

September 2021 Volume 37 Number 9

# CONCEPTION, BIRTH, AND HISTORY OF THE ARMUCHEE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

-As told to Dan Daniel by Krickett Langley
Mack and Evelyn had played hillbilly and bluegrass
music for years as a hobby. Their son John had played
mandolin, guitar, and banjo since he was eight years
old. At the age of ten John played on the Archie
Campbell Show in Knoxville, Tennessee.

While serving four years in the United States Army, John played in Bluegrass bands overseas. After getting out of the Army, John toured the U.S. with professional Bluegrass bands. Mack, Jr. started playing the banjo at age fifteen and within a month he and a friend won a talent contest on television. After John got out of the Army, he and Mack, Jr. started playing as the

Farley Brothers. Krickett, their daughter, married Charles "Chuck" Langley in March of 1969. Although Chuck was raised around Shelby, North Carolina, the home of many Bluegrass greats such as Earl Scruggs, Don Reno, the Morris Brothers and others, he had not been exposed to Bluegrass music. All that changed when he married Krickett. Being exposed to this musical family got to him. He was "bitten by the bug." He started attending festivals in Lavonia, Georgia and at the Cobb County Fairgrounds.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1972, the Farley family was having dinner and, naturally, music became the topic. Chuck commented to John Dee, "It's a shame we

have no local Bluegrass festivals. The closest is Lavonia, Georgia." Chuck asked, "Why don't we just start a Bluegrass festival?" John sort of smiled and said, "We don't have any place to have one." The festival topic was dismissed when John answered Chuck's But the idea remained a question. question in Chuck's mind. The whole family was present - Mack, Sr., Evelyn, John Dee, Walter, and Pat (Farley) Hampton, Chuck, Krickett (Farley), and Hope Langley, and Mack, Jr.

Chuck was a superintendent for a building company out of Nashville, Tennessee. He and Krickett traveled, building hospitals in Albany, Georgia; Selma, Alabama; and Rome, Georgia. They had decided to make their home where the last job assignment had sent them, Rome, Georgia. They have lived in Rome since Fall, 1970. They had been looking for property when they were shown acreage on the Old Dalton Road.



We recognize and thank our new and renewing members, for helping us to spread the word!

> Jeff Darter Jerry Hundley

#### **SEBA Breakdown & Publications**

Breakdown@sebabluegrass.org

## 2020 SEBA Board of Directors



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mandolin, guitar chairman@sebabluegrass.org

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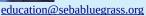
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Scott Norris guitar



(not shown)

How about **you**?

#### The **SEBA Breakdown** is a monthly production of:

The Southeastern Bluegrass Association, Inc. P.O. Box 7286
Marietta, GA 30065.

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#### **SEBA's Mission Statement**

The Southeastern Bluegrass Association (SEBA) is a nonprofit organization consisting of members, fans, bands, promoters, businesses, vendors, musicians, and friends of Bluegrass Music. Working together to reach a common goal: the preservation and promotion of Bluegrass Music, bringing it to the community through performers, instructors, jam sessions, venues and events, and providing information to all through our publications, the SEBA Breakdown and the SEBA websites.



# From the Editor HELP WANTED EDITOR SOUGHT

**The Breakdown** needs a volunteer to assume the position of Editor.

Duties include page composition and layout, soliciting contributions, and e-mailing the monthly newsletter.

Three years ago last month, I answered an ad like the one above, and took on the job of editing your *Breakdown* monthly newsletter. However for personal reasons it is time for me to step aside. I have tried to keep focused on local events, leaving national news to the national newsletters; and extending our music to younger people who perhaps don't have the sense of nostalgia that motivates many of us (self included).

I will continue on until the end of this year, and will certainly help the new editor into the job in any way I can.

Please consider stepping up to help. You may contact <u>breakdown@sebabluegrass.org</u>, or any of the board members you may happen to meet.



Please copy & use the SEBA logo. Link us...

On your web site, in your email or on your Facebook page you can help get the word out that SEBA is here to help everyone in the bluegrass music community.



## ARMUCHEE HISTORY

- continued from front page

Chuck didn't especially like it but Krickett bugged him until he bought the sixty-five acres bordered by the Armuchee Creek and the Old Dalton Road. The purchase was made in the Spring of 1973, with the intentions of making that their homeplace.

Chuck had not forgotten the idea of a festival. He called John Dee a few months after the land purchase and said, "Well, I've got someplace to have a festival. What do we need to do next to start one?" John Dee said, "You have to book bands and advertise." Chuck said, "Well, you can do all that, can't you?" So John agreed. Thus the **Armuchee Bluegrass Festival** was conceived. John talked to **Bill Monroe** about playing the first festival but he was booked up solid. John, having toured professionally, knew many bands. He contacted regional and area bands and soon had a good line-up. The festival was becoming a reality and a date was set for mid-September, 1973. The musicians, being friends of John's, agreed to play the first festival free of charge.

As you know, you don't just say, "Let's have a festival" and it just happens. It took almost a year of

planning and working to set it up. First came the inspection of the land to see if the area would be suitable. Next they had to see what work needed to be done to get the land ready. Some of the trees had to be cut down, some areas had to be bush hogged, outhouses and a stage had to be built, and a generator had to be found because there was no power down by the creek. Deciding to proceed with their plans (John having contacted the bands), they then approached Harold Galloway about doing the sound. In early 1973 the grounds began to buzz with activity. Poles were cut and set for the stringing of lights. A stage was constructed and two outhouses were built. All of this was made possible by the help of many good friends ... Ryman and Ruby Thurston, Ralph and Opal Thurston, Harold Cowart, and Pat and Joey Jordan. With everyone pitching in, the work began to move along. Along with the hard work, a lot of good memories were made. Uncle John Henry Morgan, Evelyn Farley's brother, kept the generator fueled.

John hired **Charlie "Peanut" Faircloth** as emcee, a job he held for thirteen years, adding a special flavor to the festival that only Peanut could add.

- please continue reading on page 6

# Festivals? Yes, Festivals!



Sept 23 – Sept 26 Cumberland, Maryland DelFest: Del McCoury, Travelin' McCourys, Old Crow Medicine Show, Bela Fleck, Seldom Scene, many more



**Sept 10 – 12** Bristol TN/VA. *Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion*, a celebration of the best in Appalachian music's past, present, and future. More than 100 artists on 16 stages over the three-day weekend. Jason Isbell, Tanya Tucker, Blackberry Smoke, Yola, Steeldrivers, Rhonda Vincent, etc.

bristolrhythm2021.com



ROMP Fest at Yellow Creek Park <a href="https://rompfest.com/">https://rompfest.com/</a> Sept 23 – 26 Allegany County Fairgrounds 11400 Moss Ave. Cumberland, MD 21502





## **SEBA Membership** Request & Suggestion Form

Yes I want	to Join SEBA & get the Monthly issue
of The Breakdown	with Internet Access, Member Directory
&	FREE Want Ads.

Fill in & mail form	or on line at	SEBAbluegrass.org

DATE	I'M A NEW MEMBER	
MEMBER RENEWAL	DONATION ONLY	
MEMBER UPI	DATE	

### Economy Electronic Memberships

(E-memberships are for access to the SEBA Breakdown newsletter, in color on line. For Internet access only. FREE Want Ads & all other benefits apply ) E-MEMBER \$20 E-FAMILY MEMBER \$25

## PROFESSIONAL E-MEBERSHIP w/Web Page \$30

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MUSICINSTRUCTORS	INDIVIDUAL

## **Regular SEBA Memberships**

(Receive one copy of the Black & White printed version of the SEBA Breakdown newsletter by US Mail & on line color version. FREE Want Ads & all other benefits apply)

INDIVIDUAL SEBA MEMBERSHIP	
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$30	

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To apply on line go to	www.SEBAbluegrass.org

What is the closest SEBA chapter to you?

SEE this issue	or our we	b site for	current l	locations.
I want a	SERA d	hanter	near m	

Where?

Include me in The SEBA Member Directory

Mail your Form & Payment to: **SEBA** 

P. O. Box 7286 Marietta, GA 30065

## Your Monthly guide to ... Live & Pickin Call before you go!

Please note that, due to the lockdowns, any or all may be canceled.

## Look at SEBA's Live & Pickin' website for a more up-to-date listing: http://www.sebabluegrass.org/events/wpw/

Submit yours to: www.sebabluegrass.org/events/wpw/submit.php

#### These Jams and Events meet weekly...

Tuesday - Australian Bakery Tuesday Jam, Australian Bakery Cafe, Marietta, GA, 6pm - 10pm, http://www.australianbakery.com, Greg Beyer, jam@australianbakery.com, 678-797-6222

Tuesday - Little Italy's Tuesday Bluegrass/Music Jam, Tallahassee, FL, 6:30p - 10p, https://littleitalytally.weebly.com/ Ken Towcimak, Co-ordinator, (850) 386-4843

Wednesday - The Wednesday Bluegrass Jams - see back page Colossus Pizza, Tucker, GA 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Reformation Brewery, Woodstock GA. 3:00-6:00 April-October

Saturday - Weekly Jam Sessions, Everett's Music Barn, Suwanee, GA, 7pm-12am, <a href="http://www.everettsmusicbarn.net">http://www.everettsmusicbarn.net</a>, <a href="renamacd@bellsouth.net">renamacd@bellsouth.net</a>, 770-945-5628

Reformation Brewery, Canton GA, see back page.

Saturday - Dahlonega Appalachian Jam. 2-5PM on the Gold Museum Lawn. <a href="http://dahlonegaappalachianjam.org">http://dahlonegaappalachianjam.org</a> Danielle Bell dbell@dahlonegadda.org

Saturday - Weekly Concert Mountain Home Music, Hiawassee, GA, 8-10 PM. http://mthomemusictheatre.weebly.com/, Stella Berrong, 706-896-3624 <u>mountainhomemusic@gmail.com</u>

Saturday - 1st & 3rd Saturdays - Pickin' on the Square, Court House, Newnan, GA, 10:30 am to 2pm, Art Arace, Art.Arace@delta.com

Sunday - The Sunday Bluegrass Jam, Colossus Pizza, Tucker, GA, 6pm - 8pm, www.facebook.com/Colossus-Pizza-in-Tucker, David Belcher, davidbelc@gmail.com, 678-231-7820

Various dates - The Crimson Moon, Dahlonega, GA. 7pm-9pm, Please call or check the website to see who's playing. The lineup varies and each night is special! <a href="http://www.thecrimsonmoon.com">http://www.thecrimsonmoon.com</a>, Laura Mae Bain, <a href="mailto:crimsonmoonpublicist@gmail.com">crimsonmoonpublicist@gmail.com</a>

#### These Jams and Events meet one time only or maybe once each month...

First Monday "Feed The Community" dinner Jam, Lawrenceville Rd. Methodist Church, Tucker GA. Food @ 5:45, Music Jam @ 6:15 contact Michael Moseley 404-423-2315, www.lrumc.com

First Saturday - South Bartow Gym, 6505 Glade Rd, Acworth GA. Jams 6:00 – 9:00, Bingo at 7:00. jonaustinsr@gmail.com

Second Sunday - SEBA Central Chapter Jam, Emory Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, GA, 3pm-6pm, http://www.emorypresbyterian.org/, Walter Stark, puppetstark@comcast.net, 404-315-6161

2nd and 4th Tuesday each month - Rochelle Georgia Bluegrass Jam, Cabin In The Orchard, 6:00 P.M.- 8:00 P.M., Bob McGuinty 229-276-5852, mcapple1@windstream.net

First Wednesday - Waller's Jam, Waller's Coffee House, Decatur, GA, 240 DeKalb Ind. Way, (Near Farmers' Market) 8pm-11pm, www.wallerscoffeeshop.com/events 404-975-3060

All other SEBA Chapters hold once-a-month Jams after a brief Chapter meeting. Please see Page 8 in this Breakdown Newsletter for locations, dates, times, and contacts for a good time near you!

www.sebabluegrass.org The SEBA BREAKDOWN September 2021 Page 5

## Things going on around here



## Sept 25 – 26 Franklin, Tennessee

Hear the stories, see the artisans, live the culture, love the chefs and sip the spirits. At the Park of Harlinsdale, everything the region has to offer set to the music you love in the heart of Franklin.

https://pilgrimagefestival.com



www.etix.com/ticket/v/9656/ibma-world-of-bluegrassdowntown-raleigh

Banio Ben Clark is your online home for learning to play guitar, banjo, and mandolin.



## Walhalla Performing Arts Center

101 East North Broad Street Walhalla SC

www.walhallapac.com

Tickets: https://ci.ovationtix.com/36289

Shovels & Rope Sep 10 Jeannie Seely Sep 19 Mutts Gone Nuts Oct 2 Carpenters Tribute Oct 8 The Platters Oct 10 The Little Roy & Lizzy Show Oct 22 Dailey & Vincent Oct 29 Kathy Mattea Nov 14 Appalachian Road Show Dec 3 Linda Ronstadt Experience Dec 4

Crystal Gayle Sep 5

## OH, BY THE WAY, *MERLEFEST* IS BACK!

**Sept 16 – 19,** 2021 Wilkesboro NC

Festivalgoers and music fans worldwide will be delighted to know that MerleFest, presented by Window World, will officially reconvene on the campus of

Wilkes Community College Wilkesboro, North Carolina. MerleFest is normally held the last weekend of April, but the 2020 festival was canceled due to public safety concerns amidst the COVID-

19 outbreak. Officials stressed that this would be a one-time-only move to this fall and they plan to return traditional weekend the April 2022.





Featuring Scythian, Joe Mullins & the Radio Ramblers, Liam Purcell & Cane Mill Road, His & Hers! Six hours of Bluegrass & barbecue. 1988 Jericho Church Road, Mocksville NC 27028 www.cbcbluegrass.com

## THE ARMUCHEE SAGA CONTINUES

#### - continued from page 3

Bluegrass festivals were something new to this area so the neighbors did not know what to expect. Needless to say, there was some opposition at first, but the shows went off orderly without any trouble. Many of the same bands who played the early shows when we first started are still playing our festivals today. We have many fans who have attended and supported every Armuchee Bluegrass Festival since the first one. We want these loyal supporters to know how much we love and appreciate them. These bands and fans have made the Armuchee Bluegrass Festival the longest, continuous running festival in the state of Georgia.

Our sound. man, Mike Castleberry, was at our first show in the field, as a teenager. It was there that he proposed to his wife, Inez. We appreciate Mike and think he is one of the best sound men around. Inez's father, Boxcar Pinion, was at our first show and attended faithfully for eighteen years until he passed on. Tom Jones and the Grasscutters played the first show and was with us for eighteen years until a stroke forced Tom to stop playing. James and Mary Padgett played our first shows but have now passed on.

Mid-September is a rainy time for the Armuchee area. It rained for three days before the first festival, stopping at noon on Friday. The Lord heard our prayers! Everyone had a good time and we were happy with the turnout, so a second festival was planned for September 13, 14 and 15, 1974. While getting ready for the second festival on the creek, John Farley cut his hand very badly with a chain saw. This caused grave concern whether he would be able to pick again. His hand healed just fine, and he was able to resume his expertise as a fine flat-top guitar and mandolin player. The moral of this story is, musicians should not be playing with chain saws, or if they do, they should be doubly careful to keep their fingers and hands away



from the chain! As things evolved. after two years, John Farley resigned the position of booking bands and Harold Galloway assumed that job. John wanted to play his music and festival was taking up too much of his



time. He and Debbie Galloway were married in June of 1974, so Harold became John's father-in-law.

In 1976 the date was changed so the festival became the Armuchee Bluegrass Labor Day Weekend Festival. Also in 1976, the Armuchee Bluegrass Festival was moved to the Armuchee Saddle Club due to the amenities such as water, electricity, a kitchen in the clubhouse, electrical hook-ups for campers, and bathrooms with showers.

The Armuchee Bluegrass Festival continued to grow so it was decided to add a spring festival. The first one was held on Memorial Day weekend in 1983. Also added at this time was a Sunday morning worship service. In 1984 Krickett added the kitchen to her other duties of taking care of the gate, band refunds, and advertising. In 1985, after thirteen years of loyal service, Harold Galloway and "Peanut" Faircloth resigned. **Delmas Franklin**, a local radio announcer was engaged as emcee in 1986. During the period of 1985 through 1986, Chuck and Krickett carried the burden of producing the festival.

In 1987, Mack Farley, Sr., who was a supervisor at Lever Brothers, the maker of Country Crock margarine, retired. He and Evelyn became full-time promoters, which is fitting since they were there at the birthing, weaning, and now parenting of the festival. Mack is now the band coordinator and emcee, and Evelyn handles band refunds and acts as treasurer. Three-day programs were held until the Spring of 1989 at which time the Sunday program was discontinued. We still hold Sunday morning worship service, conducted by **Reverend Douglas Maxwell**, pastor of Cave Springs Church of God. He started in the spring of 1985 and has been loyal to minister ever since. He has become our renowned "Bluegrass Preacher" whom we highly respect and cherish.

## ARMUCHEE HISTORY UP-TO-DATE

## - continued from page 6

Chuck continues doing excellent job of handling things His job starts several locally. weeks prior to our event. His own business suffers the loss of a week's production the week before Labor Day. The responsibility of grounds maintenance, putting signs out, cooking our chicken and ham for our Jam'n and cookout, parking supporting gate help, traffic. enlisting security, etc. are just some of Chuck's responsibilities. Armuchee Bluegrass Festival has developed a reputation of having good food. Chuck enjoys cooking Brunswick stew and barbecue, and this certainly adds to the flavor of our festival.

The Saddle Club has been so cooperative to work with us by updating the electrical hook-ups, changing the bathrooms, building a ticket booth, a stage and shelter, etc. To you good members, we say "Thanks!" Again, we express our appreciation to all the bands that have played our festivals for their cooperation and readiness to go on as scheduled. This has made our job so much easier. We would also like to express our gratitude to all the other promoters for their support over the years. MOST OF ALL to all our loyal bluegrass fans without whom there would be no festivals, we want to say we love you all and GOD BLESS YOU!

Chuck Langley, President Mack Farley, Sr., Vice-President Evelyn Farley, Treasurer Krickett Langley, Secretary





**Evans Music Productions** announces a festival in Cherokee North Carolina. Check evansmediasource.com for details.



## **SEBA Chapters and Jams**

Start your own SEBA Chapter or Jam Site: contact ChaptersCommittee@sebabluegrass.org

## **CHAPTERS**

## **SEBA Central (Atlanta Metro)**

Walter Stark 404-315-6161 Emory Presbyterian Church 1886 N. Decatur Rd, Decatur GA 30307 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 3:00 – 6:00

## **SEBA TAG (Chattanooga TN)**

Mitchell Kent 423-624-3063 Cumberland Presbyterian Church 7407 Bonny Oaks Dr, Chattanooga 37421 3rd Sunday, 2:00 – 5:00

## SEBA RABUN (Clayton GA)

Dean English 706-782-9852 Blueridge Music Store 629 Duggan Hill Rd, Clayton 30525 1st Saturday, 12:00 – 3:00

#### SEBA DAHLONEGA, GA

Joe Matteson 706-319-2045 Farmington Creek Clubhouse 35 Harvest Circle, Dawsonville 30534 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 2:00 – 5:00

## SEBA MARIETTA, GA

Dan Daniel 770-900-7472 Woodstock Community Church 237 Rope Mill Rd, Woodstock 30188 4th Sunday, 1:30 – 4:30

#### **SEBA MACON COUNTY, NC**

Jay Baird 828-200-1932

Apr – Oct: Macon Heritage Center
51 Cowee School Drive, Cowee 28734

Nov – Mar: Whistle Stop Depot
145 River Rd, Franklin NC 38734

3rd Saturday, 12:00 – 3:30

### SEBA MIDDLE GEORGIA (Macon GA)

Joe Choo Young America Music School 6361 Zebulon Rd, Macon 31220 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 2:00 – 5:00

## SEBA WINDER, GA

Scott & Lizabeth Weber 770-207-9223 St. Anthony's Episcopal Church 174 St. Anthony's Dr, Winder 30680

1st Sunday, 3:00 – 6:00

## **JAMS**

Australian Bakery Café

Spencer Oliver: soliver@northmetro.org

48 South Park Sq NE, Marietta, Georgia 30060

Tuesday, 6:00 – 10:00 pm

JJ.

**Tucker Bluegrass Jam** 

tuckerbluegrassjam@sebabluegrass.org

Colossus Pizza, 4368 Hugh Howell Rd., Tucker 30084

Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00, Sunday 6:00 – 8:00

Matthews Cafeteria, 2299 Main Street, Tucker 30084

Thursday 6:00 – 8:00

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Little Italy's Restaurant

Ken Towcimak: (850) 386-4843

111 S Magnolia Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Tuesday 6:30 – 10:00

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Old Time and Bluegrass Jam

Doc Byrd: 678-640-2719

Slopes BBQ, 200 Johnson Ferry Rd Atlanta, Georgia 30328

Saturday Afternoons 2:00 – 5:00 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, 6:00 pm

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Canton Georgia Bluegrass Jam

Mary Russo: mleerus@windstream.net

Canton Gazebo, Cannon Park, 130 E. Main St. Saturdays *Thru October*, 2:00 till 5:00 PM

Saturdays Thru October, 2.00 tm 3.00 TM

Reformation Brewery, 225 Reformation Parkway, Canton 30114

Saturdays Starting November, 10:45am – 1:45pm

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Woodstock Georgia Bluegrass Jam

Terry Fletcher: <u>clawgrass@mail.com</u>

Reformation Brewery, 105 Elm Street, Woodstock 30188

**Wednesdays 3:00 – 6:00** 

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Ball Ground Bluegrass Jam

Mary Russo: mleerus@windstream.net

Ball Ground City Park

177 Dawsonville Rd., Ball Ground Georgia 30107

Sundays *Thru October*, 1:00 – 5:00

RockSolid Brewing Company

345 Gilmer Ferry Rd., Ball Ground Georgia 30107

Sundays *Starting November*, 1:00 – 4:00

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Acworth Bluegrass Jam

Jon Austin: jonaustinsr@gmail.com

South Bartow Gym, Allatoona Resource Center 6503 Glade Road, Acworth Georgia 30102

1st Saturday, 6:00 – 9:00

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