

# Workshop Topics & Descriptions – MDMF 2022

## INTRODUCTION TO THE MOUNTAIN DULCIMER

- 13. String Side Up! (Beginner I)** *Sandy Lafleur* Sat. 9:15 – 10:30  
From the very beginning, what you need to know about noting, strumming and having fun with the dulcimer  
DAA New Player Sat. 9:15 – 10:30
- 20. Continuing on the Path(Beginner II)** *Norm Williams* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45  
Continuing with the basics – continue the focus on rhythm (in traditional and old time it is central to the tune); exploring and understanding the fretboard. Using tunes like “Old Joe Clark,” Holy Manna” and “Sadie at the Back Door.” (All tunes subject to change at leader’s discretion) DAA New Player / Beginner
- 27. Moving Right Along! (Beginner III)** *Lori Keddell* Sat. 1:15 – 2:30  
Learn how to switch from DAA to DAD and back to DAA, and play some DAD tunes with a few easy chords. This workshop will discuss why & when you might use these alternate “D” tunings. Come tuned to DAA  
New Player / Beginner
- 34. Let’s Get Acquainted (with Your Dulcimer)** *Nina Zanetti* Sat. 2:45 – 3:45  
In this workshop, we’ll take an exploration -and- experimentation approach to becoming more familiar with your instrument. Topics may include: finding the “sweet spot” for strumming and picking; becoming familiar with the layout of the fretboard and strings; learning to pick out a tune by “noodling”; finding simple harmonies; awareness of ergonomics and ease. Becoming more familiar with your instrument will help you become a better player and musician. DAD New Player / Beginner

## NEW PLAYER / BEGINNER

- 1. Basic Chords for Beginners** *Kim Jennings* Fri. 3:00 – 4:00  
Most beginning dulcimer players start out with learning to play simple melodies, but guess what? You can have a lot of fun with just 3 basic (and very simple) chords in DAA tuning, and will soon find yourself strumming along with ease on many familiar folk songs. (Chord sheets will also be provided in DAA and DAD for those who want to “stretch themselves” and try more challenging chord patterns.) DAA New Player/ Beginner
- 14. Rock Dulcimer Basics** *Sam Edelston* Sat. 9:15 – 10:30  
“The Folk” have always played popular music – but before cars and radio, “popular” was largely what your kin and your neighbors played. Rock music is amazingly easy and fun to play on the dulcimer. We. Will. Rock. Out.  
DAD Beginner
- 21. O, Shenandoah, I long to play thee** *Butch Ross* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45  
Learn to play this beautiful song in the simplest chord melody version possible. We’ll explore alternate, but easy, chord voicings. Various fingering techniques, and using lyrics to aid in the counting of rhythms. This song is trickier than it looks, but using these techniques you master it in no time. DAD Beginner
- 41. Strumming 101: Getting It Down** *Mack Johnston* Sun. 10:15 – 11:15  
A rhythmic, effective strum is the most crucial and critical first step for new dulcimer students. For many new players it is also the most difficult. This workshop is designed for new to novice players and will cover Basic strumming technique and applying strumming to common fiddle/jam tunes. DAD New Player – Adv Beg
- 47. New Player Repertoire** *Melanie Johnston* Sun. 11:30 – 12:30  
If you are just getting started with the mountain dulcimer and want a few easy tunes to add to your collection, this class is for you. We will just relax, have fun and play some music. DAD Beginner – Adv Beg

## BEGINNER / NOVICE

- 2. Slow Jam Workshop** *Neal Walters* Fri. 3:00 – 4:00  
Getting along in a jam session is seemingly #1 on everybody’s short list of “skills I would like to possess”. Obviously a good ear is important but what’s between your ears is even more important. A good slow jam is a fine place to learn the things you think everybody knows but you. Key of D Beginner to Novice

**8. Improving Your Strum and Rhythm** *Jeff Furman*

Fri. 4:15 – 5:15

This workshop will cover basic techniques, offer exercises to practice the techniques, and play with each other and also recorded music to get practice and experience. Be prepared for a lot of strumming! DAD  
Beginner – Novice

**28. The Joy of DAA and Traditional Playing** *Jeremy Seeger*

Sat. 1:15 – 2:30

DAA and playing only on the melody string/strings lays a good foundation and enjoyment in playing your dulcimer. It will also serve you well as you branch out into other tunings and build a repertoire. Once you have that you can branch out into other styles of playing and chords. DAA Beginner – Novice

**35. The Zen of the Mountain Dulcimer, Rythym** *Norm Williams*

Sat. 2:45 – 3:45

This workshop re-enforces strumming and rhythm techniques to increase your skills and to provide a platform for all of your future playing. We'll learn the fundamentals of rhythm, strumming, angle and hand placement, speed, and tone. The goal of this session is to have the learner comfortable with strum-hand technique so s/he can concentrate on the music. DAD Beginner – Novice

**42. Learning by Ear, “Knee to Knee”** *Norm Williams*

Sun. 10:15 – 11:15

For many, playing by ear is a daunting task. We'll demystify this idea and discuss and practice ways to play tunes you don't have music for “by ear” using the time-honored tradition of repetition, repetition, repetition (Arlo Guthrie calls it “the Bor-In Method”). We'll start with a few simple & familiar tunes and then try a couple that you probably have not heard before. Bring a recording device/phone. Come tuned to DAD. Beg – Novice

**ADVANCED BEGINNER and UP**

**22. Internal Chords - moving beyond the Melody Drone of it** *Sandy Lafleur* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45

The dulcimer, like the bagpipe has drones which sometimes harmonize with the melody and other times clash horribly. We'll discover how to sweeten our playing by adding internal chords. DAD Adv Beg – Novice

**43. Skipping the Third Beat** *Butch Ross*

Sun. 10:15 – 11:15

For whatever reason, skipping the third beat of a strumming pattern is a challenge for both beginners and advanced players alike. And yet it's essential for playing island music, show tunes and even rock-n- roll. We'll look at some ways to tame this elusive beast and make you a better strummer overall. DAD  
Advanced Beginner & up

**49. Nimble Fingers** *Ellen Pratt*

Sun. 11:30 – 12:30

In this class, you will learn several basic fingerpicking styles that you will then apply to a few familiar pieces. The focus is on muscle memory for your fingers, not repertoire. Your fingers will become nimble! DAD  
Advanced Beginner – Novice

**NOVICE**

**15. Getting Around on the Fretboard** *Kim Jennings*

Sat. 9:15 – 10:30

Learn how to play a melody in several different areas of your instrument to add a little variety to a tune. We will use this technique with a familiar tune, then we'll try it with a few fiddle tunes. DAD Novice

**29. Songs for Children** *Ellen Pratt*

Sat. 1:15 – 2:30

We will learn childrens' songs such as The Cuckoo and the Donkey, Froggie Went a Courtin', and several other fun songs that children love. DAD (possibly CGC) Novice

**NOVICE and Up**

**3. Multipart Music for Small and Large Ensembles** *Mack Johnston*

Fri. 3:00 – 4:00

In this session we will play 2 or 3 multipart pieces and cover skills and tips for ensemble playing. All dulcimer family instruments are welcome. DAD or Baritone in ADA Novice & Up

**9. Singing With The Dulcimer** *Carolyn Brodginiski*

Fri. 4:15 – 5:15

Why is it that so many people don't sing when they play the dulcimer? Maybe because it has its own beautiful voice? Maybe because the key of D is not in your vocal range? This workshop will focus on using the dulcimer as a rhythm instrument while you do the singing, playing chords rather than melody, and for those who don't like singing in the key of D, we'll learn how to transpose some of your favorite roots tunes to a key that suits your vocal range. Bring a capo. DAD Novice and up

- 11. The Lost Chord Is Found! (Which Chord Goes Where)** *Carol Walker* Fri. 4:15 – 5:15  
In this workshop we'll arrange both new and familiar tunes, making choices as we go about which chords will sound best with your melody line, and why. A small dose of painless music theory will also be injected to aid in understanding the process. DAD Novice – Intermediate
- 10. Play it Again Sam.....Just not the same way** *Melanie Johnston* Fri. 4:15 – 5:15  
When we play a tune, we usually play it 2 or 3 times the same way. In this workshop we will play tunes 3 times making each time a little different. DAD Novice – Intermediate Fri. 4:15 – 5:15
- 16. Exploring the 1-3-5 Tuning for Dulcimer** *Neal Walters* Sat. 9:15 – 10:30  
This tuning is particularly good for ragtime, blues, and other guitar-like pieces. We'll start with some simple tunes like "Victory Rag", "Railroad Bill" and "John Henry" and progress to some harder material too. DF#A Novice to Intermediate
- 23. Improving Your Left hand Fingering** *Jeff Furman* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45  
This workshop will explore the how, why, where, and when of left-hand fingering. The focus will be on accuracy, getting good clean notes, and sustain for smooth transitions. DAD Novice & Up
- 30. Finger-Picking Training Wheels** *Nina Zanetti* Sat. 1:15 – 2:30  
Mystified by the fingerstyle approach to playing mountain dulcimer? We'll break it down into three basic skills: right hand technique (how to produce a good tone, how to use different fingers to create patterns, how to bring out the melody notes); left hand technique (smooth chord transitions); and how to decipher fingerstyle tablature. This brief introduction to the "basics" will prepare you to approach simple fingerstyle arrangements with confidence. DAD Novice & up
- 37. Chord Boot Camp – 1½ Fret** *Sam Edelston* Sat. 2:45 – 3:45  
We'll drill these fingerings – mostly in the keys of G and C – into you until you develop a genuine esprit de chord. Not comfortable playing chords yet? You will be by the end of the hour. Novice – Intermediate DAD
- 50. Tunes in DAC** *Neal Walters* Sun. 11:30 – 12:30  
DAC is a popular tuning alternative to the widely played DAD and DAA tunings. It's great for those Appalachian modal songs but it can also be very handy in other settings as well. We'll try it on several tunes. DAC Novice to Intermediate
- 26. Practice with Purpose** *Carol Walker* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45  
Until someone invents a magic pill that will automatically allow you to play every piece perfectly, you will need to do the work yourself! I'll share my 65+ years of experience as we apply tried and true practice methods to any song you want to learn. Your new practicing skills will build both your repertoire and your confidence! DAD Novice – Advanced
- 31. Explore "Many Hands, Many Dulcimers"** *Carol Walker* Sat. 1:15 – 2:30  
You can join Maestro Walker's dulcimer orchestra as she leads you through selections from her newest book, Many Hands, Many Dulcimers. You'll play along on your very own part while hearing all the other instruments around you. You'll also learn some useful techniques that will insure success when you have the opportunity to get together with a live ensemble, which can be any size from 5 to 105 players. DAD Novice – Advanced

### NOVICE PLUS and Up

- 36. Lullabies and Night Songs** *Lori Keddell* Sat. 2:45 – 3:45  
Lullabies are not just for children. Learn several beautiful and relaxing melodies from all around the world. DAA & DAD Novice Plus
- 44. John Who?** *Kim Jennings* Sun. 10:15 – 11:15  
This is a repertoire class where we will learn a few tunes that all contain the name "John" in their titles: John Stinson's #2, John Ryan's Polka, John Brown's March, and Lazy John. Come enjoy these catchy tunes! DAD & DGD Novice Plus
- 4. Everybody Polka!** *Sandy Lafleur* Fri. 3:00 – 4:00  
Not all Polkas are Polish; some are Irish but they are all wonderful and spritely dance tunes. DAD w/ capo Novice Plus – Intermediate

**24. Chord Progressions** *Ellen Pratt* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45  
Knowing different positions for chords can add flavor to your musical arrangements. We will learn and practice several chord shapes up and down the fretboard in this class. DAD Novice Plus - Intermediate  
Polka, John Brown's March, and Lazy John. Come enjoy these catchy tunes! DAD & DGD Novice Plus

**45. Jigs & Reels - What's the difference?** *Sandy Lafleur* Sun. 10:15 – 11:15  
Not only do they look different on the page, they sound and feel very different, too! Try your hand at learning some fun dance tunes. DAD & DGD. Novice Plus to Intermediate

## INTERMEDIATE

**5. Classic Rock Phrasing** *Sam Edelston* Fri. 3:00 – 4:00  
Melodies, rhythms, and phrasing in rock music tend to be very different from the steady beat of the jigs and reels you may be more accustomed to on dulcimer. We'll shine a light on these differences, help you understand them, and capture the spirit of rock music on your dulcimer. DAD Intermediate

**17. Adding Notes/Variation to Your Playing** *Jeff Furman* Sat. 9:15 – 10:30  
Explore how to add notes, rhythm changes, and other variations to any type of music you play while still being true to the melody. Create interest, freedom, and fun! (Bring a CAPO!) DAD Intermediate

**38. Throw a Wrench in There** *Butch Ross* Sat. 2:45 – 3:45  
Learn how to properly, and coolly, mess up a tune; extra notes, early beats, learn where and when to add embellishments and "fancy" notes. Play a fiddle tune like a fiddler would. DAD Intermediate

**51. Fun Tunes from the Southern Appalachians** *Norm Williams* Sun. 11:30 – 12:30  
Learn several fun tunes that come from the western Carolina's, eastern Tennessee Appalachian region (source: Don Pedi) with attention to different tunings (DAA, DGD, DAC, DGC, CGC, etc. and other alternatives for more comfortable singing. We'll also discuss timing and tempo. Starting in DAD Intermediate

## INTERMEDIATE and ADVANCED

**6. Some Favorite Classics** *Nina Zanetti* Fri. 3:00 – 4:00  
Some of those "classics" that we learned in piano lessons or high school orchestra sound great on mountain dulcimer. We'll learn some lovely tunes from the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods of music, with some famous composers represented, and with just enough music history to make the tunes come alive.  
DAD Intermediate – Advanced

**12. Great Is Thy Faithfulness** *Butch Ross* Fri. 4:15 – 5:15  
Learn this great, but challenging hymn. In addition, we'll discuss how to create arrangements from standard sheet music, researching multiple versions to create your own and even how to play chords that don't seem like they should be available on the dulcimer. DAD Intermediate & up

**18. (Almost) Everything You Wanted to Know About Music Theory** *Carol Walker*  
What the heck is an appoggiatura??? How do I play an arpeggio? What does reverse Ionian mean? You have probably heard these terms and many others but never really knew what they meant. This workshop is designed to increase your musical vocabulary and knowledge of basic theory *as applied to your dulcimer* with actual examples and demonstrations of dozens of terms and concepts. DAD Int – Advanced Sat. 9:15 – 10:30

**25. Fingerstyle Seminar** *Nina Zanetti* Sat. 10:45 – 11:45  
*For experienced players who are already comfortable with basic fingerpicking.* If you enjoy fingerstyle dulcimer but wish you could play this style more effectively, this workshop is for you! Come with your questions or challenges, and we'll troubleshoot whatever may be confusing you. Topics may cover common problems, such as how to achieve a good tone and how to avoid "machine gun" playing; but the emphasis will be on whatever *you* find challenging about this technique. You will also leave with several lovely tunes to add to your repertoire. DAD Intermediate – Advanced

**32. Introduction to Less Common Tunings** *Neal Walters* Sat. 1:15 – 2:30  
Get familiar with several less common tunings which can be the perfect solution for playing or singing in keys other than D. You've probably used EAA and/or DGD but have you tried DGC, EAE, EAD, or EAC?  
Various Tunings Intermediate to Advanced

**39. Five Easy Notes** *Melanie Johnston* Sat. 2:45 – 3:45  
Why use 7 notes when you can get away with just 5? The pentatonic scale is a secret known by the best musicians. Use it to play along with others instead of or in addition to back-up chords. Use it for improvisation. Use it to make a cool “lick” within a song. Come learn how. DAD Int – Advanced

**46. The Beauty and Power of Stephen Foster’s Music** *Jeff Furman* Sun. 10:15 – 11:15  
This workshop will explore some wonderful compositions not commonly heard or played, but no less beautiful and enchanting. Learn some more timeless melodies and enchanting lyrics. (Bring a CAPO!) DAD  
Intermediate – Advanced

**52. Two-Hand Tapping** *Sam Edelston* Sun. 11:30 – 12:30  
This two-handed playing technique is most associated with rock music, but actually dates back much farther and is great for many styles of music. We’ll demystify it and get you comfortable enough to try it on some interesting tunes. DAD Advanced

## GENERAL

**7. Strings and Things for the Dulcimer** *George Haggerty* Fri. 4:15 – 5:15  
George will show you the proper way to replace & tune strings, touch up scratches & nicks, how to choose the best polish & wax, and how to replace or repair a tuning peg. Bring your questions. General

**19. Build A Cardboard Dulcimer – for Yourself or for a Grandchild**  
*George Haggerty* Sat. 9:15 – 10:30  
During this class you will attach the tuners to the pre-finished fretboard and glue the fretboard to the sound box. If time permits, George will help you begin stringing the dulcimer. You can come back to George’s booth any time during the rest of the festival to finish attaching and tuning the strings so that your dulcimer will be ready to play! (**You will need to order a dulcimer kit when you register for the festival.**) All

**33. Put that Tab in your Tablet** *Melanie Johnston* Sat. 1:15 – 2:30  
If you have binders full of music and cart them with you when you go out to play, you may want to consider an electronic music database program. There are apps for all tablet types. In this class we will specifically work with a popular program – *forScore - specific to iPad*. If you have an iPad with forScore installed, bring it to class. Alternatively and if you don’t have forScore or a tablet, you can come to just listen and see what these programs can do. Class will cover getting your music into your tablet, annotating, creating setlists and using some of the other tools forScore offers. It will change your musical life! No dulcimers required for class.  
*Optional* - Bring your iPad with forScore installed. All

**40. Songwriting Primer** *Carolyn Brodginiski* Sat. 2:45 – 3:45  
What comes first? The lyrics or the music? What are the components of a song? What style of music? Blues? Folk? Instrumental? Acapella? What do you write about, and where do you find inspiration? No matter what others may say, there is no one way to approach writing a song. Carolyn will discuss these topics and share what has worked for her (which is not guaranteed to work for everyone else). The goal of this workshop is to provide tools and ideas to help you find your way. All levels

**48. Music – The Real Medicine** *Carolyn Brodginiski* Sun. 11:30 – 12:30  
Since the beginning of time, music has been used to communicate, motivate, educate, soothe, incite, excite, entertain...and heal. Learn about the different ways music is used in clinical settings to heal, and what it means to heal. A therapeutic musician since 2016, Carolyn will share her knowledge of music and healing, discuss details of her certification, and share her experiences playing at the bedside at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, CT. All levels

**53. DIY Surface Repairs for Dulcimers** *Dwain Wilder*

Sun. 10:15 – 11:15

Dwain will demonstrate various ways to repair or hide unsightly bruises. Attendees will be invited to try the techniques for themselves on scrap materials. Suitable for owners and builders and repairers of mountain and hammered dulcimers, and other stringed music instruments. No particular expertise necessary for the techniques that will be presented. If time permits, advanced techniques of particular interest to builders and repairers will also be demonstrated. All

## JAMS

**53. Turtle Jam** *Norm Williams*

Fri. 9:30 PM (after the concert)

Come, join in, and add the voice of your dulcimer (and add your own, too, if you like) as we play some easy and familiar tunes and songs. We'll keep it slow and simple, and untimidating, so that everyone will be able to enjoy it. Come tuned to D. All

**54. Open Jam (Experienced Jammers)** *Butch Ross*

Fri. 9:30 PM (after the concert)

What better way end the first day of the festival than by playing songs and tunes together! Bring your favorites to share, and expect everything to be played at a "normal" tempo for the music. All instruments welcome! Come tuned to D.

**55. Folk Revival Jam** *Sam Edelston*

Sun. 9:00 – 10:00

Let's bring back some of those wonderful songs from the '50s and '60s that you, or your parents, or your grandparents grew up loving. Bring your dulcimers, other instruments, and voices! 'This jam is your jam, this jam is my jam. This jam is made for you and me. All aboard!' Come tuned to D. All

## Coleen Walters

### Now for Something Completely Different

Looking for something to do while your spouse, partner or SO is in class? Need a break from concentrating in workshops? Coleen Walters will be available in the vendor area to teach you some knitting basics: learn what cast on, knit, purl, stockinette, garter and cast off mean ... and how to do it! We'll work on something everyone can use, a dishcloth. Men are welcome – if Rob Brereton can knit and Rosie Greer can do needlepoint, you can knit too! Kit fee of \$6.00 covers needles, yarn and instruction booklet. You will find Coleen hanging out and knitting in the vendor area: stop by to learn some basics or have her help solve a knitting problem. If you know you would like to join her let her know so she can have enough supplies on hand. [coleenwalters@gmail.com](mailto:coleenwalters@gmail.com)