



Candidates for the 2024 Board of Directors Election

New Candidates:

Zack Valenza – I started playing bluegrass about 4 years ago when I moved to Reno and have been playing a lot with the NNBA in the past year. I volunteer for any event possible and attend all the local jams regularly. I have some previous experience as the vice president and president of the “Jam Club” at the University at Buffalo. Here I was responsible for managing the club’s events, setting up weekly jams and promoting local bands with the members of the club. I really think that I could help to grow this organization with some younger members, and contribute to a lot of the events. I have played guitar for 12 years in a few different bands as well as the mandolin for about a year.

Current Board Members running for re-election

Randy Wilson – Current President I've been a bluegrass fan and player since 1974. I play fiddle, mandolin, guitar and sing, and can fill in on bass. I first became an NNBA member in 1997, and except for a hiatus from 2007 to 2015 (when I was living out of the area), have been active playing with the NNBA Monday Night Volunteers that whole time. I have a BA degree in Communications with an emphasis on broadcast journalism. During my 27-year career with the FAA, I spent over 13 years in staff and management, and have extensive experience managing and preparing legal documents. I deeply believe the NNBA adds value to the community, and I want to help the NNBA thrive and grow.

Raymond Ritch – Current Vice President Lifelong interest and vocation in music, Involvement in the Bowers festival for many years. Photographer, Public relations, Technology, Websites, Newsletters

Craig Bailey – Current Treasurer I joined the NNBA in 2015 and started participating in the Wednesday night jams. Since I joined, I have met so many nice people, increased my bass playing skills, and even ended up playing in a band. I took over the Treasurer’s position on the Board in September. I’d like to serve another term on the board as it’s a great way to give back to an organization that has given me so much pleasure.

Cindy Gray – Current Secretary I've been involved in Bluegrass music for over 20 years, as a jammer, performer, instructor, and organizer. I served on the NNBA Board in 2003-2005, and returned to it in 2023, once I retired from school teaching. I was the Director a 501c3 organization that produced over 20 Bluegrass festivals and dozens of classes and workshops for 13 years. I taught Beginning Level in all Bluegrass Instruments at the Steve Kaufman Acoustic Camp in Maryville, TN. for 6 years. I really enjoy being a part of our “Bluegrass Community” and doing what I can to see it grow and prosper.

Tim Miller – Current Outreach I have always enjoyed playing the guitar since I was a kid. I moved back home to Reno/Sparks about 8 years ago and my dad invited me to join him in watching the Monday Night Volunteers play at his senior living place. I thoroughly enjoyed the music and researched NNBA where they all are members. I saw it as a great opportunity for me to be able to jam with folks and improve my pickin' skills. I joined NNBA 7 years ago and have appreciated the open/welcome arms of the group and its Wednesday night jams. I want to give back and it would be a pleasure to be voted as a board member for NNBA. Without the NNBA I don't think I would have been able to take the Mandolin my wife got me for Christmas several years ago and be playing as well as I do today.

Neil Linden – Current Activities I am running to retain my position on the board of the NNBA. I have lived in Reno for over 10 years and I was a public-school teacher for 15 years before moving and retiring here where I have been a member of the NNBA ever since. I play banjo and guitar, playing and teaching bluegrass music as well as playing and touring at bluegrass festivals and other events for over 60 years. I toured with Frank Wakefield and The Greenbriar Boys in the late 60’s, and performed with Peter Rowan, Maria Muldaur and Bela Fleck. Locally, I have been a member of several bands - Unionville, Center Street, Suspect Terrane and currently Sage Creek and Coyote Crossing, performing at events and shows in Reno, Carson City, Virginia City and Genoa including the 2017, 2022 and 2023 Bowers festivals. I maintained the NNBA advanced/intermediate bluegrass jam for five years and currently work with the band selection committee for the 2024 Bowers Festival. My hope is to continue to be involved with activities of the Association, helping to increase its membership and visibility in the area.

Eric Lovejoy – Current Membership Twelve and a-half years after assuming the duties as the NNBA’s Membership Coordinator I’m still liking this job. I have gotten used to being retired and having more time to devote to the NNBA and bluegrass lifestyle. I very much enjoy the socializing that the bluegrass world has to offer and being the Membership Coordinator gives me a great opportunity to hone my schmoozing skills. And speaking of honing skills ... I am still diligently working on mastering the one-fingered resophonic slide guitar (Dobro) and loving it ... and maybe even getting better! So ... bottom line ... I would be honored to continue serving on the board of directors as the Membership Coordinator and I am asking for your votes for me to keep on keepin’ on.