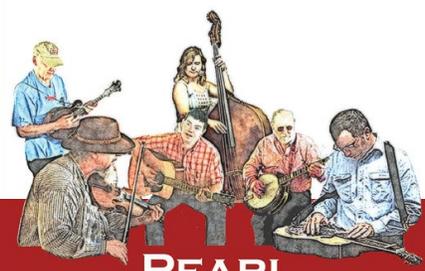
Saturday, **August 13**, Cactus Café, UT campus, **Austin**; doors open 8 PM, show 8:30 PM; \$30 or \$35 at the door; (512) 475-6515.



Faculty concert at 2016 Camp Bluegrass in Levelland. L to R: Nate Lee (fiddle), Anne Luna (bass, hidden), Alan Munde (banjo), Ivan Rosenberg (dobro), Steve Smith (mando), Tim May (guitar). Photo by K. Brown.



The enraptured crowd at Threadgill's North listens to the 2016 band scramble. Yes, we're packin' 'em' in, just like we do every Fourth of July weekend. Venue owners, shouldn't you be thinking about booking some bluegrass at your eatery? Photo by K. Brown.

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The miniature train at Salmon Lake Park, Grapeland. Photo by K. Brown.

Them Name-Droppers (with apologies to Hickory Hill)

Them name-droppers, ain't they sweet,
Droppin' them big names all over the street.
Ol' Bill and Jimmy and Reno and Smiley,
Regarded all these guys so very highly.

Baker and Graves, on a first-name basis,
Buying 'em bourbon and gin by the cases.
Hangin' out on the bus, talkin' about diesels,
I hate 'em all, them ingratiating weasels!

Tellin' they stories about road trips with Bill,
How they pushed his bus up to the top of the hill.
Showed him that Molly and Ninebrooks ought to be Ten,
Taught him the chords to Pig in a Pen.

Them name-droppers, ain't they a wonder?
Always coming 'round, stealin' your thunder.
What would they do if they ever had to pick?
Make a pig in a pen start to feel sick.

2016 Band Scramble and Garage Sale

This year's CTBA band scramble is now safely inscribed in the history books. This year, we had a very orderly and symmetrical 36 pickers in six bands, exactly half a dozen per band, and remarkably, all of them played actual bluegrass instruments. There were no spoons, harpsichords, sousaphones, or bazookas. I do think the band names could have used a little work, though — none of the names mentioned *cabins*, and only one was *lonesome*. Thanks to all the CTBA folks whose hard work made this event possible, including Duane Calvin and Lenny Nichols, who sold merchandise; Eddie Collins, who served as emcee; and Leslie Collier, who served as signup supervisor.

The proceedings started with a short set from **Southern Anthem**, the family band from Goldthwaite that will be sending three students to Gerald Jones's Acoustic Music Camp in Arlington, courtesy of the CTBA scholarship committee. Mikaela Pausewang (15) plays bass in the band, but will study vocals in Arlington. Derek (16) will study guitar and Logan (10), fiddle. All three kids are already accomplished musicians, so we know they'll make good use of their time there.

The garage sale is our major fundraiser during the year, and this year we raised about \$730 after expenses. That was down some from last year's all-time high, simply because we didn't have as many donated instruments, but the tip jar was generous to us. We recorded one band, one business, and one family membership each, along with five individual memberships.

Check the following pages for a rogues' gallery of scrambled pickers.



2016 Rogues' Gallery



Band 1: *Lonesome Mountain Scramblers*. L to R: Logan Pausewang (fiddle), Randy Collier (guitar), Gloria Brayshaw (bass), Ed Seykota (banjo), Jon Lundbom (banjo), Randy Frazier (mando).



Band 2: *Peck o' Pickers*. L to R: Rachel Hutton (fiddle), Alex Adinolfi (guitar), Kitty Ledbetter (bass), Tim Towell (mando), Chuck Middleton (banjo), Tom Duplissey (guitar).



Band 3: *Pine Needle Noodlers*. L to R: Russell Holly-Hurt (fiddle), John Jacob (dobro), Ben Buchanan (guitar), Jerry Rabun (banjo), Erin McNeeley (mando), Cara Cooke (bass and harmonica).



Band 4: *The Old Number 4*. L to R: Sheryl Sultenfuss (fiddle), Flash (dobro), Richard Sommers (mando), Shawn Spiars (banjo), Bob Vestal (guitar), Doug Sultenfuss (bass)



Band 5: *Kids in the Hall*. L to R: Elise Bright (fiddle), Dan Rupp (dobro), Alice Moore (mando), Matt Shaw (bass), Sam Dunn (banjo), Derek Pausewang (guitar).



Band 6: *The Wayne Train*. L to R: Allan Moore (fiddle), Jay Littleton (guitar), Jim Shaffer (fiddle), Mikaela Pausewang (acoustic bass guitar), Wayne Brooks (guitar), Wayne Ross (banjo).



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Aug 6th Pearl Bluegrass 1st Sat Jam & Stage Show

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Gerald Jones



Hailey Sandoz



Alan Tompkins



Michael Morrison

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PearlBluegrass.com or facebook.com/pearlbluegrass

Old Settler's Association Sponsors a Day of Bluegrass at Round Rock, July 9

On October 15-16, 1988, the very first **Old Settlers Bluegrass Festival** took place in the meeting hall at Old Settlers Park in Round Rock (*Central Texas Bluegrass Bulletin*, Oct.-Nov. 88 issue), sponsored by the Old Settlers Association, City of Round Rock and the Chamber of Commerce. CTBA members (especially Dennis McDaniel and Jeanne DeFriese) were heavily involved from the beginning. In subsequent years, it grew and moved outdoors to a different part of the park, then the Old Settlers name became attached to the unrelated megafestival now held at Driftwood. Last year, the Round Rock version was resurrected, and this year a show featuring **Tradition** (Marty Roberts, Raymie Moore, Dennis McDaniel, and Wade Hawkins), the **Brushy Mountain Bluegrass Boys**, **Robertson County Line** and the **Sieker Band** as well as the **Lake Travis Fiddlers** took place in that same hall (photos on the following pages). There was a good turnout, and although jamming was mostly limited to the lobby, there was also a late-night jam at the old Rice's Crossing store on the grounds of the park.



Tradition (L to R): Dennis McDaniel, Raymie Moore, Marty Roberts, Wade Hawkins. Photo K. Brown.



Brushy Mountain Bluegrass Boys (L to R): Adam Roberts, Dom Fisher, Matt Downing, Walt Roberts, Jacob Roberts at Round Rock. Photo by K. Brown.



Robertson County Line at Round Rock. Photo by K. Brown.



The Sieker Band at Round Rock. Photo by K. Brown.

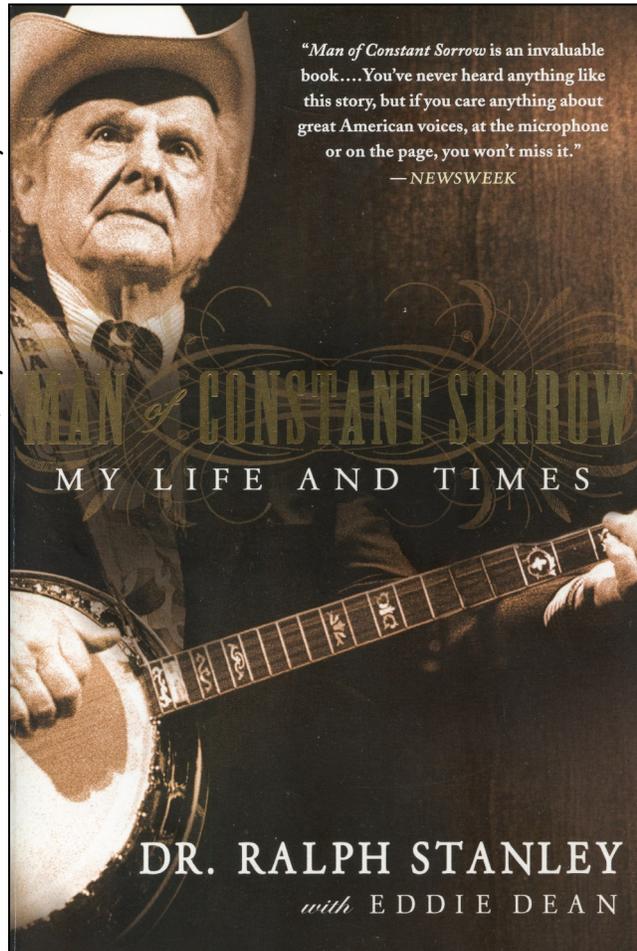
Book Review: Ralph Stanley and Eddie Dean, *Man of Constant Sorrow*. My Life and Times (2009, Gotham Books).

Reviewed by K. Brown

I've read several book-length biographies of bluegrass notables (including Howdy Forrester, Tony Rice, J. D. Crowe, the Stanley Brothers, Bill Monroe, Bob Black, Butch Robins, and Josh Graves, as well as *Pretty Good for a Girl*, Murphy Henry's massive history of women in bluegrass). Nearly all of these follow the same format: the biographer trails the performer for several years, tape recorder in hand, meeting up at festivals or between tours, conducts multiple interviews, supplements the oral history with some digging into personal or public archives, and then writes up the history. In some cases there are testimonials from former band members, who recount their years touring with the performer. The most extreme example is Murphy Henry's encyclopedic treatment, which took ten years to write and encompasses over five dozen musicians.

This book is different. It's in Ralph's own (vernacular) voice. It's Ralph telling his own story, and he has a remarkable memory for events, anecdotes, and personalities in these 452 pages. There are hints that he may have compiled it by taking a recording device with him on the road and recording his thoughts during down time. Unfortunately, we may never know because there is no account anywhere of exactly how this book was compiled. What role did Ralph's collaborator, Eddie Dean, play in assembling this biography? The acknowledgments section is terse, and we aren't told, although apparently some library research was involved. This isn't the only thing missing — there is also no index, and there are no photographs.

In any case, this is Ralph speaking. It's conversational in nature, what you might hear if you were sitting on Ralph's front porch. Near the outset, he makes the puzzling statement, "I know correct and proper English just fine, but I don't use it because that's not the way I was raised" and adds, "so I'm gonna give you my story like I was talking to you across the table." It's the story of nearly his entire life, from birth until just before the book was published in 2009; only the last seven years of his life are not covered. There are 27 chapters, beginning with his childhood, learning to sing in the Primitive Baptist Church, playing for local barn dances and running through the career-changing experience of contributing to *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Ralph learned to play banjo from his mother, Lucy, one of twelve children, all of them banjo



pickers. Ralph and Carter grew up in the extreme isolation of Smith Ridge in Dickenson County, Virginia, where the only people you might see for days were immediate family members. His father's desertion in 1939 probably heightened the isolation. As a result, Ralph grew up taciturn and withdrawn. Carter was the extrovert, Ralph the introvert. Carter was the lead singer, the emcee, the publicist, the songwriter, the booking agent; Ralph sang harmony, played banjo, and kept in the background. That all changed with Carter's death in 1966, the inevitable result of an alcohol addiction. I never got to see the Stanley Brothers, because I only became aware of bluegrass and started listening to it the same year that Carter died. But back then, songs by the Stanley Brothers furnished most of the repertoire for jam sessions and picking parties here in Central Texas. Radio was where the Stanleys learned about performance and repertoire; they listened to WHIS (Bluefield, West Virginia), WSM (Nashville), and XERA (Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila), and as it happens, XERA is where I first heard the Carter Family, the Stanley Brothers, and various bluegrass bands myself, a couple of decades later. Late at night was when you could listen to Paul Kallinger and Uncle Jim O'Neal (who sold me my first bluegrass records).

The stories behind many of the Stanley Brothers classics represent one of the most interesting aspects of this book. *White Dove* was written by Carter in 1948, in a car on the way from Asheville to Bristol. Ralph was annoyed at Carter because he kept the dome light on to write it down (page 138). The Stanleys heard *Angel Band* on the car radio, called the radio station and found out it was being done by the Webster Brothers, who got it from an old hymn book (p. 182). Likewise, *Rank Stranger* was learned from the Willow Branch Quartet while driving to a show (p. 384). *I've Just Seen the Rock of Ages* was written by John Preston, a prisoner in the East Kentucky Correctional Complex. Locked in solitary, he had no pen or paper and scratched the words on the concrete floor with a rock (pp. 382-383). *How Far to Little Rock* was learned from Kentucky carpenter Fletcher Moss, elaborated over the years, and became the brothers' only hit record in 1960 (p. 210). In 1951, with Pee Wee Lambert driving, the band was involved in a bad car accident; the other party sued over their injuries, and subsequently Carter and Ralph used their half sister Ruby Rakes as the copyright holder, to keep the royalties from being attached. This is why Ruby Rakes is listed as the author on some of the classic Stanley compositions (p. 155). When the Stanleys learned a Flatt and Scruggs number (*Mother's Only Sleeping*) around 1948 and began performing it, the result was a major feud between Lester Flatt and Carter Stanley. Ralph believes this was what sparked Carter to become a powerhouse songwriter (pp.135-137).

The Stanleys' first recording was in 1947 for Hobe Stanton of Rich-R'-Tone Records in Tennessee. Carter was so excited about this first recording that he grabbed the acetate master and played it at home, degrading the audio quality. Stanton was so irate that he didn't release it for years, and Ralph says that you can still hear the background hiss on the contemporary CD release (p. 109). *Man of Constant Sorrow* is full of stories like this.

We are fortunate to have a first-person windshield view of practically the entire history of bluegrass like this. We have nothing comparable by Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Lester Flatt, Don Reno, or Red Smiley. None of these early pioneers ever thought of recording their own biographies, apparently. The only other first-person account I can think of is *What I Know 'Bout What I Know*, by Butch Robins. Read this book. It'll put you in the front seat of Ralph's black 1936 Chevy sedan, driving a two-lane mountain road to a gig.



The festival grounds at Salmon Lake Park. The stage area is out of view to the left, and the lake is to the right. Photo by K. Brown.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Why do you keep doing the newsletter? Nobody reads it anyway.

Agnes Curbfeeler
Catwater, Texas

Editor: That's a good question. I've wondered the same thing myownself.

Dear Editor,

Why don't you just resign? The newsletter was a lot better back when John Hood, Roy Glover, or Bob Vestal was doing it.

Onslow Curbfeeler
Zeekamuskeetas, Texas

Editor: You have a valid point. But I just hate to give up my press pass to the greased pig contest at the Van Zandt County Fair. I just know that some day, some member of the Curbfeeler clan is going to catch that pig, and I want to be there when it happens.



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molly@integratedmotion-studio.com

Robertson County Line

Jeff Robertson (512) 629-5742
jaydubya7@yahoo.com

Rusty Razors

Patrick Davis (512) 802-7438
https://rustyrazors.bandcamp.com

Shawn Spiars

(512) 627-3921
sspiars@gmail.com

The Sieker Band

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

The Stray Bullets

Bob Cartwright (512) 415-8080
bob.cartwright@sbcglobal.net

String Beans

Mike Montgomery
mikemon@astro.asutexas.edu

Texas Honeybees

Leslie Collier (512) 328-0144
lesliecollier1@yahoo.com

Woodstreet Bloodhounds

(Oak Park, Illinois)
Robert Becker (708) 714-7206
robertbecker1755@sbcglobal.net

West of Waterloo

Jamie Stubblefield
jamie5011@aol.com

Max Zimmet

www.maxzimmethotpickinbluegrass.com
(512) 924-0505

CTBA Area Jams and Events

AUSTIN AREA

Every Sunday, 3 PM-??, CTBA Sunday jam at Hill's Café, 4700 S. Congress; (512) 851-9300.

2nd and 4th Saturday, 3-5 PM, beg./int. jam at Wildflower Terrace, 3801 Berkman Drive; Steve Mangold (512) 345-6155.

1st and 3rd Thursday, 7-9 PM, beg./int. jam, Northwest Hills area; Steve Mangold (512) 345-6155.

Every Thursday, 6-9 PM, beg./int. jam, Texican Café, 11940 Manchaca Road; Dave Stritzinger, (512) 689-4433.

2nd Thursday, bluegrass jam at Texas Barber Services, 2301 E. Riverside Dr, #400A; Kurt Phillips (512) 330-4895.

Every Tuesday, 8-10 PM, Texas Old Time Fiddling, Scholz Garten, 1607 San Jacinto; (512) 474-1958.

BANDERA

4th Friday of each month except Good Friday, November, and December at Silver Sage Corral – east of Bandera. Starts at 6 PM. For more info call (830) 796-4969 silversagecorral.org

BELLVILLE

Texas Bluegrass Music jam/show Jan. through September, **4th Sat**, 4pm jam, 6:30 pm show. Coushatta Recreation Ranch, 2812 Nelius Rd. (936) 697-5949 coleebiller@aol.net
www.TXBluegrassMusic.com
Plenty of RV camping, restrooms, showers.

BLANCO

First Saturday, 2-5 PM at Buggy Barn Museum, 1915 Hwy 281 N; contact Deanna Dosser, (830) 554-0006

CUERO

First and 3rd Thursday, 5-8 PM, acoustic jam at The Emporium, 417 E. Newman St.; Darrell Ferguson (256) 714-0766

DRIPPING SPRINGS

Last Saturday of each month, 3 PM, jam at Hudsons on Mercer St.; contact Cliff at (701) 770-8962 or telecliff@hotmail.com

FAYETTEVILLE:

Texas Pickin' Park: Jam **2nd Saturday**, Apr.-Nov. beginning at 6 PM on the courthouse square. Acoustic instruments only. For info: info@texaspickinpark.com
www.texaspickinpark.com

GARLAND

Bluegrass on the Square: **Every Saturday**, March- November between Main and State Sts. At 6th, 7:30 PM to 1 AM

GLEN ROSE

3rd Saturday, Oakdale Park, Paluxy River Bluegrass Association, free stage show and jam; potluck and jam Friday night before. Jim Chapman (469) 231-6616.
<http://www.paluxybluegrass.com>

HOUSTON

1st Tuesday, Fuddruckers, 2040 NASA Rd 1
(281) 333-1598

JOHNSON CITY

3rd Saturday except in December, 2-6 PM, jam at The Dome, 706 W. Main St., Hwy 290 W; Charlene Crump, (512) 632-5999.

LEAGUE CITY (BABA)

3rd Saturday: Jam 5 PM, Stage show 6:30 PM Jan- Nov., League City Civic Center, 300 W. Walker St. (281) 636-9419. Sponsored by Bay Area Bluegrass Association.

LIBERTY HILL

4th Saturday, 4-9 PM, jam at the Stocktank, 8950 Ranch Road 1869, Liberty Hill; (512) 778-6878.

LILLIAN

2nd Saturday, 4 PM jam, 7 PM show, First Baptist Church, \$4; contact Dale Brawner (972) 935-4525.

LLANO

2nd Monday, 7 PM, jam at Fuel Coffee House, 106 East Main St.; (325) 247-5272; www.fuelcoffeehouse.org

MEDINA

2nd Tuesday, all gospel jam, 6 PM at First Baptist Church; contact Linda Barton (830) 589-2486.
2nd Friday, jam at 6 PM, Masonic Lodge; contact Maude Arnold (830) 796-8422.

PEARL

1st Saturday: Jam all day/night, stage show, 12:15 PM-6:15 PM; food and RV hookups available. Pearl Community Center, on FM 183, 7 mi. south of Purlmela; contact info@pearlbluegrass.com. Check web site for show schedule: www.pearlbluegrass.com

ROUND ROCK

3rd Saturday, 2-5 PM except November and December, jam at Danny Ray's Music, 12 Chisholm Trail; (512) 671-8663.
www.dannyraymusic.com

SAN ANTONIO

Every Monday, 6:30-8:30 PM, at The Barbecue Station, 1610 NE Loop 410 at Harry Wurzbach exit; (210) 824-9191.

SCHULENBERG

1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6 PM, jam at Schulenberg RV Park Community Center, 65 N. Kessler Ave. Laretta Baumgarten (979) 743-4388; camp@schulenbergrvpark.com

TOMBALL

4th Saturday, 4 PM, bluegrass jam at Kleb Woods Nature Center and Preserve, 20303 Draper Road, Tomball. (281) 373-1777 or (281) 910-4396.

Curbfeeler's Sundries.

Emu jerky, live crawdads, bear traps, jawbreakers, milled flooring, cane fishing poles, pickled eggs, overalls, shotgun shells, sorghum molasses, lottery tickets, barbed wire, cattle guards, beans, kerosene, outboard motor oil, inboard motor oil, harness and tack of all kinds, peacans, chilipetins, japa-leeno candy, gingham curtains, lag bolts, carriage bolts, gravel by the cubic yard, weed eater line, surfcasting weights, flaxseed poltices.

Rufus Curbfeeler, Prop.
Catwater, Texas

Membership and Advertising Rates

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ATTN: Treasurer
 Central Texas Bluegrass Association
 Box 9816
 Austin, Texas 78766-9816

Merchandise

Compilation CD of member bands, vol 2	\$10
CTBA logo T-shirt (black, white, orange)	\$15
Earl Scruggs design T-shirt	\$20
Mona Lisa design T-shirt	\$20

THE 40TH LABOR DAY
BLUEGRASS
MUSIC FESTIVAL
AT SALMON LAKE
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THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
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