



EAST BAY BANJO CLUB

SINCE 1963



APRIL 2010

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2

Play-out Schedule

⇒ Saturday, April 17

Diablo Lodge, Danville
6:15 P.M. – 7:15 P.M.

⇒ Sunday, April 25

Lafayette/Orinda Pres-
byterian Parish, Ross-
moor

2:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

⇒ Saturday, May 22

Iwasa's Wedding, Bound-
ary Oaks

7:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

⇒ Thursday, June 10

Pereira's Plantation
Garden Party

11:15 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.

**For the most current
play-out information
visit:**

www.eastbaybanjo.org

Or

**Contact Bob Nelson,
Booking Agent**

bookin-
gagent@eastbaybanjo.org

or 925-372-0553

**East Bay Banjo Club
Meets:**

Every **Wednesday** (Please
Note Change)

7:30 PM to 9:30 PM
Round Table Pizza, 1938
Oak Park Blvd., Pleas-
ant Hill, California

Presidents Message



On June 13, 2010 the East Bay Banjo Club, EBBC, will hold it's 2nd Summer Jazz Banjo Festival, SJBF, at St Mary's college in Orinda. To date we are expecting approximately the same number of participants, which would mean another near sellout. We have ads in FIGA magazine, the Resonator magazine, and the Sacramento journal 'And All that

Jazz', a publication from the NOJC of the Sacramento Jubilee. press in the SF Examiner and Contra Costa Times. Our committee is hard at work on the project, but we are open to any suggestions from you, our members. Please contact me or Bill Sullivan if you have any suggestions or ideas.

We expect a large group from Rossmoor in Walnut Creek as we are working closely with their excursion group. All (5) banjo bands will be returning too. For more info and to purchase tickets visit our website,

<http://www.summerjazzbanjofestival.com/>.

With success comes growth and we continue to get new members and visits from old friends which means we may soon out grow our venue. I view this as a good problem, not a bad problem. In fact I want more new members, especially young ones, like 5-year old Marco Green.

Events

⇒ May 13/15

Arizona Banjo Blast
Tucson, Arizona

⇒ June 12/13

2nd Annual EBBC Summer Jazz
Banjo Festival
Saint Mary's College, Moraga

⇒ July 4

25th Annual Orinda Parade &
Plaza Performance
Orinda, CA

⇒ August 21

EBBC Picnic @ Landers Landing

I wish to thank everyone who volunteered their time at last years SJBF and invite you all to participate in the SJBF 2010. Contact Bud Pierce or Bill Cooper, who are in charge of day-of-event activities.

Thank you June Rosploch for all the great work you do as Secretary, and Bob Nelson, the best banjo booking agent on the west coast. And please feel free to contact me anytime you have a question, suggestion, or concern.

Thank you, Jack Convery, President

What is a Banjo Base?

Reported By: Mary Black

Guy Black of the East Bay Banjo Club, Contra Costa Co., Calif. long dreamed of making a cigar box guitar that would really work. When he was a little guy, On Sunday afternoons, family and friends would gather on his Grandfather's front porch and play music, sing and drink ice tea. His uncle helped him build a guitar out of a cigar box and copper wire. Small nails were just right for wrapping the strings around. It made noise so Guy joined in the fun. That was all forgotten until he saw The Ashbury.



When Guy was in the 5th grade the Glen Miller Band played at his school, He took up trumpet the next day and played brass all through school, including the bass Tuba the last three years of school. Guy played the Gut bucket at Shakey's and many other places in the area.

Over the years, Guy played several types of Bass fiddles both electric and acoustic, He even put together an old flat back German bass that he got in a basket; it was a good sounding Bass.

He was happy to find the East Bay Banjo Band and have a place to play. He saw his first Ashbury bass at the Banjo Rama in Carmichael 3 or 4 years ago and couldn't wait to get one.

He bought an Ashbury from Brock at Large Sound and enough spare parts to build 2 more. That 's when the cigar box popped back. But instead of a guitar He would build a bass.

Since He plays in a banjo band, why not a Banjo Bass. Thanks to his Middle School woodworking classes, he learned that he could build or fix most anything he began.

The ideas started coming that he could build a bass out of old banjo parts.

Four banjos went into the finished product. Guy built the neck and headstock, Brock and Kelly from Large Sound supplied parts from the Ashbury, now made by Fender

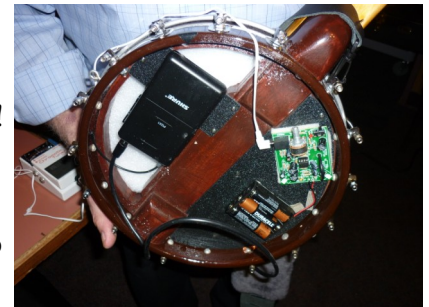
He got together enough parts to begin, some parts were built and some were purchased. The biggest help came from EBBC members; Garry Kerr gave Him a box of old banjos & parts. Bill Cooper gave him an old banjo that wasn't playable. But just what he needed. The final touch was a piece of walnut burl his neighbor gave him for the head.



Guy sawed it up in to strips a bout 1/3 of inch & glued it on the headstock, sanded & polished..

The Banjo part is just a façade; the guts are built of solid maple, routed out where needed. The stiffness of the solid maple gives better sound than a softer wood. He said, "It was a chore making the offset neck secure enough to let the banjo head come down over it". It would be possible to pull the banjo parts off and still play, but it wouldn't look as pretty!!

A wireless transmitter was added, making it possible to walk around playing without being tied down with a cable. It fit in the resonator nicely. He plans more whistles & bells. A Work- in- progress. He's also thinking about a cigar box. Who knows?



February 19, "CRABFEED" Orinda Masonic Lodge

Reported By: Kit Nelson

(A view from the stage) First, the audience was served a variety of snacks and wine, (approximately 150 people); then it was announced "salad is ready" along with "pasta".

Then a voice was heard saying, "please raise your hand if you are getting chicken".....Chicken? This was a crab feed !! Someone in our group suggested playing "the chicken dance"? Chicken dance at a Crab Feed ? How about "Coney Island crab cakes" ? (that's enough of that)



In attendance were our music leader, Bill Cooper, Mickie McDonald, Guy Black, Jesse DeTorres, Jim Blankenship, Betty David, Kit Nelson, Bob Malucelli, Kermit Collins, Lynne Deuscher, Diane Shaw, Dina Melamed, Pat Wheaton, Karen Swift, and bookie Bob Nelson.

Plenty of smiles were seen throughout the audience and it was a fun evening; (even a few young teens were doing the "charleston") and I heard someone say "come back next year" and I'm sure we will



February 23 -25, Reno Snow Train



February 23 –25, Reno Snow Train**Reported By: Chris Lardge**

President Jack Convery reported at length on the Banjo Snow Train in last month's newsletter so I will not repeat his comments here. It suffices to say that it was a very enjoyable and economic outing for East Bay Banjo players and their relatives and friends. The club had a Pullman car all to ourselves plus the Dance car where Jam sessions were temporarily substituted for the usual terpsichorean activities. Bill Cooper jammed most of the way up and then most of the way back. By the end of the trip we had to send out a search party to look for his fingertips.

Ambiance on the train evoked first class air travel before 9-11. There were no security lines, no baggage inspection, no pat downs or nude photography and you didn't have to take your shoes off, unless you wanted to.

Our seats were soft and roomy with lots of legroom, and we had our own Stewardess, Carolyn, who attended to our every need. This included, for some, copious amounts of cocktails at \$3 a pop. She also doubled as our Porter and was great help with the luggage.

The more adventurous could venture further down the train to another cocktail bar, complete with a very good singing piano player. Even further exploration got you to the Observation Car which had a panoramic viewing bubble and a snack bar in the lower deck.

In Reno Jack gave a clinic at which we learned a "new" (45 year old) Beatle's song. Our evening gig drew an audience of well over 100 people.

Overall, it was bit like traveling on the Orient Express in "From Russia with Love". All you had to do was substitute Jack Convery for James Bond in your mind's eye.

Best of all, we can do it again next year!



April 1, Sacramento Banjo Band's Springtime Spectacular! Banjo –Rama 2010



April 1, Pinole

Reported By: Bob Nelson

April Fools in Pinole

No it's not a joke. Fifteen EBBC members traveled to Bay Park Independent Living in Pinole; this was our first playout at Bay Park and it was a huge success. Bill Cooper had a great selection of music planned for us. The band was anchored down on the corners by our bases, Guy Black and Terry Horner, a nice variety of vocals by Bill Cooper, Kit Nelson, Tim Perry and Mickie McDonald was very entertaining. Our Washboard Wizards Terry Horner and Don Granberg were a hit as well.


The rhythm section was right on, thanks to Jim Blankenship, Tom Brunetti, Kermit Collins, Don Granberg, Chris Lardge, Mickie McDonald, Bob Malucelli, Herb Moore, Kit Nelson and Tim Perry. Kudos to Herb Moore, this was his first playout!

Bookie Bob reports that Bay Park is scheduling our return performance in the near future.

Remember

Guitar Heaven supports the East Bay Banjo Club, please support them.

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Store Hours		Fri. & Sat.
Tues. - Thurs.		12 noon - 6 pm
12 noon - 7 pm		Closed Sun. & Mon.

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East Bay Banjo Club Board Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2010

Attendees: Jack Convery, Jim Blankenship, Bob Malucelli, June Rosploch, Bill Cooper, Bob Nelson

Guests: Garry Kerr

Meeting quorum (simple majority of board members) was reached for this meeting.

Reports:

1. Secretary - June Rosploch
 - a. Minutes for January 5 Board Meeting were presented
 - i. Motion to approve minutes (as amended) by Bob Nelson / seconded by Bill Cooper – approved 5 / 0 / 0
2. Treasurer Report - Bill Sullivan
 - a. No Report
3. Booking Report - Bob Nelson
 - a. Gigs booked for 2010 : 13 YTD
 - b. CDs: 9 Sold, 154 In Stock
 - c. CD Baby: No activity to report
 - d. Motion to approve Booking report by June Rosploch / seconded by Bill Cooper – approved 5 / 0 / 0
4. 2nd Annual Summer Jazz Festival - Jack Convery
 - a. The club is seeking \$1,000 event sponsors this year to help defray some of the initial cost.
 - b. Bob Nelson will be the point person for Group Sales, Jack Convery for Entertainment, and Bill Cooper and Bud Pearce for Event Volunteers.
 - c. The structure of the event was discussed and it was confirmed that the Annual Summer Jazz Festival is an East Bay Banjo Club yearly event

and not a private endeavour.

Old Business:

1. Sound System - Bill Cooper
 - a. Emails have been exchanged with the sound system contact person from St. Mary's.
2. 2009 President Recognition Update – Bob Nelson
 - a. A certificate for dinner at Vic Stuarts was presented to Jim Blankenship in recognition for his serving as the club President for the past 2 years.
3. Equipment Cart – Bob Malucelli
 - a. If the club continues to use cumbersome and heavy equipment we should look into purchasing a UPS style cart.
 - b. Discussion was tabled until we find out what kind of new sound system equipment is purchased.
4. Club Camera – June Rosploch
 - a. There was a brief discussion around the possible digital camera options and cost for the club to purchase a club camera.
 - b. Motion to purchase a digital camera for approximately \$150 was made by Bill Cooper / seconded by Jim Blankenship – approved 5 / 0 / 0
 - c. Action Item: June Rosploch will purchase a digital camera
5. Club Photo –
 - a. A club group photo used for various publicity items should be updated annually.
 - b. The targeted date for the photo shoot is Sunday, March 7 and preferably early afternoon (tentatively 1 P.M.)
 - c. The suggested location was the old train at the Martinez

waterfront area. There is also an old train station that could be a nice backdrop for the photo.

- d. Motion to secure a photographer for \$75 was made by Bill Cooper / seconded by June Rosploch – approved 5 / 0 / 0
- e. Action Item: Bob Nelson to contact photographer and make arrangements .
- .6. Copywrite – Bill Sullivan
 - a. No Report
 - b. Outstanding Action Item (1/5/2010): The board has requested that all 2nd Annual Summer Jazz Festival materials be changed back to the original club copywrite notation.
7. Solo Playing Update – Bill Cooper
 - a. Bill Cooper reported that Gerald Reeves is interested in working on a solo opportunity.
 - b. Bill will also start soliciting more break / solo participation from more members.

New Business

1. Sacramento Banjo Rama – Jack Convery
 - a. The club is invited to ride up to Sacramento via a bus for an estimated \$30 a person.
 - b. On the return trip bus trip, there will be a no host dinner stop.
2. Board Minutes for Newsletter – Bill Cooper
 - a. It was suggested that the approved board minutes be published as part of the newsletter.

East Bay Banjo Club Board Meeting Minutes (Continued)

- b. Motion to publish the approved monthly board minutes was made by Bill Cooper / seconded by June Rosploch – approved 5 / 0 / 0
- 3. Membership Categories
 - a. Garry Kerry approached to board with a possible addition to the Honorary / Life Membership. The discussion was tabled since category of membership is on the April Board meeting agenda.
- 4. Membership Handbook
 - a. The membership handbook is a way to welcome new members into the club and is provided to new members. A summary of the club by-laws can be found in the handbook.
 - b. Action Item: June Rosploch will email all board members a copy of the handbook.
- 5. Website Enhancements
 - a. It was agreed this is not a board item and can be taken off-line.

Summary of Agenda Items for Future Board meetings:

1. March

- a. Sound System – Bill Cooper

2. April

- a. Honorary Life Membership – Board Discussion

Closing

Meeting Adjourned at 7:20 PM

Minutes are respectfully submitted by June Rosploch

March 2, 2010

Attendees: Jack Convery, Jim Blankenship, Bob Malucelli, June Rosploch, Bill Cooper, Bob Nelson

Guests - None

Meeting quorum (simple majority of board members) was reached for this meeting.

Reports

1. Secretary - June Rosploch
 - a. Minutes for February 2 Board Meeting were presented
 - i. Motion to approve minutes by Bob Nelson / seconded by Bill Cooper – approved 5 / 0 / 0
2. Treasurer Report – June Rosploch (for Bill Sullivan)
 - a. February 2010
 - i. \$805.00 Income
 - ii. \$1,551.84 Expenses
 - iii. **-\$746.84** Monthly Gross Profit
 - b. Net February Balance
 - i. \$9,045.04
 - c. Motion to approve financial report by Bill Cooper / seconded by Jim Blankenship – approved 5 / 0 / 0
3. Booking Report - Bob Nelson
 - a. Gigs booked for 2010: 7 New, 21 YTD
 - b. CDs: 1 Sold, 153 In Stock
 - c. CD Baby: No activity to report
 - d. Motion to approve Booking report by June Rosploch / seconded by Jim Blankenship – approved 5 / 0 / 0
4. 2nd Annual Summer Jazz Festival - Jack Convery
 - a. Bill Cooper and Bud Pearce are soliciting Event Volunteers

Old Business

1. Sound System - Bill Cooper

- a. Discussion deferred to March 7
2. Club Camera – June Rosploch
 - a. A digital camera was purchased and within budget
3. Club Photo –
 - a. The date, time and location changed for the annual club photograph. Tentatively April 18 at 2 P.M. will be suggested to the photographer. The new location is the old, tan, Martinez Superior Court Building (currently referred to as Wakefield Taylor Courthouse) on Court Street between Main Street and Ward Street.
 - b. Action Item: Bob Nelson to contact photographer and get a date confirmation.
4. Weekly Club Meeting Change
 - a. A large number of EBBC members preferred a change to the meeting night vs. changing locations.
 - b. A motion was made to change the clubs meeting night to Wednesdays as of March 17 was made by Bill Cooper / seconded by Bob Malucelli – approved 5 / 0 / 0
 - c. 6 pizzas will be provided by Round Table Pizza on March 17
 - d. **Action Item: Jack Convery will notify Round Table Pizza of the club weekly practice night change to Wednesday**
 - e. **Action Item: June Rosploch will send our regrets to Pegg's Western Grill in Martinez which offered their restaurant for the club weekly meetings.**

East Bay Banjo Club Board Meeting Minutes (Continued)

5. Sacramento Banjo Rama – Jack Convery
 - a. There will be not charter bus offered this year.
 - b. Bob Nelson will remind club members of the sign-up cut-off.
 - c. **Action Item: June Rosploch will send check along with club member’s names prior to the deadline for group discounts.**
6. Club Banner
 - a. The club banner is out of date and needs to be replaced especially since there is a change to the weekly meeting night.
 - b. **Action Item: Jim Blankenship will obtain quotes for a new club banner and report back at the March board meeting.**

Outstanding Action Items

1. Copy write – Bill Sullivan
 - a. **1/5/2010: All copy write notations for the 2nd Annual Summer Jazz Festival will be changed back to the original copy write text of “Copywrite East Bay Banjo Club All Rights Reserved”.**

Summary of Agenda Items for Future Board meetings:

1. March
 - a. Sound System – Bill Cooper
2. April
 - a. Honorary Life Membership – Board Discussion

Closing

Meeting Adjourned at 7:01 PM

Minutes are respectfully submitted by June Rosploch

EBBC Board	
President <p style="text-align: center;">president@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Jack Convery
Vice President <p style="text-align: center;">vicepresident@eastbaybanjolorg</p>	Bob Malucelli
Secretary <p style="text-align: center;">secretary@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	June Rosploch
Treasurer <p style="text-align: center;">treasureer@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Bill Sullivan
Music Director <p style="text-align: center;">musicdirector@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Bill Cooper
Immediate Past President <p style="text-align: center;">pastpresident@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Jim Blankenship
Booking Agent <p style="text-align: center;">bookingagent@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Bob Nelson

Non-Board Positions	
Assistant Music Directors <p style="text-align: center;">ljrisner@sbcglobal.net president@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Betty David Larry Risner Jack Convery
Web Master <p style="text-align: center;">webmaster@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	John Rosploch
Newsletter Editor/Publisher <p style="text-align: center;">editor@eastbaybanjp.org</p>	June Rosploch
Membership <p style="text-align: center;">membership@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Sheila Welt
Hospitality	Mickie McDonald
Librarian <p style="text-align: center;">pastpresident@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Jim Blankenship
EBBC Summer Jazz Festival Co-Chairs <p style="text-align: center;">treasureer@eastbaybanjo.org president@eastbaybanjo.org</p>	Bill Sullivan Jack Convery

Music Is the Language of the Soul

The Musical Instrument Museums grand opening was April 24 and is located in Phoenix, Arizona

The Musical Instrument Museum welcomes the young and the old, the uninitiated and the knowledgeable, to explore and experience the rich diversity of the world's music and musical instruments.

Music is something all humans share, a source of beauty and comfort in our daily lives, a means to give voice to our joy in times of celebration and a powerful force that brings us all together. Music is the lifelong friend that we all have in common.

The collection and display of musical instruments are from every country in the world, preserving, protecting, and sharing these gifts with future generations. Museum guests will enjoy a close encounter with the instruments themselves, enhanced by state-of-the art audio and video that brings to life the sounds and sights of these instruments as experienced in their cultures of origin.

To learn more visit: <https://www.themim.org/>



A Banjo Under the Bed?

The banjo may well be the most misunderstood and underrated musical instrument in existence today.

The ancestor of the banjo probably originated in Arabia a thousand years ago. The instrument, called the Rebec, consisted of a hollowed-out gourd, animal skin stretched over an opening cut in the gourd, and a neck supporting three gut strings. The Rebec found its way to West Africa, and was brought to the American Colonies. When the popularity of the "Banjar" was noted by Thomas Jefferson, in Virginia, the instrument had acquired a fourth string and by the mid- and late-nineteenth century the fifth string was added.

With the advent of jazz during the early years of the twentieth century the five-string banjo suffered a severe blow. The harmonic limitations imposed by the fifth string made it unsuitable for intricate chord progressions of jazz and it just wasn't loud enough to compete with the rest of the typical jazz combo.

As a result, the fifth string was eliminated, the neck shortened, the head enlarged, a resonator added, and heavier strings put on. The product of these modifications was called a "tenor", or "plectrum" banjo because it was strummed with a pick. Thus, the banjo became a rhythm instrument, and spawned even further hybrids, such as "banjolins", smaller, eight-stringed mandolin-like instruments

Note: The source for this article, "A Banjo Under the Bed?" came from an article, The Five String Banjo, Coming Out of The Closet (Or Attic) At Last, by Joe Knowlton, in the Sheet Music Magazine, April/May 1979 issue.

Thank you Bob Malucelli for sharing the supporting information used in the "Music Is the Language of the Soul" and "A Banjo Under the Bed?"

