



YAM NOTES

WINTER 2026

NEWS FROM THE NEXT GENERATION OF MUSICIANS

KIDSFEST | 2026

MARCH 21ST 10AM-3:30PM

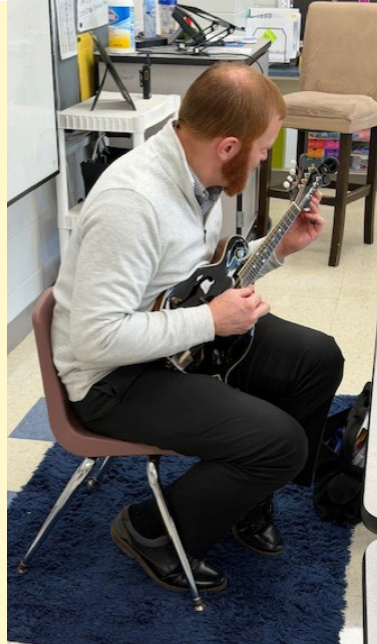
HAGOOD MILL HISTORIC SITE



It's all about kids! One of the absolute best days of the YAM Year! The entire day highlights the talents of our YAM kids, plus there are activities to entertain not only the children, but also the entire family! The event begins at 10 AM and ends at 3:30 PM. All YAM students are asked to wear their red YAM t-shirt.

Planned for the day are a Jug Band, a Make and Take tent, Appalachian Games, an Instrument Petting Zoo, Buffalo Barfield activities, in addition to a Talent Show in the afternoon for the kids. There will also be a line-up of vendors and appetite tantalizing food trucks for the entire family! The talent show is open to all "kids" 17 years and under. This portion is for any child, not just YAM students. Solos, duets, and groups are all welcome. Performances may be on any traditional/Appalachian musical instrument, including jug band instruments. Clogging skills may also be demonstrated. Participants should register for the Talent Show near the stage.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend this event, it's sure to be one the entire family will enjoy!



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST PROGRAMS, FOREST ACRES AND CLEMSON ELEMENTARY

Forest Acres Elementary joined our ranks as a new YAM school in November. They boast fiddle, guitar, and banjo students. Brittany Roper serves as Program Director and Ginger McCoy is the Homework Center Coordinator. They have gotten off to a great start and will participate with us in Kidsfest at Hagood Mill in March.

Clemson Elementary is our newest program and just began lessons on Feb 9th. Cullen Finley is leading that group of instructors and students, and they offer fiddle, mandolin, and guitar classes. We are excited to hear all they will learn this very first semester!

A heartfelt welcome to Forest Acres and Clemson Elementary!

Wallace Anderson has very effectually held down the fort with the SPPKids while the coordinator has been away on military duty. They did a stunning performance at the Celtic Christmas in December at the Pavilion at Hagood Mill. Most recently, Wallace, accompanied by Tiffany Short, who introduced the group, led the group at WSPA – Channel 7 in promoting the Winter Bluegrass Jubilee. Their performance was quite impressive and made us all extremely proud!

Pictured L-R: Juan Carmona, Lily Anderson, Cade Samples, Lyllian Accampo, Everly Southerland, Maggie Alexander, Ava Meece, Gannon Bates, and Jayce Hamilton. Not pictured: Gracey Anderson, and Jase Langston.

In addition to Wallace, another important assistant to the SPPKid group in facilitating efficient timing, is Elijah Ellenburg who has stepped in and is playing the upright bass with the group.

Thank you, Wallace and Elijah, for your excellent teamwork!

SPPKIDS GOING STRONG!



THE SOUTH CAROLINA BLUEGRASS AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC ASSOCIATION YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO THREE YAM STUDENTS

The scholarship awards, named in memory of Bill Wells, honor and encourage youth as they learn to play bluegrass and other traditional music on stringed instruments. Youth must be in grades 7 – 12 during the 2025-26 academic year and live in the state of South Carolina.

In addition to bluegrass, applicants can also play styles of traditional music such as old time, Celtic-style tunes, classic country, gospel, or folk.

Three of our youth applied and were awarded cash scholarships as follows: Cade Samples on the guitar, \$1,000; Gracey Anderson on the fiddle, \$500; and Andy Anderson on the banjo, \$500.

Congratulations to each of these promising young musicians!

Gracey Anderson has been playing the fiddle since the age of eight, inspired by her musical family and her early admiration for the instrument. A member of the YAM program and its auditioned performing group, the Sweet Potato Pie Kids, she performs regularly at gigs, festivals, church, and local jam sessions. Gracey enjoys bluegrass, gospel, and folk music, and sings lead in many of her family's performances.

She hopes to become a YAM teacher in the future and dreams of performing professionally in bluegrass gospel. Currently expanding her skills to mandolin and upright bass, Gracey gives God the glory for her musical gifts and is passionate about using her talents to encourage and bless others.

Andy Anderson began playing guitar in the YAM program in third grade before discovering a passion for banjo in sixth grade. Inspired by the sound of banjos during lessons, he eventually picked up his father's instrument and quickly fell in love with it. In 2024, he began formal banjo lessons with Mack Anderson through YAM, crediting Mack—and God—for shaping his musical growth. Influenced by legends such as Earl Scruggs and J.D. Crowe, he developed a deep love for bluegrass music.

A former member of the Sweet Potato Pie Kids, he now performs regularly with his family at church, community events, and on local radio, including WTBI. He also plays in a family band called "The Polecats" and participates in YAM jams to continue sharpening his skills. Passionate about mentoring others, he currently teaches several young students guitar and banjo and hopes to teach for the YAM program in the future.

Looking ahead, he dreams of performing in Grand Ole Opry, continuing to grow as a musician, and inspiring more young people to explore their musical talents. Outside of music, he enjoys restoring old vehicles, fishing, and hunting, and finds joy in mastering a variety of stringed instruments.



Scholarship recipients Andy Anderson and Gracey Anderson

Cade Samples is a 14-year-old homeschooled eighth grader whose main passion is playing guitar. After studying piano from age eight, he became interested in guitar through friends at his homeschool co-op and began teaching himself through online videos. In December 2024, he enrolled in YAM's Easley Evening Program, where he quickly developed a love for bluegrass music.

Over the past year, Cade has performed with the Sweet Potato Pie Kids at local venues and festivals, including Breazeale's Grocery and the Oolenoy Community House, and enjoys attending bluegrass jams whenever possible. In addition to guitar, he enjoys singing and songwriting and hopes to one day form a family bluegrass band with his brothers, who are learning mandolin and banjo.

Cade is grateful for the encouragement of his instructors and mentors in the YAM program, and he now serves as a guitar instructor at the Easley Evening Program, where he enjoys helping other students grow in their musical abilities. Outside of music, he enjoys fishing, reading, indoor rock climbing, working out, and participating in Trail Life.



*Scholarship recipient
Cade Samples*



WINTER BLUEGRASS

JUBILEE

UPDATE

14TH ANNUAL

Presented by the Young Appalachian Musicians

WINTER JUBILEE CANCELED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Winter Jubilee History repeated itself this year for our Jubilee 2026 in that it was necessary to cancel the January 31st event due to an anticipated winter snowstorm. This happened only once before back in 2016. This year, the cancellation came on the heels of a significant ice storm, still leaving its traces about as well. We were all set to present our electric headliner bands, Volume 5 and Alan Bibey and Grasstowne. Other local bands set to perform were the East Tennessee State University Pride Band, Will Clark, Ella Hennessee, Tigertown Roots, Bluegrass & Company, Creekwater Collective, The Sweet Potato Pie Kids, and our huge group of Young Appalachian Musicians. Needless to say, we were super sad to disappoint everyone. However, onward and upward as we are already actively looking ahead to a Winter Jubilee in 2027 like no other!

We wish to thank our wonderful, stalwart sponsors who are our support to make this annual fundraiser such an entertaining, successful event each year: The Cliffs Residents Outreach – The Vineyards, the School District of Pickens County, Ron and Martha Young, Mike Hull, Dr. Joe Padgett, Upcountry Fiber, Wayne Henderson Scholarship Foundation, The IBMA Foundation, John Howard, Martin Acevedo Legacy, Cornerstone Christian and Music Bookstore, Pickens Railway Company, Pickens County, Hiott Printing Company, Patterson Tax Services, Holly Springs Country Store, Blue Ridge Mountain Pools, Riversong Grove, No Vacancy, Heidi's Hot Dogs, Ron & Debra Addis, Hagood Mill, Pickens First Baptist Church, Holly Springs Center, Bill & Pat Ehney,

Robert and Lena Edwards, Brian Gulliford, Thomas G. Stokes, Ray and Chris Sanders, Hagood Community Center, and Discover Upcountry Carolina Association.

In addition, we wish to thank the Pickens County Legislative Delegation and Local Government officials, our Grant funders, YAM Instructors, Program Directors, Homework Center Coordinators, and Administrative Staff, The Preserving our Southern Appalachian Music (POSAM) Board, Pickens High School Principal, Lauren Corn, and the Fine Arts Department, Sound Technician Matt Chappell, Emcee Cindy Baucom, Photographer Kirby Allen, Photographer Nick Hancock, and Our Wonderful Jubilee Committee, our many volunteers, and our Young Appalachian Musicians and their supportive parents.

We look forward to Winter Jubilee 2027! With our team of supporters and volunteers it promises to be the best ever!

OOLENOY WINTER HOUSE CONCERT SERIES WRAPPED UP WITH A BLUEGRASS FINALE

On February 28th, the Oolenoy Community House hosted the final performance of the 2025/2026 Winter House Concert Series, celebrating a venue that has long been supporting bluegrass and traditional music in northern Pickens County. For more than 30 years, the Community House has kept the music going with a weekly bluegrass jam every Friday night.

Headlining the evening was New Dixie Storm, a longtime regional favorite from the Upstate and Western North Carolina. The band featured Jeremy McCollum on guitar, Scott Hawkins on banjo, Blake Young on mandolin, and Jeff Hayes on bass.

The show opened with Bluegrass and Company, made up of YAM instructors who are also YAM alumni. The group included Elijah Ellenburg on banjo, Malachi Ellenburg on fiddle, and Alyssa White on guitar.

Doors opened at 6:00 PM, with music starting at 7:00 PM. An open jam followed the concert.

For more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/oolenoybluegrass>

clawhammerer@gmail.com

864-897-9005



ALYSSA WHITE LEADS SLOW JAM AT OOLENOY



Alyssa White, guitar and mandolin instructor for the YAM Program, has worn “many hats” over the years! Her most recent is the Coordinator of the Oolenoy

Slow JAM. When the current coordinator was called away to active military duty back in December, Alyssa stepped up to the plate and took over the command!

As steady as clockwork, Alyssa invites a gathering of musicians, young and old, to meet on the First Friday of every month and skillfully teaches the younger set how to properly slow jam. They learn such skills as “taking a break”, timing, and rhythm. Also, they learn other valuable

life lessons - that learning to play music can be enjoyable, entertaining, and unifying. It connects one to others to form a unique community of musicians!

Alyssa can boast a proliferation of honors, including recipient of the 2024 Ryan Hood Memorial Music Scholarship, 3rd Place in Open Instrument at the Mountain Music Throwdown in Brevard, NC, 1st place Youth Mandolin at the 86th Annual Old Fiddlers Convention in Galax, VA, 2nd place Bill Wells Memorial Scholarship Guitar Recipient, 1st Place on Guitar at Martin Acevedo Banjo Man Competition in Anderson, SC, IBMA Kids on Bluegrass, and 2025 IBMA Faculty Kids on Bluegrass. Alyssa was a member of the SPPKids Performing Band, is a certified Summit instructor, and is a 2025-26 member of the Clemson University Bluegrass Ensemble/Tigertown Roots. Additionally, Alyssa is an honor student at Tri-County Technical College, majoring in business. Lastly, she is currently an instructor at Easley Evening Program, Forest Acres Elementary, Crosswell Elementary, and Central Academy of the Arts.

KUDOS TO ALYSSA IN ALL HER MANY AREAS OF EXCELLENCE!

INTRODUCING ED PAGE



Dr. Ed Page is a substitute banjo instructor with the YAM Program. He retired as Professor of Computer Science at Clemson University and recently retired from a technology company that he co-founded in upstate SC. His musical interests began with the piano when he was approximately nine

years old. He began playing the trumpet when he was 11 and began playing guitar when he was about 14 years old. In high school and college, he played in small bands that played contemporary popular music.

Dr. Page started playing the banjo as an adult. He learned to play under the expert guidance of banjo legend Al Osteen.

Now that he is fully retired, he enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, and playing both banjo and piano. He also enjoys helping others learn to play the banjo.

We have been very fortunate this year to have Ed available to help us out when we had a banjo instructor out with a sickness or other emergency situation. Ed has been a true life saver!

THANK YOU MACK AND MOLLY!

We wish to say a special thank you to Mack Anderson and Molly Johnson who filled all vacant spots in our afterschool and evening programs with the regular instructor being deployed for military duty for several months.

Mack took on banjo classes at Easley Evening Program, Dacusville Elementary, Central Academy, in addition to his already full load of classes at the Pickens Evening Program along with several other afterschool programs. Molly took on banjo classes at McKissick Academy and Forest Acres Ele. Classes went as smoothly and efficiently as ever at all locations!

MEET DOUG DIMOND

Doug is quite a talented guitar instructor, advanced in the acoustic and electric 6-string and 12-string guitar, as well as the upright and electric bass. He also plays the mandolin at the intermediate level. We are very fortunate to have Doug as a “sub” for our YAM Program this year.

Growing up in the golden era of rock and roll (60’s and 70’s), Doug was compelled to try to be a part of it. He started playing at the age of 12 years and was a member of a couple of bands in his teens and early 20’s. While in school he took classes in music theory.

Joining the army in 1976, his ambition to make a career of music was significantly “cooled”, although he did continue to play with his friends in the Army. Retiring from a military career resurrected his love for music, including bluegrass. He played in a couple of bluegrass bands as lead guitar and bass. To this day he still likes to attend bluegrass jam sessions. He also plays solo acoustic gigs and plays bass in a local band.

He also at one point in his life ran a sole proprietor business as an IT consultant and taught computer Science at Anderson University, and then later became their IT Director. His hobbies include woodworking and wood burning.

Doug is married to Kim, his wife of 48 years, and they have a blended family of five children. They are the proud grandparents of eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

“Teaching someone to play music goes beyond just knowing technique and knowing the hardware,” Doug says.

“I think it is important to learn how to “feel” the song to play it well, although technique definitely comes first. I also think it is important to not get discouraged because you don’t sound like a professional musician the first time you pick up an instrument.”



A hearty ‘thank you’ to Doug, our trusty YAM guitar and mandolin sub!

COMING SOON

Mid/Hi Camp

April 25, 2026

- Open to 6th – 12th grades
- Held at Hagood Mill
- Afternoon classes – instrument instruction, working in a band
- JAM Afterwards

SPPK Auditions

April 18, 2026

High School Band Auditions

April 18, 2026

End-of-Year Celebration (SPPKids, Special Recognitions):

May 2, 2026

SPPKid Gig

Trailblazer Park, Traveler Rest

June 20, 2026

YAM Camp

July 13 – 17, 2026

SPRING SCHOLARSHIPS DUE MAY 1ST

Completed Spring Scholarship Applications are due to Tiffany Short at tshort@yamupstate.com by Friday, May 1st. The scholarships may be used for TAM YAM Camp, Evening Music Program, or fall afterschool lessons.

YAM HAS A NEW MAILING ADDRESS!

POSAM/YAM has a new mailing address. We are phasing out 792 Holly Springs School Rd, and will be using PO Box 412, Pickens, SC 29671.

YESIYAM

The YESIYAM Booster Club is dedicated to promoting community interest and cultivating support for the Young Appalachian Musicians Program, which is sponsored by Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music, Inc., (POSAM), a charitable non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. Your support will help ensure the continuity of the excellent instruction the children have come to expect. Those wishing to become YESIYAM booster club members or otherwise contribute to the program, may do so by sending to: POSAM, PO Box 412, Pickens, SC 29671. For further information, please call Betty at (864)230-9695 or email mcdanibw1@gmail.com.

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