



Bluegrass Express

a publication of the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine

Spring 2025

REMEMBERING BOB BOOTHBY

By Stan Keach

Bob Boothby, a well-loved and long-standing member of Maine's bluegrass community, passed away in early 2025 after a long illness.

Bob was one of the first bluegrass musicians Liz and I met in Maine. Soon after we moved here in 1981, he and bandmate Bruce Hobart came over to our house for a really fun four-person jam. Over the years, we were always impressed by this: every bluegrass musician and fan really liked Bob a lot. Besides being a terrific banjo picker and baritone singer, he was one of the very nicest people around — upbeat, cheerful, always seemed sincerely interested in knowing how you were doing. He was one of those guys who seemed to like everybody. He enriched the bluegrass community a lot!

My co-editor, Taylor Smith, reached out to some of the people who knew Bob best; here are the remembrances they shared with us.

-Stan Keach

REBECCA BOOTHBY-CONLEY, BOB'S DAUGHTER...

My Dad, Banjo Bob Boothby, played 3 finger style banjo in the style of Earl Scruggs and he was a master at it. He played the very first bluegrass festival in Maine in 1972, playing with the Blue Grass Ridge Runners with Stan Hallett and Bob Murray. Throughout the 1970s and 80s, He played banjo with many bands including White Mountain Bluegrass, Al Hawkes, Mac McHale & the Old-Time Radio Gang, and the Danville Junction Boys.

Growing up, I have fond memories of The Danville Junction Boys weekly practice at our home in Auburn in the 1980s. Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms, Foggy Mountain Breakdown, Flint Hill Special and Mountain Dew were some of my favorite songs that rang through the house. Ron Gallant, Bruce Hobart and John Sparrow were his pickin' buddies in the DJB and they would play, sing and laugh so hard all night, they always had a good time. Dad was the happiest when he was pickin' and singin' with his bluegrass buddies.

For six decades, Dad played almost every bluegrass festival in Maine either on stage or off, with many late-night pickin' jams. His banjo playing was the best. For the rest of my life, anytime I hear that distinct Scruggs style bluegrass banjo, I will be taken back to a place that is my home and my heart, my dad.



Pictured above - (l. to r.) Bob Boothby, Rebecca Boothby-Conley, Ron Gallant, and Bruce Hobart

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**BMAM'S 2025
BLUEGRASS
FESTIVAL GUIDE**

**FESTIVAL DETAILS FOR
MAINE AND THE NORTHEAST
SEE PAGES 4-11**

In this special issue of the Bluegrass Express, we're taking you on a tour of bluegrass festivals in Maine and beyond. So air out your tents, ice down your coolers, and get ready for festival season.

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN ROC, NEW BMAM BOARD MEMBER

By Stan Keach

John "Roc" Philibert has been playing bluegrass, maritime, and country music in Maine and New England for a long time. You may have seen and heard him, playing standup bass or mandolin, with Simon St. Pierre, White Mountain Bluegrass, Mac McHale & the Old Time Radio Gang, and more recently with Zink & Company. A traditionalist through and through, he's always been a solid professional player and a gentleman and good guy, as well.

The BMAM board welcomes John as a new board member. John has been around the music for a long time and adds a lot of insights and ideas to our organization.

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JOHN ROC INTERVIEW

*Continued from front page***SK: Where are you from?****JR:** I've been a Mainer most of my life; currently living in Wells since 1985.**SK: How did you get into bluegrass music?****JR:** Bob and Laure Philibert my Folks, played Classic Country, Bluegrass, and Canadian Maritime Music.**SK: Who were your early musical influences? Who are your favorite musicians and bands?****JR:** Mac Wiseman, Jim & Jesse, Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs. First Generation Bands.**SK: Can you tell us about your 1 or 2 or 3 favorite mandolins? Same question for other instruments you play?****JR:** I am fortunate to own a 1977 Paganoni Mandolin built for Les Thompson — the Jimmy Goodreau. Gibson is good. Bass would be Kay M1, and I'm a Martin HD28 guy.**SK: What are some of the bands/acts you've played in over the years?****JR:** Simon St Pierre, White Mountain Bluegrass, Mac McHale and The Old Time Radio Gang, Freewheelin', Southern Rail, Zink and Company and many more.**SK: What are a couple of your favorite shows you've ever played?****JR:** *Imperial Theater in Saint John, NB. Many Europe Countries, Caribbean, etc.***SK: Outside of bluegrass music, are there any other genres/styles of music you've played or enjoyed listening to?****JR:** *I do listen to all good music.**Continued on page 3*

REMEMBERING BOB BOOTHBY

Continued from front page**RON GALLANT, GUITARIST, DANVILLE JUNCTION BOYS**

Bob was a dear friend and outstanding band mate for many years. He was part of the early New England bluegrass scene with such luminaries as Fred Pike, Jimmy Cox, Smokey Val, etc. He was a great mentor to [Danville Junction Boys' mandolinist] Bruce Hobart and me as we were learning the genre. On banjo he could play it all, from Daybreak in Dixie to Alan Munde's Stymied, and he had a natural baritone voice that was perfect. I will miss him and consider myself blessed to have known him. Love ya, Bobby.

JOHN SPARROW, BASSIST, DANVILLE JUNCTION BOYS

Bob and I both joined DJB in the early 1980s. From that point on our lives remained firmly connected as friends and musicians. On stage he dependably pumped out flawless Scruggs/Stamley style bluegrass on his well-worn Gibson "bow tie" banjo to provide tremendous drive to DJB's infamous full-speed-ahead performances. His playing was rock solid, and his friendship proved just as solid.

Bob loved jamming at festivals, frequently ignoring stage shows to better spend the time picking with friends. In his prime everyone at festivals appeared to know Bob, and vice versa. I always felt we could parachute him from an airplane anywhere east of the Mississippi and he would land within 50 miles of somebody he knew through bluegrass!!

Back in pre-video days Bob provided exciting opportunities for northern audiences to witness quality banjo playing. For example, young Eric Gibson (Gibson Brothers Band) had never seen a live bluegrass banjo player on stage until he watched Bob Boothby performing at an event in upstate New York. Quite likely Bob made a positive impression on that young lad!

Yes, no doubt many of my fondest memories are playing bluegrass with my good friend Bob, both during 12 years with DJB, and also at his annual July 4th parties on Coffee Pond.

One thing for sure: If there's any bluegrass jamming in the afterlife we all can rest assured "Banjo Bob" is now happily in the thick of it!!

**272 LEWISTON RD, MECHANIC FALLS, ME 04256**

To schedule a tour call: Paul Main 207-490-2001
or Ken Brooks 207-654-2227

**MAINE COUNTRY MUSIC
HALL OF FAME PRESENTS
“UNPLUGGED” CONCERT
IN HARTLAND, APRIL 13**

HARTLAND, ME – April 2025 -- The Maine Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum will present “UNPLUGGED,” an all-acoustic live country music show on Sunday, April 13, 2025 from 1PM to 4PM at the Irving Tanning Community Center, 62 Elm St, Hartland, Maine.

The show will feature a great lineup of legendary Maine country and bluegrass performers—all members of the Maine Country Music Hall of Fame—including Brian Gelina, Stan Keach (along with the Sandy River Ramblers), Joe and Nellie Kennedy, Phil and Ellen LeClaire, Paul Main, and Ken and Jane Brooks. All proceeds from this event will benefit the Maine Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum, a non-profit 501(c)(3) cultural organization based in Mechanic Falls, Maine, and the only country music hall of fame museum east of Nashville, Tennessee.

The Irving Tanning Community Center is located at 62 Elm St, Hartland, Maine. Tickets are \$15 at the door, general admission. Show starts at 1pm. Doors open at 12 noon. Food and beverages will be available at the show.

For more information contact 207-613-5411 or find the Maine Country Music Hall of Fame on Facebook. This show is sponsored by Renys Charitable Foundation, Norway Savings Bank, McKusick Petroleum Company, William A. and Sue-Ann Buckley, David Smith and Tracy McCrillis.

Irving Tanning Community Center
62 Elm Street, Hartland, Maine

The Maine Country Music Hall of Fame

**2nd Annual
"Unplugged!"**

(All Acoustic Show!)

\$15 Per Person at The Door!

A Talented line-up of Maine Country Hall of Fame Performers!

Sunday, April 13, 2025 1 - 4 p.m.

**** Hall of Fame Fundraiser ****

Joe & Nellie Kennedy

Brian Gelina

Stan Keach

Phil & Ellen LeClaire

Paul Main

Ken & Jane Brooks

Food & Beverages Available!

Thank you to our Sponsors

Norway Savings Bank

William A. and Sue-Ann Buckley
David Smith, and Tracy McCrillis

McKusick PETROLEUM

Renys

JOHN ROC INTERVIEW

Continued from page 2



SK: How has bluegrass music, and the bluegrass community, changed since you first started being involved in the music?

JR: *Traditional Bluegrass is it for me, and I recognize that music must change to progress and move forward.*

SK: Do you have any advice to pass on to young bluegrass musicians, or to the bluegrass community in general?

JR: *Any music must be learned from the originators and move forward after that.*

SK: What do you enjoy doing besides playing music?

JR: *I've been away from touring for a few years now, and I'm now enjoying running Sally and I Gaming Store.*

SK: If you'd like to, please tell us about your family, your business ventures, or anything else you'd like to talk about.

JR: *Sometimes I think it would be fun to do limited dates for the fun of it. We'll see.*

Bluegrass has brought more people together and made more friends than any music in the world.

Bill Monroe



My mother played a little bit of the old time clawhammer. She tuned the banjo up and picked one tune for me, and it just became natural to me. When she picked it, I just started and picked it, too.

Ralph Stanley

BMAM'S 2025 BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL GUIDE

BLISTERED FINGERS

*Family Bluegrass
Music Festival*

DATES: Two Festivals — June 19-22; August 21-24

LOCATION: Litchfield Fairgrounds,
44 Plains Rd, Litchfield, ME 04041

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$25-\$100

www.blisteredfingers.com



Photo courtesy of Blistered Fingers

The June Blistered Fingers Bluegrass Festival currently holds the title as Maine's longest-running bluegrass festival. Blistered Fingers was launched in June 1991; they added an August festival in 1995. In 2010, the festival moved from its long-time home in Sidney to the spacious Litchfield Fairgrounds.

The festival has remained a strictly-bluegrass festival all along, booking a mix of perennial favorites and newer members of the Blistered Fingers Bluegrass Festival community. Acts like the Gibson Brothers, Nothin' Fancy, Dave Adkins Band, The Kody Norris Show, and local standouts the Katahdin Valley Boys, Robinson Gospel, and of course Blistered Fingers have been mainstays every year recently.

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62nd Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival June 19, 20, 21 & 22, 2025 Litchfield Fairgrounds - Litchfield, Maine

The Gibson Brothers (NY) S
Danny Paisley & The Southern Grass (PA) F
Hemingway Brothers (ME) F, S
Katahdin Valley Boys (ME) T
High River F, S

Emcee - Sandy Cormier
Sound - Blistered Fingers

Kids Academy Thurs - Sat
Indoor Bathroom Facilities
FREE HOT SHOWERS
EXTRA LARGE TENT PROVIDED
PETS MUST BE ON LEASH AT ALL TIMES ON FESTIVAL GROUNDS. POOPER SCOOPERS MUST BE USED.
NO SMOKING, VAPING, PETS, COOLERS OR EXPOSED ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ALLOWED IN CONCERT AREA.
ANYONE APPEARING TO BE INTOXICATED, ACTING ABUSIVE, INDIVIDUALLY DRESSED, OR CAUSING TROUBLE WILL BE REMOVED FROM PREMISES AND NO REFUND WILL BE GIVEN. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ANYONE ADMISSION.
CAMPFIRE IN ABOVE GROUND FIREPLACES ONLY! NO BICYCLES, ATVs OR PERSONAL GOLF CARTS ALLOWED. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS OR LOST, STOLEN OR DAMAGED PROPERTY.

Nothin' Fancy (VA) F, S
Rock Hearts (RI) S
Hosmer Mt. Boys (CT) T
Cedar Ridge (NY) F
Blistered Fingers (ME) T
Robinson's Gospel (MA) Sun

GPS DIRECTIONS:
Camping: 30 Plains Rd., Litchfield, ME
Day Parking: 2422 Hallowell Rd, Litchfield, ME

Gate Opens 8:00AM (Sunday) June 15, 2025
Daily Gate Times Are 8:00AM-10:00PM

Ticket Prices Per Person:
Thurs - Sun 4 Day Advance: Before April 1st \$85
Thurs - Sun 4 Day Advance: Before June 1st \$95
Thurs - Sun 4 Day At Gate: \$100
Children 16 & under Free with adult
Camping Free Thurs-Sun with Weekend Tickets
Early Camping Sun-Wed \$10/day per camper
Camping/Night Without Weekend Ticket - \$10
Guest/Visiting Sun-Wed - \$10/Person per day
Dogs \$10/Entire Stay
All Tickets Are Non-Refundable

Day Prices/Person Payable At Gate Only:
Thurs. 4PM-9PM - \$25
Fri. 10AM-9PM - \$40
Sat. 10AM-9PM - \$40
Free Sunday Gospel Sing & Jam 10AM-11AM

All Weekend Tickets may be purchased on-line or send a self-addressed stamped envelope & check to:
Blistered Fingers Production Inc.
Greg & Sandy Cormier
263 Trafton Rd.
Waterville, ME 04901
blist-f@blisteredfingers.com
(207) 873-6539

**Don't Just Hear About It,
COME EXPERIENCE IT!**

www.blisteredfingers.com





Photo courtesy of Blistered Fingers



DATES: Two Festivals — June 19-22; August 21-24

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BLISTERED FINGERS Family Bluegrass Music Festival

Continued from page 4

Also in the lineup this year will be Rhonda Vincent, Danny Paisley, Rock Hearts and local/regional bands Seth Sawyer, Back Woods Road, Beartracks, Hemingway Brothers, Hosmer Mountain Boys and Cedar Ridge. Check the web-site for schedules and more details.

The Blistered Fingers festivals are mid-sized festivals, and there is always a variety of food vendors on hand. Patkus Guitars and Rick's Musical Instruments also set up shop on festival grounds. Indoor bathrooms and free hot showers are always available. There's a large tent for shade in the stage area. A Kids Academy is another nice feature, and one that organizer Sandy Cormier says is part of the festival's efforts to foster "the future love of this music in our younger generation."



63rd Blistered Fingers 63rd Family Bluegrass Music Festival

August 21, 22, 23 & 24, 2025

Litchfield Fairgrounds - Litchfield, Maine

Rhonda Vincent & The Rage (MO) F

The Gibson Brothers (NY) S Nothin' Fancy (VA) F, S

The Kody Norris Show (TN) T Dave Adkins Band (KY) F

Katahdin Valley Boys (ME) T, S Back Woods Road (ME) S

The Seth Sawyer Band (VT) F, S Beartracks (NY) F

Robinson's Gospel (MA) Sun Blistered Fingers (ME) T

Emcee - Sandy Cormier
Sound - Blistered Fingers

Kids Academy Thurs - Sat

Indoor Bathroom Facilities

Free Hot Showers

Extra Large Tent Provided

PETS MUST BE ON LEASH AT ALL

TIMES ON FESTIVAL GROUNDS

POOFER SCOOPERS MUST BE USED

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EXPOSED ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

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NO BICYCLES, ATV'S OR PERSONAL
GOLF CARTS ALLOWED.
NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS OR LOSS,
STOLEN OR DAMAGED PROPERTY.

Electric Hookup
Is Still Only
\$35 For Your
Entire Stay!



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COME EXPERIENCE IT!**

www.blisteredfingers.com

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Day Parking: 2422 Hallowell Rd, Litchfield, ME

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Thurs - Sun 4 Day Advance: Before April 1st \$85

Thurs - Sun 4 Day Advance: Before August 1st \$95

Thurs - Sun 4 Day At Gate: \$100

Children 16 & under Free with adult

Camping Free Thurs-Sun with Weekend Tickets

Early Camping Sun-Wed \$10/day per camper

Camping/Night Without Weekend Ticket - \$10

Guest/Visiting Sun-Wed - \$10/Person per day

Dogs \$10/Entire Stay

All Tickets Are Non-Refundable

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Thomas Point Beach Bluegrass Festival: A Farewell and a Look Back

By Shari Elder

When I was asked to write something up for the Thomas Point Beach Bluegrass Festival, I knew it would be too long. How do you sum up 45 years? Too emotional. Indeed. Too personal. That is what Thomas Point Beach Bluegrass has always been. Personal. It's about the people.

Many of you know how the story began. In 1972, Pati Crooker Mulligan took over management of Thomas Point Beach from her parents Harry & Marion Crooker. This beautiful beach and park on the coast of Brunswick, Maine was known as "the family-fun spot" and the "prettiest and cleanest park in New England." It was a gathering place for family and friends to come together. In that spirit, Pati had been looking to bring some signature events to the park, and took a leap of faith with help from the Prindle Family and held the first Thomas Point Beach Bluegrass Festival on Labor Day Weekend in 1979. It was small, and Pati never left the front gate, but it was a success and the start of something special.

I always had hoped Pati would write a book sharing the stories and the lore of the festival. The history has been written up in *Bluegrass Unlimited* and documented on the website (thomaspoinbeachbluegrass.com) but like many long standing traditions we rely on the oral histories to keep the memories alive.

So many of you have shared your own Thomas Point Beach stories with me over the years. From first steps to wedding proposals, family reunions, first kisses, workshops, hot air balloon rides, swims across the bay, lobster feeds and oyster shucking, bingo games, marshmallow golf, autographs, Blue Angel flyovers, Pogeys Fest, jams, and so, so much more. We all have tales to tell.

My own journey with the festival began when I was 16. Some memories in your life play back like a movie over and over in your mind. I guess that is how you know they were life-changing. I remember every detail of that interview with Pati in the summer of 1985; exactly what I wore, specific questions, meeting Jenna. I remember very vivid details of the little office in the Main Lodge where I would go on to spend many, many hours of my life. I began as a gift shop girl and went on over the years to do it all from mowing lawns and cleaning bathrooms to booking bands and emceeing. The good, the bad, the ugly, and the fantastic. I learned the lessons through the years.

My first festival, I worked the snack bar and the gate. I didn't hear much of the music, but I do remember the people. I remember checking people in, telling folks to slow down to that impossible 5 MPH speed limit, and the "Welcome Home." I watched the worries and stress of everyday life visibly melt away as campers pulled up to the gate.

Happy people would come proudly hold up that coveted wristband (more than once paid for in rolled change). On the inevitably rainy Labor Day Monday mornings I would sit on the porch of the yellow gate house waving folks out and keeping a list of comments about counting down the days until next year.



About 300 bands graced that little stage over the years. From Showcase Bands making their debuts to the Father of Bluegrass himself, Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys (82, 83, 88, 89), bringing Thomas Point Beach into the national spotlight.

White Mountain Bluegrass was a staple at the festival playing from 1979-2008 and a reunion in 2014. The general rule was a band might be invited back two years in a row, but then we needed to switch things up, but the crowd demanded some bands

over and over and we were known to break our own rules.

Bands like The Del McCoury Band (20 years), The Gibson Brothers (19 years), and the Tennessee Mafia Jug Band (14 years) became fixtures on the line-up and forever friends. Curating a lineup will always be my favorite part of preparing for a festival, and although the stage show is the main event, the true heart of a festival is the crowd! The people who attend make it all worth it. There were many times in the history of the Thomas Point Beach Festival that the stage show took a pause. In 2003, Pati wanted a break after 25 years of running the festival and turned her attention to family. You all came anyway to camp and jam and just be together! The inaugural "Non-Fest" was born resulting in t-shirts to mark the occasion the following year. I am always amazed by the number of folks I run into on the grounds festival week who still don't know who the headliners are. They simply don't care. They were coming anyway to be together!

In 2008, Pati officially retired the event. For the next two years, with no line-up, the park was still full and the music played on. And then one day with Pati and Michael in the house kitchen she said to me "We were thinking we would just bring back a one-day thing. They are coming anyway, we might as well have a stage show. What do you think?" I was in a new job and focused on my family, but you didn't have to ask me twice. These were my people and this event meant the world to me. We spent the next few hours remembering, laughing, and brainstorming names to distinguish it from what had been. We landed on the "Thomas Point Beach Special" with a nod to the classic song "Orange Blossom Special." It probably comes as no surprise that the idea for a one day, smaller event quickly spiraled back into a traditional event that mirrored our previous years and we had five more years together.

In 2016 instead of a festival, we held a beautiful Celebration of Life for festival founder, Pati Crooker. With a moving beachfront service, the dedication of a milestone in her honor, and an open stage featuring tributes that included Dailey & Vincent, the park was again full of the music that we all loved and my heart was full of the abundant love you all brought.

The question on everyone's mind was, "What's next?" Ken Irwin, of Rounder Records, sat with me under the ice cream awning and talked about the importance of the event to the bluegrass world and the support we would have if we wanted to move forward.



THOMAS POINT BEACH BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL: A FAREWELL AND A LOOK BACK

Continued from page 6

Pati's son Michael and his wife Jen were now running the operations of the park and campground, and were weighing the future of the event. It didn't take long for us to conclude that together we should give it a go and for the past eight years we have done just that.

We have done our best to hold on to tradition, while putting our own stamp on things. Our goal has been to provide a place for generations to come together to love and laugh and cherish this genre and each other. There are so many camping groups with people of all ages who gather together year after year in "their" spot for the week. Thomas Point Beach Bluegrass is the Lunn/ Lemieux clan who grew up as "part of the magic" and have been essential to making it all happen for so many years, the Manic Mountain Boys tucked into the woods famous for their antics, the White Mountain Bus parked for so many years near the osprey nest, the Greenwoods' High Tea on the circle, dinner at the Stillman's on site 3, Donna & Jerry parked right behind the stage, all our Canadian friends, the Estees, Fitzpatrick's and Arsenaults spanning all 40 years, the Bellew family who grew to over 60 strong and continued the tradition for 36 years honoring their father even after he had passed by still coming together, and each person who sat in the audience all these years. In this run, we even had our own "Non-Fest" in 2020 when we held a Covid-cation Bluegrass Camping Weekend. Social distanced of course!

2024 marked 45 years since that first bluegrass band played at TPB. It was also time for Michael and Jen to make the difficult decision to move on. Times change, business changes, and mother nature has taken its toll on the beach and the grounds. The park needs updates. Mr. Crooker told Pati years and years ago, you will know when it is time. And they did. The park is now owned by Modern American Campgrounds and they have plans to put in the kind of investment needed to restore the grounds and upgrade systems. I have had conversations with the new owner and he has shared that there may be a place for bluegrass at Thomas Point again, but it will not be this year and it's not clear what the format would be. As for just showing up to camp? I don't have that answer. They are currently not taking reservations yet for the season. I suggest checking their website regularly.

What I do know is that there is a void for so many of us. I get a call, text, or email almost daily asking, "What now?" That particular combination of the perfect venue, the special people, and excellent talent are a cherished memory. We are so lucky to have lived it and I personally have been honored to play a part in making it happen. I am grateful to my own family, my festival family and friends, and so many who have supported this event for so long.

So how do we keep the magic alive? We keep in touch, we keep supporting the genre, we attend shows, stream music, send cards, jam, reach out on social media, and we remember. The Thomas Point Beach Facebook Page will stay active as a place to share memories and support musicians and promote shows. Right now, I know there are bluegrass events being created with care. Go to them and see one another and tell the stories of Thomas Point Beach past. I plan to see you there!



Pictured above -(l. to r.) Kyle Lunn, Spenser Wilson, Shari Elder, Michael Mulligan, Pati Crooker Mulligan

BMAM'S FESTIVAL MEMORIES

We asked the BMAM Board for their best advice and most cherished memories from decades of festival-going. Here's what they had to say.

Must-have festival items:

- ♦ More chairs than you think you'll need
- ♦ A few chairs without armrests for picking
- ♦ Coffee (and travel mugs!)
- ♦ Earplugs to sleep soundly through late-night jams
- ♦ Layers! You must plan for every single type of weather.
- ♦ Extra strings for your instrument!

Best tips for a new festival-goer:

- ♦ Be open minded and not shy about joining a jam. (But make sure to "read" the jam before you dive in!)
- ♦ Take in as much of and festival as possible—the shows, booths, food trucks, jams, and everything else.
- ♦ Meet your picking neighbors, investigate new bands, and pick as much as you can.
- ♦ Get to know people! They're the heart of every event.

Favorite festival memories:

"Jamming with friends and band members off stage, including Michael Cleveland, Larry Sparks, Laurie Lewis, Katahdin Valley Boys, and Rock Hearts." – Hideaki Mizuno, Board Chair

"Our fun memory was at a June Blistered Fingers festival which was cold and windy with rain. My bride of 50+ years cuddled up with blankets and heavy jackets, still loving the bluegrass show. The show must go on!" – John McKusick, Board Member

"My favorite memory is 2008 when Pati gifted me a fiddle and Michael a guitar and she had her banjo. None of us knew how to play, but we learned a few notes that day so we could join the Del McCoury Band on stage for a song!" – Shari Elder, Board Member

"At the Whites Beach Festival, Union River Band was performing on stage. Muleskinner Blues was on the set list. When the band started playing it, a couple of people, who remain anonymous, dressed in a donkey costume and danced into the audience area. Their antics were priceless! Everyone was howling and crying with laughter!" – Nellie Kennedy, Treasurer

"Three upright bass players broke bass strings in one festival—Thomas Point Beach, 2024!" – Hideaki Mizuno





OSSIPEE VALLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL

DATE: July 24-27

LOCATION: The Ossipee Valley Fairgrounds,
291 S. Hiram Rd, Hiram, ME 04041

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$40-\$200

www.ossipeevalley.com *Photos courtesy of Ossipee/Jay Strausser Visuals/Taylor Smith*

Since 1999, Ossipee has been a mainstay for music lovers in Maine and beyond. Launched as a bluegrass festival, Ossipee has evolved to also include a heavy slate of roots and Americana artists from Thursday through Sunday. Festival organizers Bill Johnson and Molly McKenna have their ear to the ground for emerging artists and a knack for booking breakout performers like Billy Strings, Molly Tuttle and Sierra Farrell.

This year's festival features a hearty dose of bluegrass, with national acts such as AJ Lee & Blue Summit; Rob Ickes and Trey Hensley; and fan favorites Twisted Pine. Maine's bluegrass scene will be well represented with Breakin' Strings, the Hazel Project and Tricky Britches.

Always the last weekend in July at the Ossipee Valley Fairgrounds, the festival offers a lot more than main stage shows. Catch more intimate performances at Stage Too and the new riverside stage that debuted at last year's festival. The Brews & Bluegrass tent offers late-night music with a rotating cast of all-star pickers. Don't miss the rollicking Dance Barn, which kicks off as the main stage ends. And, of course, you can find picking in campsites across the fairgrounds at all hours of the day. (Definitely keep an eye out for the quiet camping sections if 3 a.m. banjos aren't your cup of tea!)

Apart from the music, take advantage of the Ossipee River: Blow up an inner tube and have a lazy float from one end of the fairgrounds to the other. The festival also offers a large—and constantly evolving—midway with food vendors and sellers of everything from tie-dyed clothes to hand-carved artisanal wood products.



THE CALIFORNIA HONEYDROPS
SIERRA HULL | SHADOWGRASS
AJ LEE AND BLUE SUMMIT
TOMMY EMMANUEL | FABIOLA MÉNDEZ
ROB ICKES & TREY HENSLEY | RAINBOW
GIRLS | SAMUEL NALANGIRA | LONE PIÑON
TWISTED PINE | THOMPSON THE FOX
THE ALUM RIDGE BOYS AND ASHLEE
FARAYI MALEK | COLD CHOCOLATE
| SPRINGTIDE | SPENCER & THE WALRUS
THE HAZEL PROJECT | BREAKING STRINGS
THE BAGBOYS | TRICKY BRITCHES & MORE!

7.24-27 | HIRAM MAINE
OSSIPEE VALLEY
MUSIC FESTIVAL



COUNTY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL



County Bluegrass delivers more than a beautiful festival site in Aroostook County. The four-day festival delivers a heavy dosedoes of traditional bluegrass with a slate of artists from Tennessee to Canada.

This year's roster of national touring bands includes Carson Peters & Iron Mountain, Nick Chandler & Delivered, Serene Green. The Ruta Beggars are traveling north from Massachusetts, and Dobro great Ivan Rosenberg is crossing the border from New Brunswick. And of course there are several Maine bands on the bill, including Blistered Fingers, the LaClairens and Dirigo Strings.

Organizer Stev Rogeski suggests arriving on Wednesday to enjoy the festival's famous early-bird chicken barbecue and potluck dinner on Wednesday night. A unique feature of the County festival is the pole barn that houses the main stage and provides a comfortable covered seating area for the audience. So whatever Mother Nature sends to Aroostook County, the bluegrass will keep driving in Fort Fairfield.



DATE: August 28-31

LOCATION: 119 West Limestone Rd., Fort Fairfield, ME 04742

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$20-\$100

www.countybluegrass.com

YOUR Labor Day Weekend Festival...



County Bluegrass *JUST ASK...*

August 28, 29, 30 & 31, 2025

119 West Limestone Rd. Fort Fairfield, Maine 04742

Carson Peters & Iron Mountain



Serene Green



4 DAYS
Of Bluegrass
With an Expanded
Schedule
To give you lots
More Music!

An AWARD WINNING LINEUP...

Carson Peters & Iron Mountain, TN

Nick Chandler & Delivered, NC

Serene Green, PA

The Grass Messengers, NY

Mike Mitchell, VA

The Ruta Beggars, MA

High River

Ivan Rosenberg, NB

Blistered Fingers, ME

Dirigo Strings, ME

The LaClairens, ME



NEW

Ticket Pricing

NEW Christmas Present Pricing Advance Weekend Ticket: \$85 (til Dec 31)

Advance Weekend Ticket: \$90 ('til July 31) Weekend at the Gate: \$100

Children 16 and Under – Free with Adult

Day Tickets: Thurs - \$20 Fri - \$25 Sat - \$30 (\$20 after 5) Sun - \$30 (\$20 after 5)

Early Bird Camping - \$10 nite (Mon – Wed) Electric - \$40 for entire weekend

Camping without Weekend Pass - \$10 nite Dogs - \$10 weekend

PALMYRA PRODUCTIONS LLC

For ticket mail to: County Bluegrass 519 N Caribou Rd. Fort Fairfield, ME 04742

For Additional Info: visit www.countybluegrass.com Call Stev 207-227-6242 / email stev@countybluegrass.com



JENNY BROOK BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

DATES: June 26-29

LOCATION: Tunbridge World's Fairground,
1 Fairground Ln., Tunbridge, VT 05077

TICKETS: 1-6 day tickets ranging from \$10-\$200

www.jennybrookbluegrass.com

Photos courtesy of Jenny Brook

The Jenny Brook Bluegrass Festival has been a big favorite for many Maine fans since it was established in 2001. Now held in Tunbridge, Vermont (about 3 hours from Portland, 2.5 hours from Kittery), the festival offers a great lineup of national and regional acts, plus a wide variety of free interesting diversions, including a popular barn dance; morning yoga classes; kids activities, including nightly movies; a cornhole tournament to raise money for cancer research; and workshops on the Artists' Stage.

For a fee, festival goers can attend Bluegrass University classes, taught by pros, which run for 2.5 hours per day.

This year's performers will include: Dailey & Vincent; Rhonda Vincent; The Gibson Brothers; Danny Paisley; the Po' Ramblin' Boys; Rob Ickes & Troy Hensley; The Amanda Cook Band; The Kody Norris Show; The Kevin Prater Band; Appalachian Express; The Clements Brothers; Rock Hearts; The Feinberg Brothers; Kelley John Gibson; The Greene Brothers; Hazel Project; The Hemingway Brothers; Cedar Mountain Bluegrass; The Seth Sawyer Band; and The Bluegrass Gospel Sing.



GREY FOX BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

DATES: July 16-20

LOCATION: Walsh Farm,
1 Poultney Rd., Oak Hill, NY 12460

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$90-\$310

www.greyfoxbluegrass.com

Grey Fox has been a destination for bluegrass fans for 25 years, and for many more years before that in its earlier incarnation as Winterhawk. Through the years, the site has changed from the beloved hill at Rothvoss Farm to the flatter (and more campsite friendly) Walsh Farm. But one thing has remained the same: a stellar lineup of bluegrass artists that will delight everyone from dyed-in-the-wool traditionalists to newgrass aficionados.



Photo courtesy of Grey Fox/Jay Strausser Visuals

This year's lineup includes Del McCoury Band, Sam Bush, Steep Canyon Rangers, Sierra Hull, Della Mae, and many more. Maine will be well represented on the Grey Fox stage with Joe K. Walsh (Mr. Sun) and Grant Dresnok (Pythagoras). Bounce between the festival's four stages, or dip into Jam Central Station, a tent featuring two Wernick Method teachers ready to teach the basics of bluegrass jamming. And if the stage isn't calling you, grab your instrument and wander until you find your own jam.

DANBY COUNTRY & BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

DATES: July 24-26

LOCATION: Otter Creek Fun Center,
1800 US 7, Danby, VT 05739

TICKETS: 1-3 day tickets ranging from \$25-\$85

www.danbycountrybluegrassfestival.com

The Danby Country & Bluegrass Festival is a three-day festival that features mostly regional acts from the northeast. This year's lineup includes The Seth Sawyer Band; Scott Henry Greene; Cedar Ridge; Just Passin' Thru; Mark Milos; Amy Gallatin & Stillwater; Marty Wendell & his Tour Band; Unken Brew; River Mountain Valley Boys; and Bob Greene.

Some of the features of the festival include: free rough camping with weekend ticket; large tent for shade; food concession; 50/50 raffle; guitar raffle; no showers on site; no fires allowed; no dogs in concert area, but dog sitting tent provided.

Danby is in south central Vermont, about 15 miles from the New York state border.

BASIN BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

DATE: July 10-13

LOCATION: 1 Basin Rd., Brandon VT 05733

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$15-\$75

www.basinbluegrassfestival.com

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Basin Bluegrass Festival. Located in western Vermont near the border of the Green Mountain National Forest, the Basin festival features a heavy dose of traditional bluegrass and plenty of field picking. This year's lineup includes New England bands such as New Hampshire's Roll on Buddies, the Seth Sawyer Band from Vermont, and Maine's own Blistered Fingers. National acts include Nothin' Fancy and Carolina Bluegrass Style.

For early birds arriving Thursday, make your way to the spaghetti dinner to raise money for Relay for Life cancer charity walk and then dance the carbs away to the classic country sounds of Cannonball Express.



PODUNK BLUEGRASS MUSIC FESTIVAL

DATE: August 7-10

LOCATION: Goshen Fairgrounds,
Rte 63, 116 Old Middle St., Goshen, CT 06756

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$25-\$190

www.podunkbluegrass.com

Photos courtesy of Podunk



Podunk has been a long-time favorite of New England bluegrass fans. The festival started in East Hartford in 1996 and for several years has made its home at the Goshen Fairgrounds in beautiful Litchfield County.

This summer's lineup includes the Dan Tyminski Band, Po' Ramblin' Boys and Jim Lauderdale, Stillhouse Junkies, and Rob Ickes & Trey Hensley.

Bluegrass festivals are decidedly friendly events. But Podunk isn't afraid to add a competitive twist: The festival's schedule includes a band competition and a songwriter contest, where winners can earn prizes as well as bragging rights to parade back to the campsites. (In fact, BMAM board member Stan Keach has won the songwriting contest twice, and the first time he won he also was awarded second place!)



GREEN MOUNTAIN BLUEGRASS & ROOTS FESTIVAL

DATE: August 14-17

LOCATION: Hunter Park, 410 Hunter Park Rd.,
Manchester Center, VT 05255

TICKETS: 1-4 day tickets ranging from \$40-\$240

www.greenmountainbluegrass.com

*Photo courtesy of GMBR/
Erin Kiernan Photography*



A relative newcomer to the northeast festival circuit, Green Mountain Bluegrass & Roots has grown by leaps and bounds since launching in 2018.

The festival delivers a thoughtfully curated lineup of artists that span the bluegrass genre. Don't miss the GMBR All-Stars, an always evolving group that comes together at each festival to offer their take on a slice of bluegrass history, whether a track-by-track recitation of the Ricky Skaggs & Tony Rice duo album or a mind-bending foray into the classic newgrass album *Strength in Numbers*.

This year's festival features Peter Rowan, Watchhouse, Steeldrivers, Molly Tuttle, and more. After the main stage shuts down for the night, head over to the Lamplighter Stage for a rotating cast of festival performers picking in a casual setting.



Photo courtesy of GMBR/Jay Strausser Visuals

THIS JUST IN:

Bluegrass music will be happening at the Ossipee Valley Fairgrounds in Hiram, ME over Labor Day Weekend. Follow Bluegrass Music Association of Maine on Facebook to keep tabs on the developments.



HELP WANTED

SUMMER CAMP FIDDLE/VIOLIN PLAYER(S)

Overnight children's summer camp in Maine seeking a summer camp counselor who plays fiddle or violin to play for nightly campfires.

Our children's camp does a lot of singing; we try to have a violin or fiddle player in the camp band. Violin/fiddle playing counselor would also participate in supervision of a camper cabin, and supervision of activities such as swimming, drama, kayaking, field sports, arts & crafts, etc. No experience necessary in anything except fiddle or violin. Counselors have some time most days to participate in activities such as swimming, sailing, wind-surfing, kayaking, and hiking. Free sailing and wind-surfing lessons available a few times each week.

COMPENSATION: Room & board included. Fiddle playing counselor would live in a cabin with campers & other counselors. One day off per week. Salary depends on experience. High school students usually earn \$500 per week. Fiddlers with 1-2 years of work or school after high school can earn \$700 per week. Fiddlers with 3-4 years work exp. after high school can earn \$800 per week.

DATES: Some flexibility, but usually 5, 6, or 7 weeks in the June 10 to August 16 range.

Visit www.slovenskicamps.com for more information, as well as photos and videos of camp activities and campfires. Email: Peter.Slovenski@gmail.com.



BMAM NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERSHIPS 11/01/24 - 01/31/25

NEW MEMBERS

James & Sandra Bragdon
Daniella DeCaro
James Dionne
Robert & Jana Edes
Lisa Ferguson
John Ganz
Jean Hamlin
Sarah Hipkens
Roberta & Robert Jarvis
Jeff Patterson
Joshua Popkin
Jim Smith
Jack & Maude Tatar

MEMBER RENEWALS

Wayne & Estella Bennett
Mike & Patti Burns
Paul Cameron
William Case
Charles P & Joyce Carter
William Case
Michael Chung
Steve Davis
Kevin Dyer
Bonnie & Tim Joy Guerrette
Mark Hodges
Richard Jagels
Robert & Valerie MacDonald
Karen & Tom Mangino
John & Sharon McKusick
Richard Moskowitz
David Pearson
Dorothy Perry
Beth Revels
Joan & Evan Richert
Bruce & Patricia Smith
Raymond Soulard
John Sparrow & Shirley Hamilton
Terry & Tina Spearrin
Edmund Stubbs
Joseph Tourigny
Jim Vekasi
Bill & Elaine Walsh
Kevin Welch
John Philibert

BMAM JAMS

— APRIL, MAY 2025 —

Eastern JAM

Old Town Riverside Grange
1266 N. Main St., Brewer

For more information visit: www.mainebluegrass.org

SUNDAY, APRIL 6 • 12-3 PM

Southern JAM

First Parish Congregational Church
116 Main St., Yarmouth

SUNDAY, APRIL 13 • 1-4 PM

Separate picking rooms available to accommodate various levels
BMAM members \$5; Non-members \$7. All welcome!

For more information, or to sign up Contact Bob Bergesch
Email: rbergesch@gmail.com or Text: 207-831-8908

Farmington JAM

Farmington Community Center
127 Middle St., Farmington

SUNDAY, APRIL 27 • 1-4 PM

SUNDAY, MAY 25 • 1-4 PM

Several rooms, all levels welcome. Free to the public
Contact: stankeachbluegrass76@gmail.com

Get
ready for
festival
season!

Come
to all of our
late-spring jams
and get in your
top picking
shape!



BMAM OFFICERS

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**The Bluegrass Music Association of Maine is...**

an organization of people, listeners and players, who enjoy Bluegrass music. It was formed in March of 1995, and incorporated on July 8, 1996 as a Maine 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. The BMAM, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, welcomes all Bluegrass friends, fans, and pickers to become active members.

Functions of the organization include the following:

- To educate the public about Bluegrass music, in order to foster an appreciation of its history and cultural heritage;
- To further the enjoyment of Bluegrass music, for ourselves and others, through teaching, sharing, and playing;
- To encourage participation in Bluegrass music events;
- To promote Bluegrass music as a family entertainment;
- To support area workshops, festivals, and concerts;
- To support area musicians and bands that play Bluegrass music;
- To inform members about Bluegrass and related events around the state;
- To cooperate with other organizations to promote Bluegrass and related music;
- To preserve the memories of those who have preceded us in this field of endeavor.

COPY DEADLINE

Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication date. Ad rates are for camera-ready copy. Ads to be made up from scratch have an additional cost and must be sent by the 5th of the month. Payments must accompany ads when they are submitted.

SEND ALL ADVERTISING TO:

Bluegrass Express
 Re: Advertising
 PO Box 9
 Dexter, Maine 04930

The Bluegrass Express is...

a quarterly publication of the Newsletter Committee.

For more information on how you can become involved, contact any committee member.

Please email any news, photos, article information, or anything you find pertaining to bluegrass in Maine to skeach@mainebluegrass.com or mail to this address:

BMAM

Re: Newsletter
 P.O. Box 9
 Dexter, Maine 04930

Advertising Rates

25 Words _____ \$5.00

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1/4 Page _____ \$15.00

1/2 Page _____ \$20.00



Bluegrass Music Association of Maine

P.O. Box 9
Dexter, ME 04930
MaineBluegrass.org

www.MaineBluegrass.org

*Your source for
Bluegrass information!!!*

*Please check your membership status!
Thanks!*

JOIN THE BLUEGRASS MUSIC ASSOCIATION OF MAINE

A one year membership includes:
Quarterly Newsletter
Discounts to BMAM sponsored events

DATE: _____ EVENT: _____

I am a: ___ Fan ___ Musician ___ Band Member

Primary Instrument:: _____

Band Name: _____

Volunteer Opportunities: (check if interested)

- ☐ S. Jam (Yarmouth) ☐ E. Jam (Brewer)
☐ Teaching ☐ Newsletter ☐ Festivals

Other things I can help with: _____



www.mainebluegrass.org
P.O. Box 9, Dexter, ME 04930

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