

SILVER STATE STRING BUSTER



News and information from the Northern Nevada Bluegrass Association. Click [here](#) for the most current events calendar.

Member Spotlight Zeke Griffin



Mandolins, guitars, motorcycles and cats. Jamming and traveling, family and hats. These are a few of Zeke Griffin's favorite things.

In fact, he's passionately in love with all of these things, and his love and kindness spill all over you when you're around him. Everyone that has ever met him has a "Zeke story". He's quite simply irresistible and insuppressable. He WILL brighten your life!

Zeke has been a member of NNBA since the stone age (ha ha...inside joke!). He has served the organization in many ways, as a volunteer, an Instructor, an event coordinator and as a member of several awesome Bluegrass bands, including the Moonlight Hoodoo Review and Strange on the Range. The Hoodoos toured Europe and Strange on the Range played at Strawberry!

We love you, Zeke, and we are sooo grateful for all you have done for NNBA!!

EARLY BIRD FESTIVAL TICKETS NOW ON SALE!

NNBA MEMBERS SAVE UP TO \$20
ON FESTIVAL PASSES!
CLICK [HERE](#)

2023 Bowers Bluegrass Festival Thurs~Sun, Aug. 24~27

- Thurs:** Jam Camp & Bar-B-Que
- Fri:** 3 Bands, Virginia Reel, Food & Beer Trucks
- Sat:** 7 Bands, Tweeners, Workshops, Vendors, Kids' Activities, Beer & Wine Garden
- Sun:** Bluegrass Gospel Concert

NEW! FOR THE 2023 FESTIVAL

24-HOUR-A-DAY JAMMING

THURS thru SUN

at our new Camping Area,
Washoe Lake State Park
and dedicated jamming areas at the
Bowers Festival Grounds.

See Map, P7

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Cousin Jim

Guest Article

Bowers' Headliners

Cousin Jim has been providing us with expert reviews and musical recommendations for over 20 years! Let's see what he thinks about the Bowers Bluegrass Festival headliners chosen by the Band Selection Committee. He's got a dang fine ear, and he knows good Bluegrass when he hears it!

[The Po' Ramblin' Boys](#) are ramblin' out to Reno to be the headliners of NNBA's Bowers Bluegrass Festival this August. This great band is steeped in authentic Bluegrass and Old Country music. Their musical heros are Bill Monroe, The Stanley Brothers, Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard. And the "Boys" have a special place in their hearts for The Possum—George Jones.

I first saw this group in 2019 at the Father's Day Bluegrass Festival in Grass Valley, just after they won the IBMA award for Emerging Artist. The "Boys" were wonderful and wowed the Grass Valley audience with their "true grass" songs and fine pickin'.

The band started off when three friends that worked at the Ole Smoky Moonshine Distillery in Sevierville, TN. got together to do some pickin'. CJ on mando, Josh on guitar and Jereme on banjo. When hired bands didn't show up to the bar, they were asked to fill-in. Another guy that worked in the tasting room, Jasper, joined them on bass. Word spread that they were good. REAL good! But they needed a fiddle....so, when Laura showed up and "sat-in" with the guys on some sessions....well, she became a "Boy", too.



Bowers 2023 Headliners, the Po' Ramblin' Boys

I encourage you to enjoy a few videos of the Po' Ramblin' Boys on Youtube. They have an extensive number of singles and even whole shows at the Station Inn to enjoy!!

[The Carolyn Sills Combo](#) is an award winning five piece country & western swing band from Santa Cruz, Ca. Lead singer and bass player, Carolyn writes great songs and has a powerful voice. In November 2021, she was named the Academy of Western Artists' Western Swing Female of the Year!

Their sound is inspired by Marty Robbins, 60's country rock, mustashioed cowboys on the range, and even some Patsy Cline classics. Humor is ever-present in their shows.

Carolyn plays bass and sings lead on most songs, with great harmony vocals from Sunshine Jackson. Gerard Egan on guitar, Charlie Joe Wallace on a mean steel guitar and Jimmy Norris on percussion round out the Combo.

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Board News



2023 Board Members, from left: Cindy Gray (Secretary), Randy Wilson (President), Neil Linden (Activities), Tim Miller (Outreach), Sue Newberry (Treasurer). Not pictured, Eric Lovejoy (Membership),

Next Board Meeting:

- Sunday, April 23, 3pm
- Members Welcome to attend!
- Pop us an email if you'd like to get on the Agenda
 - info@nnba.org

President's Letter

Howdy Pickers and Grinnerers!

I'm glad to be writing to y'all as your newly elected President of the Northern Nevada Bluegrass Association. I look forward to working with our Board of Directors for 2023: Ray Ritch - Vice President, Cindy Gray - Secretary, Sue Newberry - Treasurer, Eric Lovejoy - Membership Coordinator, Tim Miller - Outreach Coordinator and Neil Linden - Activities Coordinator.

If you're reading this, you survived the pandemic, and I'm glad you're still around! We all lost friends and family along the way, and now we have their memories to cherish. For a moment, think of someone you lost. Now think of a song they loved. Sing that song in your head or pick up an instrument and play and sing it out loud. Memorializing our lost loved ones in song is healthy and beautiful.

After the pandemic, like the rest of the world, our NNBA family is rebuilding and reconnecting with friends and picking partners. We're venturing out to see live music again, attending jam sessions, signing up for lessons and workshops. In short, WE'RE ALIVE!

And, thankfully, we can get together with others to play and listen to Bluegrass music at many events in our community.

Hey, we have an all new website! Check it out at nnba.org! If you're an NNBA member, you can login to the Members Area and get special discounts on Bowers tickets!

Speaking of the Bowers Festival, plans are well under way, and I tell ya what, this year's festival is shaping up to be a great one! Look for more on that in this newsletter.

I'm excited about what's in store for NNBA and for Bluegrass and traditional acoustic music in our region.

And remember, this is YOUR Association -- Get involved! Volunteer to help with the Bowers Bluegrass Festival! Attend a board meeting! Participate in a workshop! Join in a jam session! Invite a friend to go see a band play live! Or just invite some friends over and pick some tunes. Bluegrass music is a wonderful thing to share.

Pickin' and grinnin' in lovely Sparks, NV,

Randy Wilson

president@nnba.org

SHUT UP AND PICK!!

Playing Bluegrass Music Ain't As Easy As Many People Think!

Becoming a proficient Bluegrass picker takes commitment, time and self-forgiveness.

Ever had the experience of practicing a lick or tune over and over in your living room, until you can do it with your eyes closed?

But then, when you get to a jam.....you can't remember a dang thing! Don't stress it, we've ALL been there. The great thing about jam sessions, is everybody understands and forgives whatever mistakes are made by others.

But sometimes we forget to forgive ourselves. Bass and mandolin player, Paula Walkins has a great approach -- "Just smile when you eff up!" she says. And it works! Because it makes everybody else smile, too!

In fact, attending jam sessions that are the right level for you is THE BEST WAY to improve your playing. We have many Bluegrass jams for all levels of players here in Reno, so come on out and pick with us!

Leveled Bluegrass Jams in Reno

For more detailed list, [click here](#)

Beginner/Intermediate Level

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month, 6:30,
1st Congregational Church, Reno

Intermediates/Advanced Level

1st Tuesday of every month, Carmelita's
Restaurant, Reno, 6pm

4th Thursday of every month, Mountain Music
Parlor, Reno, 6pm

Every Sunday, Alibi Ale House in Truckee, 6pm

Get Involved

Bluegrass Music Events Rely on Volunteers!
*Earn a free Festival Pass and have a
whole lotta fun!*

Volunteer for a Festival!

Strawberry Music Festival

May 25th - 29th

Nevada County Fairgrounds

Grass Valley, CA

[Volunteer link](#)

Father's Day Bluegrass Festival

June 15-18

Nevada County Fairgrounds

Grass Valley, CA.

[Volunteer Link](#)

Bowers Bluegrass Festival

August 25-27

Bowers Mansion Regional Park

Reno, NV.

[Volunteer Link](#)

Volunteers at our Bowers
Festival earn some
very cool percs!
Click [here](#) to learn more!

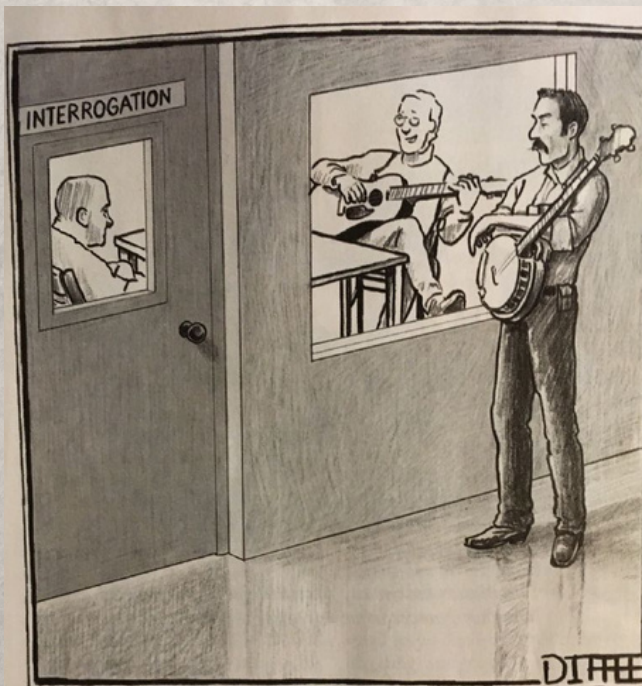


Reeling at the Festival!

Bluegrass jammers often play "Fiddle Tunes" -- lively instrumentals in which every player improvises a flashy solo. Many of these tunes are familiar to all of us -- "Turkey In The Straw" and "I'm a Little Baby Bumblebee". But did you know that these tunes are HUNDREDS of years old and have been played for people to dance to for centuries?

Many of us vaguely remember dancing to these tunes in a 3rd grade "Square Dance" activity. "Square Dance" is an Americanization of ancient social dancing, in which all dancers dance together. One of the most popular dances is the Virginia Reel. It originates from the *rinnce fadha*, a pre-Christian Irish dance that was brought to Virginia by English colonists.

The Bowers Bluegrass Festival will feature a Virginia Reel on Friday evening! Learn the steps and dance to a live band!



"Don't feel like talking? Fine. Maybe it's time you had a little chat with my partner."



Washoe Valley, nestled between Reno and Carson City, is a surprise. A rural paradise with gorgeous lake and mountain views, wild horses, sand dunes, campgrounds and hiking trails.

For 37 years, we have gathered here for our annual Bowers Bluegrass Festival.

We, like many others, love it just the way it is. And we support the Washoe Valley Alliance for its diligent stewardship of this restful valley.

Please join us to honor and celebrate Washoe Valley on Saturday, May 20, 10am to 2pm. Free event with Bluegrass music! Click [here](#) for details.

WASHOE VALLEY ALLIANCE PRESENTS
Celebrate WASHOE VALLEY
 MAY 20 / 10 AM - 2 PM
 WASHOE LAKE STATE PARK

FOOD. RAFFLE. MUSIC. FUN.
 Free admission courtesy of Washoe Lake State Park

WASHOE VALLEY ALLIANCE
 www.WashoeValleyAlliance.org

You are invited to come and learn more about these organizations in Washoe Valley.

- Washoe Lake State Park
- Northern Nevada Bluegrass Association
- South Valley Volunteer FD
- WV Dept. of Wildlife
- Bureau of Land Management
- Living With Fire
- Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
- Carson Rehabilitation Center
- Laborers' Audubon Society
- A-H
- Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful
- Washoe County Parks
- Washoe Valley Forum
- South Valley Library
- SOFS
- WV Historical Society
- Virginia Range Wildlife Protection Association
- Big Springs Press 150
- WV Land Trust
- ASAP
- NOI/Free Adapted Services
- Master Gardeners/Cooperative Extension
- College's Long Resources Dept. for Washoe Tribe
- Red Cross
- Washoe County Sheriff's Office
- Scenic Nevada

Protecting Washoe Valley's Unique Qualities through Education and Stewardship



Multiple award winning Western Swing Band, the Carolyn Sills Combo

Bowers Headliners - ctd from page 2

If you want to enjoy a few videos of the Carolyn Sills Combo, Google them up on Youtube, and enjoy: “Rotary Phone Blues”, “Feleena”, “Even Villains Once Were Babies”, “Bad For You” and many other fine songs.

[The Bow Ties](#), from San Francisco, are amazing bluegrass pickers dedicated to preserving the masters’ classics. They have performed at music festivals around California and at the Father’s Day Bluegrass Festival in Grass Valley, and were the 2018 winners of the Rocky Grass Band contest.

Band leader Yoseff Tucker (5-time recipient of CBA's Guitar Player of the Year award) is a familiar face to many of us here in Reno.

Sacramento's [One Button Suit](#) is another up-and-coming West Coast band that is making waves in the bluegrass world. Fronted by award winning contest fiddler, Melissa Lincoln, the band holds true to a string band vibe with the addition of exquisite vocals, and original compositions.



The Bow Ties will headline the Friday Show



One Button Suit appears on Saturday

2023 Bowers Bluegrass Festival

Map of Venues



**Ample parking
at all venues**

