

# SPBGMA DEFINITION AND BY-LAWS

SPBGMA (spig'ma) is the acronym for Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America. SPBGMA has been incorporated (not for profit) in the State of Missouri since 1974.

The primary function of SPBGMA is to educate the public; preserve, promote and encourage new development in Bluegrass Music through the following programs: NOTE: SPBGMA was the first organization to define Bluegrass Music by the instruments (See Sec. C).

(A) To preserve the traditional spirit and art form of Bluegrass music, by organizing and managing Bluegrass Music Festivals, and shows at locations that have adequate facilities (USING SPBGMA BAND MEMBERS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE). To restrict the use of alcoholic beverages, promote better entertainment, comfort, pleasure, and fellowship for all who attend these above named activities and to maintain the family atmosphere which we feel is vital to the preservation of Bluegrass Music.

(B) To offer a management service for any community civic group desiring to hold a Bluegrass Music related event. This service includes sound system, attractive portable stage, promotional literature, and top SPBGMA Bluegrass Bands. It is the sincere desire of SPBGMA to work with community groups who wish to sponsor Bluegrass Music activities of this type, and who have adequate facilities for them.

(C) To organize the SPBGMA International Association of Judges for the purpose of educating and certifying judges to score Bluegrass Band and Bluegrass Instrument contests. The primary reason for forming SPBGMA in 1974 was to conduct contests such as the National Fiddlers Convention & Championship established in 1980 until November 2001. The original dream was realized in 1984 with the 1st International Band Championship that was held in conjunction with the 10th Anniversary SPBGMA Bluegrass Music Awards held in Nashville that same year. SPBGMA has established some basic rules and regulations that will aid in the preservation of the original traditional Bluegrass instrumentation. SPBGMA has also established regulations to govern the types of Instruments to be used in SPBGMA Bluegrass band contests. A combination of the six basic acoustic instruments most commonly known to Bluegrass music (defined by SPBGMA) that will be recognized are the: **five string banjo, guitar, mandolin, fiddle, Dobro and bassfiddle**, with one mandolin, one five string banjo, one guitar and bassfiddle being the minimum mandatory requirement. **(In Band Contests only.) SPBGMA was the first organization to define Bluegrass Music by the types of instruments used to maintain Bluegrass Music groups.**

(D) In all other festivals and programs sponsored, directed or sanctioned by SPBGMA, the above traditional Bluegrass Instrumentation with the addition of the acoustic bass guitar and other selected traditional mountain-folk acoustic instruments will be accepted. **Electric instruments will not be permitted at any SPBGMA sponsored or sanctioned program.**

(E) We encourage SPBGMA performers to exercise professionalism in appearance and showmanship at all times while on stage. (We feel this is in keeping with our Bluegrass tradition.)

(F) For the promotion of bluegrass music SPBGMA has put together this annual information guide titled Festival. The fans and interested public will be able to obtain these through membership by direct mail or at various Bluegrass Festivals around the country.

(G) Basic band membership fee is \$35.00 per year. Band members will have their group photo (black & white) printed in SPBGMA's annual publication along with information about their band. Groups who join should immediately submit a good quality, black and white photo to the address below. **Any or all of the above mentioned instruments must appear in the group photo submitted.** NOTICE: The above mandatory combinations mentioned in section (C) will be required in band contests only. Any combinations of these six basic instruments may be accepted in all other programs. \$60.00 Annual Membership for all groups outside USA.

(H) Individual patron membership is \$15.00 per year; Foreign \$35.00. All members will receive the Festival Guide Band Directory and quarterly *Bluegrass Music News*. (The two bulk mailing dates for your festival guide will be late February and April of each year).

(I) Annual Promoters membership is \$50.00 per year, which includes a 1/4 page ad in the SPBGMA Annual Festival Guide. If members wish a larger ad instead of the above, please deduct \$30.00 off the SPBGMA ad rates. The above will apply to the current Bluegrass Music News ad rates. For ad rates contact SPBGMA (address below).

Members, including band leaders and promoters, will receive a copy of the annual festival guide that is mailed out in February of each year.

(J) To encourage the support of the various Bluegrass publications and associations.

All membership dues must be paid to SPBGMA no later than December of each year to insure that your band and festival will be included in the following year's publication. For further information contact:

**Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America**  
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**[www.spbgma.com](http://www.spbgma.com)**