



Rhythm Bones Player

A Newsletter of the Rhythm Bones Society

Volume 11, No. 4 2009

In this Issue

The Rhythm Bones Society — A Vision Come True

Carolina Chocolate Drops” Dom Flemons

Rhythm Bones at Cmp

Lady Plays the Kleppers Drawing

Mary Seel Obituary

Charlie “Bones” Ginsburg Obit

Rhythm Bones Player Newsletters on Website

Columns:
Executive Director

Editorial

Letters to the Editor

Profile of a Member

Website of the Quarter

Recording of the Quarter

Bones Calendar

Future Issues
Preliminary Bones Fest XIV Information

Shakespeare and Bones

Executive Director’s Column

10 years ago several visionaries were inspired to begin an organization based on the rhythm bones. They were trying to buy a sort of insurance policy to ensure that the instrument would continue, continue to be played, but continue to be taught and proliferated.

You see I think their greatest fear was that the instrument would recede to a point where it would only be known in its context of the past, and the vast majority of people would only encounter it if they saw a picture of the minstrel show, or read about it in a book. In short, people would forget they existed.

They wanted to make sure that not only did people have a chance to see the instrument being played, but they had a chance to play it themselves.

That they had a chance to experience the great joy each of us experience when we play, but when we see people’s reaction to our playing. They wanted a chance to bring the instrument to another generation by gathering people together whose enthusiasm would spark growth and eventual acceptance by a public too focused technological entertainment, and who had forgotten some of the old ways.

So here we are ten years later. We have a solid core membership, a top notch newsletter, and a yearly opportunity to display our instrument to the public. I think we can be assured that Fred Edmunds would be very pleased by this.

But what of the future, a somewhat shaky

(Continued on page 6)

The Rhythm Bones Society-A Vision Come True

This article reviews the ten year history of the Rhythm Bones Society (RBS) and looks forward to the next ten years.

For those of us who have been around for a while, it’s amazing to see the changes in rhythm bones playing that have occurred during the past ten or so years. RBS has and continues to have an impact on the music world, and the number of known rhythm bones players continues to grow while playing quality improves.

History. RBS was the vision of founding father, Everett Cowett (read it below and also see Vol. 8, No. 1.) We organized on the back porch of the home of the late Russ Myers and his wife Wilma. On September 23, 1999, 34 people signed the By-Laws creating an organization whose purpose, as stated in the first issue of the newsletter, is “to preserve, educate, communicate and foster development of rhythm bones sounds and music.” Seven rhythm bones players were elected to the Board of Directors to lead this new society (see Page 4 for short biographies of current and former Board Members.)

Bones Fests. Our annual Bones Fests began two years earlier organized by Ev Cowett at the urging of who might be called our founding grandfather, Dr. Fred Edmund, maker and seller of rhythm bones and a great instructional video (see Vol. 5, No. 3). The first ten Bones Fests were re-

viewed in 2006 in a 24 page special Reflections issue of the newsletter.

Our Website. What do you give a father who doesn’t want anything? For Martha Cowett Cummings, it was the Rhythm Bones Central website now with the address rhythmbones.com, and an early home page is shown on Page 6. This website is the source of much information about rhythm bones, and is where many people were

(Continued on page 7)



Rhythm Bones Society Logo. The hands are Everett Cowett’s.

Editorial

The Rhythm Bones Society is ten years old and it's showing. Membership has declined over the past couple of years as has attendance at recent Bones Fests. As Steve Brown said in a Page 22 article in the special Reflections issue of the newsletter celebrating ten years of Bones Fests, "The next 10 years will be a challenge to keep the society together and bones playing exciting and relevant as we pass the mantel to a whole new crop of bones players."

2010 will start off interestingly. There is new blood on the Board with the election of Bill Vits and Kenny Wolin. Bones Fest XIV hosted by Teri Davies and Kenny Wolin is back on the East Coast where we have had our greatest attendance. Martha Cowett Cummings volunteered to help webmaster Jonathan Danforth with upgrades to our website.

The Page 1 article talks about the vision that RBS father, Ev Cowett, had when he hosted Bones Fest I. It is time rethink where we are and update that vision—writing it down so it can be easily shared. Let's try to finalize it at Bones Fest XIV.

The news of Mary Seel's passing barely made the last newsletter. This issue has her obituary including some remembrances from BFXIII attendees.

I had not heard of Charlie Bones, and discovered him on the internet after he died. I wrote his widow and she told us a bit about him.

I almost got to see the Carolina Chocolate Drops perform near Chattanooga and meet rhythm bones player Dom Flemons. Well Dom was nice enough to share his story with us.

New member Adele Megann sent us the short article to the right with this note: "Here's the little article, finally. As you can imagine, it's a crazy time for a school music teacher, between report cards and Christmas concerts. Check out the photo on Page 8.

Several people have suggested a Profile of a Member column, so I have added it to the newsletter. I am going to select members with the most years of membership except for this issue where I am using a profile sent in by Bob Goulet as background for his CD

reviewed in the last issue.

I had the opportunity to help a prospect with kid rhythm bones by suggesting paint stirrers cut in half. Ace, Lowes and Home Depot will give you lots of them if they know you teaching kids. I teach with heavier bones, and then give the kid, after demonstrating that they really work, the paint stirrer bones. Parents like the quiet sound.

One sidebar to the story about Ted 'Mr Goon-Bones' Goon. When I re-read the original article, Ted told about having lunch with the actor, William Holden, who played Goon-Bones. I talked to Holden's son, West, on the telephone, and while he remembered his dad played rhythm bones, he could not provide details other than Holden played drums and bongos. I wanted an interesting story!

Several years ago when my wife and I spent a night in the Lodge at Shenandoah National Park, I had the opportunity to play with Linden Bowman, stage name 'The Classic Hill-billy.' Recently his daughter contacted webmaster Jonathan Danforth and asked him if he could find me (though she did not know my name.) Jonathan sent emails to several members, and I responded. Well, Linden really liked the rhythm bones accompaniment, and now when he has some serious health problems, his daughter wanted some rhythm bones music to comfort him. I supplied that along with a thank you note for letting me play along with him. I really like the things our little Society can do.

Rhythm Bones at Camp

What was the most energetic thing I did in October? I went to camp with eighty kids, aged nine to twelve. Yes, there's a good reason--I'm an elementary school teacher. Our Grade 4-6 students had been invited for an overnight by the Tim Horton's Camp in Tatamagouche. And no, Nova Scotia's North Shore is not the nicest place to be mid-October. (Snow was spotted.) BUT, I did get to spread the news about rhythm bones.

Just on spec, I brought along five pairs. Sure enough, pouring rain and cold wind canceled the evening's activities. While we were all inside, teachers trying to convince the kids to

Rhythm Bones Player

Rhythm Bones Society
Volume 11, No. 4
Fourth Quarter 2009
ISSN: 1545-1380

Editor
Steve Wixson
wixson@chattanooga.net

Executive Director
Stephen Brown
Bones@crystal-mtn.com

Web Site Coordinator
Jonathan Danforth
webmaster@rhythmbones.com

Board of Directors
Steve Brown, Executive Director
Jonathan Danforth
Gil Hibben, Assistant Director
Mel Mercier
Bill Vits
Steve Wixson, Secretary/Treasurer
Kenny Wolin

The Rhythm Bones Player is published quarterly by the Rhythm Bones Society. Nonmember subscriptions are \$10 for one year; RBS members receive the Player as part of their dues.

The Rhythm Bones Player welcomes letters to the Editor and articles on any aspect of bones playing. All material submitted for consideration is subject to editing and condensation.

Rhythm Bones Central web site: rhythmbones.com

play board games, I sat down in one of a pair of chairs, and started to play by myself. Kids drifted over in groups of two or three ("What are you *doing*, Ms. Megann?"), and tried the rhythm bones out ("What are *those*?").

The four wooden rhythm bones were popular, but many were squeamish about the bone bones! By the end of the evening, almost everyone--kids, teachers and staff--had given rhythm bones a try. Many visited me only once, but a few couldn't help themselves, and kept coming back between card games. A couple of kids caught on to the technique, and others really wanted to!

One Gr. 6 student in particular, Brandon, soon had the basics mastered, and was helping me out by teaching others (see Page 8). We soon had all five pairs going. Since then, I gave him a pair, and he's been practicing at home. Goes to show, you never know when the opportunity will arise to pass on the craft. *Adele Megann*

Rhythm Bones Player Newsletters on Website

Volumes 1 through 9 of the Rhythm Bones Player newsletter in Adobe PDF format are now available for viewing. They are temporarily on my personal Comcast webpage <https://home.comcast.net/~wixson.s/Newsletters/main.htm>. They were tested with Internet Explorer.

Please try it out and let us know how it works. Consider this a working version while we continue to make changes until it performs like it should. The first change will be a title page with links to each individual newsletter.

The last two volumes of the newsletter will remain in paper form only for members. In January of each year we will add one more volume online.

In addition to looking up specific newsletters, you can do an Adobe text search for other information. This is free to everyone and part of our educational service.



Hans Weehuizen sent us this drawing titled *Lady Plays the Bones* (kleppers in Dutch). It was given to him by a friend who is a collector old music books. It dates back to the 1700s.

Profile of a Member

I was fortunate enough to be taught to play the rhythm bones at the very young age of seven. Sometimes in life, despite tragic events, good circumstances arise that stay with you all your life.

It all started at the age of three when I battled Polio Mialitis for the next two and a half years. Physio Therapy was difficult for a young kid to do year after year without getting totally disinterested and rebelling.

The small Religious Nun in the convent I lived in after my mothers' death took it upon herself to make sure I did all these exercises. She had been taught to play bones by her father in Cape Breton N.S. when she was a young girl and figures music and bones would motivate me to exercise my arms. It worked because I loved the bones and the music. I especially, in later years enjoyed the rarity of the bones.

I played on stage in front of a live audience for the first time at the age of eight. Thrilling experience!

As a teen and well into my sixties I played the drums in Rock, Country, and Blues bands, all with a pinch of Rhythm Bones thrown in. In my late sixties, I found that carrying around that large drum kit in and out of gigs became work as opposed to fun. So much easier to carry around bones, I got evolved in local Traditional and Folkloric music. From then on, it became "Bones and Bodhran" for me. I have-

n't looked back since.

Le Vent Des Cantons (The Breese Of The Townships) has kept us busy since it started. We have played in venues like "The Montreal Olympic Stadium, The Colleeze in Quebec City, The Maritime Accordion Competition in The Coliseum in Moncton N.B., International Fiddles Competition In Burlington Vt., and so many more.

We are a trio that consists of Piano, Vocals, and Accordion with traditional syncopated percussions.

Claire Ouellette who masters the piano as well as lends her soft singing voice in local Quebec folkloric songs with a blend of alto saxophone playing as well. She is talented in her ability to work the audience as the Francophone M.C. for our group.

Laurencio Beaudin, Quebec Grand Champion Accordion Player 2008, playing any one of five different diatonic accordions, puts out a toe-stamping beat one can't sit still to. Equipped with wireless microphones, he makes it a point to leave the stage and play for the folks in the audience much like a troubadour.

As for myself; I play rhythm bones, bodhran, wood block with drumsticks along with an array of other light percussion instruments. My duties also include parading in the audience demonstrating the bones. My wireless mike lets me talk to the audience in English. A truly Bilingual band!

On www.leventdescantons.com one can find a variety of real bones as well as starter kits for young people. I also make them out of Oak, Maple, Teak, Ash, wooden bones at affordable prices. *Bob Goulet*

[See last quarter's Recording of the Quarter or their website to order their latest CD.]

Bones Calendar

Check out the Calendar on the rhythmbones.com website.

Bones Fest XIV. July 23-25, 2010, Old Towne Alexandria, VA. More details in the next issue.

NTCMA and Bones Contest. August 30-September 5, 2010. Bones contest on Saturday or Sunday.

The Carolina Chocolate Drops' Dom Flemons

I first learned to play the bones from a woman that I met at the Mount Airy Fiddler's Convention in Mount Airy, NC in the summer of 2006. The group I play with, the Carolina Chocolate Drops, had had our first CD release party during the festival. We had finished selling CDs to the crowd when this woman approached me.

She asked me if I played the bones. I told her "no". She then responded by telling me that I needed to learn the instrument because it was part of the tradition. She placed the bones in my hand and showed me how to do it. She then told me that the bones were her family's instrument and told me a wonderful story of owning her uncle's bones which he had kept with him all the way through Europe in WWII. The bones, she said, were light as a feather when she got them and they still had the imprint of his hand on the smooth surface.

After a few months, I went to teach at Common Ground on the Hill in Maryland which is where I met Washington, DC bones player, Mike Baytop. Mike learned from an older man named Richard 'Mr. Bones' Thomas (I've heard his name pop up time

and time again) and what Mike showed me was that the bones can work with any type of music.

The third element of my playing developed when I began to reexamine the older minstrel band picture. The bones players in most pictures are depicted with their hands up in the air. I then began to try and interpret movements I saw in the pictures and found that not only did it work, but it took the experience of playing the bones to a whole other level.

With these lessons I had learned the basic skills that I use now in my playing. I have also found that the bones have single-handedly changed the way that I approach any other instrument that I play.

At the moment, I play a pair of cow ribs in my left hand and I play a pair of Osage Orange in my right. *Dom Flemons*

[To see Dom play rhythm bones, go to these two youtube links; www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLazWX8uxPU and www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xOxHyTP91c .]

Mike Baytop had a stroke last February, but is recovering. Mike and Richard 'Mr Bones' Thomas had planned on attending Bones Fest III, but Richard had some health problem that kept them away. Mike attended the Friday night session of Bones Fest VIII in Reston, VA

Profile of Current and Past Board Members



Stephen Brown, Board Member from 1999 to 2002, Assistant Director from 2002 to 2004 and Executive Director since 2004. Steve learned to play the bones from Percy Danforth in 1978. He was featured lecturer at the MFA in Boston, won the All Ireland Bones Championship in 2003 and 2004, and is on the staff of the Comhaltha Music School. Hosted Bones Fest V.



Sally Carroll, Board Member from 1999 to 2005. Sally is a sailor and knows the maritime history of rhythm bones. At the time she went on the Board, she had been playing for less than six months (and had gotten very good) and she represented the beginning rhythm bones player. Hosted Bones Fest VIII.



Dom Flemons of the Carolina Chocolate Drops. Photograph by Scott Legato. Used with permission.

Everett Cowett, Executive Director from 1999 to 2004 and then Board Member until 2009. See Vol 8, No. 1 for a complete biography of Ev. Hosted Bones Fests I, II and VI.



Jonathan Danforth, Board Member since 2005 and Webmaster since 2002. Hosted Bones Fest X. Grandson of rhythm bones legend Percy Danforth.



Gil Hibben, Board Member from 2002 to 2004 and Assistant Director since 2004. Hosted Bones Fest VII and XIII. Makes bones including bones for kids. Has lead our finale at Bones Fests since BFVII.



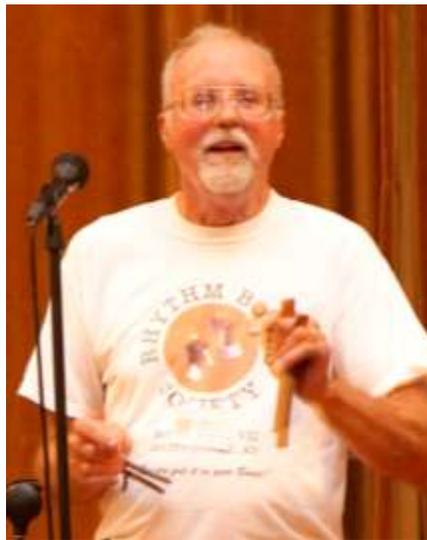
Mel Mercier, Board Member since 1999. A more complete biography was published in Vol 4, No. 2.



Jerry Mescher, Board Member from 1999 to 2009. See Vol 8, No. 4 for more about Jerry.



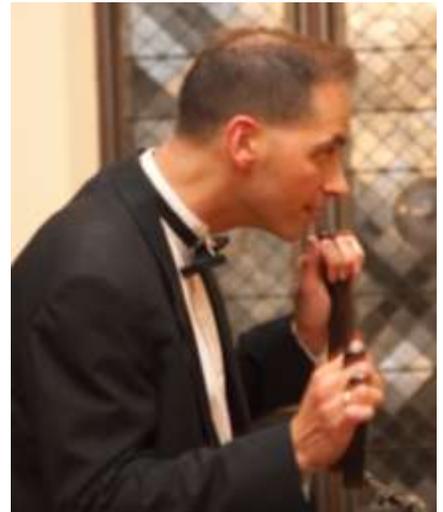
Russ Myers, deceased, Assistant Director from 1999 to 2002. See Vol 5, No. 2 for more about Russ. Hosted Bones Fest III.



Steve Wixson. Secretary/Treasurer and Newsletter Editor since 1999. He learned to play one-handed from his father, and after attending Bones Fest II became a two-handed rhythm bones player. He says he is a jack of all trades (that is of rhythms and different kinds of bones) and master of none. He gets paid to play, so considers himself a professional rhythm bones player. He hosted Bones Fest IV and IX.



Bill Vits, Board Member 2010. Bill learned the rhythm bones from Percy Danforth in Ann Arbor 1978. Since finding his 'bones family' on the internet he has attended 5 Bones Fests over the years. Bill is the Principal Percussionist with the Grand Rapids Symphony and plays drums with surf rock combo, The Concussions.



Kenny Wolin, Board Member 2010. Co-hosting Bones Fest XIV. Kenny first learned the rhythm bones from Percy Danforth in 1979. This musical passion led him to the Bonesfest XIII engagement to our very own Teri Davies, as well as the anticipated Bonesfest XIV wedding. Kenny is a percussionist with "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band and plays bones and concertina with "The President's Own" Irish Ensemble at the White House.

Bones Fest XIV

Old Towne
Alexandria, VA

July 23-25, 2010

Hosted by
Teri Davies
and Kenny Wolin

**PUT IT ON YOUR
CALENDAR NOW**

More details in next

Mary Bachelor Seel Obituary

In a note from Mary's son, John: "Mary passed away yesterday morning (September 28th) on her 84th birthday. Her family was by her side. It was an amazing experience for all of us. Her courage in suffering and joy for life has left an enduring mark on her children and grandchildren. We thank you so much for the Bone Fest as it fulfilled one of her last wishes. Thank you for treating her like a queen."

Mary Bachelor Seel was born on September 28th, 1925. There was a nice story of her life in the Volume 10, No. 2 newsletter. Highlights include learning rhythm bones in the fourth grade, being a direct descendent of Daniel Boone, serving with her husband as a medical missionary in Korea for many years, and having a warm and wonderful personality.

Mary died of liver cancer. It was with sheer will power that she was able to attend Bones Fest XIII where in a short period of time she made many friends. Below are some of the

remembrances of these new friends.

"A Bones Fest event is always filled with unexpected treasures. This year, I found the Rose of Alabama, Mary Seel. Her joy of life and excitement at being at Bones Fest was contagious. She entertained me with stories of her adventures in far off lands. There were stories of her bones playing, stories of her medical service, stories and more stories. I wanted to hear them all. What a lady! What a life!

Mary was a person who spent her life serving others and from that she got her greatest joy. A Native American proverb says: "When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life in a manner so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice." Mary lived such a life. We wish her fair winds and a safe passage to the Promised Land, where her joy and warmth will be welcomed and her stories will be cherished." *Mary Lee Sweet*

Just got the Rhythm Bones Player newsletter, and was sad to see our Mary Seel passed on. She sure was full of life and I'll never forget her enthusiasm. *Dutch Kopp*

I helped Mary on and off the stage at Bones fest XIII. She was so happy to be there. She said quietly to me please stay close by in case I might fall backwards. Well she did not falter in her performance in any way. Her performance energized her and everyone there. What a treat to have met her. *Wow! David Boyles*

Mary was a unique and wonderful person and Teri and I are so blessed to have met her, even for such a short time. Since we're both percussionists, we hit it off right away. My first drum lessons were from the Haskel Harr Drum Method Books, and it's still considered the best and continues to be the standard teaching method. I was so excited to learn that Mary was a student of Haskel Harr! *Kenny Wolin*

Mary made a significant impact on Bones Fest XIII and left an indelible impression on the hearts of everyone there who met her. She ended her time on stage saying "Lord willing, I'll see you at Bones Fest XIV." *Scott Miller*

And Scott, I bet she will! *Steve Wixson*

(Executive Director from page 1)

subject whether we're talking rhythm bones or the economy of the country. We can only take care of our own business, we can only control our own actions, and put our energies to bear on those things most important to us.

And if we go back to our "founding fathers" if you will, it was really about connecting with other players and not allowing the instrument to be forgotten. We have what promises to be an exciting Bones Fest in a most historic environment in the coming year. We have new, enthusiastic members on the Board of Directors who promise to bring their considerable expertise to promoting our organization.

I think it would be in keeping with the original intent of the organization to develop more opportunities for our members to play for the public. I also think that the concept of Regional Bones Fests has not been fully utilized. I think too, that getting the word out to the international community could help to solidify membership and broaden our audience. I'm looking forward to the next 10 years to see how the labors of Fred Edmunds, Ev Cowett, and Russ Myers blossom and bear fruit. *Steve Brown*

DEM BONES, 'DEM BONES, 'DEM
RHYTHM BONES!

Welcome to Rhythm Bones Central

Your host of this spot is Everett Cowett, a nationally known "bones" or for you sophisticated ear there you may call him an "instrument" (I, on the other hand, just call him Dad!) Here is a picture of me, Martha, and my Dad, Everett, playing the bones together in late years (see Parent below about the history below)

OK, so you may be thinking to yourself right now:
"What is a rhythm bone?" or you might be thinking:
"Is this what I think this is?" To answer that, here is a brief explanation...

THE BONES IN BRIEF

The bones are one of several types of clappers, all of which are common idiophones (Note: all bones are clappers but not all clappers are bones) and are classified as percussion musical instruments. The bones should not be confused with spoons, which are also clappers or chime-like, which are flat blocks of bone, or plastic scrubbed with 1 to 12 white dots. Names such as clappers, sticks, spoons, clackers, and knobby-stickers have been ascribed to the bones. The name is derived from their original composition and nomenclature, bones. Originally rib bones of small animals were used since their size and shape fit the need desired. For different sounds, bones and consequently other materials, particularly wood are used.

Mr. Bones

Rhythm bones in some form date back almost as far as man himself. They have been excavated from prehistoric Mesopotamian graves (c.3000 BC) depicted on Egyptian relief's (c.3000 BC) found in Egyptian tombs (c.2000 BC) and depicted on Greek vases (c.500 BC). In more recent times Shakespeare calls them by name in Act IV Scene 1 of A Midsummer Night's Dream

An early Martha Cowett Cummings' Rhythm Bones Central home page. Other pages had history, types of rhythm bones, report on Bones Fest I, where to buy rhythm bones and the Percy Danforth instructional video, etc.

(Continued from page 1)

and are introduced to the Rhythm Bones Society.

State of Rhythm Bones in 1999.

There is no way of knowing how many rhythm bones players there were in 1999 (or in fact today.) The number could be in the low tens of thousands, and these were taught by the last generation of minstrel bones players. Many of these people are late in life and will be gone in a couple of decades.

I found out about Bones Fest II from the Rhythm Bones Central website and attended. When I returned and coming from academia, I surfed the internet and did an exhaustive search discovering about 100 pages of rhythm bones information. There were 12 references to "rhythm bones," two to "rattling bones" with the rest using only "bones." Nowadays, our instrument is more often referred to as rhythm bones.

Ev Cowett discovered Beth Lenz Master's Thesis, and we obtained a copy with 312 pages full of rhythm bones history, some of which is being reprinted in our newsletter.

My 1999 research, which contains a summary of each web page found, is available as a PDF document. Email wixson@chattanooga.net and I will email you a copy.

State of Rhythm Bones in 2009. I recently completed a similar, but not exhaustive search, and the results are interesting. There are almost 21,000 web pages for a search on just "rhythm bones." The Rhythm Bones Society is referenced on many web pages, and our content is extracted and used by others. Many of us now have our own rhythm bones websites.

The Rhythm Bones Society has had about 100 members each year though this has decreased some in the last two years (72 for Year 2009.) The quality of rhythm bones playing has dramatically improved due in part to our organization and our Bones Fests.

Ev Cowett's Vision Presented at Bones Fest I. "I thought we would start the program. I want to keep it very informal and really do three major things. Number 1 is share boning things so that we can all learn from one another. Secondly, I was hoping we could get together and do a little

bit of bones synchronizing, harmonizing if you will. And third, I'd like to talk to you all about having a real big bones festival where you invite people other than just bones players. During the afternoon we can talk about that."

Much of Ev's vision has come true. We share 'boning things' at our Bones Festivals (Fests) and in the newsletter. We synchronize and harmonize in small jam sessions and with Walt Watkin's pass-around. Ev demonstrated his concept of this at Bones Fest II when he and his family played together in some sort of unity. We haven't invited 'people other than just bones players,' and that is something we can discuss. 89 rhythm bones people did show up for Bones Fest X, and to my mind that qualifies as 'big.' Ev, obviously, started us off in the right direction.

What is our Vision for the future.

A vision statement typically defines with inspiring words the direction of an organization in terms of its values, and inspires people to action. I would hope we can draft such a statement over the next several months and discuss it at Bones Fest XIV. I will include a Vision article in the next two newsletters before the Fest.

Here is what our members say.

The following are responses to emails sent by Steve Brown and myself asking for reflections from the past and visions for the future.

Andy Cox said, "What is our uniqueness, how do we determine it, what outcomes do we want, how to communicate this to the other rhythm bones players.

Walt Watkin said "Reiterate our mission/purpose and assess whether we have met and are meeting goals. Summarize our growth pattern in membership over the ten years in age, sex, and numbers. Are we attracting youth? Changes in average age of members. Have we lost members or are we growing? Remember those members who have departed this life. What changes in style of play and music genre have emerged over the period. Where do we go from here? Invite Letters to Editor. Give them some subjects to comment on i.e. Should we budget to have a Dixieland/ragtime band, an Irish band, and or a country band at fests? Should the

Society act as agent to solicit gigs for members at various venues with the revenue for same "donated" to the Society? Possible venues: Ball parks; football stadiums; county fairs.

Former member Jim Holloway said "Do you think a social media outlet might keep people connected -- perhaps a Facebook page for RBS?"

Dutch Kopp said: "Do we really want everybody playing bones or just a select few? Should we join in on to spoons playing and maybe jaw harp players too—all in one entity each sticking up for their own thing. Hey at least more people are in attendance. Is that what we want? Electrified bones playing that's where its at—lets go that way. Well I am content with less is best when it comes to bone players and just go on teaching and having fun the heck with the rest—we're the best.

Bill Vits said: "I've been thinking that to expand our membership we need to tap into the Percussive Arts Society and their membership (1,000's). I've been to a few PAS Conventions and I'm hoping that next year I could go to Indianapolis in Nov. and have a booth to promote the RBS. My associate, Eric Sooy, runs > Black Swamp Percussion and he has a booth every year. I'll ask him what the costs would be in having a booth or if I could work out of his. There seems to be an imaginary barrier between percussionists and bones players in general. When I demonstrate for percussionists that barrier often evaporates. PAS also has "presenters" that do workshops so I could also apply for that opportunity.

Former member Rob Schneider said; "I can tell you that my lapsed membership resulted from the non-prorated method of applying dues. Seems the 'All-Ireland' championships draw very well. How about a similar "All-America" competition.

Scott Miller has made presentations at the last two Bones Fests on the benefits of using a service whose purpose is to support organizations like outs.

What can you do? Think about this and send in a Letter to the Editor with your thoughts on the subject.
Steve Wixson



Camp student Brandon with new member and teacher Adele Meegann. See Page 2 for the story. Photograph by Chris.

Charlie 'Bones' Ginsburg Obit

Charles R. Ginsburg was born December 28, 1921 in Chicago, Illinois. He died November 22, 2008 in Toledo, Ohio.

Charlie learned how to play the rhythm bones when he was eight years old. An African American man taught him how to play them.

As a musician and country music performer, he was a nationally registered bones player with the stage



Charlie 'Bones' Ginsburg performing rhythm bones on the *Hee-Haw* television show. Note Grampa Jones on the left.

name 'Charlie Bones.' He performed on the television show *Hee-Haw* and was featured in a cameo appearance at New York's Carnegie Hall and the Ohio State Fair. Locally, he was often seen performing at Tony Packo's with the Cake Walking Jazz Band.

Charlie's passion for playing rhythm bones and teaching the technique to children served as the catalyst to create the Spoons and Bones Club after school program for the Toledo Fulton Elementary School during the late 1960s. *Deloris Ginsburg*

Rhythm Bones Society

1060 Lower Brow Road
Signal Mountain, TN 37377-2910

Address Correction Requested