



# EAST BAY BANJO CLUB



Since 1963

May/June 2015

Membership Newsletter

Editor: Karen Hefter

Volume 10 Issue 3

## Upcoming Play Out Schedule

### June 19th

Aegis of Pleasant Hill  
6:15pm - 7:15 pm

### July 2nd

Castro Valley Masonic  
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

### July 4th

Orinda 4th of July Parade

### DATE CHANGE—August 15th

Club Picnic, Landers Landing



East Bay Banjo Club Meets  
**Every Wednesday**  
7:00 pm– 9:00 pm  
The Greenery Restaurant  
1551 Marchbanks Drive,  
Walnut Creek, CA

Be sure to check our website,  
[www.eastbaybanjo.org](http://www.eastbaybanjo.org),  
for current event information and a  
blog about past performances.

For bookings, Contact  
Bob Ehrhorn, Booking Agent at  
[bobehrhorn@att.net](mailto:bobehrhorn@att.net)  
or  
Call 510-581-5195

## President's Message:

What can I say? I am so very proud to be a member of a fun group dedicated to playing banjos – for that, all I can say is thanks to all of you!!!

This month I'd like to share some playing techniques that I have learned over the years. I have observed that the easy part of playing an instrument is learning to play it. The more difficult part is playing it along with others, in order to create a harmonious and well blended sound.

In previous articles I have addressed basic musical information and now I would like to deal with playing techniques.

First, the tempo (rhythm): For a group, this is the most critical component. Someone must set the tempo either with a count or introduction. Once it has been set it must be followed by all that are playing in the group. All players not playing either harmony or melody should be playing rhythm. So now comes the question, "just who/what do I follow when playing rhythm?"

- Vocals - If there is a vocalist, that is the person to follow and the vocalist should keep an even tempo all through the tune – you have no choice and must follow the vocalist's tempo.
- Bass – If no vocalist then the bass is the instrument to follow – the bass must keep a steady and solid beat for everyone to follow and the vocalist(s) should be following the bass also.

Second, the harmony: Harmony is playing that supports and re-enforces the melody, but does not duplicate it. Harmony should not be the audible focus of the tune for the listeners; the melody should always be the focus. Harmony playing is acquired with practice and developing an ear for various chord and note patterns. Harmony can also be picked notes rather than chords, as long as it adds to the tune.

Third, the melody: The melody is the voice (lyrics) of the song, be it vocal or presented by an instrument. Rarely is it proper to have more than one melody player at a time. However, this can sound really nice if it is done by two different



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### Pittsburg Senior Center

May 16, 2015

By: Diane Malucelli

Photos by: Dianne Risner

The EBBC ployout on Saturday, May 16th was at the Pittsburg Senior Center and it was for their Senior Health Fair. They had tables with health information throughout the building. They had a wide variety of entertainment before our performance, such as follies dancers, singers and tap dancers. We played while people ate lunch, but we were delayed about a half hour because of the equipment setup. We played for about 45 minutes.

Betty David and Larry Risner led our group and Guy Black was our bass player. The other banjo players were Tom Brunetti, Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Bob Malucelli, Diane Malucelli, and Bud Pearce. Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg and Bud Pearce were our vocalists. The audience really enjoyed our music and several of them got up and danced to our music. There were two ladies that danced together and a gentleman that did a soft shoe dance.

The organizers of the event would love to have us come back again next year but we explained that we need to have setup time factored into the schedule. We'll see what happens next year. It was a fun event and the seniors seemed to really enjoy it.

### President's Message, Continued from Page 1

Instruments, as a pair or a voice and an instrument together harmonizing, much like two vocalists singing together.

Ironically, many soloists have a tendency to vary the tempo and over-play rhythm. The reason for this is that they have worked at developing methods to emphasize playing songs that sound wonderful when soloing but with a group or band it doesn't work real well. It's easy to do all sorts of things when one is playing alone, even add or omit notes and also vary the rhythm – anything goes playing solo – it adds character!

Funny thing - did you notice that I have have not used the word "Banjo". The concepts in this article apply to playing any instrument – banjos included.

Oh yes, what about that loudness thing? The order of dominance when playing in a group is that the melody (vocal and/or lead player) should be the loudest "out in front" with all the others playing support.

Til' next time,  
Larry Risner  
EBBC President



## Sacramento BanjoRama 2015

5-17-2015

by: Karen Hefter

photos by: Bob Nelson, Karen Hefter

The EBBC made a very strong showing at the 2015 Sacramento BanjoRama. We were one of the largest banjo bands present that day, with 19 performers up on stage. We also had more singers than any other banjo band. Our performance was very spirited and was very well received by the large crowd. We started out with our club's theme song, "The Banjo Picker's Ball," and our club members sang the song with gusto the second and fourth times through. This gave the performance a very strong start.

We played a total of 9 songs, which featured 6 of our fabulous singers: Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Red Higgins, Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce, and Danielle Torres. The singers were all real crowd pleasers and the audience happily sang along to many of the songs. One of the crowd favorites was "Crawdad Song," led by Banjo Hall of Famer Harry Higgins and sung by his wife Red Higgins and granddaughter Danielle Torres. Bud Pearce always gets a lot of enthusiasm from the crowd when he sings "Hello Ma Baby" with his tiny plastic megaphone. The other singers were equally well received.

This year's BanjoRama performance was a real showcase of our club's talents - songs were led by 4 different banjo players and sung by 6 of our singers. Our performers included: Tom Brunetti, Jack Convery, Betty David, Clyde Dedmon, Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Karen Hefter, Harry Higgins, Red Higgins, Garry Kerr, Bob Malucelli, Diane Malucelli, Dina Melamed, Phil Myers, Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce, Larry Risner, Danielle Torres, and guest performer John Stafford on bass.

Later on in the day, our own Jack Convery was featured in his own solo set and he started out performing solo, accompanied by Evan Dale on bass. Next, Jack invited John Stafford up with his clarinet for another song. As time went on, Jack slowly built up the group on stage by inviting several outstanding EBBC members, including Kit Nelson, Harry Higgins, Danielle Torres, and Bud Pearce, to join him one or two at a time. Jack ended his set by playing Dueling Banjos with a friend who played the 5-string banjo. Jack's set was a half hour of outstanding music!



### Sacramento BanjoRama





### Stoneman Village

May 26, 2015

By: Sheila Welt  
Photos by: Bob Nelson

It was a beautiful day for an outdoor playout. The weather was sunny, with enough breeze to keep the heat down. Our audience was spirited and sang along with many of our songs. A lot of the residents came up to talk with us after our performance. It was good to see friends from past EBBC performances in attendance.

Banjo Players in attendance: Tom Brunetti, Jim Blankenship, Betty David, Clyde Dedmon, Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Ardie Jarrett, Bob Malucelli, Diane Malucelli, Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce and Sheila Welt. Singers were: Bob Ehrhorn, Don Granberg, Kit Nelson, Bud Pearce and Sheila Welt. Bass: Guy Black. Washboard: Dina Melamed.

Set Up, Break Down and Sound Crews included: Tom Brunetti, Bob Elrhorn, Ardie Jarrett, Bob Malucelli, Diane Malucelli, Bob Nelson, and Sheila Welt. Our photographer for the day: Bob Nelson.

An interesting side note to this playout: There was a scheduling conflict between our playing and some kind of meeting that was scheduled for the same time slot. We were informed that we needed to turn off the mics because we were too loud and the people in the meeting couldn't hear each other speak. With mics off, the singers could not be heard and it was difficult for the banjos to stay in sync with each other. Regardless of the restrictions, the audience enjoyed our performance and the EBBC had a good time.





**My Cigar Box Ukuleles**

By: Bob Malucelli

I recently built two ukuleles out of cigar boxes. I made the neck of the first one out of a piece of birch wood and I shaped the wood so that the peg head was at 15 degrees to the fingerboard. I added a thin piece of trim and installed metal frets. I connected the neck to the cigar box, cut tone holes in the box, and added tuners. This ukulele has a nice sound to it.

I made a second ukulele out of a deeper cigar box. I put a piece of birch wood inside the box and attached it to the underside of the top of the box, parallel to the neck. I used another piece of the birch wood and added it to the top of the neck to make the 15 degree angle. I made the frets out of toothpicks and added a piece of trim. The tone holes are on the sides of the 'head' this time. This ukulele doesn't have as nice of a tone as the other, so further experimentation with fret material, tone hole size, depth of the box, etc. is required. The total cost of this ukulele was under \$20.

**Martinez Seniors Ukulele Jam Club**

**Continues to meet this summer. See the Martinez Senior Monthly Bulletin for dates that practice is suspended.**

Ukulele players are always welcome to play with the EBBC at their meetings on Wednesday nights, 7:00-9:00pm, The Greenery Restaurant.

**2015 Performance Participation  
2015 Playouts to date: 6**

Black, Guy	5
Blankenship, Jim	1
Brunetti, Tom	5
Convery, Jack	2
David, Betty	6
Dedmon, Clyde	4
Ehrhorn, Bob	5
Granberg, Don	6
Hefter, Karen	3
Higgins, Harry	2
Higgins, Red	2
Hodson, Deb	1
Horner, Terry	2
Jarrett, Ardie	4
Kerr, Garry	4
Lardge, Chris	2
Malucelli, Bob	5
Malucelli, Diane	5
Melamed, Dina	4
Myers, Linda	2
Myers, Phil	3
Nelson, Bob	5
Nelson, Kit	5
Neuman, Dick	1
Pearce, Bud	5
Risner, Larry	3
Torres, Danielle	2
Welt, Sheila	2

**New feature: Participation Awards**

At the end of the calendar year, members who actively participate in at least half of the yearly playouts will receive a gift certificate of \$15 to be used at the Greenery Restaurant toward a meal.

*Upcoming Birthdays...*



**July**

21 - Brian Green  
31 - Janet Mullin

**August**

05 - Angelina Blankenship  
31 - Bob Malucelli



2015 EBBC Board	
<b>President</b> rhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net	Larry Risner
<b>Vice President</b> dmalucelli@att.net	Bob Malucelli
<b>Secretary</b> jarjohn@msn.com	Ardie Jarrett
<b>Treasurer</b> weltbear@sbcglobal.net	Sheila Welt
<b>Music Director</b> 925-938-0126	Betty David
<b>Immediate Past President</b> weltbear@sbcglobal.net	Sheila Welt
<b>Booking Agent</b> bobehrhorn@att.net	Bob Ehrhorn

2015 Non-Board Positions	
<b>Assistant Music Director</b> entline@msn.com	Jack Convery
<b>Assistant Music Director</b> karenhefter@gmail.com	Karen Hefter
<b>Assistant Music Director</b> rhythmbanjo@sbcglobal.net	Larry Risner
<b>Hospitality</b> weltbear@sbcglobal.net	Sheila Welt
<b>Librarian</b> jpblankenship@att.net	Jim Blankenship
<b>Membership</b> dmalucelli@att.net	Diane Malucelli
<b>Newsletter Editor/Publisher</b> editor@eastbaybanjo.org	Karen Hefter
<b>Telephone Tree</b> dmalucelli@att.net	Diane Malucelli
<b>Uniforms—Gold Vest &amp; Polos</b> jarjohn@msn.com	Ardie Jarrett
<b>Web Master</b> bud.pearce@pearcechriss.com	Bud Pearce

**Education Corner**



Here are practice tips from highly successful banjo players:

<http://blog.deeringbanjos.com/10-practice-habits-of-highly-successful-banjo-players/>

**Date:** Wednesday, April 8, 2015

**Place:** Greenery Dining Room, Walnut Creek, CA

**Board Members Present:** Larry Risner, President; Ardie Jarrett, Secretary; Betty David, Music Director; Bob Ehrhorn, Booking Agent.

**Absent Board of Directors:** Bob Malucelli, Vice President; Sheila Welt, Treasurer and Past President.

**Appointed Chairs Present:** Diane Malucelli, Membership & Telephone Tree; Jim Blankenship, Librarian; Bud Pearce, Web Master.

**Absent Appointed Chairs:** Sheila Welt, Hospitality; Karen Hefter, Editor.

**Guest Present:** Chris Lardge; Guy Black; Diane Risner.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:37 by Larry Risner, President.

#### **BOD OFFICERS REPORTS:**

**Secretary:** The minutes were approved as presented, 4/0/3

**Treasurer:** Sheila Welt was absent, but her report was accepted as presented, 4/0/3. This report will be filed for audit.

**Vice President:** Bob Malucelli was absent.

**Music Director:** Betty David had nothing to report.

**Booking Agent:** Bob Ehrhorn – We have a gig on April 18<sup>th</sup> from 11 – 2:30 at Forest Hill Farms. Larry Risner and Betty David will be acting as co-music directors. We plan to also work with little kids to get them interested in playing the Ukulele, similar to the previous year.

**Past President:** Sheila Welt, Absent.

#### **APPOINTED CHAIR REPORTS:**

**Hospitality:** Sheila Welt – Absent

**Membership:** Diane Malucelli – The new membership roster is available.

**Telephone Tree:** Diane Malucelli – she will be working on an update.

**Librarian:** Jim Blankenship – Jim has copies of the new Crawdad song.

**Editor:** Karen Hefter – Absent

**Web Master:** Bud Pearce – Nothing to report.

#### **UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS:**

The Martinez Ukulele Group has about 25 players who we are to encourage to come and join the East Bay Banjo Club. Larry Risner and Bob Malucelli would like for them to join us at the Forest Hill Farms playout.

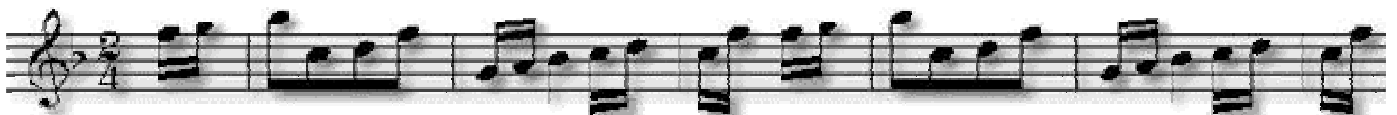
#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Arizona Blasters are willing to share their music with us, and would like for us to share with them. We agreed that both groups could benefit from this. We need to purchase a new program that will facilitate this sharing process (and allow us to protect our electronic music files). The program is called “Drop Box Pro” and will cost \$99.

A motion was made and passed that we authorize Karen Hefter to purchase and install this program. Motion passed 4/0/3.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,**  
Ardie Jarrett





**East Bay Banjo Club Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Wednesday, May 13, 2015

**Place:** Greenery Dining Room, Walnut Creek, CA

**Board Members Present:** Larry Risner, President; Bob Malucelli, Vice President; Ardie Jarrett, Secretary; Sheila Welt, Treasurer and Past President; Betty David, Music Director; and Bob Ehrhorn, Booking Agent.

**Absent Board of Directors:** None

**Appointed Chairs Present:** Diane Malucelli, Membership & Telephone Tree; Sheila Welt, Hospitality.

**Absent Appointed Chairs:** Jim Blankenship, Librarian; Bud Pearce, Web Master; Karen Hefter, Editor.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order at 5:35 by Larry Risner, President.

**BOD OFFICERS REPORTS:**

**Secretary:** The minutes were approved as presented, 7/0/0

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer’s report was accepted as presented 7/0/0. This report will be filed for audit.

**Vice President:** Bob Malucelli reported that he and Larry Risner will play their banjo and ukulele at a Boy Scout meeting with hopes of creating their interest in learning how to play. They will be furnishing music with a reproduction cost, which the club will pay for from the treasury.

**Music Director:** Betty David reported that there will be 3 playouts in the next 10 days. All is going well.

**Booking Agent:** Bob Ehrhorn reported that he had maps of how to get to BanjoRama in Sacramento and that we play at 2:55 for 20-30 minutes. The playout at Aegis Living of Pleasant Hill has been changed to Friday, June 19. It was clarified that since we are a 501 (c) (7) and operated exclusively for social purposes, donations are not deductible.

**APPOINTED CHAIR REPORTS:**

**Hospitality:** Sheila Welt – Nothing to report.

**Membership & Telephone Tree:** Diane Malucelli – We have two new paid members and she is working on updating the telephone tree. Diane will also keep track of which members participate at Banjo Rama for refund.

**UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS:**

Larry Risner reported that we are getting some interested players from their teaching Ukulele at the Martinez Senior Center. He and Bob Malucelli are also hoping to generate interest via their playing for the Boy Scouts.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

We discussed showing our appreciation to members who participate in our playouts. A motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and passed that the club give a \$15 Christmas gift certificate toward a meal at the Greenery to members who have played in at least half of our total yearly playouts.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,**  
Ardie Jarrett



Concord, CA 94524

P.O. Box 5414

[WWW.EASTBAYBANJO.ORG](http://WWW.EASTBAYBANJO.ORG)



# East Bay Banjo Club

**Meets every Wednesday**

**From 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM**

At

**The Greenery Restaurant**

**1551 Marchbanks Drive,**

**Walnut Creek, CA 94598**