

How to find the right Strings

Singles, Sets & Bulk

At JustStrings.com, we make it easy for you to find the strings you need: guitar, bass, violin, mandolin, mandola, mandocello, mandobass, viola, cello, banjo, lute, bouzouki, ukulele and more.

World's Largest Selection

Thousands of different singles, sets and bulk packaged strings are in stock and ready to ship. You've got a great instrument. Let us help you make it better.

800.822.3953

www.juststrings.com

Every Musician's Dream has
now Come True ...



port-stand

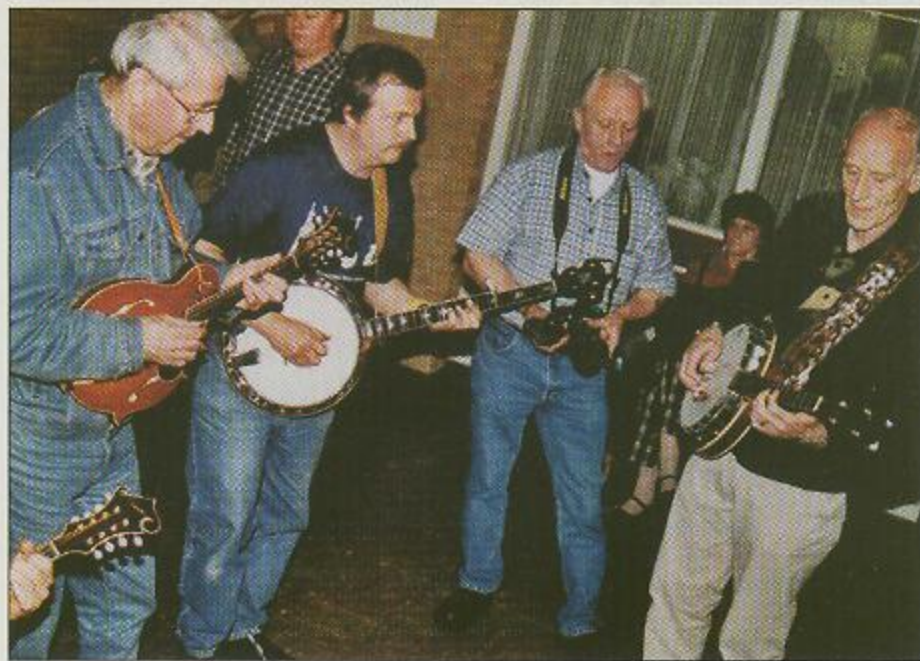
The Best Portable Music
Stand on the Planet.

Visit us at: www.portastand.com
651-439-1731

Patent Pending.

A.G. LETTER

From Holland



PHOTOS BY HANS VAN DAM

Jamming at the European World of Bluegrass festival.

Dear bluegrass fans,

"The singing is high lonesome. The playing hard driving. The music bluegrass." So reads the program guide to the European World of Bluegrass festival, held here in Voorthuizen, a pretty little town nestled next to a forest reserve southeast of Amsterdam. It's a picture postcard sort of place, where the houses are tidy, the gardens are weed-free, the streets seem to have as many bicycles as cars, and the locals don't mind hosting several hundred bluegrass pickers and aficionados for the weekend.

I've come here in the company of seven Frenchmen, and in case you're wondering how a middle-aged American gal managed that, the answer is the Internet. Before I left for Europe, I contacted a couple of French guitarists through the flatpicking listserv (Flatpick-L), and they've kindly taken this fellow picker under their wing, inviting me along on their annual trek up north for four days of performances, jamming, and friendly musical hanging out.

It was nearly a six-hour drive from Paris—plenty of time to listen to tapes and schmooze in a melange of my not-very-good French and my hosts' considerably better English. We commiserated about uncooperative band members (like the French bluegrass diva who refused to stoop to such mundane tasks as coiling microphone cords after the gig), cracked banjo jokes (yes, they're international), and talked about what makes good music. When mandolin player Christophe declared, "I like when the melody is played with the heart, not with the fingers," I knew I'd met some simpatico music buddies.

There are more than 40 bands playing here at the festival, which takes place in the local community center, and they've come from all over Europe—Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy, England, Russia, France, and Belgium. Many are as polished as any top regional touring band in the U.S. The Netherlands' Four Wheel Drive delivers complex arrangements and works smoothly around a single microphone. Swedish band Downhill performs its own compositions (graceful, well-crafted songs in English), and the guitarist, Hans Wahlstedt, pulls a wonderfully percussive backbeat out of his old Martin. At first it's a bit startling to hear mu-