

*Artist Roster*  
FOR  
SCHOOL PERFORMANCES



VIRGINIA'S HERITAGE MUSIC TRAIL



*Artist Roster*  
FOR  
SCHOOL PERFORMANCES



## Produced by:

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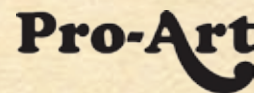
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## Supported by:



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## MAJOR VENUES OF THE CROOKED ROAD

- ★ 1 Blue Ridge Institute & Museum, *Ferrum*
- ★ 2 The Floyd Country Store & County Sales, *Floyd*
- ★ 3 Blue Ridge Music Center, *Carroll/Grayson Counties*
- ★ 4 Rex Theater & Old Fiddlers Convention, *Galax*
- ★ 5 Heartwood, *Abingdon*
- ★ 6 Birthplace of Country Music, *Bristol*
- ★ 7 Carter Family Fold, *Hiltons*
- ★ 8 Country Cabin II, *Norton*
- ★ 9 Ralph Stanley Museum, *Clintwood*
- *Affiliated Venues & Festivals*
- ▲ *Wayside Exhibits*
- *The Crooked Road*

# Introduction: About the Crooked Road

## The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail

The Crooked Road (TCR) is a 330-mile scenic driving route through the Appalachian mountains of Southwest Virginia that connects nine major music venues and over 60 affiliated venues and festivals. Here, visitors can experience the region's rich traditional music every day of the week, year-round. The music is everywhere — in concert halls and country stores, at festivals and in parks. The variety of our music is noteworthy, including old time string bands, bluegrass, centuries-old ballads, a cappella gospel, blues, and more. Travelers can also stop and tune in at any of the 27 radio-transmitting wayside exhibits along the route to learn about the musical heritage of each community.

This musical tradition has had an indelible impact on American music. Some of the greatest names in American music — the Carter Family, Jim & Jesse McReynolds, the Stonemans, and Ralph Stanley — are from this region. TCR has had phenomenal success in bringing well-deserved attention to the region's traditional music through articles in the *New York Times*, *Smithsonian*, and *USA Today*, as well as recognition by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of America's "Dozen Distinctive Destinations." Consistent with its mission to promote economic development in Southwest Virginia, TCR had over \$23 million in economic impact on the region in 2008.

TCR strives to celebrate, promote, and preserve the traditional music of Southwest Virginia and, in keeping with that mission, has created a comprehensive Traditional Music Education Program (TMEP). This roster, produced by the TMEP, is designed to help integrate regional music into the educational experience of Southwest Virginia's students.



Orange indicates The Crooked Road Region of Virginia

# The Crooked Road's Traditional Music Education Program (TMEP)

The Crooked Road's Traditional Music Education Program (TMEP) is a multi-faceted educational initiative. It is designed to support existing traditional music instructors and programs, to encourage the implementation of new traditional music programs, to support youth music performance, and to incorporate traditional music coursework and instruction in Southwest Virginia's schools. Established in 2010, the TMEP provides unique educational opportunities and programs for the region's youth and has already fostered tremendous pride and interest in celebrating the musical and cultural heritage of Southwest Virginia. The TMEP combines both direct learning for students and professional development for teachers, designed to align with The Crooked Road's mission: promoting the unique musical traditions of our region. This roster supports that effort, making it easy for educators at all levels to find a variety of programs that introduce and celebrate our cultural heritage, while also educating students about the impact and importance of our regional music. This roster is one means by which the TMEP strives to reach students at all levels of education in Southwest Virginia's public schools and community colleges.

Current TMEP initiatives include after-school programs in which students learn to play old time and bluegrass music from accomplished musicians, a youth music concert series, and an annual festival featuring youth performers. In 2013, TMEP published a set of lesson plans entitled *Traditional Music in the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide*, and we have begun holding teacher training workshops based on this curriculum. Additionally, TMEP offers "Teaching Along the Crooked Road," a re-certification course for K-12 educators offered through the Virginia Community College System.

The TMEP includes a diverse group of stakeholders: representatives from K-12 schools, community colleges, and traditional music programs, as well as independent instructors and musicians.

For more information, contact The Crooked Road at (276) 492-2409 or by e-mail: [admin@thecrookedroad.org](mailto:admin@thecrookedroad.org).



# For Educators: Tips for Using the Artist Roster

TCR's Traditional Music Education Program is pleased to present The Crooked Road's *Artist Roster for School Performances*. By distributing this roster in our public school systems, the TMEP hopes to provide educators with the opportunity to choose from an array of talented regional artists. All of these artists are enthusiastic about the prospect of visiting schools and introducing students to our musical heritage through live performances.

The roster offers a variety of artists whose work covers a variety of styles so that teachers can find just the right performance to suit their needs. Some artists focus on performances that introduce our region's music in a general way. They might, for instance, teach students to differentiate between bluegrass and old time string band music. Others may focus on one genre of music in particular, such as ballad singing, by addressing the customs and history of that style in depth.

Please contact TCR's Program Manager, Jonathan Romeo, if you have questions or need assistance choosing the right artist for your school: (276) 492-2401 or [jromeo@thecrookedroad.org](mailto:jromeo@thecrookedroad.org).

## A Word of Thanks to Our Artists!

As you look over this roster, you may notice that the fees listed here seem low for offerings of this caliber. That is a reflection of the commitment of these performers to our region's youth. These talented artists hope to inspire participation and interest in Virginia's musical heritage by making their programs affordable for schools. The Crooked Road is grateful for their generosity.



# Adam McPeak & Mountain Thunder

**GENRE:** Bluegrass

**PROGRAMS:** Each band member is able to teach and play various instruments. Several of the musicians may be young, but they are professionals. Band members can instruct beginners in the basics of how to choose an appropriate instrument, how to tune it, and how to play it. They can make suggestions about performance and quality of sound, including tone, noting, and methods of playing. Several band members also have experience building instruments. Adam McPeak apprenticed with luthier Buddy Blevins of Deer Valley Musical Instruments. He has completed a fiddle and is in the process of building a banjo. Steve Chrisley, the banjo player for the group, builds banjos; his son David plays a banjo that Steve made for him.

**BIOGRAPHY:** 18-year old Adam McPeak heads up his own band, Adam McPeak & Mountain Thunder. As he began putting his band together, he didn't have to look beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains of home to find what he was looking for. Hiring his dad, Mike McPeak, originally of the McPeak Brothers, to sing and play rhythm guitar, Adam also added Steve Chrisley, who lends his rich baritone and plays the five string banjo. Nikki Wright fiddles and sings lead and harmony, while David Chrisley holds them all together on the upright bass. Since 2009, when the band was formed, Adam McPeak and Mountain Thunder have begun to make their mark on bluegrass by entering and placing or winning in numerous fiddlers conventions. In 2012, the band placed ninth in the SPBGMA national band championship, and they repeated this success again in 2013. Individually, the members of the band have also won many impressive competitions. Adam McPeak & Mountain Thunder have had the privilege of playing a number of festivals and concerts. Their East Coast touring schedule is expanding every month. They are currently recording in Eastwood Studio, laying down the tracks for their debut CD. More information on that can be found on their web page and Facebook page.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system, including monitors, mics, and sound board

**WEBSITES:** [www.adammcpeak.com](http://www.adammcpeak.com)  
[www.facebook.com/pages/Adam-McPeak](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Adam-McPeak)

**FEE:** \$600. Willing to negotiate within a school's budget.



**CONTACT:**  
Debbie Frye  
[dgf1956@yahoo.com](mailto:dgf1956@yahoo.com)  
(276) 239-0720

Photo: Debbie Frye

# Anderson & Strickland

**GENRES:** Bluegrass/Americana

**PROGRAMS:** Gerald Anderson and Spencer Strickland are musicians and instrument makers. They have performed both locally and internationally for many years and have been making musical instruments for over 30 years. They include guitar, mandolin, fiddle, and autoharp in performances. Experienced luthiers, Gerald and Spencer are always pleased to talk about how they make the instruments that come from their respective shops.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Gerald Anderson began making mandolins twenty-nine years ago in Wayne Henderson's shop and has since crafted more than 200 instruments. In the many years Anderson has been crafting mandolins, he has also played old time music with friends, including Wayne Henderson and Butch Barker. Gerald has made many recordings and won numerous awards, including best guitar player at the 2003 Galax Fiddlers Convention (2003). Spencer Strickland grew up in a family and community steeped in music. Like Gerald, Spencer has won numerous awards. 2004 was a great year for Spencer: he won best all-around performer at the Galax Fiddlers Convention, best mandolin player at Merlefest, and began apprenticing with Gerald as a luthier. The two released a CD entitled *Headin South* and are currently working on their second CD project, which will be an addition to the Crooked Road CD Series produced by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Two vocal and two instrument mics with sound system

**WEBSITES:** [andersonstringinstruments.com](http://andersonstringinstruments.com)  
[www.virginialuthiers.com](http://www.virginialuthiers.com)  
[andersonstrickland.net](http://andersonstrickland.net)

**FEE:** \$750 plus mileage



**CONTACT:**

Gerald Anderson  
9104 Troutdale Hwy  
Troutdale, VA 24378  
[andersonstrickland@yahoo.com](mailto:andersonstrickland@yahoo.com)  
(276) 782-8080

Photo: ©Cameron Davidson/[camerondavidson.com](http://camerondavidson.com)

# Anna & Elizabeth

**GENRE:** Appalachian Old Time Music

**PROGRAMS:** Anna Roberts-Gevalt and Elizabeth LaPrelle offer a captivating variety show of fiddle and banjo music, ballads, and close harmonies, along with storytelling, flatfoot dancing, and intricate shadow puppets they create with scrolling illustrations they call “crankies.” The artists make the crankies together, using cloth and paper, to depict oral histories, banjo tunes, and ballads. (Check their web site—URL provided below—for photos of these impressive hand-quilted works of art.) They have performed to great acclaim in venues across the U.S. including the High Museum of Modern Art in Atlanta, the Seattle Folk Festival, the Lexington Opera House (KY), and have even taken their shows abroad to Uzbekistan.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Anna Roberts-Gevalt (originally of Vermont) and Elizabeth LaPrelle (of Rural Retreat, Virginia) met coming to traditional Appalachian music from different directions. Anna was in a touring old time band. Elizabeth was singing ballads in faraway states. They have joined forces to create a show that uses theater and stories to show people what they love about old tunes and ballads. They know that keeping the music in the mountains—playing in their communities, playing for schools—is part of the job.

Anna is a masterful fiddler and banjo player who honed her skills in apprenticeships with masters of the Kentucky music tradition. She is currently filming a documentary about a central Kentucky string band and producing a compilation album of young traditional musicians. Anna has taught at fiddle camps throughout the Southeast and is currently faculty coordinator of the Cowan Music School, a Kentucky traditional music school.

Elizabeth is a young ballad singer and banjo player whose heartfelt and powerful singing has won her prizes at regional fiddlers conventions since the age of eleven. She has recorded three solo albums, and her singing has been featured on NPR’s *All Things Considered* and *A Prairie Home Companion*.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Table, electrical outlet, sound system for larger venues

**WEBSITE:** [www.annaandelizabeth.com](http://www.annaandelizabeth.com)



**FEE:** \$250 per assembly; negotiable depending on travel distance.

**CONTACT:**

Elizabeth LaPrelle  
[elizabethlaprelle@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethlaprelle@gmail.com)  
(276) 613-0577  
Anna Roberts-Gevalt  
[arobertsgevalt@gmail.com](mailto:arobertsgevalt@gmail.com)  
(802) 310-2146

# Anndrena Belcher

**GENRES:** Traditional Appalachian Music and Songs, Play Party Dances, Traditional Dance

**PROGRAMS:** Always traditional and also improvisational, Anndrena likes customizing her performance to fit the needs of each audience. She performs traditional Appalachian music and songs and old time “play party” dances. She also teaches basic flatfooting and beginning square dance. Anndrena plays rhythm guitar and sings original songs based on her own life as a mountain person who, as a child, migrated with her family to inner-city Chicago. The traditional folktales that she tells are interwoven into her programs with personal narratives and stories that she has written herself. Her CDs entertain and delight audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Anndrena is also a touring artist for the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Anndrena’s performances celebrate a life lived in what she calls the “crux of contradiction.” A child of 1950s Eastern Kentucky who “migrated” to inner-city uptown Chicago, she takes her life to stories, paintings, clothes, and then make the stories into songs. Part holler girl, part inner-city uptown, Anndrena makes music that lives where the two worlds slam into each other and share intimate space.

**WEBSITES:** [www.anndrena.com](http://www.anndrena.com)  
[www.crec76.org](http://www.crec76.org)  
[www.myspace.com/anndrenasmusicandstories](http://www.myspace.com/anndrenasmusicandstories)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Professional sound system, appropriate performance space, straight-back chair, water

**FEE:** Performance from \$500–\$2,500. Fees vary—special rates are available for block-bookings and for low-income community organizations. Because Anndrena is an artist featured on the Virginia Commission for the Arts Touring Roster, some VCA funding might be available.



**CONTACT:**  
Anndrena Belcher  
P.O. Box 668  
Gate City, VA 24251  
[anndrenabelcher@aol.com](mailto:anndrenabelcher@aol.com)  
(276) 494-2163 or (276) 479-2732

# Crooked Road Ramblers

**GENRES:** Traditional Old Time, Bluegrass, and Country Music

**PROGRAMS:** Members of the band have taught in Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM, Inc.) programs, in addition to providing private lessons. Kilby Spencer is a member of the Field Recorder's Collective and has studied the history of old time music in Virginia and North Carolina extensively. The band's shows include a mixture of history and humor, without being too academic.

**BIOGRAPHY:** The Crooked Road Ramblers, a traditional band steeped in the traditional music of the Blue Ridge, was formed by fiddler Kilby Spencer in 2001 and includes John Perry on guitar, Peco Watson on clawhammer banjo, Donald Hill on guitar, Wayne Dye on mandolin, and Karen Carr on bass. The majority of the band members are second—or third—generation musicians who grew up playing old time music at square dances and fiddlers conventions in Southwest Virginia and northwest North Carolina. The band has played at The Carter Fold, the Wayne Henderson Festival, Bristol Rhythm and Roots, and many other musical venues and events throughout the region. They are known for keeping the dancers on the floor and providing plenty of laughs during each performance.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Not able to provide sound, but will work with anything that is provided

**WEBSITE:** [www.facebook.com/crookedroadramblers](http://www.facebook.com/crookedroadramblers)

**FEE:** \$700 within a two-hour radius

**CONTACT:**

Kilby Spencer

KILBYAS@hotmail.com

(336) 982-2923 (home)

(336) 200-0404 (cell)



Photo: Susan Colvard Carter

# Eddie Bond & Josh Ellis

**GENRES:** Appalachian Old Time Fiddle and Banjo

**PROGRAMS:** The musicians will discuss regional repertoire and musical styles, as well as the historical and cultural background of the music. Instrument demonstrations can be presented.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Eddie Bond and Josh Ellis play old time fiddle and banjo with the New Ballards Branch Bogtrotters in Galax, Virginia. The band plays Appalachian string band music that is geared mostly for dancing. Eddie grew up in Fries, VA, a town renowned for having numerous great old time musicians: Henry Whitter, Kelly Harrell, Glen Neaves, and Glen Smith are just a few of the tradition-bearers who influenced Eddie's playing. Eddie's family played music, too, so he was immersed in the culture at a young age. He began to play guitar at age 8, learning from his grandmother Widner, then moved on to banjo and fiddle soon after that. Eddie's great uncle Leon Hill played with the Whitetop Mountain Band in those days, and Eddie was always listening and learning. Josh Ellis moved to Galax in the mid-1990s, met a banjo player from the area, and immediately became interested in learning how to pick. He had previously played rock and roll guitar, so he knew something about music already. It was in the rich traditions of the mountain banjo that he found his solace and his musical calling. Josh has learned from several local banjo players from around the region and has played banjo for the Bogtrotters for nearly a decade. Together, Eddie and Josh can render fiddle and banjo duets in an old time style that would have been heard around the region generations ago. They have carried their music to Europe, the Library of Congress, and all over the United States at many of the top folk festivals.

**WEBSITE:** [www.facebook.com/thenewballardsbranchbogtrotters](http://www.facebook.com/thenewballardsbranchbogtrotters)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Depending on the venue, a sound system may be needed. Usually, if the room is small, Eddie and Josh can play without mics.

**FEE:** \$400 to \$600, depending on format (workshop or demonstration). Travel reimbursement required if the distance is over 50 miles.



**CONTACT:**

Eddie Bond  
fiddlinbond007@gmail.com  
(276) 237-4484  
Josh Ellis  
(276) 237-1850



# Erynn Marshall & Carl Jones

**GENRES:** Old Time, Roots, Americana

**PROGRAMS:** Erynn Marshall and Carl Jones present the vibrant history of old time mountain music through engaging and educational performances. They each play many instruments, and as they perform they tell stories and interact with their audiences. Participation is encouraged! Carl and Erynn joyfully help students understand centuries of rural musical traditions; from the archaic sound of a solo fiddle to the fretless banjo and then to fiddlesticks, they cover it all and then move on to talk about song duets and string band numbers. Of course, fiddle music is incomplete without dancing, so performances often end with Erynn's teaching students how to "flatfoot" a tune or two.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Carl Jones is an old time mandolin, banjo and guitar player who was once part of the Rising Fawn ensemble with Norman and Nancy Blake. He has made a dozen recordings, including his new CD release of original songs, *Traveling Star*. Carl is widely respected for his fine musicianship on many stringed instruments, warm personality, and ability to write original songs about the moment-to-moment joys and surprises of day-to-day life. Carl has taught music to children and adults at music camps across the U.S., England, and Spain. Erynn Marshall has played fiddle since she was a young girl. She learned much of her music from 80- and 90-year-old Southern fiddlers, and she enjoys living in the mountains where old time music's deep roots continue to thrive. Erynn has performed and taught traditional music for over twenty years, recorded several CDs, published a book on fiddle/song traditions, and won numerous awards for her fiddling. She is a sought-after instructor at fiddle camps, including the Sore Fingers music camp in England. People often comment on how they can see Erynn's love of fiddling when they watch her perform.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Acoustic music suitable for groups of 40 or fewer. Sound system advised for larger groups.

**WEBSITE:** [www.facebook.com/crookedroadramblers](http://www.facebook.com/crookedroadramblers)

**FEE:** \$400 - first presentation plus travel; \$200 for additional 1-hour presentation



**CONTACT:**

Erynn Marshall  
[erynnmarshall@gmail.com](mailto:erynnmarshall@gmail.com)  
(276) 237-6866

# Jeff Brown & Still Lonesome

**GENRE:** Bluegrass

**PROGRAMS:** Band members will discuss regional repertoire and musical styles, as well as the historical and cultural background of the music. Instrument demonstrations will be presented.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Jeff began playing at the age of nine. While still in elementary school, Jeff and his brother Tony formed the Richlands Bluegrass Boys and performed at festivals, fairs, churches, family reunions, and other venues. In 1993, Jeff received an audition to try out for the legendary Larry Sparks as bass player and tenor singer and worked as a Lonesome Rambler from 1993 to 1996, with a part-time stay in the band in 2007. Jeff recently toured again on a limited schedule with Larry Sparks and was featured on Sparks' new CD *Almost Home*. Jeff has also been featured on three other CD projects. Jeff has performed on many famous stages: The Grand Ole Opry at the world famous Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee; the *Austin City Limits* television show; and *Song of the Mountains* on PBS. One notable moment in Jeff's life happened while performing with Sparks at the Carter Fold in Hiltons, Virginia—Jeff was asked to play bass for Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash. Jeff also toured with The Charlie Sizemore Band and has filled in with Blue Highway and Dr. Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys and many more. Jeff teaches guitar and acoustic bass and served as the director of the Traditional Music Program at Southwest Virginia Community College. Jeff also serves as Coordinator and Co-Chair for the Virginia Mountain Music Festival and the Mountain Music Jamboree. He serves on the Musicians Coordinating Committee with The Crooked Road.

**WEBSITE:** [www.jeffbrownandstilllonesome.com](http://www.jeffbrownandstilllonesome.com)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Professional sound system required: three vocal mics, four instrumental mics, one XLR - DI for bass, and at least two monitors

**FEE:** \$600 to \$1,000, depending on travel.



Photo: Sherry Brown

**CONTACT:**

Jeff Brown  
[jeff@jeffbrownandstilllonesome.com](mailto:jeff@jeffbrownandstilllonesome.com)  
(276) 202-3639

# John & Kathie Hollandsworth

**GENRES:** Traditional Appalachian Tunes and Songs

**PROGRAMS:** John and Kathie gear their concerts to all different age groups and provide music workshops for both students and teachers. They assist teachers with teaching autoharp and folk songs to students. They also share and teach music and ballads of the southern Appalachians that were brought over by settlers from Europe. These pieces have become staples in the Appalachian repertoire. They might also touch on music from other traditions, especially if it has a connection to our region. The history of each of the instruments is an integral part of their presentations. As an autoharp luthier who has built instruments for customers throughout the U.S. and in ten foreign countries, John can also include an instrument-building demonstration as part of any school program.

**BIOGRAPHY:** John and Kathie Hollandsworth are natives of Christiansburg in Southwest Virginia. They have been performing in the region and beyond for over 30 years, including the entire continental United States and the U.K. They make it a point to share the historic importance of the music of the southern Appalachians as part of their musical offerings. They play as a duo, but are also members of other bands in their area. Both John and Kathie are vocalists, and the instruments most often included in their duo performances are the autoharp, hammered dulcimer, guitar, bass, and mountain dulcimer. John is internationally known as a premier autoharp player and is sought after as a workshop leader and instructor. In 2010, he was inducted into the Autoharp Hall of Fame in recognition of his talents as a performer, teacher, and luthier of custom-built autoharps. Kathie has over 30 years of experience working with children's and handbell choirs and has also taught piano for many years.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system with four mics

**WEBSITE:** [www.blueridgeautoharps.com](http://www.blueridgeautoharps.com)

**FEE:** \$600 plus mileage



## **CONTACT:**

John and Kathie Hollandsworth  
[john@blueridgeautoharps.com](mailto:john@blueridgeautoharps.com) (John)  
[luraedythe@gmail.com](mailto:luraedythe@gmail.com) (Kathie)  
(540) 392-3924 (John cell)  
(540) 392-3910 (Kathie cell)  
(540) 382-6550 (home)

# Katie Hoffman

**GENRES:** Ballads, Singer/Songwriter, Bluegrass and Old Time

**PROGRAMS:** Katie combines her passion for singing with her talent as a teacher, delivering programs that combine artistic integrity with education. Part presentation, part musical performance, they bring to life Appalachia's dynamic musical traditions. Katie's approachability and her beautiful voice engage students no matter their age. She enjoys working with teachers to customize programs that meet their specific needs and objectives. Depending on the audience, she can offer an introduction to Appalachian traditional music or deepen the knowledge of people who already know and love it. Two of her most popular programs focus specifically on Appalachian ballads. One explores the ways in which the ballad tradition helps modern listeners understand more about the lives of the women who, using the oral tradition, kept the songs alive and circulating. Another explores animal symbolism in the ballads, connecting it with medieval British Isles literature and culture. A crowd pleaser, Katie has addressed a wide variety of audiences—international visitors, elementary students, senior citizens, faculty symposia—and has taught about regional culture, literature, and music on the college level.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Katie grew up in Richmond, Virginia, where she befuddled her schoolmates by preferring folk music to rock and roll. As a youngster, she loved listening to all of the records in her mother's eclectic collection, but she preferred the folk stuff—especially ballads and bluegrass. Katie grew up playing the guitar, singing folk music, and writing songs. She began performing publicly in college, and during her first years as a graduate student she became part of the East Tennessee State University Bluegrass band. Katie's CD, *Beautiful Day*, produced by Raymond W. McLain, showcases many of her original songs. On the CD (and in real life) Katie plays rhythm guitar and sings both lead and harmony vocals. She holds a PhD in English from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and she is owner of and principal consultant for Appalworks, a business focused on promoting Appalachia's cultural heritage through education and entertainment. She and her favorite banjo picker, Brett Tiller (who also happens to be her husband), have entertained audiences across the region and helped a number of audiences outside of the mountains appreciate and understand Appalachian music.



**WEBSITE:** [www.appalworks.com](http://www.appalworks.com)  
[www.facebook.com/appalworks](https://www.facebook.com/appalworks)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Depending on the size and acoustics of the venue, a sound system may be needed.

**FEE:** \$350-450 for a solo lecture/performance or \$500-600 for a duo, plus travel. Fees depend on the level of customization provided. Discounted rates are available for multiple appearances during one visit.

**CONTACT:**  
Katie Hoffman  
[hoffmankatie@rocketmail.com](mailto:hoffmankatie@rocketmail.com)  
(423) 329-4742

# Mac Traynham

**GENRES:** Old Time Multi-Instrumentalist

**PROGRAMS:** Mac's focus is on traditional songs and tunes from the Crooked Road region. His programs emphasize the older traditional playing styles and the interesting historical background of the songs and tunes that were in most regional musician's repertoires before the electronic era. Mac encourages audience participation, including singing along and clapping in time to the music. In addition to his performance and teaching, Mac also brings photos of great old time musicians from his collection, which allows students to see many who inspired Mac. When possible, he also brings sound clips of their music from his extensive collection. Longer presentations—or presentations that focus only on his work as a luthier—include demonstrations and discussions of how instruments are constructed, their similarities and differences, and the reasons for their distinctive sizes and shapes. Students are allowed to touch and hold instruments (with supervision) if time permits. Mac's objective, no matter the presentation, is promoting pride in the area's musical traditions.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Mac Traynham is a multi-instrumentalist and performer dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the traditional music of Southwest Virginia. He lives in Willis, VA, in Floyd County. As a teenager in the early 1970s, Mac was drawn to the banjo and to the bluegrass music sound. He first attended the Galax Old Fiddlers convention in 1975, where he discovered old time music and was drawn to its rhythmic sound. As his interest grew deeper, Mac became drawn to the music of his community's oldest residents. He wanted to learn the older techniques, as well as the native tunes and songs. Over the past 20 years, he has been invited to participate in many workshops and classes at renowned old time music camps in West Virginia, North Carolina, and elsewhere. Since 1979, Mac has made many recordings of his own and has appeared on the recording projects of other musicians. His work has garnered favorable reviews. Just as the old timers passed their knowledge to him, Mac also feels a duty to pass on what he has learned to younger generations. He really loves the way that programs like JAM (Junior Appalachian Musicians) offer local kids the opportunity to learn to play stringed instruments, and he believes strongly this kind of learning will have side benefits that will enrich students' lives and communities.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system for large venues

**WEBSITE:** [www.mactraynham.com](http://www.mactraynham.com)

**FEE:** \$250 up to one hour travel one way, \$300 up to two hours travel one way, \$350 up to three hours travel one way (including travel)

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Mac Traynham  
[mactraynham@gmail.com](mailto:mactraynham@gmail.com)  
(540) 789-4201 (home)  
(540) 789-8338 (work)  
(540) 789-8969 (cell)



Photo: Ben Traynham

# Marya Katz

**GENRES:** Appalachian, Celtic, Gospel, Traditional & Contemporary Folk, Songwriting

**PROGRAMS:** Along with concert-setting performances, Marya is also available to speak with individual classes about the music. She is a proponent of connected curriculum, encouraging students to see how the music relates to various historical eras or events, or how music connects to language arts and other academic disciplines. She is very familiar with Virginia's Standards of Learning, both in music and in academics, and is willing to work with music and/or classroom teachers to provide in-depth workshops.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Marya Katz taught music for 33 years in public schools (mostly at the elementary level) before retiring. In addition to general music (vocal) courses for grades K-8, she has also been the director of high school choral ensembles and worked with pre-school developmentally-delayed students. She earned National Board Certification in Early/Middle Childhood Music in 2002. Marya is a performer (both with Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge and also in solo presentations), a composer (her work is featured on a CD *Between Sunset & Stars*), an educational workshop leader (she is the sole proprietor of Playful-Shops, a consulting enterprise that she formed after retiring), a conductor (she directs the adult choir at her church), and a dulcimer teacher (featured at various festivals along the Eastern seaboard, as well as private and group lessons).

**WEBSITES:** [www.dulcimations.com](http://www.dulcimations.com)  
[www.maryakatz.com](http://www.maryakatz.com)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Depends on venue

**FEE:** \$200 for a single concert performance (approximately 45 minutes). \$250 for a half-day residency; \$500 for a full-day residency. If travel is beyond 50 miles from Blacksburg, an additional \$50 for expenses is requested.



**CONTACT:**  
Marya Katz  
[maryakatz@gmail.com](mailto:maryakatz@gmail.com)  
(540) 961-4435

# Mike Mitchell

**GENRES:** Contemporary and Traditional Bluegrass (Fiddler), Singer/Songwriter

**PROGRAMS:** Mike's presentation involves the history of Appalachian music, starting with instruments and their appearances in the U.S., and including how they came together in Southern Appalachian bands. The presentation covers Appalachian musical styles through the 20th century and ends with sharing time based on the question "where do we go from here?"

**BIOGRAPHY:** Born in Buffalo, NY, "Mikey" and his single mom immigrated to Ontario, Canada, in 1973, where he began taking Suzuki violin lessons at age 5. He was awarded top honors in the National Canadian competition for first-year students and continued to be recognized throughout his young life as a talented performer. As a teenager, Mike lost his way. At 15, he dropped out of high school, stopped playing music, and was living on the streets. He ended up in the juvenile justice system of Ohio. As far from music as he was, those hard years were a formative part of his later style of playing and songwriting. After finding peace with his grandfather on a family farm in Ohio, Mike went on to finish his education and major in violin studies in college. In the 1990s Mike met Conni, a West Virginian who introduced him to mountain life and music. In 1998, Mike worked in Virginia as a session violinist and performer for the Encrypted label. By New Years Eve 2000, he realized that something was very wrong. He could hardly play the fiddle. Three months later, he was diagnosed with a brain tumor: stage 4 brain cancer. Miraculously, he recovered and went on to release *High and Lively* (2001) and tour with the Mike Mitchell Band, and The Recipe, a jam band based in Morgantown, WV. When his daughter came along, he moved out of the city and into the Blue Ridge Mountains of Floyd County. There, he met a fiddle maker named Arthur Conner, who inspired him to learn the bluegrass fiddle style. Dedicating himself to teaching students, Mike founded the Floyd Music School in 2005. It now boasts 70 students, three teachers, ribbons at fiddle competitions, kids in the Roanoke Youth Orchestra, adult students in regional string ensembles, Lions club scholarship winners, and invitations for local and regional performances. Also in 2005, Mike co-founded Roanoke-based newgrass band Blue Moonshine, and in 2008 he released the critically acclaimed CD, *13 Hours*. "I am blessed to have been given the gift of music," Mike says, "to have been spared the loss of life and playing, and to now give back as a teacher and performer."



**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Depends on venue: Mike enjoys working with tech clubs and crews in schools when possible.

**WEBSITE:** [www.mikemitchellmusic.com](http://www.mikemitchellmusic.com)

**FEE:** Solo, \$150-200, depending on distance; with full band, \$600 to \$1,100

**CONTACT:**  
Mike Mitchell  
[mitchmusic@swva.net](mailto:mitchmusic@swva.net)  
(540) 745-6872

# Olen & Frances Gardner and Friends

**GENRE:** Bluegrass Gospel

**PROGRAMS:** Group members will discuss regional repertoire and musical styles, as well as the cultural and historical background of the music. Instrument demonstrations will be presented.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Olen & Frances Gardner have been performing together since the 1970s. They started as the Appalachian Ramblers, playing bluegrass and folk songs. They have performed for colleges, schools, and churches. They have also presented programs for the Blue Ridge Parkway, Roanoke Mt. Campground, and Mabry Mill. Olen taught guitar and banjo for many years at New River Community College and is a certified repairman for Martin Guitar Company. Their gospel group plays regularly at the Floyd Country Store.

**WEBSITE:** None

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** The Gardners have their own sound system.

**FEE:** Negotiable, depending on distance and length of program

**CONTACT:**

Olen and Frances Gardner  
Post Office Box 85  
Riner, Va. 24149  
ogardner12@verizon.net  
(540) 382-8779



Photo: Contributed Photo



# The Railsplitters

**GENRE:** Old Time Mountain Music

**PROGRAMS:** The Railsplitters are available for performances as a duo (featuring Adrian and Julie Shepherd-Powell on fiddle and banjo), a trio (joined by a guitar player), or a full string band (joined by a guitarist and a bass player). All performances include a mix of old time fiddle tunes, old-timey singing, and flatfoot demonstrations. With the trio or full string band, educational offerings can extend beyond a performance to include a flatfoot workshop for up to 50 students at a time. With the full string band, a square dance workshop and dance can also be offered. Instrument workshops (beginning to advanced) are also available (fiddle, banjo, guitar) for a small number of participants.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Adrian and Julie Shepherd-Powell are The Railsplitters, an old time duo from Southwest Virginia that plays hard-driving fiddle tunes. Occasionally joined by friends from around the Appalachian region, The Railsplitters play at various festivals and venues across the Southeast. In May 2013, The Railsplitters took first place in the old time band contest at the Gathering in the Gap and in July 2013, they won third place in the old time band contest at the Morehead Old Time Fiddlers Convention. Adrian, a native of Crimora, VA, has won contests at fiddlers conventions all over the Southeast. His fiddle style is straight forward with a hard-drivin' bow. He has played with many old time bands, including the Pea Ridge Ramblers, Matt Kinman's Old Time Serenaders, and the Cabin Creek Boys. Julie is an award-winning clawhammer banjo player and a flatfoot dancer. She's originally from North Carolina. She also teaches old time banjo at Mountain Empire Community College, competes in flatfoot dance competitions at fiddlers conventions all over the southeast, and calls square dances anywhere from Knoxville to New York City. Most recently, she took first place in the flatfoot dance competition at the 2013 Morehead Old Time Fiddlers Convention. Adrian and Julie currently live in Big Stone Gap, VA.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system and mics. Flatfoot workshop and square dance need to take place on a non-carpeted floor, preferably wood.

**WEBSITE:** None



**FEE:** Duo performance: \$300; trio performance: \$500; string band performance: \$600; booking organization will also pay travel expenses.

With each booking the following options are available: add a flatfoot workshop for an additional \$200.00; Add a square dance for an additional \$300; add an instrument workshop for \$150 per instrument workshop.

**CONTACT:**  
Julie Shepherd-Powell  
julie.shepherd.powell@gmail.com  
(828) 773-3243

# Ron Short

**GENRES:** Singer/Songwriter, Multi-Instrumentalist

**PROGRAMS:** Workshops for groups of 10-15 in storytelling, sing-along Appalachian musical history, voices of many instruments and how to use them.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Ron Short—storyteller/actor, playwright, composer, musician—thinks globally, but plays locally. He has thirty years of performance experience traveling the World with Roadside Theater—from Lincoln Center to Lick Fork. His interest is playing real music from real people.

**WEBSITES:** [www.facebook.com/ronshort](http://www.facebook.com/ronshort)  
[www.facebook.com/possumbebop4u](http://www.facebook.com/possumbebop4u)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system with two mics; can perform acoustically in small room.

**FEE:** \$500 per hour workshop or performance, travel included

**CONTACT:**

Ron Short  
[ronshort62@gmail.com](mailto:ronshort62@gmail.com)  
(276) 393-6588



Photo: Jon Lohman

# Sandy Shortridge

**GENRES:** Appalachian Bluegrass/Folk

**PROGRAMS:** Sandy offers performances and creative writing workshops. Janie Mullins, a retired educator from the Buchanan County School System described Shortridge's interactive performance/workshops as "motivational, inspiring, and very effective . . . Sandy has a great rapport with kids. She inspires them to look inside themselves, embrace their heritage, write from the heart and to express themselves artistically." Sandy's performances motivate children to take a story from an oral language and write it down effectively. She helps children recognize their capabilities and express their wishes and dreams.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Sandy, an Extension Agent whose specialty is 4-H youth development, is also an accomplished singer, songwriter, storyteller, and performer. Sandy has lived in the mountains of Southwest Virginia all her life and is one of four daughters from a coal mining family in Buchanan County. Her Appalachian style, in combination with her songwriting ability and stories from her family's front porch, conveys the emotions and pride that many mountain people share for their home, heritage, and culture.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Depends on venue

**WEBSITE:** [www.facebook.com/thesandyshortridgeband](http://www.facebook.com/thesandyshortridgeband)

**FEE:** \$200 to \$300 (depending on length), plus travel expenses

**CONTACT:**

Sandy Shortridge  
sshortri@vt.edu  
(276) 935-5093



Photo: The Crooked Road

# Scott Freeman

**GENRE:** Bluegrass

**PROGRAMS:** Group members will discuss regional musical styles and repertoire, as well as the historical and cultural background of the music. Instrument demonstrations can be presented.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Scott Freeman grew up in a musical family in Mount Airy, NC, and today he makes his living performing, recording, writing, arranging, and teaching music from his home in Woodlawn, Virginia, and all around the region. “There were always instruments around the house,” he remembers. His three brothers all played music, so he seemed destined to play. “They always needed a mandolin player,” says Scott, who plays multiple instruments but still favors the mandolin. The brothers performed bluegrass and gospel music together with other community members. In the 1970s, Scott was drawn to the mandolin by hearing David Grisman and other musicians who were experimenting with traditional music and jazz. He has performed with many groups and musicians from the region and was a founding member of Skeeter and the Skidmarks, who played at bluegrass festivals across the country. Later, he played for six or seven years with the progressive bluegrass band Alternate Roots. He also played several shows with Glen Lawson, the McPeak Brothers, and Amantha Mill of Boone, North Carolina. Scott has also spent a great deal of time teaching. He currently has about seventy private students and maintains an active waiting list. He works with famous banjo instructor and musician Pete Wernick at workshops held at MerleFest. Scott spent more than three years teaching for the Junior Appalachian Musicians program in Sparta, and today he teaches for a program at the Blue Ridge Music Center in Virginia. Scott has participated on many recordings, and has recorded solo projects. He currently plays with various groups, particularly with national banjo champion Steve Lewis and Josh Scott in a group called the Trespassers.



Photo: Contributed Photo

**WEBSITE:** None

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Depends on venue

**FEE:** \$400 within a 50 mile-radius

**CONTACT:**

Scott Freeman  
2906 Cranberry Road  
Woodlawn VA, 24381  
scottfreeman37@yahoo.com  
(276) 237-2818 (cell)  
(276) 238-1610 (home)

# Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge

**GENRES:** Appalachian, Celtic, Gospel, Traditional and Contemporary Folk

**PROGRAMS:** During concert performances, Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge encourages audience participation through song and physical response to the music. In a school concert setting, they can also provide PowerPoint presentations to enhance the performance, showing scenes of the music the students hear, lyrics to the sing-alongs, etc. They also will contact pertinent members of the school staff (music teachers, administration) to consult about potential integration of the music with planned themes or wishes (for example, highlighting particular SOLs).

**BIOGRAPHY:** The members of Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge are Charles Bostian (hammered dulcimer, bass), Jack Webster (vocals, guitar, bass), Marya Katz (hammered dulcimer, vocals, guitar, percussion), and Carolyn Smith (flute, percussion). They have performed for private functions (weddings, parties), holiday celebrations, receptions, festivals, outdoor concerts, churches, and schools. Their four CDs are: *Mountain Mists* (1996), *Blue Ridge Heritage* (1998), *Christmas with Simple Gifts* (2003), and *Between Sunset and Stars* (2008).

**WEBSITE:** [www.sgotbr.com](http://www.sgotbr.com)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge can provide their own sound equipment if necessary.

**FEE:** \$200-\$300 for a single performance (approximately 45 minutes), depending on whether it is necessary to provide sound equipment. If travel is beyond 50 miles from Blacksburg, an additional \$50 for expenses is requested.



Photo: Glenn Comeau

**CONTACT:**  
Charles Bostian  
[bostian@vt.edu](mailto:bostian@vt.edu)  
(540) 552-9327  
1609 Kennedy Ave.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

# Tyler Hughes

**GENRE:** Old Time

**PROGRAMS:** Tyler's program presents students with an overview of the history of old time banjo and its role in country music. Programs also address storytelling and information about Appalachia's culture and its first settlers. Each performance includes music on a variety of traditional instruments and sing-alongs designed to be easy for children to learn.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Hailing from the coal mining town of Big Stone Gap, VA, Tyler has been carrying on the traditions of old time banjo playing since age 12. Drawing from influences Hobart Crabtree, Dock Boggs, and Bascom Lamar Lunsford, he weaves together stories and songs that represent Appalachia's rich cultural heritage in a modern and fun setting. Tyler has long been an advocate for roots music education. He has taught at Mountain Empire Community College's Mountain Music School and he continues to organize their student string band. He currently plays with the Empty Bottle String Band in Johnson City, TN, and works as a solo artist on the side. Tyler just released his first album, *Wise County Jail*, in October of 2012. He studied old time music at East Tennessee State University, where he has completed a bachelor's degree in Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music Studies, and where he is pursuing a master's degree in Appalachian Studies.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system with vocal and instrument mics and preferably one condenser mic

**WEBSITE:** [www.facebook.com/TylerHughesBanjo](http://www.facebook.com/TylerHughesBanjo)

**FEE:** \$100-\$350 depending on travel time and length of performance

**CONTACT:**

Tyler Hughes  
[thughesbanjo@gmail.com](mailto:thughesbanjo@gmail.com)  
(276) 220-2442



Photo: Eddie Kilbourne

# Town Branch Bluegrass

**GENRE:** Bluegrass

**PROGRAMS:** Town Branch Bluegrass offers shows in which they play traditional mountain music songs, many of which have ties to our region. The band also offers the opportunity for students to ask questions that pertain to bluegrass music, bluegrass artists, and bluegrass instruments.

**BIOGRAPHY:** As long as bluegrass music has echoed through the hills and valleys of the Appalachian region, musicians of all ages have gathered together to play and preserve this favorite style of music. Town Branch Bluegrass follows in this tradition by combining the traditional songs of yesterday with the driving sound of a modern style. Town Branch Bluegrass consists of Brandon Elkins, banjo; Jack Bonham, guitar/vocals; Shirley Smith, vocals; Wayne Bonham, guitar/vocals; Bill Newman, mandolin; and Peggy Ely, upright bass. Over the past eight years, the band has performed at regional events in Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina, including several Crooked Road venues such as The Carter Family Fold, Lay's Hardware, and Heartwood. They have also performed at Clinchfest, Mountain Empire Home Craft Days, the Jimmy Martin Memorial Bluegrass Festival, the Wilderness Road Festival, Paramount Theatre, the Papa Joe Smitty Festival, Feed and Seed, Bluegrass on Broad, and Seedtime in the Cumberland.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Access to a standard electrical outlet

**WEBSITE:** [www.townbranchbluegrass.com](http://www.townbranchbluegrass.com)

**FEE:** \$100-\$350 depending on travel time and length of performance

**CONTACT:**

Brandon Elkins

P.O. Box 11

Jonesville, VA 24263

[townbranchbluegrass@verizon.net](mailto:townbranchbluegrass@verizon.net)

(276) 393-9754



Photo: Morgan Akens

# Wayne Henderson & Helen White

**GENRE:** Traditional Appalachian

**PROGRAMS:** Hailing from the “mecca” of traditional mountain music, Wayne and Helen provide a visit to an Appalachian porch. Helen’s simple, strong guitar backup provides a solid foundation for Wayne’s guitar wizardry. The songs, fiddle tunes, amazing guitar playing, and Wayne’s stories and tales allow an audience to experience a sample of Appalachian culture. The duo can offer a concert in which Wayne showcases and talks about his unique finger-picking style. Wayne, an internationally renowned luthier who has built guitars for legendary musicians such as Eric Clapton, can also talk about guitar-building.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Wayne Henderson is a National Heritage Award recipient honored for his craftsmanship as a luthier and his renowned finger-style Appalachian guitar playing. His instruments are coveted worldwide and he has a long waiting list for his guitars, mandolins, and banjos. Sponsored through the National Council for Traditional Arts, the Smithsonian Institute, Office of Arts America, European World of Bluegrass, Chet Atkins International Appreciation Society, and numerous individual venues, Wayne has toured broadly in the U.S., Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. His lightning fast, articulate playing style was influenced by Doc Watson and E.C. Ball, both close friends and neighbors in this musically rich corner where Southwest Virginia meets Northwest North Carolina. His repertoire includes Appalachian fiddle tunes, Carter Family melodies, and a few swing and rockabilly standards. He has won more awards at the Galax Fiddlers Convention than any other competitor in its seventy-seven year history.

A singer, fiddler, guitarist, and tunesmith, Helen White has toured extensively with Wayne in the U.S. and Europe. Her compositions include works for theater and video projects, as well as a *Booklist*-honored recording of original songs for children. Helen is the founder and served as regional director of the Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM Inc.) program from the program’s inception in 2000 until 2013. This renowned program serves students in 25 mountain counties in Virginia and North and South Carolina, introducing them to their musical heritage through small group instruction in the instruments and music common to the region.

Both Wayne and Helen are frequent instructors at major traditional music camps across the country.



**WEBSITE:** [www.waynehenderson.org](http://www.waynehenderson.org)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system with 2 mics per performer and a monitor

**FEE:** Negotiable, based on distance from artists’ homes. Fee ranges from \$500 - \$1,500 including travel. Because Wayne and Helen are featured on the Virginia Commission for the Arts Touring Artist Roster, some VCA support may be available for performances.

**CONTACT:**  
Helen White  
[foxridge@ls.net](mailto:foxridge@ls.net)  
(276) 579-7421



# Whitetop Mountain Band

**GENRES:** Traditional Appalachian, Bluegrass, Old Time, Country, Gospel and Dance

**PROGRAMS:** Whitetop Mountain Band has long experience teaching music and dance to all ages in public schools, Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM Inc.) programs, music camps, colleges, and private lessons. The band offers workshops and discussions about various aspects of traditional music, including instrumental and vocal technique and history. They teach both flatfoot and group dances and instrument making. Jackson Cunningham is a luthier who can talk about his craft with interested audiences.

**BIOGRAPHY:** The Whitetop Mountain Band (WTMB) is a family-based band from the highest mountains of Virginia. Whitetop, Virginia, is an area rich in the old time music tradition; this band has deep roots in mountain music. The members have done much to preserve the Whitetop region's style of old time fiddling and banjo picking and are legendary musicians and teachers of the style. The band is well known for their high energy and charisma on stage. One of the most popular dance bands in the region, WTMB has a great following at square dances all over Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The band has also performed at all sorts of venues and festivals throughout the United States, including The Smithsonian Folklife Festival, World Music Institute in NYC, Ola Belle Reed Festival, and Merlefest. The band members have toured overseas in the U.S., U.K., Ireland, and Australia. WTMB has also taught and been master musicians/dancers for workshops and classes in fiddle, banjo, guitar, vocals, and dance all over the U.S. The band currently has recordings on the Arhoolie Record Label and Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. The band members have also been recorded by JuneAppal, Heritage, and have been on fiddle compilations for Rounder Records. WTMB has been featured in many books, magazines, and TV/radio shows about Appalachian music.

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system needed for larger auditoriums.

**WEBSITE:** [www.whitetopmountainband.com](http://www.whitetopmountainband.com)

**FEE:** \$700 for local performances (within 50 miles). For longer distances, travel would need to be covered.



## **CONTACT:**

Emily Spencer  
wtmbbanjo@hotmail.com or espencer@grayson.k12.va.us  
(276) 579-4322 (home)  
(336) 200-0408 (cell)

Martha Spencer  
whitetopmountaineers@hotmail.com  
(336) 385-0773

Debbie Bramer  
tdbramer@hotmail.com  
(276) 728-4798

Photo: Susan Colvard Carter

# Whitetop Mountaineers

**GENRES:** Old Time, Bluegrass, Country Roots

**PROGRAMS:** Concerts, workshops (dance, instrumental, ballad-singing, and instrument making)

**BIOGRAPHY:** Martha Spencer and Jackson Cunningham perform together as the Whitetop Mountaineers. They both live in Whitetop, VA, among the highest mountains in Virginia. Their shows feature old time country duet singing, up-tempo old time fiddle, clawhammer banjo, bluegrass mandolin, and guitar instrumentals, as well as high-energy Appalachian dancing. Martha and Jackson are both members of the Whitetop Mountain Band, and have performed across the U.S., Australia, Ireland, U.K., and New Zealand.

**WEBSITE:** [www.whitetopmountaineers.com](http://www.whitetopmountaineers.com)

**TECHNICAL NEEDS:** Sound system with one omni-directional mic or two vocal and two instrument mics

**FEE:** \$300-500 (travel expenses depending on distance)

**CONTACT:**

Martha Spencer  
[whitetopmountaineers@hotmail.com](mailto:whitetopmountaineers@hotmail.com)  
(336) 385-0773



Photo: Susan Colvard Carter





The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail  
One Heartwood Circle  
Abingdon, VA 24210  
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[www.thecrookedroad.org](http://www.thecrookedroad.org)