



## The Wayfarers Will Be on CFMS Stage January 25



Hailing from rural Southeast Ohio, The Wayfarers emerged onto the scene in early 2010 playing their own form of American Roots music. While much of their repertoire is drawn from the Appalachian tradition they revere, The Wayfarers fuse tight

musicianship - centered largely by the fiddle - with the high energy that characterized early mountain music. With old-time radio shows setting the example, their style encompasses Appalachian dance music, traditional mountain fiddle tunes, and pre-bluegrass music of the 1920's - resulting in a dose of nostalgic Americana. Their spirited approach to live performance is infectious, and people of all ages are drawn in to the sounds of thumping washtub bass, driving guitars, sawing fiddles, and rich harmonies.

The Wayfarers have been featured on the national PBS television series "Song of the Mountains", toured much of the Midwest and Southern Appalachians, released 4 studio albums, and have shared the stage with some of the biggest names in bluegrass & country music; including Ralph Stanley, Ricky Skaggs, *Marty Stuart, and many more.*

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# Wayfarers To Perform Jan. 25

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**CFMS' Bill Cohen recently interviewed Brandon Bankes, The Wayfarers' mandolin player, about their approach to their music.**

**Bill Cohen:** You say that the Wayfarers combine "Appalachian dance music, traditional mountain fiddle tunes, and pre-bluegrass music of the 1920's." What is it about this mixture that you find so special?

**Brandon Bankes:** The old-time Appalachian sound in particular just always appealed to us more than bluegrass. When you listen back to those early recordings of hillbilly or mountain music -- there is a purity, rawness and energy that I think was lost a little bit when commercial bluegrass came around. The music itself split off and became much more complex, flashy and polished. Now, that's not a knock on bluegrass or to say we don't love bluegrass, as we certainly take elements from both old-time and bluegrass -- but there was always a fondness toward the very early sounds of the style in its purest form that I just fell in love with. It's the way the clawhammer banjo and fiddle sounded together. It was imagining people before us playing these fiddle tunes in parts of the country that were still completely untouched by the modern world, or getting them from an ancestor from across the ocean. It's the beauty/ simplicity of the music itself and the traditions/history of it that drew us in from the beginning. It's sort of like listening to a time machine. This all kind of came full circle when I had the chance to visit Ireland a couple years ago and participated in a few local jam sessions. It was an incredible

bucket list moment for me to swap tunes back and forth with these guys. Even though we were literally oceans apart, we all knew the same tunes.. perhaps they were played slightly different with lyric changes, but it was an incredible revelation to hear it in person. It's all from the same family tree.

**It's the beauty/ simplicity of the music itself and the traditions/history of it that drew us in from the beginning.**

**Bill Cohen:** You guys all look pretty young. How old are you all, and how young were you when you began your musical careers?

**Brandon Bankes:** We're all in our early to mid 30s. The band started nearly 10 years ago, when we were all in our 20's, which is really hard to believe. It's pretty tough to keep a band together this long, especially when we were all right smack dab in the middle of the prime of our lives when people are moving, changing careers, and having kids. We've done all of those things, but somehow the band has remained and we're still going strong. As far as individual musical journeys go, we each have different backstories to how we got into music. I grew up on traditional country like George Jones and Loretta Lynn, walked away from it and got into punk rock when I was a teenager. Josh grew up on gospel music and Johnny Cash. Justin played upright bass in a rockabilly band at one point. Matt is a trained concert violinist, and

Nate played guitar and sang in an alternative/metal band. We're kind of all over the place as far as backgrounds, but what united us is that we all just love good music. We still love all sorts of different styles outside of the traditional forms that we play in The Wayfarers.

**Bill Cohen:** Who are the musician heroes and heroines that have influenced your music?

**Brandon Bankes:** As far as the genre goes, the usual heavy hitters like The Carter Family, Skillet Lickers, The Stanley Brothers, New Lost City Ramblers, Doc Watson, Bill Monroe.. the patriarchs of the style. We also love modern artists like Tim O' Brien, Billy Strings, Dirk Powell, and Foghorn Stringband to name a few. But then you'll find some really off the wall artists we like such as The Ramones or Megadeath. Referencing back to when I was into punk rock as a teenager, I think some of those nuances still come through in our style today. Old-Time and Punk have a very similar DIY attitude...just pick up an instrument and play the heck out of it!

**Bill Cohen:** Tell us about your touring around the country. How many performances do you do every year and what's the variety of venues you've played at?

**Brandon Bankes:** We've been very blessed to do this for nearly 10 years now. When we started out, we honestly had no intentions of it ever leaving the basement of where we rehearsed. We genuinely just loved the music, and getting together and playing it on a weekly basis for our own enjoyment was just fine by us.

# The Wayfarers at CFMS Coffeehouse

Continued from p. 2



**Brandon Bankes:** Fast forward 10 years later, I think we've played every type of event you can think of. From busking on the street corners in Nashville, to beautiful old theaters in the South opening for some of our heroes, to breweries and Festivals across Ohio and beyond...we've played so many different type of venues. One of the coolest things we have ever had the chance to do was play on the PBS Series "Song of The Mountains." All of us, more specifically myself and Josh, used to watch that show before we formed the band. It was a pretty surreal moment to see ourselves on that show, and on national TV. In general, we do around 100 shows a year but it fluctuates a little depending on our personal lives and how busy we are individually.

**Bill Cohen:** Your band's roots are in Southeast Ohio, our Appalachian region. How does that impact your mindset as you perform and create songs?

**Brandon Bankes:** I think it makes the music that much more relatable to our audience. There's a certain familiarity, because it was born here. It's woven into the very fabric of who we are as Americans and also this region. We're certainly not scholars of old-time music by any means, but I do think all of us being from the Appalachian hills of Ohio gives it a little more authenticity and validity. It's also not just the music, it's a whole culture and stories from this region that goes right along with it that appeals to so many. There are songs in this style for moments in all people's lives, from courting to dying, playing with children to working in the fields and mines. Songs of innocence and anguish, songs of silly mischief and rage, seduction and heartbreak, hope and utter despair. What the music shares is a visceral connection to the way real people live their lives, and that certainly applies to this area as well as anywhere. It's just real, relatable music. On a personal level, my Grandpa, Raymond Bankes, was a coal miner who was killed in the

mine when I was just one year old. I never got to meet him, but a lot of the love for this style of music I think comes from him. How that works, I don't know, but I think some of it has to be genetic. He played in a lot of local country bands, and when I got older my Grandma passed some of his instruments onto me. So for me personally, when I play this music and take it all over the country, it's a humbling feeling, like I'm "carrying the torch" for him. He never got the chance to play music past the local level, and this was his dream.

**Bill Cohen:** . In just one or two sentences, what should our people expect to experience if they come to your Columbus appearance?

**Brandon Bankes:** Fun, energetic music that will make you want to get up and dance!

## Member Profile: Mike & Nancy Zajano

**Editor's Note:** Mike and Nancy Zajano have been involved with CFMS for over seven years. Mike developed his musical skills by participating in the various jam sessions that are open to everyone. After almost 30 years in Worthington they are moving to New Hampshire to be close to their grandchildren. Bill Cohen interviewed them for this Member Profile.

**Bill:** You have been such active members of CFMS the past several years. You have volunteered at the annual folk festival. You have participated in many jams as either a player or a listener. And you have attended many many monthly coffeehouses and fundraising concerts. Why did you become so heavily involved with CFMS so quickly after discovering us?

**Mike:** I've always been drawn to organizations like CFMS – Of, For, and By the Members. There's a sense that "We can do this by ourselves, for ourselves," In Phil Ochs's words, "Won't be asked to do my share when I'm gone, So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here."

**Nancy:** I love the sense of community that comes with people sharing live music. It's more than a performance by one or two individuals; it's a communal experience.

**Bill:** What is it about folk music that you find so special?

**Mike:** It's real. It eschews the superficial, sappy stuff and tells stories about real people with real emotions. It addresses things both big and small, and with seriousness at times and with humor at other times. I got hooked the first time I heard Peter, Paul, and Mary sing "Blowin' In The Wind." No other genre of music ever measured up after that.

**Nancy:** So many of the lyrics are sheer poetry, capturing great emotions or events in a few words. For example, Kate Wolf captures a lifetime of feelings with

"Sometimes the greatest love hangs by such a slender thread."

**Bill:** Do you have any particularly special moments that you recall from past CFMS events?

**Mike:** Oh boy, images! Breaking down the COFF paraphernalia in the rain two years ago. Farmers' Market jams with the Worthington Squares, at Franklin Park, and elsewhere. Many, many nursing home jams. Fighting my nerves during my first open mic.

**Nancy:** Sitting a few feet away from John Gorka as he talked about his process of writing a song at the festival. Watching Joe Crookston light up the stage with his energy and music. Watching two-year olds keep the beat with the "annoying objects" (toy instruments) at the Farmers' Market jams.

**Bill:** How do you describe the spirit that CFMS embodies?

**Mike:** Egalitarian, democratic, supportive, inviting. Everyone is welcome and appreciated. I consider myself still a novice as a jammer, but I've improved quite a bit because I've been accepted and supported regardless of my limitations. There is a range of musical accomplishment but there is little judgment. And those who come to listen are so supportive. It's never too late to grow and improve.

**Nancy:** Relaxed, accepting, willing to jump in. It's fun to watch the room move into action after a coffeehouse as everyone picks up the chairs to clear the room before the security alarm goes off at 10 pm.



## A Cool, Alternative Venue for Folk Music

It's one of the most unusual and unique venues for folk music in all of Columbus, and yet, most folk fans have never been there. It's Tara Hall, an old brick house in a residential neighborhood a couple miles south of German Village.

Tara Hall was originally set up as a kind of cozy clubhouse for members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a local Irish fraternal group that bills itself as "Irish, Catholic, American." The century-old house originally offered just Celtic music, but in the past several years, the members have also welcomed multiple performances by 2 of CFMS's premier bands that are known much more for Americana, singer-songwriter, folk, and other genres: Halfway Home and Whinestopper.

Renilda Marshall and Patrick Casey perform in both bands. "It's kind of like the bar in the TV show "Cheers"—once you visit, everybody knows your name and you're part of the family," says Renilda. "Couldn't find a nicer bunch of folks anywhere!"

Patrick notes the venue is musician-friendly. "There is a core group of regular attendees (I like to refer to them as "repeat offenders") who are very supportive to the musicians who play there...and especially welcoming to folks who haven't been there before," he says. "There are always a couple of members who eagerly help musicians bring in gear and then take it out at the end of the night." Perhaps 50 people at most can fit into Tara Hall's first

floor performance space, complete with a small bar that features reasonable prices. The musical shows have the feel of house concerts, because most of the audience can sit at small tables as close as 6 feet from the musicians. The most distant folks are only 30 feet away. That's why musical shows have the feel of house concerts.

Adding to the homey atmosphere of the performance space is the wall in back of the performers. It's totally covered with thousands of corks from wine bottles.

Besides Halfway Home and Whinestopper, other folk bands known to CFMS fans have also performed at Tara Hall. Among them are the San Patricios, Pitch and Swing, and BluesSwing. Ed Tatum of the San Patricios appreciates that there is a spirit of "wonderful community, and everyone there is listening intently." He adds: "the acoustics are fantastic."

For the audience, a musical show at Tara Hall can be had for a bargain price. There's usually no cover charge for the regular Friday night shows. Instead, people are simply encouraged to throw tips for the musicians into an open guitar case.

Tara Hall is located at 274 E. Innis between South High Street and Parsons Avenue.



**Making music at Tara Hall**



**The wall of corks**

# Random Events and Notes

## Columbus Folk Music Society's Year-End 2019 Matching Fund Challenge

An anonymous donor has offered again this year to match (and even up the match!) all donations to the Columbus Folk Music Society received before midnight, Dec 31, up to a grand total of \$700. As the 2020 Central Ohio Folk Festival efforts are now in full-swing, your donations will help!

Supporters such as yourself are the cornerstone of the Columbus Folk Music Society and its support and coordination of diverse folk cultural activities that thrive in Central Ohio.

*This is a great opportunity to give \$25, \$50 or more (and before year-end). Please give now in order to get the match. Last year the match amount was \$500 and we more then made our goal of raising over \$1,000!*

There are 3 easy ways to donate:

1. **Visit our website and donate via PayPal:** <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/contact-donate.html>. Just click the DONATE button.
2. **Send a check** made out to Columbus Folk Music Society (a 501c(3) tax-exempt organization). Please make a notation that it's a donation for *CFMS 2019 Challenge*. Mail to: CFMS 2019 Challenge, P.O. Box 20735, Columbus Ohio 43220.

OR you can

- 3) **Contact our Treasurer**, Charlie Flowers at: [treasurer@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org](mailto:treasurer@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org) to work out payment.

## Thanksgiving Concert: "Songs of True Gratitude"

On Friday, Nov. 29, CFMS presents an alternative to the Black Friday buying frenzy. In a Thanksgiving concert that will remind us of all the gifts we have been given, Bill Cohen will perform songs linking to John Denver,

Don McLean, Pete Seeger, Louis Armstrong, Peter Paul & Mary and more.

Vocal harmonies will be provided by the In Spirit Singers.

**When:** Friday, Nov. 29, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** Maynard Methodist Church  
2350 Indianola Columbus 43202

\$10 per person donations suggested at the door. Proceeds will help Bill's wife Randi make her annual trek to the Dominican Republic, where she serves as interpreter for the International Medical Alliance of Tennessee, a team of volunteer doctors providing free medical care to impoverished villagers.

## CFMS Musicians Play at Columbus Marathon

At the recent Columbus Marathon on October 20, players from the Folk Music Society provided some musical rhythms for the runners and spectators.



## Save the Date

**Concert: Saturday, January 25, 8:00 p.m. The Wayfarers. Old-time Mountain Music (nostalgic Americana). Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Ave., Columbus. Jam Session, 6—7:00; Open Mic, 7—7:45; Community Sing, 7:45—8:00 p.m. CFMS Members: \$10; non-members: \$15.**

**Jam: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month: Jam at Claremont Retirement Village. 7041 Bent Tree Blvd., Columbus.  
1st Tuesday at Memory Care unit, 2:00 to 3:00. 3rd Tuesday at main dining room for independent living, 2:00 to 3:00. Contact Jane VanAuken (vanaukenj@gmail.com) for more info.**

**Jam: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month: Jam at Worthington Christian Village, 165 Highbluffs, Columbus, 2:00 to 3:00. Contact Jane VanAuken (vanaukenj@gmail.com) for more info.**

**Jam: 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month: Jam at Wesley Glen, 5155 N. High St., Columbus. 1st Thursday at Health Center, 2:30 to 3:30. 3rd Thursday at Special Care unit, 1:30 to 2:30. Contact Jane VanAuken (vanaukenj@gmail.com) for more info.**

**Jam: 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month: Jam at Laurels of Worthington (Memory Care Unit), 1030 N. High St., Worthington, 2:00 to 3:00. Contact Jane VanAuken (vanaukenj@gmail.com) for more info.**

**Jam: The Saturday Music Jam at Worthington Farmer's Market 9:30-11:30am. Beginning November 1, this jam moves indoors, to the Worthington Mall at the corner of Route 23 and W. Wilson Bridge Road. All are welcome. Consider bringing a chair.**

**Jam: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday every month Acoustic Jam – Picking Party, 7-10 pm. (Mike Hale/Mary Miller-Hosts)  
Old Horseshoe Tavern & Restaurant  
65 S Main St, Johnstown, OH 43031**

**Open Mic: 4th Thursday every month Acoustic Open Mic, 7-10 pm. Old Horseshoe Tavern, Johnstown. Mike Hale and Mary Miller, hosts.**

## Following Our Own

**Grassahol at Byrnes Pub** Friday, Dec. 27, 7—9:00 pm 1248 W. 3rd Ave., Columbus

**BluesSwing at T. Y. Furniture**, Sunday, Dec. 1, noon—4:00 pm. 4555 N. High St., Columbus

**Avalon Nine at Unity Church, Delaware**, Sunday, Jan. 5, 10:30 am

## Welcome to Our New and Returning Members

Shane Braden  
Philip Hart  
John & Kazuko Volkmar (family)  
James & Ellen McDonald (new)  
Glenn Myres & Angela French  
Cindy Deering  
Laura Weber  
Art & Sharon Mittenbergs (family)  
Dan Clarke (family)  
Ray Pauken  
Claude & Regina Miller (family)  
Hugh & Ruth Ann Farthing (family)  
Jennifer Cohen-Jordan  
Linda McDonald  
Howard Mosley  
Karen Stephens  
Mark & Patricia Converse (family)  
William Page  
Don Newton (family)

**The Columbus Folk Music Society**

P.O. Box 20735  
Columbus, OH 43220



**We're on the web!**

www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org

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**Membership renewals are due annually on September 30th.** Check one of the membership levels listed below.

- |  |   |  |  |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Band Membership \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$250      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$25  | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Friend \$50     | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$200  | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$500 |

For credit card transactions, visit CFMS website at: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/member-application.html>

Membership amounts may be tax-deductible. My place of work matches donations:

**Like to volunteer? Please click all that apply. We are an all-volunteer driven organization!**

- |                                       |  |   |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal        | <input type="checkbox"/> Desktop Publishing    | <i>Please send completed membership form with payment to: Columbus Folk Music Society, P.O. Box 20735, Columbus, OH 43220</i> |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> General Help | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Tasks  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Musician     | <input type="checkbox"/> Music Instruction     |   |