



Volume 4 , Issue 3

JAMMIN' TIMES

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Texas Traveling ... A letter from Ken Harman to Reg Jones

How you doin'?

We have been in Texas for two weeks now and are having a good time here -- The weather is fine -- about 70f during the day but going down to around 40f at night -- still need a heater (kinda like May time in Birtle) We stopped off at Arlington near Ft Worth for a Bluegrass concert which I judge as just fair -- **Blue Highway** - one of my favorite groups, are great musicians but their choice of material seems too 'new grass' (or something) -- **Illrd Time Out** are also great musicians but again their choice of material seems different then I am used to.... Maybe I am too picky in my old age but these groups would all be sent home if good ole Bill Munroe had 'em in his band on account of looking "Scruffy" on stage -- what is it with these young performers to-day? They seem to think that dirty, torn, old jeans and needing a shave is cool -- maybe for rockers but not my Bluegrass heros --- They seem to forget that the only reason they survive is because of an audience that is largely gray haired and expecting something different. There that's my rant for the day -- it's over now.

You gotta get going down the road ol' buddy, you would love the place we are camped right now -- Triple Creek RV Camp near Woodville Texas (they have a web site) Its back in the piney woods about 12 miles from any town, the last 3 miles is over a red dirt road, but they have full hook-ups, large grass sites and really friendly helpful people -- Every week has a music genre theme, Gospel, Country, Bluegrass -- starting Thursday & Friday evening there is a pot luck supper at the main hall each night with pickin' afterwards. Saturday the same thing except local groups come in to put on a stage show with jammin' afterwards....

Sunday, Monday & Tuesday we just lay around in the sun or take side trips out to the Gulf or check out the back country....This part of Texas is pretty much woods with some farm land here and there (they call it the "Big Thicket.") Duncan Stewart (A MOBS banjo picker) is coming over for a few days next week on his way back home.

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REGGIE'S RAMBLINGS

Manitoba Caravaners

Well, it's nearing that time again to dig our RVs out of the Manitoba snow banks and get them ready for a summer of fun and camping, so we can get on the roads and terrorize the campgrounds with our pickin' and grinnin'. Our favourite trip that we have made for the past two years has been to the Northern Lights Bluegrass Festival located near Big River Saskatchewan.

To say we have a ball is a severe understatement. Now, most of us on this trip, are not exactly spring chickens so driving long distances are not something we really enjoy. Picking and Grinning is another matter entirely. Consequently, we only drive as far as we have to at a time, so it won't interfere with our desire to jam the time away.

This year we have changed times slightly. Instead of leaving Grand Valley Park on Wednesday, we are actually leaving on Tuesday so we won't miss any of the events scheduled for Friday. This also lets us get set up on Thursday at beautiful Ness Creek. Our schedule is as follows.. Meet at Grand Valley Camp Ground Monday evening for a send-off jam at the pavilion. Leave early Tuesday morning for breakfast at Virden and then continue on to Indian Head, where we'll spend the night. On Wednesday, we will have breakfast at the Grain Elevator restaurant, then continue on to Watrous Saskatchewan. Once again, we'll pick our brains out and might even get down by the water, at that little café, for some yummy bread pudding. Who knows, we probably will even visit Danceland for one of their 90 minute dances. It costs a whole "Twoonie" to attend. On Thursday morning we will make our way to Big River with a stop for a breakfast near 16 hwy at a spot we found last year. Then continue on to Prince Albert for a break and a bit of shopping at their mall to make sure we have everything we'll need for the weekend. After an hour or so leave for the balance of our trip to Ness Creek and get set up. If you own a camper, come along with us. It's great if you are a musician, however, there is lots to do even if you are not so inclined and the bluegrass show at Northern Lights is wonderful with always lots of great talent being showcased. Now, if you don't own a camper, you can also be looked after, as all of the places we stop at have motels and in some cases, cabins for rent. Big River is close by and there are places located at their website that have facilities listed, if you book early. Weekend passes are reasonably priced, so you see you don't have many excuses to rob yourself of a great time. All you campers need to ensure is, your water tanks are full and your waste tanks are empty when you leave Watrous. Ness Creek is rough camping only. (They have showers and bathroom facilities on site) If you own a generator, take it along, as it's nice to have for a few conveniences you might need. They also can keep your batteries charged up. Don't worry about this too much, as someone always has one with them. You certainly will enjoy your surroundings at Ness Creek though, as it's located in the middle of a dense forest with lots of artsy carvings to admire while enjoying the music. Did I mention their canteen? How could I miss that important detail? Wow, the food is wonderful if you can't stand your own cooking. You can contact me for all the information you might require. You will be responsible for booking your own sites and weekend passes. Now this all takes place August 20th to the 22nd for the actual bluegrass weekend. We will however, be leaving on the 16th and returning for home on the 23rd. Some of us take our time coming home with a stay at Watrous on Monday evening and you are perfectly welcome to hang with us till the end. It's up to you. C'mon down to Westman jams and view the photos of last year's trip, or just come by and pick and grin with us.

Remember! No matter where are.....There you go!!!!!! Reg

Volunteer Of The Month



Lois Burke

Calendar of Events

Sunday, March 28 - Westman Jams Sprucewoods Jam
2 - 5 p.m. Sprucewoods Hall

Sunday, April 11-Theme Jam at Sprucewoods Hall "50's
Music" 2-5p.m.

Saturday, April 17 - Annual Yard Sale
Sprucewoods Hall 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Sunday, April 25 - Westman Jams Sprucewoods Jam
2 - 5 p.m. Sprucewoods Hall

Bingo - 7 p.m. every Thursday - Sprucewoods Hall

Crib Night - 7:30 every Monday - Sprucewoods Hall



April 9 - Russ Billeloch
April 21 - Christine Hearn
April 22 - Peggy Stock

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Texas traveling cont.....

The jammin' here is worth taking note -- all acoustic and so far I see about 25 or 30 pickers sitting around in a circle pretty well doing what Westman Jammers do--with one exception--- they have a remote mic mounted on an extended mike boom holder which in turn is mounted on a gurney type thing with wheels on it like you see under expensive office chairs.

The floor is cement so the things rolls along real easy and each picker just rolls it along to the next one when his/her turn is over--don't even have to get up - Nobody is minding the mixers or anything, just one mic and two big speakers in the corner of the hall and it all works really well. They have a sound stage as well for groups that come in but the jamming is done on the open main floor.

If (heaven forbid) somebody doesn't want to sit around listening to the music they have an attached game room to play cards, write a letter, read or tune your instrument

I have found that different regions have quite recognizable differences in styles in the way tunes are sung and played -- here you can detect the old time country swing manner of tempo's and rhythm applied to country tunes --

The traditional Bluegrass style of hard driving chords with heavy use of base strings on the guitar seems to get 'em confused a little bit.

I have heard some great vocals by local folks that come in to pick with park residents. Some old traditional country tunes that I hadn't heard for years or maybe never have heard.

Next month we are working our way up to Mountain View in Arkansas for a week of pickin' n grinnin' then over to Branson to maybe take in a show or two before coming home -- hope to get in one more Bluegrass concert over at North Platte Nebraska on our last stop North.

Will stay in touch, if Wayne is getting short of stuff for the "Times" you can give him this letter if it works for him.

Ken Harman

Triple Creek RV Camp
Woodville Texas



Sophia Batenchuk

Sophia is three years old and she and her parents have recently moved to Sprucewoods from Thompson. About a year ago she started singing along with her grandmother's favorite records and she hasn't looked back since. She loves Johnny Cash's **Ring of Fire** and performed it for us at the February Sprucewoods jam. Sophia's musical roots come from her grandparents. She has a plastic guitar which she plays to accompany her vocals. Come back and sing for us again Sophia.



John Weedmark and Eva Deamel

John and Eva hail from La Riviere and both have been playing the fiddle for fifty two years and twenty five years respectively. Both come from musical families and have drawn from the music of Don Messer, Andy Desjarlais and many others for their musical inspiration. They enjoy playing in care homes, hospitals, and also at dances. Welcome to Westman Jams guys.



Amy Olsen - Trotz

Amy hails from Brandon and has been singing karaoke and for fun for as long as she can remember. She likes country and 70's music and enjoys singing at the jams. She and Cathy Marshall were chatting at the February Sprucewoods jam and lo' and behold discovered that they were first cousins. Ain't that a hoot, another family connection at Westman Jams.

Welcome aboard Amy, hope we see lots more of you.

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February 22, 2010

Wayne Morrissey,
President
Westman Jams
P.O. Box 185
Douglas, MB
R0K 0R0

Dear Mr. Morrissey and Friends at Westman Jams,

On behalf of the International Music Camp it is my pleasure to thank you and all our friends at Westman Jams for the generous support you have offered for student scholarships again this year. The funds you raised and will assist 13 students in attending camp this summer.

2010 is shaping up to be a great summer and we're especially excited about the addition of a Composition program and the launch of our new music technology lab in the Alme International Arts Centre as well as the return of the Piping and Drumming camp. These additions will be a nice compliment to the 43 arts programs offered at IMC for students of all ages.

I would also like to invite you and anyone else who is interested in participating in our annual CPR (Clean, Paint & Repair) weekend which takes place at camp May 21 and 22, 2010. Come for a few hours or for both days to help beautify and maintain IMC's facilities as we prepare for the summer camp season. There are also volunteer opportunities throughout the summer.

When camp is in session each week includes a free Festival of the Arts concert Friday evenings at 8:00 and free student concerts every Saturday at 11:00 and 1:00; come and enjoy the beauty of the Peace Gardens and the IMC experience if you have some time! Of course, our Adult Camp is also a great way to enjoy IMC.

I wish you and all our friends at Westman Jams a wonderful and prosperous spring. Thank-you again for your support of arts education!

Sincerely,

Brent Johnson,
Canadian Representative
International Music Camp

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