

## [The Bluegrass Association of Southern California](#)

PO Box 10885  
Canoga Park CA 91309  
(818) 221-4680  
[bascinfo@socialbluegrass.org](mailto:bascinfo@socialbluegrass.org)

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## Simon Pure to Perform at BASC Bluegrass Night at the Braemar

Tuesday, January 18th, 2011  
[Braemar Country Club](#)  
4001 Reseda Bl. Tarzana 91356  
6:30 to 9:00 PM

Simon Pure performs a blend of traditional and contemporary Bluegrass music, and is one of best bands at it in Southern California.

Webster's Dictionary defines



Simon Pure

“Simon-Pure” as untainted, pure. The thesaurus yields synonyms such as genuine, authentic, and real. All of these words describe the core philosophy of this band, and those who have seen and heard them perform can attest to how well they have managed to live up to their name. Simon Pure is a straight ahead bluegrass band, combining superb musicianship with flawless vocals. Go to their website and give a listen to Laurie Campbell's work on *Kentucky Borderline*. Rhonda Vincent, move over, this cut is Simon-Pure dynamite.

The band members met at the Agoura Hills jam, enjoyed playing together, and formed the band in 2005. Since then,

they have been steadily increasing their repertoire, refining the sound, and building a sizeable fan base. They won first place honors at Topanga in 2006, and their appearance on the SWBA stage at Huck Finn this year resulted in an avalanche of positive comments from the crowd, and genuine interest from promoters.

Admission to the show is \$5.00, which includes coffee, tea, and soft drinks. \$19.00 admission also includes the world famous Braemar Country Club pasta bar which opens at 6:15 PM. Bar service is available.

There is ample seating and safe and secure free parking. Advance reservations are suggested. Call Harley Tarlitz at (818) 221-4680.

### *BASC Bluegrass Night to Change Venues*

Beginning February 15, 2011 BASC Bluegrass Night is moving to [Viva Fresh Cantina](#). Conveniently located at 900 Riverside Drive in Burbank, the cantina serves some of the best Mexican food in town. Moving to this new venue will enable us to offer an expanded program and improved seating. See you there next month!

## 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](mailto:french10@pacbell.net)

### 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  
Mondays  
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

Jeff Fleck  
(310) 390-4391  
[jeffreyfleck@me.com](mailto:jeffreyfleck@me.com)

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

# Bluegrass Oddities

-- by Jeff Fleck

*"Bluegrass is whatever the hell I say it is."*

This is the motto that a talented musician and songwriter I know has on his business card. My friend has a penchant for provocative statements usually laced with a healthy dose of irony. Such statements may evoke our ire at first, but upon reflection they encourage us to re-examine some of our own preconceptions and comfortably held beliefs. They can become the opening parry of a great discussion.

For some folks, however, those words represent the final statement of the discussion. This may simply be a case of ignorance. They hear several songs that are referred to as

Bluegrass and jump to large-scale conclusion based upon minimal information. The antidote is simple.

They need to listen to a lot more Bluegrass, particularly the music of the "Founding Fathers"

-- Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, the Stanley Brothers, among others -- most of which is easily accessible in the age of the CD and Internet.



Bill Monroe and two of the original Bluegrass Boys

among others -- most of which is easily accessible in the age of the CD and Internet.

There are other folks who take my friend's words pretty much as an ideological position for which there can be no compromise. They chafe at the imagined chains of anything smacking of tradition, definition, or limitation. Why should their creativity be limited, the inalienable right to express their deepest inner being infringed upon? And since we can't come up with a universally accepted definition of Bluegrass music, one man's (or woman's) opinion is as good as the next. In any case, the so-called Founding Fathers were themselves innovators who came up with their sound through experimentation.

Now whatever you may think of these positions, one thing is for sure: The Founding Fathers were indeed innovators and did experiment with their music. But not all experiments are successful. Considering some of those failed experiments -- I call them Bluegrass oddities -- might even prove instructive in developing a sense of what Bluegrass music is and is not.

In 1951, Bill Monroe recorded a new version of his 1946 hit song, *Kentucky Waltz*. This time he was backed by Nashville studio musicians -- the same musicians who would soon be churning out country music hits throughout the 50s and 60s -- instead of his own band, the Bluegrass Boys.

## Member Bands

[2 Frets Lower](#)

[Border Radio](#)

[The Brombies](#)

[Fifth Wheel](#)

[The Get Down Boys](#)

[Grasslands](#)

[Lonesome Otis](#)

[Murphy's Flaw](#)

[Sometimes in Tune](#)

[Stagerobbers](#)

[The Statmen](#)

Whispering Pines

[Wimberley Bluegrass Band](#)

## Teachers

### Bill Knopf

5-String Banjo Instructor. All styles. Over forty years instructing. 818-891-2533 or [billknopf@billknopf.com](mailto:billknopf@billknopf.com)

### Bill Purcell

Lessons in Banjo, all levels, in the Riverside/Inland Empire area. 951-353-1664

### Shelah Spiegel

Fiddle lesson in her home in Fountain Valley (Orange County). Also available to judge fiddle contests. 714-962-5083 or [ifddler@yahoo.com](mailto:ifddler@yahoo.com)

### Pat Cloud

Fingerpicking style banjo specialist from bluegrass to jazz. Over 40 years experience. Currently taking students at [Boulevard Music](#) in Culver City. (310) 398-2583

## Bluegrass Oddities (cont.)

A prominent role was given to the Hammond organ which was played by Owen Bradley, the man who produced more Monroe recordings than anyone else and who was also an architect of the Nashville Sound. In spite of Bradley's best efforts, the old Hammond did not catch on as a Bluegrass instrument.



The Stanley Brothers and The Clinch Mountain Boys

Sydney Nathan was the mastermind behind King Records, the pioneering independent label that championed both Rhythm and Blues and Bluegrass music in the post-war years. In 1960 he asked the Stanley Brothers, who were recording for King at the time, to do a cover of *Finger Poppin' Time*, a recent crossover hit for King Rhythm and Blues artists, Hank Ballard and the Midnighters. The Stanley Brothers cover of the song, complete with overdubbed drums and African American finger poppers, ("We was a pickin' and they was poppin' their fingers," is how George Schuffler described it) did not make it to the charts. Nor, as far as I know, has it been performed by any other Bluegrass band.

So there is something about the Hammond organ and the finger poppin' beat of rhythm and blues that do not quite mesh with the sound, style, and spirit of Bluegrass music. The musicians at the time realized this. Bill Monroe went back to recording with his Bluegrass Boys, and Carter Stanley would later refer to their cover of *Finger Poppin' Time* as "a little tune...that somebody talked us into recording one time..." And fifty years later we can still hear the incongruity. Like other musical genres, Bluegrass music is a mix of elements --instrumentation, melody, rhythm, harmony -- that blend together in a unique way. Experimentation and innovation keep a genre fresh, but like any living thing it will reject (sooner or later) the introduction of foreign or incompatible elements.



Hank Ballard and the Midnighters

### ***This Just In!***

***BASC to present Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper at the Ford Theatre on September 25, 2011. Get all the details in next month's BASC eNewsletter.***

# About BASC

BASC is dedicated to the support and promotion of Bluegrass music at all levels.

We support Bluegrass at the amateur level with our monthly Jam in the Park. We provide a showcase for the best local Bluegrass bands at our monthly BASC Night at the Braemar.

We build interest in Bluegrass by bringing some of the best national bands to Southern California, including such artists as J.D. Crowe, Laurie Lewis, IIIrd Tyme Out, James King, and The Special Consensus.

Most importantly, we provide a place where people who want to get connected to Bluegrass as pickers, as listeners, as volunteers or organizers - can get together and meet people who share their love of this great music.

## The January Band Scene....

**The Brombies** perform January 3rd, 17th, and 31st in the Back Room at [Viva Fresh Cantina](#) in Burbank. Shows start at 7:30 PM...**Grasslands** will be appearing at the [Blythe Bluegrass Festival](#) for two shows on Friday, January 14th...**Lonesome Otis** will be appearing at the [Bluegrass in the Park Festival](#) in Yuma, Arizona on Saturday, January 22nd.... **Get Down Boys** will be at [Liquid Kitty](#) on January 9th from 10 PM to 1 AM..**Sometimes in Tune** will perform at the Granada Hills Library on January 22nd at 3 PM...**Border Radio** will be at the the El Segundo Library on January 15th at 2 PM; they are hosting the Roots & Twang Night at [Molly Malone's](#) on January 16th, and will appear at the [Cinema Bar](#) in Culver City along with Cliff Wagner and the Old No. 7 on January 28th starting at 9 PM.

## Don't Miss the First BASC Jam in the Park of the Year!

Sunday, January 23rd, 1:00 to 5:00 PM

On the fourth Sunday of every month pickers from far and wide are gathering at the [CTMS Center for Folk Music](#) 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 when the weather when nice -- this jam is for pickers of all skills and experience.

Encino Park 16953 Ventura Blvd. Encino, CA 91316

[Click Here for Map](#)

### Yes, I would like to join BASC and support Southern California Bluegrass One-Year Membership

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this coupon and check to:

BASC c/o Ben Weinberg 16799 Schoenborn St. North Hills CA 91343