



ROB CUTHRELL WANTED to play music, and he wanted to do it with friends.

So in 2008 he placed an ad in the local Washington paper inviting other traditional musicians to join him: "Meet under the oak tree on Main Street," he wrote. The people who responded liked playing together, and their group, the Beaufort County Traditional Music Association (BCTMA), continued to grow. Last year, BCTMA had 140 members.

"Folks started coming to play and kept

ALBUM

Good-time Music

Musicians in Beaufort County created a CD filled with traditional and original old-time sounds.

BY KATIE SAINTSING


coming back," says Linda Boyer, current BCTMA chair. "We played on the street corner in the summer and fall, and moved to Rob's barn to play in the winter."

Since 2011, they've held their twice-a-week jam sessions at Union Alley Coffeehouse in Washington's Inner Banks Artisans' Center.

"Everyone gets a chance to play and sing, and we all join in — whether we know the songs or not," Boyer says.

Union Alley Showcase, BCTMA's second album, reflects this spirit of inclusivity and joyful creativity. The songs are a mix of traditional and original — ever a new sound, but always respectful of the

history of old-time music.

The opening track, "Collard Green World," one of Boyer's own, celebrates the small pleasures in life. Music with friends is the "strawberries on my shortcake," she sings, "vinegar on my collard greens." 

Katie Saintsing is an editorial assistant at Our State. Her most recent story was "Filling in the Gaps" (February 2013).

To hear the music of BCTMA and learn how to buy the CD, visit the website: bctma.org.