

The Bluegrass Association of Southern California

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Board of Directors

Harley Tarlitz
Jeffrey Fleck
Bob Cesarone
Ben Weinberg
Nanette Weinberg
Jim Silvers
Walden Dahl

BASC Elections

Elections for the BASC Board will take place on June 15, 2010 at the BASC Bluegrass Night at the Braemar immediately prior to the concert. Nominations are welcome. Get information about BASC Bluegrass Night on page 3.

Don Tucker and the Huck Finn Jubilee: A Short History

The Huck Finn Jubilee, June 18-20, 2010, Mojave Narrows Regional Park, Victorville, CA

Don Tucker is a man who gets things done. He knows how to organize big events, juggle numerous tasks, solve problems, motivate, and deal with the unexpected. Thirty-eight successful years as founder and director of the Huck Finn Bluegrass Jubilee, with the indispensable help of his wife Barbara, are proof enough. Yet the trajectory of Don's career -- and the history of the Jubilee -- has often been determined by unexpected twists and turns.

Fascinated with theme parks as a youth, Don considered Walt Disney and Walter Knott his idols. So, upon graduating from Cal Poly Pomona with a degree in landscape architecture, he tried to get a job with Disney. When no job turned up, he took what he thought would be a temporary position with the County of San Bernardino Regional Parks. After a short time on the job, they asked him to direct the Calico Spring Festival in the California high desert, and thus he found himself on the path to a career as event organizer and promoter.

By 1976, the Calico festivals, which now included a spring banjo and fiddle contest, along with other festivals in Norco, Topanga, Julian, and Idlewild, were flourishing. It was the bi-centennial year, the movie *Deliverance* had introduced "dueling banjos" to a wide audience, and acoustic music was gaining popularity. The time seemed right for a new festival, so Don came up with the idea of the Huck Finn Jubilee, a weekend event where families could relive the life and times of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. Don had the perfect location for the event, a desert oasis outside of Victorville that reminded him of the Mississippi River. And of course the right music for the Jubilee could only be Bluegrass music.

For the next four years, Don ran the Huck Finn Jubilee for the County of San Bernardino with considerable success, attendance reaching as high as 7,000 for the weekend event which, in addition to Bluegrass music, included tent and RV camping, activities and contests for the youngsters, including a Huck Finn look-alike



Enjoying the show on the main stage at the Huck Finn Jubilee

contest, fishing, river raft building, a crafts fair, a mountain village and camp, and of course an array of country "vittles" for consumption.

In 1981 Don decided to form his own business. However, when he offered to produce the Huck Finn Jubilee for the County of San Bernardino on a contract basis, they turned him down. Rather than let the project die, Don went ahead and produced the Jubilee on his own. The results that year were disappointing, and it was one of only two years that the Jubilee lost money. But Don persisted, and, in spite of a weak economy, the festival slowly grew through the end of the decade.

Two weeks before the 1989 Jubilee Don got a call from Bobby Osborne, a call that was destined to change the nature of the Huck Finn Jubilee forever. "We're stuck on the West (continued on page 2)

Jams Around Town

The BASC Jam in the Park

[CTMS Center for Folk Music](#)

Encino Park

11953 Ventura Blvd.

Encino, CA 91316

4th Sunday, 1:00 to 5:00 PM

Jeff Fleck 310-390-4391

The Soup Jam

3240 Industry Dr,

Signal Hill, CA

Tuesdays 7:00 PM

Don Rowan 562-883-0573

The New Westside Jam

[Industry & Jazz Cafe](#)

6039 Washington Blvd.

Culver City, CA

1st Monday 7:30 PM

Jeff Fleck 310-390-4391

The Altadena Jam

Coffee Gallery

2029 N. Lake

Altadena, CA

2nd Sunday 12:30 PM

Dave Naiditch

french10@pacbell.net

[Blue Ridge Pickin' Parlor](#)

17828 Chatsworth St

Granada Hills, CA

1st Saturday 7:30 PM

(818) 282-9001

Orange County Archery

18792 Brookhurst St.

Fountain Valley CA

1st & 3rd Thursday, 6 PM

Shelah Spiegel

(714) 454-1976

[Viva Cantina](#)

900 Riverside Drive

Burbank CA 91506

3rd Monday

Clinic: 6-7 PM Jam: 7-10 PM

Matt Merritt (818) 669-9778

[Zoey's Cafe](#)

185 E. Santa Clara St.

Ventura CA 93001

2nd and 4th Tuesdays

6:00 to 10:00 PM

Gene Rubin

805-340-2270

Editor

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*All comments, suggestions,
and submissions will be gladly
considered.*

Huck Finn Jubilee

(continued from page 1)

Coast,” Bobby said, and he asked if Don would book the Osborne Brothers at Huck Finn on Friday evening if they would play for a reduced rate. Up until that time, Don had booked only local talent, so Bobby wasn’t too hopeful. But a deal was struck, and Don even offered to pay extra if a bigger than usual crowd showed up.

Don learned two things that Friday evening: That a well-known band like the Osborne Brothers would draw a bigger crowd than usual, and that most local bands could not match the quality sound of a full-time professional band. “How can you guys be so good?” Don asked Bobby after the show.

“Because we do it every day,” was the answer. Much to Bobby’s surprise, Don kept his word and paid the Osborne Brothers the additional money he had promised. Word got around that Don was a man of his word, and soon he was booking national bands on a regular basis.

Since the Osborne

Brothers, just about every major Bluegrass band has performed at Huck Finn, including The Country Gentlemen, Seldom Scene, Jimmy Martin, J.D. Crowe, Larry Sparks, Tony Rice, Ricky Skaggs (the only artist to be booked three times), Lonesome River Band, Blue Highway, and Illrd Tyme Out, among others. Earl Scruggs celebrated his 80th birthday at Huck Finn and enjoyed himself so much that he signed over 800 autographs. Rhonda Vincent “discovered” the Cherryholmes Family at Huck Finn and subsequently helped them launch their national career.

Over the years, the musical workshops conducted at the SWBA (Southwest Bluegrass Association) Stage have become an integral part of the Jubilee. Here is where the visiting bands and artists share their bluegrass know-how and experience with their fans in a smaller, informal setting, with plenty of time for questions. In recent years, you might have heard Earl Scruggs or J.D. Crowe illustrate banjo techniques, Dailey and Vincent discuss harmony singing, or the Grascals talk about band dynamics. In addition, Tom Lister of SWBA gathers some of the best local Bluegrass bands to perform on the stage, bringing back a taste of the old days when local bands provided all the musical entertainment.

While many Bluegrass festivals tend to thin out after the Sunday morning gospel shows, Don saves the biggest event of the Jubilee for Sunday night. Reaching out to the wider country music audience, he has brought some of the biggest stars of that genre to the main stage of the Huck Finn Jubilee, including Roy Clark, Roger Miller, Patsy Montana, Mel and Pam Tillis and Merle Haggard. These shows always draw a big crowd, so, in addition to providing a great musical experience, the Sunday night influx of country music fans helps subsidize the rest of the Jubilee.

In 2001, Don stunned the Bluegrass world when the Huck Finn Jubilee won the International Bluegrass Music Association’s coveted Bluegrass Event of the Year Award. It was stunning not only because it was the first Bluegrass event west of the Mississippi River ever to win the award, but also because the Jubilee beat out the highly publicized and commercially successful *Down from the Mountain* concert tour.

Today, the Huck Finn Jubilee is the premier Bluegrass event of Southern California. Top bands from the East love to come to the Jubilee and Southern California Bluegrass fans love to see and hear them. As long as this combination continues, the Huck Finn Jubilee will enjoy many more years of success.



Rhonda Vincent and friends at the “World’s Biggest Bluegrass Jam”

The Gig Watch

[Simon Pure](#)

June 19th 7:00 PM & June
20th 3:00 PM

SWBA Stage at [Huck Finn](#)

June 26th, 7:00 PM

Gateway Church

29646 Agoura Rd

Agoura Hills CA 91301

[The Brombies](#)

June 6th, 20th 27th

[Zeke's Smokehouse](#)

Montrose, CA 91020

June 7th & 16th

[Viva Cantina](#)

Burbank CA 91506

[Grasslands](#)

June 18th 3:00 PM

SWBA Stage at [Huck Finn](#)

[Lonesome Otis](#)

June 18th 12:50 & 5:00 PM

Main Stage at [Huck Finn](#)

June 20th 3:00 PM

SWBA Stage at Huck Finn

[2 Frets Lower](#)

June 15th 8:00 PM

BASC Bluegrass Night at
the Braemar

June 21st 8:00 Pm

[Viva Cantina](#)

900 Riverside Drive

Burbank CA 91506

[Sometimes in Tune](#)

June 13th 3:30 - 6:00 PM

[Calabasas Historical Society](#)

23537 Calabasas Rd.

Calabasas CA

BASC Sponsors

[Deering Banjos](#)

[Braemar Country
Club](#)

[CMH Records](#)

[Weber Fine
Acoustic
Instruments](#)

[2 Frets Lower](#) to Perform at BASC Bluegrass Night at the Braemar

Tuesday, June 15th, 2010

[Braemar Country Club](#)

4001 Reseda Bl. Tarzana 91356

6:30 to 9:00 PM

Formed in early 2009, 2 Frets Lower combines the talents of five individuals, each with decades of musical experience. The group performs primarily traditional bluegrass vocals with "an occasional" contemporary number. 2FL makes full use of vocal harmonies accompanied by exciting and tasteful instrumentation, never forgetting that "the instruments provide the bedrock for the singing."

Performing for audiences throughout California, 2FL brings a sense of respect and enjoyment to the music they play.

Donn Cunningham's lead singing and guitar playing are the backbone of 2FL. Starting guitar at age 9, Donn soon played in blues, rock and jazz groups. Seeing Clarence White at the Ash Grove in the late 60's, he caught the Bluegrass "bug". With recordings of Clarence hard to find at the time, Donn learned all the fiddle tunes he could from Doc Watson and Tony Rice recordings. Developing his own style, Donn has been a regular member of Vin Fiz Flyer and Second Wind Bluegrass. Over the years he has performed with other groups including Murphy's Flaw.

Banjoist, **Fred Heilbrun** stole borrowed his older brother's banjo when he was 10 years old. For retribution, his brother made him learn how to play it. In addition to extensive "pick-up" work, Fred has been a member of The Reorganized Dry City Players, Shadow Mountain, Circuit Riders, and The Phil Salazar Band. He has also recorded for and performed with other artists such as We Five, Delaney Bramlett and Billy Joel. Joining 2FL in 2009, Fred continues to be an active member of the Southern California bluegrass scene.

Steve Wilke is a mandolinist/guitarist who has performed extensively throughout Southern California. He enjoys playing in many different styles ranging from classical to bluegrass. He has regularly led worship in

churches around the Southland for the past 30 years and is also active in composing and arranging for various stringed instruments and vocals. Steve currently plays guitar and mandolin in a number of ensembles; including the Pasadena Strings, the Moreton



Bay String Band and 2FL.

Paul Dorn grew up with music in the home. At a young age, his father traded away Paul's flute and bought him a guitar (and lessons). This did not stop him from his eventual collision with the string bass. He enjoyed the music of artists such as Bill Monroe and Flatt & Scruggs, The Dillards and the Country Gentlemen. Progressing to less traditional bands, he found Old and in The Way, New Grass Revival, John Hartford and Tony Trishka. Paul has played in bands since high school; Homegrown, The Boys O' Noise, Back to Back, Vin Fiz Flyer, The Stan West Blues Band, New Astro turf, Murphy's Flaw and now, 2FL.

Master violin maker **Don McKinley** rounds out 2FL with his resonator guitar. Coupled with his baritone singing, Don puts the final touches on a band that truly enjoys a mutual respect for the music and the friendships it creates.

Admission to the BASC Bluegrass Night at the Braemar is \$5.00, which includes coffee, tea, and soft drinks. \$16.00 admission also includes the world famous Braemar Country Club pasta bar which opens at 6:30 PM.

BASC Bluegrass Night at the Braemar

2010

June 15th

[2 Frets Lower](#)

July 20th

[The Brombies](#)

August 17th

[The Bladerunners](#)

September 21st

[Murphy's Flaw](#)

October 19th

[Border Radio](#)

November 16th

[Rocky Neck Bluegrass Band](#)

December 21st

[Sett Gates](#) and [Nathan McEuen](#)

2011

January 18th

[Simon Pure](#)

February 15th

[Sometimes In Tune](#)

March 15th

[Susie Glaze and the Hilonesome Band](#)

Other SoCal Bluegrass Resources

[California Traditional Music Society](#)

[San Diego Bluegrass Association](#)

[California Bluegrass Association](#)

[International Bluegrass Music Association](#)

[Folkworks](#)

[Alive and Picking](#)

[Blue Ridge Pickin' Parlor](#)

[Boulevard Music](#)

[McCabe's Guitar Shop](#)

Don't Miss the BASC Jam in the Park

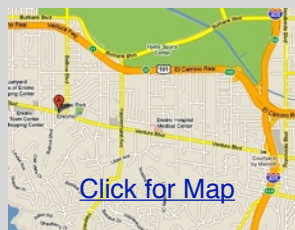
Sunday, June 27th 1:00 to 5:00 PM

On the fourth Sunday of every month pickers from far and wide are gathering at the [CTMS Folk Music Center](#) in Encino Park for what is becoming one of Southern California's premier Bluegrass events -- the BASC Jam in the Park. With plenty of room -- inside the Center or outside on the grass if the weather is nice -- this jam is for pickers of all skills and experience. Don't be surprised if you find three or four jams going on when you arrive. Just pick the one that fits you best and join in. The jam goes from 1:00 to 5:00 PM. Snacks and drinks (and BASC tee shirts) will be on sale.

Here are the remaining dates in 2010.

June 27th * July 25th * August 22nd *

September 26th * October 24th * November 28th * December 26th



Encino Park
16953 Ventura Blvd.
Encino, CA 91316

**Yes, I would like to join BASC and support Bluegrass
in Southern California.**

One-Year Membership

Individual \$20.00 - Family \$25.00 - Band \$30.00

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I would like to volunteer to _____

Mail this coupon and your check payable to BASC to:

Ben Weinberg
16799 Schoenborn St
North Hills CA 91343

[Click here
to join BASC
On-Line](#)

Run Away with Huck Finn...

FATHER'S DAY WEEKEND • JUNE 18, 19, 20, 2010

HUCK FINN JUBILEE

Country & Bluegrass

CAMP in a meadow • EAT lots of vittles • SHOP a crafts village • RIDE in a hot air balloon • ENJOY 3 days of music

The Oak Ridge Boys

Mark Twain Live

Rhonda Vincent & The Rage

Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper

Russell Moore & Illrd Tyme Out

Chris Jones & The Night Drivers

The Travelin' McCourys

Nathan McEuen & Scott Gates

Sierra Hull & Highway 111

Sons & Brothers

Waddie Mitchell

The Hey Boyz

Julie Wingfield

Lonesome Otis

Riley's Mountaineers

Bon Family Cloggers

Line Dancing with KC Douglas

Chapel with Wayne Rice & Lighthouse

Sunday Gospel Sing

The National Bluegrass Playoffs &
Southwest Bluegrass Association present



Deering Banjo Championships

\$1,000 1st Prize! • Call to enter: 1-951-780-8810



Friday Night Barn Dance with Riley's Mountaineers
Route 66 Car Show • Russell Bros. Circus
California State Arm Wrestling Championships



SIRIUS XM RADIO'S "BLUEGRASS JUNCTION" WILL BE THERE!

Camping & Tickets
huckfinn.com • 1-951-780-8810

MOJAVE NARROWS REGIONAL PARK • VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA

