

Restless Lester



Restless Lester is a bluegrass band that hails from Alberta and features some of the province's top pickers. The band is anchored rhythmically by the twin towers of band leader Steve Fisher, well-known and talented flatpicker from Calgary's Sheep River Rounders and Hot House Bluegrass Band, and bassist Keith Burgess, long-time rhythmic anchor and session player for several western Canadian and acoustic music artists. On fiddle is Bruce Blair, a native of eastern Ontario caught up in the ongoing westward exodus to Alberta. Since his arrival in Wild Rose Country, Blair's achievements in old-time Canadian fiddle, country, and Cajun music have been well documented and appreciated. Rounding out the group is Brad Lindberg, a permanent fixture in the Calgary area's club and lounge scene, who provides offbeat and creative melodic banjo stylings reminiscent of Bill Keith, Don Reno and Eddie Adcock.

Audiences get to travel the gamut, from the Stanley Brothers to Elvis to Bob Wills to Loudon Wainwright III and back again -- and have a whole lot of fun on the journey! This hot young band's unique repertoire is winning audiences fast.

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The Rawling Brothers



Doug and Bruce Rawling have been playing music since their childhood, when they travelled and sang with their family. Since then they have been involved in several musical ventures – sometimes together, sometimes apart – and during that time have sold over 50,000 albums. They have enjoyed radio air play in Canada, United States and Europe., and their album “Hand Me Downs, Volume 1” was the 2004 Vibe Award winner for the best Country Bluegrass Album in Canada. “Back in the 80’s, when we had more hair, we actually had one of our songs go to number two on a New York radio station”, recalls Doug. “We were getting quite a bit of U.S. air play, and my sister who was living in Florida at the time could hear her brothers singing on the radio, so that was pretty cool.”

Being singer-songwriters, the Rawling Brothers are often asked to describe their sound, a question they don’t find real easy to answer. “Our music is a blend of a lot of different styles”, says Bruce, the younger of the two brothers. “We’ve been influenced by old time country, gospel music, bluegrass, folk and even rock music. We’ve come up the phrase ‘Rocky Mountain Country’ and we think that works pretty good for describing our sound”. Whatever you call it, their grassroots, close to the earth sound, featuring close harmonies and acoustic instruments, seems to strike a chord with a lot of people. They’ve built up a loyal fan base through the Prairie Provinces and the Midwestern states. The Rawlings share a deep love of music and feel blessed by God to be able to do what they love to do. www.rawlingbrothers.com



The logo for the Northern Lights Bluegrass & Old Tyme Music Festival 2006. It features a stylized green graphic of a mountain range with musical notes floating above it. Below the graphic, the text "NORTHERN LIGHTS BLUEGRASS & OLD TYME MUSIC FESTIVAL" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with "NORTHERN LIGHTS" in green, "BLUEGRASS" in blue, and "& OLD TYME MUSIC FESTIVAL" in brown. The year "2006" is written in a large, brown, serif font below the main text.

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The Cracker Cats



The Cracker Cats are three dynamic and entertaining young women from Saskatoon, who are making something new out of something old. Their high-energy rowdy and passionate performances are full of fire, with flying fingers and tight interwoven harmonies. These modern day gypsies provide a tasteful offering of traditional roots music, while proudly bringing a Saskatchewanness to the music they perform.

The two original members, Kamila and Melissa are the primary singers, song-writers. They have been kickin' and causin' trouble, traveling, trading songs and generally trying to kill each other for the past six years. Their beautifully blended harmonies, and concrete connection is intoxicating. Kamila, with her smokey vocals and rippin' mandolin, is described as the Dark Angel. Melissa, the Country Kitty, is known for her sweet singing and straight giver' guitar. A stroke of luck or a twist of fate, either way Eliza is an enhancing addition. This Hillbilly Hottie is the bang twangin' banjo and story-singer of the band. With such complimentary characteristics these Cats have been dropping jaws and making miles for the past two years.

Together, The Cracker Cats create a unique roots sound, encompassing elements of country, bluegrass, blues and folk with gypsy soul. From hard hitting and fast paced, to slow winding and melodic, the space they create becomes a melting pot as the music drives and affects listeners. Their musical talent, physical glow, and infectious energy will surely capture your hearts and keep you on your feet for a boot stompin' good ol' time. www.crackercats.com



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The logo for the Northern Lights Bluegrass & Old Tyme Music Festival 2006. It features a stylized green graphic of a musical staff with notes and a treble clef at the top. Below this, the words "NORTHERN LIGHTS BLUEGRASS & OLD TYME MUSIC FESTIVAL" are written in a bold, sans-serif font. "NORTHERN LIGHTS" and "BLUEGRASS" are in green, while "& OLD TYME MUSIC" and "FESTIVAL" are in brown. The year "2006" is written in a large, brown, serif font at the bottom.

Upstream



After a four year hiatus, the acclaimed trio, Upstream is getting back together. Band members Gord Vaadeland (Vocals, fretless bass, guitar), Sheila Vaadeland (Vocals, Guitar, Percussion) and Darryl Amundson (vocals, mandolin, guitar and dobro), will be joined by multi-instrumentalists, Lucas Welsh and Tom Kennedy stage for the Northern Lights Bluegrass and Old Tyme Music Festival. Although Upstream's first release, Vintage Vantage, dates back to 2000, the album's sound is still unique. Combining their folksy rural traditions with a wonderful mixture of acoustic folk, gospel and bluegrass, they create rich musical textures which sound both old and new at the same time. Their tight "push the envelope" harmonies and instrumental skills provide a framework for the real life images portrayed in the lyrics of their original songs.

The bottom line is that Upstream is back doing what they love. In addition to the songs from the album, they will be adding new material to the repertoire. You may also notice, as you watch their performance, a renewed passion for what they are doing on stage. Expect a very personable show, as the trio sings about what they know and what they believe, from within the comfort zone they create for the audience with their laid back approach.

A stylized logo for the Northern Lights Bluegrass & Old Tyme Music Festival. The top part features a green silhouette of a boat with several musical notes floating above it. Below this, the text "NORTHERN LIGHTS BLUEGRASS & OLD TYME MUSIC FESTIVAL" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. "NORTHERN LIGHTS" and "BLUEGRASS" are in green, while "& OLD TYME MUSIC FESTIVAL" is in brown. The year "2006" is written in a large, brown, serif font at the bottom.

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Bannock Country



This popular Métis band from Debden, Saskatchewan has quite a following in Western Canada. The band's leader is Bruce Isbister, who plays fiddle, lead guitar and background vocals. He is joined by Ralph Arcand (yes, he is John's brother) on lead vocals and rhythm guitar, and Irvin "Chaps" Little on bass.

Bannock Country has been the feature band at the John Arcand Fiddlefest Saturday Evening Dance since 1999 and the group has made appearances at Back to Batoche Days and many other events. They provide old time tunes that will get the audience up dancing like there was a horsehair floor at the festival site!

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Ken Olson & Friends



Ken Olson may be best known in music circles as part of the successful bluegrass gospel group, The Baler Strings. His first solo project, *Just a Closer Walk*, was recorded with many of the friends he had sung and played with in the past. The album was nominated for Country Gospel Album of the Year by the SCMA in 2003. From this recording came the core group with his brother Stan and long-time friend Esther. When schedules permit, they are joined by special friends Per Vinding (vocals, mandolin & harmonica) and Ted & Sharon Lehn (vocals, guitar, mandolin & autoharp).

The group made its debut in 2002 at a Country Gospel Music Association function, and went on to win Bluegrass Artist of the Year at the 2003 CGMA Canadian Convention. Ken and Esther received the Producer of the Year award for the album, Ken was awarded Manager of the Year, and also was honoured with the prestigious Male Entertainer of the Year award. Ken's love of jamming and encouragement of other musicians earned him the 2004 Mentor of the Year award.

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Friends of Old Time Music



One hot Old Time band! Featuring John Murray (fiddle, vocals), Bonnie Logan (banjo, vocals), Joys Dancer (banjo, accordion, vocals), Milo Drtina (guitar, vocals, kazoo, harmonica), and Mona Goodwin (banjo, fiddle, washboard, vocals). The Friends currently reside in Saskatchewan, and have played numerous venues from the Ness Creek Festival to Mardi Gras in New Orleans, and even a Bluegrass and Country Festival in Vicenza, Italy.

Prior to radios and recordings, people made their own music. A good fiddler was highly respected and prized in the community. Old-time music was dance music, but it was also parlour music and ballads. It was never concert music, and usually participatory. Each region, even each county, had unique styles, and until the development of recordings and radio, the tunes and songs were passed by oral tradition. With the advent of radio, records, and the music industry, the diversity began to decline and fewer and fewer people learned to play this music. The music was preserved only in pockets and by a few individuals and families. Friends of Old Time Music is part of that preservation, playing a wide variety of tunes including music from the Skillet Lickers and Uncle Dave Macon, and they'll continue to do their part to keep this genre alive for years to come.



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Vickie Dyck and The Last Resort Band



Vickie Dyck and The Last Resort Band is a family band with two sisters blending harmonies that only sisters can. Vickie and Colleen are joined by a couple of "honourary brothers" who help round out the acoustic band. Gordon Sayers plays lead guitar and Tony Allen plays upright bass.

Vickie Dyck and The Last Resort Band perform, folk, old-tyme, country and gospel music using acoustic instruments; guitar, mandolin, banjo and upright bass. "The Last Resort" plays at The Barn Playhouse at the Flavours of Fall concert each year, but got its start on the bandstand during the summer events at The Barn Playhouse. Vickie and Colleen Dyck are an integral part of running of The Barn Playhouse so when other bands were unable to make it, the sisters at The Barn would step in as a "last resort". The name stuck and became the official name of the band!

The Last Resort concerts are a great mix of styles and sounds from old-tyme to bluegrass to country to folk with a little bit of gospel thrown in for good measure. We like to think that a concert with The Last Resort is like sitting around the kitchen stove on a cold winter's evening making music and telling stories till you've forgotten all about the weather out side. A true prairie experience! www.barnplayhouse.com/band.html


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