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Fresh Sounds in the World of Bluegrass, September - December 2011 [1]

Eddie & Martha Adcock with Tom Gray and Friends, *Many a Mile* (Patuxent Music, www.pxrec.com [2])
?TwoGrass? duo Eddie and Martha Adcock join with longtime friends Tom Gray, Gene Johnson and Missy Raines for a set of songs from two of the genre?s most influential bands: The Country Gentlemen and Second Generation. Eddie Adcock and Gray were members of the Gentlemen during the 1960s, and both Adcocks along with Gene Johnson were in Second Generation in the ?70s. Included: ?Down Where the Still Waters Flow,? ?Two Little Boys,? ?Amelia Earhart?s Last Flight,? ?Matterhorn,? ?This Morning at Nine? and more.

Darin & Brooke Aldridge, *So Much in Between* (Mountain Home Music Company, www.crossroadsmusic.com [3])
The latest album from husband and wife duo Darin and Brooke Aldridge showcase the couple?s trademark vocal harmony blend and Darin?s mandolin playing, backed by Rachel Johnson, Chris Bryant and Dwayne Anderson, with guests Tom T. Hall, Jerry Salley and Rob Ickes. Much of the material comes from Jerry Salley and Lisa Shaffer, plus Don Stover, Shane Nicholson & Kasey Chambers, Tom T & Dixie Hall, Sidney Cox and more.

Bearfoot, *American Story* (Compass Records, www.compassrecords.com [4])
The latest from this bluegrass-flavored Americana band born in Alaska, now residing in Nashville, is the first recording from their new line-up, featuring Nora Jean Struthers, Angela Oudean, Todd Grebe, Jason Norris and PJ George. In the mostly original album all the songs were penned by Struthers and Grebe, plus one from Annalisa Tornfelt.

Blue Highway, *Sounds of Home* (Rounder Records, www.rounder.com [5])
The men of Blue Highway put their trademark lonesome scald on a new set of original music from Tim Stafford, Shawn Lane, Jason Burleson and Wayne Taylor. Co-writers include Steve Gulley, Barry Bales, Craig Market, Jon Weisberger and Bob Minner. Included: ??I Ain?t Gonna Lay My Hammer Down,? ?Bluebird Days,? ?Heather and Billy,? ?Roaring Creek,? ?Only Seventeen,? ?Drinking from a Deeper Well? and more.

John Bowman, *Family Chain ? The Songs of Joe Isaacs* (Pisgah Ridge, www.crossroadsmusic.com [3])
In liner notes John R. Bowman says, ?My intention here is to give credit to a man who has greatly influenced me both personally and spiritually. These songs have ministered to me many times over the years. I continue to listen to them practically every day. I hope as you listen to this recording that you can feel the heartfelt love I have for the music of Joe Isaacs. His writing is a treasure that will stand the test of time.? Included: ?I Pressed Through the Crowd,? ?Garden Tomb,? ?Sweet Holy Spirit,? ?What a Debt He Paid for Me,? ?He Never

Failed Me? and more.

Earl Brackin, *Looking for a Story* (www.earlbrackin.com [6])
North Georgia singer/songwriter/guitarist Earl Brackin presents 11 original songs on his debut solo release; two of which he co-wrote with Spatial Effects band mate Thomas Brown. Included: ?Big Leagues,? a spiritual song utilizing baseball themes and metaphors; ?Mystery of Your Smile,? a love song for grown-ups; the romantic and country as a turnip green ?Grits on Her Lipstick,? and more. Ferrell Stowe, Megan Lovell, Besty Blankenship, Tod Brock, John Boulware, Gary Thompson, Ken Hamilton, Schylar Shoates, David Crawford and Kent Suddeth appear, in addition to Brackin and Brown.

Dale Ann Bradley, *Somewhere South of Crazy* (Compass Records, www.compassrecords.com [4])
The title track of four-time IBMA Female Vocalist Dale Ann Bradley was co-written with Pam Tillis, who also lends a harmony vocal. Dale Ann offers a nod to the Father of Bluegrass with a hard driving take on the Monroe song ?In Despair,? and she surprises fans with a bluegrass version of Seals & Croft?s ?Summer Breeze.? Stuart Duncan, Steve Gulley, Kim Fox, Andy Hall, Sierra Hull, Alison Brown, Mike Bub, Alison Brown, Matt Combs, David Long and Mike Sumner make guest appearances. Dale Ann is particularly pleased to include the oft requested ?I Pressed Through the Crowd? and country chestnut ?Will You Visit Me on Sundays.?

The Carter Brothers, *The Road to Roosky* (Compass Records, www.compassrecords.com [4])
On the first album for the Compass label brothers Tim and Danny Carter present a varied collection of songs that pay homage to their family tradition (Hall of Fame members, The Carter Family) as well as showcase the adventurous, Americana blues edged side of their music. Sam Bush and Ferrell Stowe guest, along with the late Vassar Clements on ?Jerusalem Moan??recorded a few months before his death in 2005. This recording may be the only recording of Vassar singing and scatting, as well as playing the fiddle. Included: ?Woman at the Well,? ?Deep Ellum Blues,? ?What Does the Deep Sea Say,? ?Red Rooster? and more.

Mary Z. Cox, *Girl with the Banjo Tattoo* (www.maryzcox.com [7])
A self-confessed ?banjoholic? and third generation Floridian, Mary Cox is an award-winning clawhammer banjo and mountain dulcimer player whose new album includes 14 new arrangements of traditional tunes on banjo, acoustic guitar and dulcimer. Mary plays all the instruments, joined by Ellen Sheppard on the banjolin. She makes note of the instrument played and the person she learned it from for each tune. Included: ?Chickens Crowin? at Midnight,? ?Scarborough Fair,? ?Whiskey Before Waltzing with Soldiers,? ?June Apple,? ?Star of the County Down? and more.

The Dang It Bobbys, *Big Trouble* (www.thedang-itbobbys.com [8])
In 2004 Brooklyn-based multi-instrumentalist Kris Bauman and guitarist Luca Beneditte formed a ?bourbon-soaked brain-child of an alt-bluegrass folk band? named after a cartoon character. Their original style distills classic country and bluegrass music, combined with modern indie sounds and harmonies from classic jazz. The all original set includes titles like ?Sad Sack;? ?Hey Guess What;? ?Road Kill Jerky? and ?Planes, Trains & Automobiles.?

Rodney Dillard & the Dillard Band featuring Beverly Dillard, *Don?t Wait for the Hearse to Take You to Church*

(Rural Rhythm Christian, www.ruralrhythm.com [9])
Rodney and Beverly Dillard are joined by Steve Bush, George Giddens, Tim Crouch, Bruce Hoffman, Marty Wilhite, Pete Generous and Jim Glaspy on a new gospel album. The list of songs include ?Leaning on the Everlasting Arms? (performed by The Dillards on The Andy Griffith Show), ?Gospel Ship,? ?Somebody Touched Me,? ?When My Time Comes to Go,? ?The Devil Just Can?t Knock Me Off My Knees? and more. Also included are four bonus tracks from Rodney and Beverly?s syndicated ?Mayberry Values? radio spots.

Ethan Hughes, *Searching for a Home* (Patuxent Music, www.pxrec.com [10])
In the liner notes for Eric Hughes? debut album David Bromberg says Hughes, 20, ?can?t remember a time when bluegrass music wasn?t being played around his house?. It?s obvious from this recording that a lot of things about bluegrass music are rooted in Ethan?s subconscious. He learned how to sing and phrase his singing and Dobro playing?.[and] how to sing and play with taste.? Hughes is backed by Russ Carson, Nate Grower, Marc MacGlashan, Sav Sankaran, Frank Solivan, Wally Hughes and Norman Wright.

Laurie Lewis, *Skippin' and Flyin'* (Spruce and Maple Music, www.spruceandmaplemusic.com [11])
Laurie Lewis is pictured in a Blue Grass Boys suit, wide necktie and Stetson hat on her new album, recorded as a tribute to the Father of Bluegrass, In liner notes she says, ?Bill Monroe was not a follower of styles but steadfastly played his singular music through the good times and the tough, inspiring me with his example to be free to explore my own musical path. Performed with a ?traditional bluegrass band? (fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar and bass), all of the harmony singing stems directly from the school of Bill Monroe. This collection is an installment on those student loans and a warm thank-you to Big Mon.?

The Del McCoury Band, *Old Memories: The Songs of Bill Monroe* (McCoury Music, www.delmccouryband.com [12])
Released digitally Sept. 27 and on vinyl Oct. 25, the latest recording from new Bluegrass Hall of Fame member and former Blue Grass Boy Del McCoury is a tribute to Bill Monroe. Del works his way through a 16-stack set of music that gives a nod to the shows he played with Monroe by starting with ?Watermelon on the Vine? and concluding with a favorite closer, ?Y?all come.? In between are both classic and obscure songs from the Monroe repertoire, including ?Close By,? ?Rose of Old Kentucky,? ?Alabama Waltz,? ?The Girl in the Blue Velvet Band,? ?Train 45??with lyrics and more.

John McCutcheon, *this Land: Woody Guthrie?s America* (Appalsongs, www.folkmusic.com [13])
When folk musician John McCutcheon got his first guitar he pedaled down to his local public library in search of an instruction book and stumbled upon *Woody Guthrie Folksongs.* Thus began a lifetime of instruction that comes full circle with McCutcheon?s 35th album, recorded in honor of the 100th anniversary of Guthrie?s birth on July 14, 2012. Included: ?I Ain?t Got No Home,? ?Mail Myself to You,? ?Deportees,? ?1913 Massacre,? ?This Land is Your Land,? ?Hobo?s Lullaby? and more.

Molly & Tenbrooks, *The Old Mandolin* (www.mollyandtenbrooks.com [14])
Molly & Tenbrooks is a Spokane, Washington-based bluegrass band made up of music teachers and a software engineer. The majority of the songs on their new album were written by band members Kelly Bogan and Dannie Lynn Plummer, both who were invited to IBMA?s

annual Songwriter Showcase at World of Bluegrass 2011 in Nashville. Straight ahead bluegrass instrumentation with Dobro and a unique vocal style, along with prolific songwriting skills are spotlighted on titles like ?Juney Whank,? ?Some Kind of Fool,? ?Grandpa Played the Saw,? ?The Loyal Rebel Rose,? ?Mama Hung the Moon? and more.

Russell Moore & IIIrd Tyme Out, *Prime Tyme* (Rural Rhythm Records, www.ruralrhythm.com [9])
The new album from IIIrd Tyme Out, led by reigning Male Vocalist of the Year Russell Moore, is a celebration of the band?s first 20 years. Each song on Prime Tyme was selected with input from each band member, drawing from their respective musical influences. Compositions were penned by Ronnie Bowman, Bill Castle, David Norris, Billy Smith, Davie Carroll, Mark Brinkman and more. Included: ?Old Kentucky Farmers,? ?Whippoorwill,? ?Goodbye Old Missoula,? ?Pretty Little Girl from Galax? and more.

Leon Morris, *Thinking Today of My Home* (Patuxent Records, www.pxrec.com [10])
In liner notes Bill Emerson says, ?Leon and I have been friends since he migrated from Canada in 1959. Along the way we shared the experience of working with the great Buzz Busby. With this album Leon gives us excellent renderings of the Busby classics ?Going Home,? ?Me and the Jukebox? and ?Lost.? He also displays his considerable prowess as an instrumentalist on ?Golden Slippers? and turns in a fine rendition of my own tune, ?Welcome to New York.? Leon?s composition ?Charlie? pays tribute to another great lead singer and friend, Charlie Waller?. I know this first rate album will hold you captive as it has me.?

Mountain Faith, *Save Me* (Mountain Home Music Company, www.crossroadsmusic.com [3])
The latest album from 2011 World of Bluegrass showcase family band, Mountain Faith is a set of bluegrass gospel music. High energy bluegrass instrumentation and vocals are showcased here from band members Sam, Summer and Brayden McMahan; Paul Harrigill and John Morgan. Titles include: ?Peace in the Valley,? ?My God is Real,? ?Gone Away,? ?Love Lifted Me? and more.

Noam Pikelny, *Beat the Devil and Carry a Rail* (Compass Records, www.compassrecords.com [4])
Pikelny, the banjo player with The Punch Brothers and the first recipient of the Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass Music, steps to center stage with his second solo recording, released October 25, 2011. Backed by a stellar cast of musicians, high points include Tom Waits? ?Fish and Bird? with vocals from Aoife O?Donovan (Crooked Still), a re-working of the Henry Thomas classic ?Bob Mckinney? with Tim O?Brien, a banjo duet with Steve Martin on ?Cluck Old Hen,? a powerful instrumental trio with Chris Thile and Bryan Sutton on the original ?Bear Dog Grit? and more.

Junior Sisk, *The Heart of a Song* (Rebel Records, www.rebelrecords.com [15])
Traditional bluegrass fans will look forward to another set of hard-edged, straight ahead bluegrass on Junior Sisk and Ramblers Choice?s third release for the Rebel Records label. The songs were written by Tim Massey, Rick Pardue & Harry Sisk, Jr.; Russell Johnson; John Pennell & Barry Tashian; David Sloas; Daniel Salyer; Dixie & Tom T. Hall and Junior himself, among others. Rhonda Vincent sings a duet with Junior on ?The Sound of Your Name,? written by John Pennell and Barry Tashian.

The Skaggs Family, *A Skaggs Family Christmas Volume Two* (Skaggs Family Records, www.skaggsfamilyrecords.com

[16])
The second volume of Christmas music from The Skaggs and White family comes with a bonus DVD, which features 26 songs from the family?s holiday concert, recorded live in Nashville at the historic Ryman Auditorium. ?We released Vol. 1 back in 2005 because our fans asked us for it,? Ricky Skaggs says. ?We didn?t know if we?d ever do another one, but we?ve been hearing from our fans and they?re ready for more Christmas songs?so here?s volume two. It was joy to create and we?re excited to share it.? Ricky, his wife Sharon and their children Luke and Molly are joined by Buck and Cheryl White and Cheryl?s daughter, Rachel Leftwich. Also featured is Ricky?s band Kentucky Thunder and The Nashville Strings. A DVD of the live Skaggs Family Christmas Show is included in the package!

Snyder Family Band, *Stages* (Mountain Roads Recordings, http://mountainroadsrecording.com [17])
The Snyder Family Band features parents Bud and Laine, with Samantha (12), Zeb (16) and Owen (5). In liner notes Bud says, ?The idea for the title Stages came from thinking about all of the places we have been able to perform, the new venues that are on our schedule and the stages where we dream to play in the future.? In addition to five cuts written by Samantha and Zeb, the material comes from Wyatt Rice, J.J. Cale, Todd Rakestraw, Stephen Foster and more.

Three Tall Pines, *All That?s Left* (www.threetallpines.com [18])
Three Tall Pines is an award-winning quartet from the heart of New England that plays bluegrass and Americana music. Their second album showcases original music, vocal and instrumental chops from Dan Bourdeau, Joe Lurgio, Connor Smith and Gian Pangaro on songs like ?Crosstown,? ?Tire Chains,? ?Rosebud,? ?Black Sunday Blues,? ?Blue Pontiac,? ?Metamorphosis? and more.

Various Artists, *Close Kin: A Reunion of Bluegrass and Old-Time Music* (http://mountainroadsrecordings.com [19])
In liner notes Karl Cooler observes, ?Many times bluegrass and old-time artists can be heard jamming off stage at festivals before or after shows, or even late into the night after the crowds have gone home. Amazing sounds are created when these styles are blended together, as their heritage intended?. *Close Kin* brings these sounds to the fans.? Featured musicians include Johnny & Jeanette Williams, Adam & Tina Steffey plus members of The Snyder Family, Skeeter and the Skidmarks, The Wolfe Brothers String Band, The VW Boys, Rich in Tradition and more with a set of new and old traditional songs written by Martha Scanlan, Katherin Donan, Kasey Chambers & Shane Anthony, Nancy Cardwell & Thomas J. Brown and more.

Various Artists, *Mark Twain Words & Music* (Mailboat Records, www.marktwainmuseum.org/index.php/community-projects/mark-twain-cd [20])
Produced by Carl Jackson and Cindy Lovell, this new recording was created to commemorate ?the Year of Mark Twain? in 2010, with the goal of sharing Samuel Clemens? legacy to a new audience and help provide financial support to the Mark Twain Museum in Hannibal, Missouri. Garrison Keillor narrates the story of Twain?s life, Jimmy Buffett is the voice of Huck Finn, and Clint Eastwood plays the part of Twain. The list of musicians includes Emmylou Harris, Ricky Skaggs, Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, Rhonda Vincent, Bradley Walker, Joe Diffie, The Church Sisters, Sheryl Crow, Brad Paisley and Jackson himself?who had a hand in writing six of the songs.

Various Artists; *Rural Rhythm Records Salutes Bill Monroe 100 Year Celebration: Live at Bean Blossom* (Rural Rhythm, www.ruralrhythm.com [21])
In 1973 Bill Monroe released the classic live bluegrass album, Bean Blossom, which contained top bluegrass artists of the day performing bluegrass classics and fan favorites. Thirty-eight years later Rural Rhythm has released a new album recorded live at the historic festival grounds featuring 12 Monroe classics performed by Rural Rhythm artists, Bobby Osborne, Ronnie Reno, Russell Moore & IIIrd Tyme Out, Lonesome River Band, Lou Reid & Carolina, Audie Blaylock & Redline, Blue Moon Rising, Grasstowne, Rickey Wasson, Dwight McCall, Carolina Road, Brand New Strings, The Bartley Brothers and Grasstown. Songs include ?Uncle Pen,? ?Can?t You Hear Me Calling,? ?Southern Flavor,? ?Body and Soul,? ?Big Mon? and more.

April Verch, *That?s How We Run* (Slab Town Records www.aprilverch.com [22])
In liner notes Riley Baugus says, ?April Verch is known for being one of the world?s finest fiddlers and performers of Canadian traditional music, but on this recording she also reaches deep into the heart of traditional music of the United States. She approaches this music with the same richness, charm, beauty and respect with which he plays the fine music of the Ottawa Valley?. For this project April has brought together a great supporting cast. She chose some of today?s finest traditional musicians, who all come from different places throughout the continent, but all of whom come together of one mind. We love the music and we love what April does with it.?

Frank Wakefield, *A Tribute to Bill Monroe* (Patuxent Music, www.pxrec.com [10])
Fifty years ago Bill Monroe told Frank Wakefield, ?Well, you can pick as good as me?or nearly as good. So now you?ve got to go out and get your own sound.? In liner notes Joseph L. Scott says after doing just that, Wakefield ?has returned to the music and the man that made him want to do it all in the first place. While there are few things as exhilarating as a trip to new and distant lands, when it?s all over, there is nothing more gratifying than coming home.? Frank is joined by Audie Blaylock, Michael Cleveland, Mark Delaney, Tom Ewing and Marshall Wilborn on the album, with guest appearances by Tom Mindte and Taylor Baker on 16 cuts from the repertoire of Bill Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys.

John Warren & Charlie Cushman with special guests, *A Tribute to Fiddlin' Paul Warren, Vol. 2* (Warren-Cushman)
In liner notes Johnny Warren, son of legendary fiddler Paul Warren says volume 2 ?includes several up tempo fiddle and banjo tunes. Eight of the selections were chosen because they were played frequently by Dad on live shows or around the house, but he never recorded them. ?Right at Lyles? is a tune I wrote and Charlie named, after the place Dad was born and raised in Hickman County, Tennessee. Charlie [Cushman] did a remarkable job playing the ?Scruggs? style on all the selections, especially on the three banjo tunes where Jerry Douglas and I did our best to pay respect to Uncle Josh [Graves] and Paul Warren on the Dobro and fiddle breaks. We also came across a live cut of Dad playing ?Old Joe? with the Osborne Brothers and thought it was appropriate to end the CD with this recording. I feel a sense of Dad?s presence every time I pick up his old Stainer."

The Missy Werner Band, *Three Kinds of Lonesome* (www.missywerner.com [23])
The sophomore release from the Missy Werner Band features Werner on lead vocals and mandolin, with Artie Werner on bass, Jeff Roberts on banjo and Tim Strong on guitar?plus guests Ned Luberecki, Jennifer Strickland, Aaron Till and Mike Witcher. Songs were

composed by producer Jon Weisberger, Strickland, Jeremy Garrett, Mark Brinkman, Mark Simos, Stephen Mougin, Lisa Shaffer, Larry Cordle and Larry Shell, plus more. Missy sings two duets, paired with Frank Solivan and later Chris Jones.

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