

2025 Fort New Salem Dulcimer Festival
Workshop Descriptions by Workshop Leader

Note: May Change if Needed

Playing Without Tab – Marge Diamond – Hear a tune and wonder how to play it? Marge will show you some techniques to help you play by ear. This is for those who have some playing experience. MD – AB

Add More Tunes to Your Play List – Marge Diamond – Do you have some dulcimer playing experience and are wondering where to get more tunes? Marge has a large repertoire of fiddle and old-time tunes from her many years of playing at festivals. She will share a few of these with you in this workshop as well as answer questions on techniques. MD – AB

Never Touched a Hammered Dulcimer Before – Jeff Fedan – This is a workshop for someone who has not done more than look at a hammered dulcimer, but wants to try it out to see if they'd like to play it. We'll cover the layout of the instrument, tuning, hammering technique, and learn a real song or two. A lender instrument will be available. B – HD

Spoons are for more than eating with – Jeff Fedan – If you tap your feet when you play, why not do something with your hands too? Spoons add a special flavor to up-beat, old-time tunes and are easy to play. Some (mostly me) have suggested that spoons are (is?) the most important part of any old-time band. If you can clap your hands, you can play the spoons. Funny, no one uses forks or knives in a band! All

Hammered dulcimer tunes from north-central West Virginia we should play more often – Jeff Fedan – So many tunes...so little time. What about tunes in the old-time repertoire that we have neglected? Let's learn a few of them. HD – AB, I

Basic Hymns that We Love – Amy Kaiser – Learn to play some of your old favorite melodies along with some harmony variations HD – AB

Beginning Pennywhistle – Amy Kaiser – Learn the basics of playing this simple, easy to carry instrument. Fingering charts will be provided. If you don't have your own pennywhistle, \$10 ones will be available for purchase at the workshop. Pennywhistle - B

Strengthen Your Strum 1 – Bill Locke – The idea of using a flat pick to structure a strum into a rhythmic pattern is explored in this workshop. A single well known and simple tune will be used with a series of strum methods to develop a variety of sounds that can add a different energy to a tune. This may be used to provide sounds familiar from the playing of other instruments in an old-time band. We start with the basics and add complexity as we go. MD - AB, I

Strengthen Your Strum 2 – Bill Locke – In this workshop Bill will show some more advanced strumming techniques including triplets (cross-picking) and damping methods which may be used to further add variety to playing. A range of tunes genres might be tried using these methods including old-time and blues sounds. As before, we are playing the instrument in a fashion that tends to “join the band” as it relates to the overall sound. MD – I

Finger Style Guitar – Bill Locke – For those that can play a few chords and want to do it all without a pick. We won't do it all, but we can give it a start. Dance with your right hand.

Playing Hymns on the Mountain Dulcimer – Rayme Pullen – This workshop will explore a handful of well-known hymns from the “red back hymnal” tradition in two tunings (DAA and DAD). We will cover playing the hymn melodies first in drone style, then with a basic I - IV - V chord accompaniment, as well as some options for re-harmonizing some of these well-known classics to add color and life to your hymn arrangements. MD – AB, I

Adapting Pop Covers to the Mountain Dulcimer – Rayme Pullen – This workshop will cover several tunes you may not have thought to try on the dulcimer. Songs by Sierra Ferrell, Dolly Parton, Ed Sheeran, and Amy Winehouse translate surprisingly well to a mountain dulcimer with a little creativity. We will explore how to play a handful of pop songs in two tunings (DAA and DAC). The playing style in this workshop will focus on strumming to an accompanying chord progression and adding instrumental fills to fit the type of song you want to cover. MD – AB, I

Fun With 4-chord Loops – Jerry Rockwell – In this session we'll learn the basics of jamming with 4-chord loops, starting with the famous D-A-Bm-G progression and its minor-leaning offspring which is a reordering (Bm-G-D-A). We'll learn some riffs that go with these chords, and we'll get some arrangement ideas to fuel your creativity. Besides 4/4 time, we'll try 3/4 and 6/8 time as well. DAD tuning for dulcimers. All instruments welcome, and open to all levels.

Learning ALL your D, G, and A Chords – Jerry Rockwell – Tired of playing the same old lower position chords? We'll open up your chordal horizons by learning at least one or two more shapes for these three primary chords, including some great chords with open strings. We'll apply these chord shapes to a "stretched-out" version of the cabbage chords. Tuning DAD Intermediate and up.

Introduction to 4-String Equidistant Dulcimer Playing on Standard DADD and Baritone AEAA and ADAA – Jerry Rockwell – I love playing the 4-equidistant dulcimer as TWO separate 3-string instruments: one dulcimer in DAD, and the other in ADD. Once you get used to the ADD or 511 strings, they offer new musical

possibilities. Even though it is possible to play the same chords further up the fingerboard on the DAD or 158 set, they FEEL so much better on the ADD set! I will also show you some of my favorite 4-string chords, including some using open strings. Open to all levels.

Moving Basic Melodies on Hammered Dulcimer – Bill Schilling – The purpose of this workshop is to acquaint the participants with one simple technique for adding variety while playing melody lines on hammered dulcimer. Participants will try using basic patterns to move the melody higher and/or lower depending on the ranges of their instruments and the keys involved.

Beginning Melody Chord Style Ukulele – Bill Schilling – The purpose of this workshop is to introduce the participants to ways to play simple melody chord style ukulele adapting the melody chord numbering system used for autoharps. Players will be able to hear more melody in their playing (while still chording) by learning to use more chord changes than are used for standard accompaniment chords. Singing while playing may also be incorporated. Ukulele – B, AB

Songs with Good Choruses – Bill Schilling – A shared group of voices is something really special. We'll try some rounds, some harmonies, some simple words to remember, some old favorites, and some challenges to the memories. We'll use instruments and we'll sing a cappella. Participants may suggest or lead songs during the workshop, but everyone should come prepared to join in the singing! All

Mountain Dulcimer Styles – Linda Sigismondi – In this workshop, beginning to novice players will get a chance to hear and try several different styles of playing the mountain dulcimer including basic strumming, fingerpicking, and using a noter using some traditional tunes.(DAD tuning)
MD – B

Native American Flute – Linda Sigismondi – This is a workshop for those interested in starting a journey on the Native American style flute or simply learning more about it. We will look at some basics on how to play including the minor pentatonic scale and some simple ornaments. Examples of different keys and types of flutes will be demonstrated. Playing the flute with other instruments will be discussed if participants are interested. Several Am flutes will be available for use but if you have your own you are welcome to bring it. NAF – All

Drumming – Linda Sigismondi – Is your head hurting from all the new techniques and music you worked on today? Come and beat out some tension in a drum circle. Linda will show you some basic rhythms and do some rhythm games. Some “bucket drums” and other percussion instruments will be available for use. You can bring your own drum and percussion instruments. All

Basic Blues on the Mountain Dulcimer – Steven K Smith – Yes, you really can play

the blues on the mountain dulcimer. It's fun, it's easy, and it sounds GREAT! In this class we'll go over the basics of the instrumental 12 bar blues pattern in several keys, all while tuned to DAd. MD – AB, I

Chord Building for the Mountain Dulcimer – Steven K Smith – Ever wonder what those letters you sometimes see printed above a line of music or tablature mean? Come to this workshop and find out! We'll learn the basics of "What is a Chord?" and "Where are they?" as applied to the mountain dulcimer. Then we'll go over a couple of common chord progressions and talk a little about chord substitutions. MD –AB

Some Intermediate English Tunes – Steven K Smith – I'll present some traditional English tunes from the English Country Dance repertoire in intermediate level arrangements for the MountainDulcimer, along with some discussion of sources for the tunes..MD –I

One Chord to Rule Them All – Christine Steiner – Learn one simple pattern and be able to play any chord. Will learn to "chop" chords and play arpeggios. Will practice playing backup chords to a couple of common fiddle tunes.. HD - B

Childgrove – Christine Steiner – This is a fun song in Em. Will learn basic tune, some embellishments, and play "chopped" chord backups. HD - AB

5 Pattern Tune – Christine Steiner – Learn "Nutfactory Shuffle" by breaking it down into five 2-measure patterns that you will memorize and put together to create this tune. Depending on your skill level, you can play the basic tune, or I will show you how to embellish it for more advanced players. HD - All

Dorian Mode – Joe Steiner – Using the old-timey song Pretty Polly, we'll explore the Dorian mode and open up a whole new world of haunting melodies on the dulcimer. MD – AB

Making It Swing – Joe Steiner – In this workshop, we will use a couple Bob Wills tunes to learn "Swingy" backup and get ideas for arranging lead lines MD - I

Harmonica – Joe Steiner – Learn the basics of playing this simple, easy to carry instrument. Some harmonicas will be available for sale. Harmonica - B

Ensemble Playing – Shari Wolf – How to add pizzazz to your group playing by using intros/outros, chord backup, alternative melodies, breaks/solos, and more. All Instruments/levels

Getting Started on Mountain Dulcimer – Shari Wolf – This is a workshop for the very beginner. Participants will be shown how to tune the mountain dulcimer, how to find notes, and how to strum. Participants will also learn how to play several easy melodies. MD – B