



EAST BAY BANJO CLUB

SINCE 1963



March/April 2014

Membership Newsletter

Editor: Karen Hefter

Volume 9 Issue 2

Upcoming Play Out Schedule

April 18th

Walnut Creek Civic Center
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

April 26th

Forest Home Farms, San Ramon
11:00 am - 2:30 pm

May 1st-4th

BanjoRama, Clarion Hotel
Sacramento, CA
Perform Sun. 2:45 pm - 3:05 pm

May 8th

SIRS, Walnut Creek
12:30 pm - 1:15 pm

May 22nd-24th

Arizona Banjo Blast
Tuscon, Arizona

May 26th

The Kensington, Walnut Creek
1:30 pm—2:30 pm

East Bay Banjo Club Meets
Every Tuesday
7:00 pm- 9:00 pm
Luigi's #1 Deli
537 Main St. at Castro St.
Martinez, CA

President's Message:

First of all I would like to thank all of you that make the club what it is for all of us. Secondly, many thanks to the volunteers that haul around and set up the sound system for the Tuesday meetings and also the gigs. It's a lot of work and much is being done to make that task a lot easier.



I had every intention to add to my previous article regarding song introductions, but another subject of more importance has come to light. It has to do with the volume levels while playing a banjo. There is a great difference between playing a guitar as compared to playing a banjo. A guitar by nature does not deal well with hard playing and therefore it isn't played hard, even by beginners. The banjo on the other hand is of a drum style construction and most players have a natural tendency to play the banjo way too hard because it seems like the thing to do. Unfortunately, playing a banjo hard takes away from its somewhat limited tonal qualities. There is a natural tendency to play a banjo hard, especially if one is playing along with other banjo players. The problem here is that the more banjos you add to a group, the louder they are collectively, and then the sound can turn into just a lot of noise. Banjos are by nature loud and it takes a little time to learn how to play them softly. My suggestion for beginners is to learn how to play the chords while holding the pick loosely or use a soft pick. Either of these methods will help result in softer playing. It's much easier to start learning to play softly then advance to playing harder if (and when) it is needed. When playing rhythm in a group, try to be aware of how loudly you and the others are playing. If you can't hear the lead melody or the vocalist, then the rhythm players are playing too loud. A guide for this is for the rhythm players to play as if a vocalist is singing each and every song. The melody of a tune must always be dominant to the listener's ear at all times – rhythm is the support foundation for the melody and should never overpower the melody.

Some thoughts for rhythm banjo playing:

- Play in support of the group, not for yourself.
- Play every tune as if there is a vocalist singing it.
- Keep in mind that the banjo is much louder to those out in front of you.
- If someone is playing loudly, don't play loudly also.
- If you can't hear the melody, the rhythm is too loud.

Larry Risner

Be sure to check our website,
www.eastbaybanjo.org,
for current event information and a
blog about past performances.

For bookings, Contact
Phil Myers, Booking Agent at
bookingagent@eastbaybanjo.org
or
Call 925-932-3489

Flying With Your Banjo

By: Garry Kerr

Members flying to Arizona with their banjos should be aware of the hazards to their instruments when entrusted to airline employees. Two Bay Area banjoists have incurred serious damage to their instruments with only minor compensation by the airlines. The greatest risk comes when the instrument is checked into the baggage handling system and goes through automated machinery where odd shaped cases can become jammed and possibly crushed or broken (it has happened).

You should carry your banjo through TSA in hopes of carrying it aboard, but there is always the remote possibility of having to gate check it along with the baby strollers etc. This avoids the potential disaster in the terminal building but your case WILL be thrown onto the conveyer belt and stacked in the baggage hold with other bags and cargo. At your destination, you pick it up in the jetway next to the aircraft door. The best strategy is to plan on carrying your banjo on board so that is within arms reach for the entire trip. Most airlines today allow musical instruments to be carried aboard and travel in the overhead bins or coat closet IF there is room. The captain and flight crew have the final say in the matter. Whichever airline you chose, you need to strategize so that you position yourself as close to the front of the boarding order as possible. Although I have flown on several airlines, Southwest is by far the musician friendliest of all the carriers. The chance that you can carry your banjo aboard is nearly 100%. In fact, flight attendants often will ask you to play something. Since Southwest uses a group boarding system you must do whatever you can to get as close as possible to the front of the line in the "A" group. Subsequent groups reduce your chance of finding an empty bin. Southwest offers priority boarding options for \$12.50 and up, a good investment. Also be sure to check in online 24 hours before your flight, and at the earliest possible moment. Even if you check in less than a minute after the window opens, expect a boarding number greater than 25 – 30. Don't forget there will be a handful of pre-boards also. Experience has shown me that anywhere in the "A" group, the odds are good that you will find an empty bin. **Always have your banjo in a hard case.** Once you board and your banjo is safely in the bin, there will only be room left for 1 roller bag and little else. That bag will be shoved into the bin and pushed until it is realized that it will only fit sideways. Also, if your flight arrives too late to make a connection, you lose your priority boarding privilege and your banjo will have to be gate checked. For that reason, always pack your banjo as though it is going to be drop kicked into the hold. When packing your banjo, see how it fits in the case and how it might move when the case is dropped at any angle. This is how I pack my banjo if I suspect it might be handled by the airline:

- a. Slack the strings.
- b. Mark the position of the bridge with tape and lay it flat on the head.
- c. Be sure the resonator fits tightly in the case, both horizontally and vertically. If necessary, pack with bubble wrap. If tossed onto the conveyer belt, it always lands top down.
- d. Be sure the resonator thumb screws are good and tight – if the case is dropped, the edge of the flange can easily break out of the top of the resonator.
- e. Be sure the neck is well supported near the peghead, as this is the weakest point on the banjo. The safest way is to find a way to immobilize the peghead.
- f. You will likely find one or more latches open at your destination. It doesn't hurt to put a strap, (or duct tape) through the handle and around the case as extra insurance.
- g. Be sure there is nothing in your case that attracts the attention of TSA.

If your banjo travels in the hold, it doesn't hurt to open the case at the destination airport and check for damage before leaving.



Musical Instrument Museum

4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix, AZ

By: Bob Malucelli

Photos from: www.mim.org

Those of you who are going to the Arizona Banjo and Ukulele Blast might want to spend some time checking out the Musical Instrument Museum. The museum boasts an extensive collection of more than 15,000 musical instruments, at least 5,000 of which are on display. Admission includes use of a wireless headset that picks up signals transmitted from each exhibit. As you walk towards each exhibit, you'll hear the sounds of the instruments being displayed. There are five Geographical galleries and each gallery has displays devoted to the music of individual regions. There is also a Mechanical Music Gallery, an Artist Gallery, an Experience Gallery, and a Conservation Lab. The cost is \$18. Telephone: 480-478-6000.



Look, Ma, No Paper!

(Or, Go Digital And Forget About That Big, Bulky Binder)

By: Karen Hefter

Whenever I play my banjo, other banjo players and audience members constantly ask me about the electronic device I am using for my music. This often starts an interesting conversation where I tell the person how wonderful it is to use the iPad for music. I must be convincing, because this has, in several cases, resulted in the person going out and buying an iPad for their own music! Since music on my iPad seems to be so intriguing to so many people, I decided to write an article about how I use it.

Benefits: There are several major benefits of using an iPad for music. First, iPads are very light, small, and easy to carry around, especially compared to those huge binders with 250+ songs for each banjo band. Second, it is easy to find a particular song very quickly on the iPad - you don't have to remember if "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise" starts with "The" or "World" because you can either search by keyword, or you can scroll through a list of songs. For performances, you can make a 'set list' ahead of time. A 'set list' is a list of songs you set up in performance order. When you use a 'set list,' you can just tap the screen and go to the next song, in order, without searching or scrolling. The iPad is not difficult to use for music and it is not something that just the younger members of a band can master. In fact, one of the oldest members of our club got an iPad recently and loves it!

The ForScore App: To actually read and organize the music on the iPad, I use an 'app' called ForScore. It costs a few dollars and it is put on your iPad by going to the AppStore and searching for "ForScore." This app is specifically designed for reading, organizing, and annotating music and it has lots of other great features, too. For example, you can search for songs by keyword. You can make notes on your music by typing comments on it, in color, with a color and font size of your choice, or you can draw on your music using your finger as a 'pen' of any color, opacity, and tip width you like. Another neat feature is that you can 'crop' your digital music to eliminate the white space in the margins of the song, which also makes the music larger and easier to read. ForScore has a built-in metronome and you can even link a song from your music files to a song in ForScore so that you can practice with a soundtrack. You can even set up links to flip pages back and forth, like when there is a repeat on the third page of a song that refers back to the first page. Or, you can buy a Bluetooth foot pedal, like the Firefly Cicada or the AirTurn BT-105, which allows you to flip pages back and forth for songs that are more than one page long, without even taking your hands off of your banjo! I personally prefer the Firefly Cicada, because it is lighter, smaller, and cheaper, plus it uses real batteries, rather than requiring an outlet somewhere to charge it.

How To Get Music On The iPad: You may wonder, "How the heck do I get the music on the iPad in the first place?" It is not too difficult, as it turns out. The first step is to have someone in the group scan each piece of music into its own .pdf file. This can be done on a scanner or printer with scan capability. Then, each song has to be named appropriately. For the two bands I play in, I chose to name each song with the title of the song and the key, such as "Five Foot Two - C.pdf." Once this is done, the files can be stored (and shared with others) via a program called Dropbox. Dropbox is a nifty program that lets you get at your files from your computer, your iPad, and the web. Note: Dropbox is also a great way to share photos and videos with family and friends! From ForScore, you can import all of the music files you have stored in Dropbox, either all at once, or one song at a time.

Once you have your music on your iPad, you'll be ready to get rid of those big, bulky binders and to stop worrying about packing clothespins in your banjo case for windy outdoor gigs. You will be 'going green' by saving tons of paper. You, too, can amaze your fellow players and audience members with your technical prowess and create your own iPad converts!



Screen shot of my iPad, showing typed annotations in a pink font, purple and green highlighter markings, and a black 'drawing.'



Orinda Masonic Center Crab Feed Playout

February 28, 2014

By: Karen Hefter

Photos by: Bob Nelson

We played for a full house of around 150 happy and well fed people at the Orinda Masonic Center Crab Feed. The place was packed! Our fifteen players performed on a raised stage and had a great view of the festivities. We had a little trouble setting up the sound equipment, but everyone pitched in and we figured it out. For this performance, we were led by Betty David in a variety of crowd pleasing favorites. Our singers were Jesse De Torres, Kit Nelson, and Sheila Welt. We ended the performance with *When The Saints Go Marching In* and people got up and started marching in the aisles! Deb Hodson got out of her seat, brought her banjo down into the audience area, and joined the parade. The audience seemed very appreciative of our performance. Our players were: **Guy Black, Tom Brunetti, Kermit Collins, Betty David, Jesse De Torres, Don Granberg, Karen Hefter, Deb Hodson, Ardie Jarrett, Dina Melamed, Linda Myers, Phil Myers, Kit Nelson, Larry Risner, and Sheila Welt.** Club members Jim Able, **Georgette De Torres** (and her grandson), and **Bob Nelson** supported the players from the audience.



**Welcome to our
NEW MEMBERS!**



Education Corner

Since both Sacramento BanjoRama and the Arizona Banjo Blast are coming up, information about what to bring with you to a banjo conference seemed appropriate. Check out this link for suggestions on what to pack in your banjo case.

<http://blog.deeringbanjos.com/getting-organized/>



Bob Hodson



Garry May and Bonnie Miller

Banjoes For Sale or Wanted

Equipment Hand Truck, like new, DayTon Convertible, 4 wheel, \$75. Call Bob 925-674-0920.

The East Bay Banjo Club assumes no responsibility for any transactions made through the For Sale or Wanted advertisements.



East Bay Banjo Club

2014 Membership Form



**Dues are now payable in the amount of \$20.00 per member.
Youth, under 18 are Free**

Name: _____

Street or Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell number optional: _____

Email Address: _____

Birthday Month and Day: _____

Please make \$20/member checks payable to: East Bay Banjo Club. Money can be sent to EBBC, P.O. Box 5414, Concord, CA 94524 or personally given to Linda Myers, Membership Chairperson.

Celebrating Our Upcoming Birthdays...



May

- 09 - Larry Risner
- 24 - June Rosploch
- 27 - Betty David

June

- 03 - Robin Reeves
- 07 - David Hefter
- 17 - Linda Myers



2014 EBBC Board	
President rhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net	Larry Risner
Vice President dmalucelli@att.net	Bob Malucelli
Secretary jarjohn@msn.com	Ardie Jarrett
Treasurer plmyershome@att.net	Linda Myers
Music Director 925-938-0126	Betty David
Immediate Past President weltbear@sbcglobal.net	Sheila Welt
Booking Agent plmyershome@att.net	Phil Myers

2014 Non-Board Positions	
Assistant Music Director entline@msn.com	Jack Convery
Assistant Music Director rhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net	Larry Risner
Hospitality weltbear@sbcglobal.net	Sheila Welt
Librarian jplblankenship@att.net	Jim Blankenship
Membership plmyershome@att.net	Linda Myers
Newsletter Editor/Publisher editor@eastbaybanjo.org	Karen Hefter
Telephone Tree dmalucelli@att.net	Diane Malucelli
Uniforms Gold Vest 925-685-0673 Polo Shirts jarjohn@msn.com	Robin Reeves Ardie Jarrett
Web Master bud.pearce@pearcechriss.com	Bud Pearce

A HUGE thank you goes to Sheila Welt for donating a new wireless mixer and 4 wireless mics to the EBBC. This is a HUGE improvement to our sound system. Thank you, Sheila! The club will be reimbursing you.

East Bay Banjo Club Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**Date:** Tuesday, January 14, 2014**Place:** Luigi's #1 Deli, 537 Main Street, Martinez, CA**Board Members Present:** Larry Risner, President; Bob Malucelli, Vice President; Ardie Jarrett, Secretary; Linda Myers, Treasurer; Betty David, Music Director; Phil Myers, Booking Agent; Sheila Welt, Past President.**Absent Board of Directors:** None**Committee Chairs Present:** Linda Myers, Membership; Jim Blankenship, Librarian.**Absent Committee Chairs:** Karen Hefter, Newsletter Editor; Bud Pearce, Web Master.**Guests Present:** Guy Black, Mary Black, Don Granberg, Bob Nelson, Kit Nelson, and Lynne Deutscher.**Call to Order:** 5:05 PM by Larry Risner, President.**BOD OFFICERS REPORTS:****Secretary:** December minutes were approved as presented, 7/0/0.**Treasurer:** Bob Nelson – Bob gave his report through Dec. 31, 2013. The treasurer's report was accepted 7/0/0. The treasurer's books have also been audited and passed to the next treasurer.**Vice President:** Bob Malucelli – Bob asked that we pick a bank that won't charge us a service charge. He asked if we would be donating funds this year. This was tabled.**Music Director:** Betty David – Betty likes the group to sit in a crescent shape with lead players in front. Betty would like to promote people to start a song, lead a song, or sing.**Booking Agent:** Phil Myers — It was suggested that we have gig terms up front and agreed on prior to the event.**CORRESPONDENCE:** None**COMMITTEE REPORTS:****Hospitality:** New chair needs to be appointed. Sheila Welt will cover position for now. Cards will only be sent for get-well and sympathy...no longer for birthdays.**Membership:** Linda Myers – Latest member is Allie Vaught, Larry Risner's granddaughter.**Librarian:** Jim Blankenship –Everything is o.k. and he will be responsible for old Resonators.**Web Master:** Bud Pearce - absent**Telephone Tree:** Diane Malucelli volunteered to chair this committee. Suggested that we activate when there is a death within the group.**Editor:** Karen Hefter – absent.**Mickie McDonald:** The BOD agreed that a memorial needs to be done but that we should wait a couple of weeks until CASA lets Kit Nelson know what they are going to do.**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Motion passed that we order 25 Resonators for the coming year. Another motion passed that we do not increase the annual dues for this coming year.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The formation of a By-Law revision committee was tabled until the Feb. meeting.
- A new wireless microphone system with 4 mics and 1 receiver was tabled until later in the year.
- What types of music and instruments are allowed to play with EBBC was tabled until the Feb. meeting.
- Organizations that we will donate to was tabled until later in the year.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 6:28 PM until February 11, 2014.**Respectfully Submitted,**

Ardie Jarrett



East Bay Banjo Club Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**Date:** Tuesday, March 11, 2014**Place:** Luigi's #1 Deli, 537 Main Street, Martinez, CA**Board Members Present:** Larry Risner, President; Bob Malucelli, Vice President; Ardie Jarrett, Secretary; Linda Myers, Treasurer; Betty David, Music Director; Phil Myers, Booking Agent, Sheila Welt, Past President.**Absent Board of Directors:** None**Committee Chairs Present:** Linda Myers, Membership; Bud Pearce, Web Master; Sheila Welt, Hospitality; Diane Malucelli, Telephone Tree.**Absent Committee Chairs:** Karen Hefter, Newsletter Editor; Jim Blankenship, Librarian.**Guests Present:** Guy Black, Mary Black, Don Granberg, Bob Nelson, Kit Nelson.**Call to Order:** 5:02 PM by Larry Risner, President.**BOD OFFICERS REPORTS:****Secretary:** January minutes were approved as presented, 5/0/2.**Treasurer:** Linda Myers gave the treasurer's report as of the end of February. The treasurer's report was accepted 7/0/0. This report will be filed for audit.**Vice President:** Bob Malucelli – Nothing to report.**Music Director:** Betty David – Betty thinks we are coming together as a group. She will do a write up of her expectations of new members for the newsletter, such as taking directions from the music director, and the proper uniform attire. She will handle all audience requests.**Booking Agent:** Phil Myers - Gigs for the year are coming in slowly, due to problems with the sound system. We need to play military songs at the Veteran gigs.**CORRESPONDENCE:** None**COMMITTEE REPORTS:****Hospitality:** Sheila Welt – Nothing to report**Membership:** Linda Myers – We have 36 paid members & 10 Life/Honorary/Youth members.**Librarian:** Jim Blankenship – Absent**Web Master:** Bud Pearce –Website is paid for the year, including the security system. He will make meeting date corrections. The big sign for Luigi's is finished. He can make business cards for officers & the club, if needed.**Telephone Tree:** Diane Malucelli – the tree has been put together and everything else is fine.**Editor:** Karen Hefter – absent**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:****By-Law Revisions:** Tabled until next month.**Wireless Mic System:** Larry explained the system, but decided to put it on hold for now.**NEW BUSINESS:****Don Granberg:** Don received a 8 string Little Wonder Vega Banjo Mandolin that he will donate to the club. The proceeds from its sale will go to the club.**ANNOUNCEMENT:** Guy shared a conversation with Luigi concerning his cost for our using his facilities. We need more members to purchase meals and other items to help offset his expenses. Please Help!!!**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 6:26 PM until April 8, 2014.**Respectfully Submitted,**
Ardie Jarrett

Concord, CA 94524

P.O. Box 5414



EAST BAY BANJO CLUB

Meets every Tuesday

From 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

At

Luigi's #1 Deli and Market

537 Main Street @ Castro Street

Martinez, CA