



IN HONOR: The fourth-annual GuitarFest is being held Saturday in honor of Don Skinner, a founding member of the Beaufort County Traditional Music Association, and of Lonesome Creek Bluegrass Gospel Band and the Skinner Family Band. Skinner passed away last year.

All-day GuitarFest honors local musician



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By **Vail Stewart Rumley** (<https://www.thewashingtondailynews.com/author/vailrumley/>)

Email the author (<mailto:vail.rumley@thewashingtondailynews.com>)

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A mission of the Beaufort County Traditional Music Association is to make music accessible to anyone who wants to play and for anyone who simply wants to listen. Since its inception in 2008, a core group of BCTMA musicians have resurrected the tradition of musical gatherings: jams in which bluegrass, old time and traditional music — along with a little blues and classic rock ‘n’ roll — are the standards.

And then there's GuitarFest. For four years, BCTMA has hosted a lineup of musicians and music for a guitar-centric show. Featuring some of the most notable guitarists from across eastern North Carolina, the show is a more focused version of the BCTMA mission.

"GuitarFest is a great opportunity for many of the best guitarists to get together and perform and also enjoy a variety of other musicians," said Linda Boyer, one of BCTMA's founding members.

This year's GuitarFest honors one of those musicians: founding BCTMA member Don Skinner, who passed away in 2016. Skinner played guitar, banjo, mandolin, Dobro and lap steel, and was member of Lonesome Creek Bluegrass Gospel Band and the Skinner Family Band, with his son, Jesse, and wife, Judy.

The event has grown to an all-day affair, from 1:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. This year, it's also expanded to include the photography of BCTMA member Tom Whelan, whose work documents the many BCTMA performances over the past nine years. On Saturday, at Arts of the Pamlico's Turnage Theatre, Whelan's exhibit opens the show at 1:30 p.m.; a guitar jam with GuitarFest performers wraps it up at 9:25 p.m. In between, are a mix of performances by local guitarists plus legends such as Steve Creech who, even in retirement, continues to play more than 100 gigs a year.

For BCTMA member Bob Daw, GuitarFest is a special day on the BCTMA calendar.

"(It's) special because it's free and available to everyone — from the poorest to the richest; from the youngest to the oldest; from musical beginners to most experienced," Daw wrote in an email. "Everyone can share in the fun of enjoying some great guitar talents back to back."

The Turnage Theatre is located at 150 W. Main St., Washington. GuitarFest is free and open to the public; donations to BCTMA are accepted. BCTMA's regular Saturday jam will be held from 10 a.m. to noon, as scheduled.

GuitarFest 2017

- 1:30 p.m. Tom Whelan Exhibit
- 2 p.m. Jesse Skinner & BCTMA guys
- 2:40 p.m. Bill Walker and Lyle Carlson
- 3:25 p.m. Now and Then (Debbie and Terry Davis)
- 4:10 p.m. Riddle (Mark Sclafani, Tina Sclafani, Roy Pastorek)
- 5:55 p.m. Steve Creech with Devin Frazier, Roy Pastorek and Robert McGuaghy
- 5:40 p.m. John Bradley, Sam Weatherly, Karen Modlin, Brad Brechtelsbauer
- 6:25 p.m. John and J.B. Featuring Pamela Cox
- 7:10 p.m. JD Joyner
- 7:55 p.m. Kat Head Biscuit Blues Band
- 8:40 p.m. ION Trio

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