

Harvest

Continued from Page 1E
Limits [Music Festival] two weeks ago, everybody was in their own niche and nobody was open to bringing anybody in. Here, everyone wants to talk to you."

It's also mandolin/fiddle player Jake Joliff's first time at Harvest, even though the festival bears the name of the band (Yonder Mountain) that he recently joined. "It's one of the best festivals I've ever been to... I really like the mix of music here," he said. "It's very peripherally bluegrass."

What the 2014 Harvest Fest wasn't mud and tornado warnings (a la last year); long portable toilet lines and panic-inducing crowds (a la Waka and every other gigantic music fest); unabashed nudity, drug-zombies and disdainful hipsters.

What it was: beautiful (at times sweltering) sunny days and cool, stary nights; stilt-walkers, silk-dancers and Cirque du Soleil-style performances (compliments of Little Rock's ReCreation Studios); bundled babies in hand-pulled wagons and children decorating hula hoops; bearded hillbillies subtly hawking their plastic bottles of Mountain Spring "water"; late-night campsite concerts featuring headlining musicians (not to name-drop, ahem Yondermountainstringband); after-parties in attendance; grating pop-up lounges, strung with twinkly lights and fueled by fiddles, washboards and a lone reggae singer with an acoustic guitar; killer blues set after killer pop set after killer funk set after killer soul set, all closed down by killer party-rock (Andy Frasco & the U.N., who brought onstage maybe every festival artist still hanging around).

Of those killer sets, here are our top six.

THE CHOCOLATE DROPS
"The Chocolate Drops were wonderful, very tight," Massey said.
The Carolina Chocolate Drops are a string quartet

Composer

Continued from Page 1E
Corigliano's compositions have won a Pulitzer Prize, four Grammy Awards and an Academy Award. He has composed three symphonies, an opera (*The Ghosts of Versailles*) and a number of concertos and pieces for solo instruments and orchestra — most notably, the *The Red Violin Concerto*, which he developed for violinist Joshua Bell from the themes of his Oscar-winning film score.

On Thursday morning, Corigliano will make a few remarks and answer questions at a welcoming ceremony at which the Arkansas Symphony's Rockefeller String Quartet will play his *String Quartet No. 1*. At 7:30, various musicians and ensembles will perform an all-Corigliano

Bluegrass

Continued from Page 1E
It added bluegrass festivals in March and November, stretching the music season on both ends of the calendar. Musicians perform at the Ozark Folk Center State Park, dedicated to preserving and promoting the region's heritage.

Moreover, during most of the year, Mountain View is one giant jam stage, and its community is one big band. At any hour, day or night, locals congregate on storefront porches, in park pavilions and outside the Stone County Courthouse to pick "n' strum 'n' sing 'n' dance."

"If you put a fence up and didn't let tourists in," said Scott Pool, who owns Mountain View Music store with his wife, Shay, "they'd still be playing music."

Residents drive around with instruments in their pickups — everyday tools.
"Mountain View is sort of in its own world. We live in a time capsule," said Clancey Ferguson, a 16-year-old fiddler and singer who grew up here. "The music stays pure."

LOOKING FOR ROOTS
When I attended the Mountain View Bluegrass Festival in November 2013, I was on a mission to unlock secrets tucked inside a heavy black case that rested in the trunk of my rental car.

For more than a decade, I

founded in North Carolina in 2005 and dedicated to reclaiming black America's musical history — a mission that goes far beyond gospel and blues. The lineup has changed a few times, and Rhiannon Giddens, who studied opera at Oberlin College, is the only member remaining from the 2010 Grammy-winning incarnation. But the Chocolate Drops remain powerful and smart. They played Odetta, Fats Waller and Blind Willie Johnson. They played the bluegrass tune "Black Annie," in tribute to Joe Thompson, a fiddler who mentored Giddens before his death at 93, in 2012.

They played the early-1800s "Snowden's Jig," a mysterious, Arabian-sounding piece created by black musicians from Ohio, with a dark beat provided by Rowan Corbett's clacking bones and Hubby Jenkins' hollow box, while Giddens on violin and Malcolm Parson on cello teased out a serpentine melody.

They delivered crowd favorites "Cornbread and Butterbeans" and a sexy rendition of Blu Cantrell's "Hit 'Em Up Style." Then, just to prove that they can, they played an original — "Come Love Come," inspired by a Civil War novel that Giddens read, with rhythms that taunt and warn, depicting freedom as an alluring but unpredictable lover.

They even covered Patsy Cline and Hank Williams, because this was that kind of crowd.

As they played, they educated. Before belting out a Gaelic tune, misty and deep with ominous, spacious drums, Giddens talked about how in the 1700s North Carolina had the largest diaspora of Scottish people, which meant there were black Gaelic speakers.

Jenkins had a catchphrase for the evening: "If you don't know what I'm talking about, Google it."

THE OH HELLO'S
As 13 musicians trotted off the main stage, set against tall trees awash in burgundy and orange strobes, Kim Doughy, 28, of Little Rock turned to her

program, followed by a reception. Admission is free; call (501) 450-1249.

Friday he'll address Hendrix music appreciation, history and theory students and hold forth at a composer workshop and forum. He'll work with college and high school ensembles at Saturday morning's Wildwood Academy session.

And he'll close out his visit Nov. 11 with an ASO River Rhapsodies chamber concert, 7 p.m. at the Clinton Presidential Center, the Rockefeller Quartet will once again play his *String Quartet No. 1*.

A pair of weekend concerts — 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday at the Maumelle Performing Arts Center, 100 Victory Lane, Maumelle — will reunite Corigliano with guitarist Sharon Isbin, who will perform *Troubadours — Variations for*

Mountain View Bluegrass Festival
Thursday-Saturday, Ozark Folk Center State Park, 1032 Park Ave., Mountain View

Admission: three-day pass is \$65; Thursday night gospel show is \$20; all-day Friday or Saturday passes are \$25. No credit cards accepted; advance purchase suggested.
(870) 269-2704; (870) 269-2542
mountainview-bluegrass.com

have owned — note the distinction from "played" — a mandolin. Various teachers have taught me nursery rhymes and classic rock tunes with mandolin parts, such as the Grateful Dead's "Ripple" and REM's "Losing My Religion." My playlist also includes radio hits (Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer," Ceo Lo Green's "Forever Your

But I'd never studied the mandolin's bluegrass roots or performed the songs it was designed to sing — songs the Ozarks have been crooning for ages. So I planned to make a long-overdue introduction: Mandolin, meet your folk.

I arrived on the Wednesday evening before the three-day festival.

In the darkness, I knocked on the front door of Mulber-



Fire dancers Erica Gurley (left) and Rebeka Poland, performers with Little Rock's ReCreation Studios, participate in one of the troupe's nightly Harvest Fest circuses.

friends, flushed and grinning. "I love them," she said reverently.
A baroque pop-folk outfit from 'Texas, the Oh Hello's are the brainchild of siblings Maggie and Tyler Heath, and the setup is akin to a music shop fire sale, with two full drum kits, guitars, banjos, violins, tambourines, even an accordion. Onstage, 52 limbs skip, clap, strum, bang and stomp, creating a magnificent thunder, followed by a celestial downpour (of music notes rather than raindrops).

FOLEY'S VAN
"Y'all were my favorite discovery at Harvest this year!" wrote Jennifer Spears of Louisiana, on Fayetteville-based Foley's Van's Facebook page. The normally six-piece band added the blissed-out Washboard and borrowed Mouth guitarist Lucas Parker for an epic late-night set, with hundreds of fans spilling out of the tiny Roost tent that mostly hosted hyper-local bands. At first there were eight people onstage, although at one time there may have been as many as 13, including a trumpet player, a djembe (hand drum) player and a second mandolin player from other bands, as well as Andy Frasco, who pranced about aping musicians.

The entire show was high-energy progressive bluegrass, incorporating banjo and guitar jams (Chris Crovella and John Henry Holthus), slide mandolin (Allen Swearingen), wide-legged punk-punk

SAMANTHA FISH
"These guys crushed it. Who are these guys?" asked Brian Erdmann, 46, of Alaska. He had just witnessed Samantha Fish, a 25-year-old from Kansas City, Mo., deliver gut-wrenching, soul-shaking, face-scrunching blues. Her perpetually agonized expression belayed her age as her hand glided the neck of her guitar, then jerked in retreat,

Guitar and Chamber Orchestra. Ludwig van Beethoven: *Symphony No. 5* in c minor, op.67. Concert Conversations, open to all ticket holders, one hour before "curtain."

Arkansas Symphony Masterworks Concerts
7:30 p.m. Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday, Maumelle Performing Arts Center, 100 Victory Lane, Maumelle. Sharon Isbin, guitar. Philip Mann, conductor. John Corigliano: "Three Hallucinations" from his score for *Altered States*; *Troubadours — Variations for Guitar and Chamber*

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And it will also reunite him with ASO Music Director Philip Mann, with whom he worked in Sydney, Australia, in September 2009 while Mann was putting together the world premiere of a new small chamber version (for voice and sextet) of Corigliano's *Mr. Tambourine Man*, a collection of seven Bob Dylan song texts.
Corigliano said in a note following the performance (which Mann has posted on his website, conductormann.com), "Philip Mann is an extraordinarily gifted conductor. I have seen and heard him prepare and perform a very difficult work of mine in Sydney, and cannot think of anyone who could have done a better job."
"What I found amazing

warm months but scatter when the mercury drops.
"The talent here is ridiculous," said one resident. "I can't even listen as good as they play."

NEXT GENERATION
Children are key to Mountain View's survival.

To keep the next generation involved and inspired, the town started a Music Roots program in the 1990s. Thanks to grants and donations, students in grades four through eight who express interest in folk music will receive the instrument of their choice and free weekly lessons. More than 1,000 children have taken advantage, including home-schooled children.

"Mountain View's main mission is to pass along the traditions and not let them die," said Ferguson, a Music Roots recipient who leads her own band. "My big dream is to play the Grand Ole Opry. Then again, that's every kid's dream."
On Friday morning at Mountain View Middle School, fifth-graders assembled for their first lesson of the day.

"Strum. Change to an A, now go back to your D," said Mike Sutter from the front of the room. Three volunteers milled around the desks, pausing here and there with tips.

The dozen or so kids produced a lively, slightly wobbly "The Ain't No Bugs on Me." Their fingers shifted from chord to chord while they belted out the verses.

Every weekend, the Jimmy Driftwood Barn hosts a spirited variety show of local talent. Each performer plays two songs, but other musicians often pile onto the stage as backup and added chaos. The rustic venue — pews for seats, year-round Christmas lights, a circulating basket for donations — honors the Arkansas-born folk singer, songwriter and fiddler who died in 1998.

Driftwood wrote such hits as "The Battle of New Orleans" and "Tennessee Stud," won a Grammy and performed at Carnegie Hall and the Grand Ole Opry. In the 1960s, he returned to Stone County and founded the Rackensack Folklore Society in Mountain View and later the folk festival. He was also a creative force behind the folk center, until clashing visions with other planners ended his involvement.

Many of the performers at the barn are mainstays of Mountain View, including little Mary Parker. The now-9-year-old prodigy could spark an electric storm with her fierce fiddling. At Jimmy's and around town, she jams with musicians eight times her age. They shake their heads in awe and admiration.

turing (Parker), a bobble-headed drummer-guitarist (Chris Jerry), a wild-swinging upright bassist (Patrick Calaway) and a fiddler on hyper-drive (Brandon King), who climbed apprehensively atop the shoulders of a giant gorilla.

DIRTFOOT
It was only Friday morning, but Liberty Chandler of Mountain View — at 12, a Harvest Fest veteran — was already talking about Saturday morning's Chompdown. "Dancing to Dirtfoot at Chompdown, that's the best part," she said.

Began at Wakarusa in 2007, Chompdown is a potluck (or in many cases, free) breakfast for anyone who happens to wander into the early-morning party, held at the RV campground, which offers electricity for amps and half a dozen coffee pots. And since the beginning, Dirtfoot has played Chompdown.

This Harvest, the event drew about 200 and spawned a dance party rivaled only by the one accompanying Dirtfoot's third set, 16 hours later, at the spookiest, almost claustrophobic Backwoods stage.

It was the perfect setting for Dirtfoot's defiant, troubling, pirate music, about rum, the devil and Amella Earhart.

In the brilliant child of morning and in the inky damp of night, the boys from Shreveport gave us autumn, that majestic contradiction of abundance and death, playing the season as it begs to be played.

BLACKFOOT GYPSIES
Hailing from Nashville, Tenn., the four-man Blackfoot Gypsies are part rockabilly, part blues and part twang-infused British Invasion. (Heck, frontman/guitarist Matthew Paige was even dressed like the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper.)

"I'd heard of them, but never seen them," said Andrew Theford, 25, also of Nashville. "They blew me away. And they were a change from the folk, blue-grassy thing."

Because the Gypsies played at the same time as festival favorites Lettuce, there

writing for a highly idiomatic instrument that I didn't fully understand were augmented by my dislike of most 'idiomatic' guitar music, as well as my fear of writing a concerto for an inherently delicate instrument."

He also worried that "anything you write for the guitar would sound Spanish, and that locks you in."

But Isbin persisted. She deluged Corigliano with various ideas until she presented him with the idea of troubadours, 11th-13th-century French poet-musicians, and particularly of celebrated female troubadours.
That led Corigliano to start thinking along the lines of "serenading and of song."
"When she gave me that idea, I said, 'That's it! That's a great way of getting away from the Spanish guitar concerto,'" he says.

For her first song that night, she roused the crowd with "Stinky's Blues." She invited the audience to come up and dance. Her younger brother, Gordon, hopped on stage like a cricket and shimmed in his pint-size cowboy boots.

"Now, I am going to play some singing songs," she said in a voice as sweet as buttered scotch. She opened her kewpie-doll mouth to sing "You Are My Sunshine." The crowd released a communal "awwwww."

MUSIC

MOVING ON

On Sunday morning, the streets were deserted, the music silenced. Families were filing into church. At the Rainbow Cafe, diners dressed in camouflage hunched over eggs and sausage, bulking up for the first weekend of deer hunting season.

I was not ready to let go. I grabbed my mandolin and strolled to the courthouse square. I sat on a bench, selected a sheet of music and played D, A, D. A woman approached from across the street. I picked louder, hoping that she would join me. Instead, she pulled out a camera, snapped a picture of the stone building and drove off. I don't think I was in her frame.

Her shot missed an important moment: me carrying on an old music tradition, doing my part to help preserve a cherished heritage. I strummed the chords of a familiar classic and sang the accompanying lyrics, bugs and all.

only about a dozen people at the show. But the Gypsies were undaunted. Paige was all swagger and shimmy. He arched his back, sank to his knees, launched air-splits and cocooned, then flung his guitar, which bounced at the end of his wiry arms like a manic yo-yo, personifying the festival's unofficial theme, thus dubbed in a Friday afternoon Frasco show: "Let's be young and have fun forever."

MORE MEMORABLE MOMENTS
In their first of three official sets, Yonder Mountain thrilled the nerds by covering Dolly Parton's "Jolene." The next night, the band thrilled the rest of the nerds by opening with the *Game of Thrones* theme music.

Joe Winters of The Steel Wheels geeked out during The Jayhawks set, at one point urging them to "please, please play 'Tampa to Tulsa.'" And even though they couldn't have heard him, amazingly, the next song was "Tampa to Tulsa."

During a soulful Paper Bird performance, Sage Cook of Elephant Revival danced in the audience with a mystery lady in a Marilyn Monroe dress. And this was some serious dancing — correct hand placement, spinning and footwork. (Someone's had lessons.)

Trampled by Turtles performed a sped-up, bluegrass cover of Arcade Fire's "Rebellion," and thousands of people boogied to what might be one of indie pop's most un-boogie-able songs.

And that was it. After the final Frasco show, the hodgepodge of performers hopped around backstage, still flying on adrenaline as they made frenzied party plans. But most of them landed at subdued, wee-Sunday-morning campsite lounges, where long-empty flasks mocked and fires petered out with daybreak.

Soon the music lovers would rouse, uncurling themselves from downy wombs, collapsing flimsy shelters and promising their neighbors they'd meet again next year on the mountain.

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Television

48th Annual CMA Awards is country's night to shine.

PAGE 2E

ARKANSAS ONLINE www.arkansasonline.com

WHAT'S IN A DAME



JENNIFER CHRISTMAN

Hobbies in clink link four

Ana, age 29, has a lot in common with her husband.

She works the graveyard shift clerking at a convenience store.

And he's serving a life sentence for sending a clerk to the grave while robbing one.

Ana, married for one year to a convicted murderer who has served 27 years, is one of four main cast members of Lifetime's *Prison Wives Club* (9 p.m. Tuesday; online at tinyurl.com/q2g34cr). The Seattle-based reality show about women whose significant others are in the slammer (not to be confused with Investigation Discovery's *Prison Wives* and VH1's *Mob Wives*) debuted last week.

While some cast members were romantically linked to their prison-bound partners prior to their doing time, Ana sought out a match via pen pal site writeprisoner.com. "He was a lifer," she says with a nervous giggle. "I never have to worry about him coming out and killing me."

Or does she? A law change makes her husband, arrested as a juvenile, eligible for re-sentencing and release.

Another concern for Ana: In forming her family that her husband isn't a prison guard, but rather an inmate (hey, she didn't lie about the "where" part). Of course they'll probably put it together when they sign the release to be filmed for a show called *Prison Wives Club*.

Ana's friend LaQuisha, herself married to a man sentenced to 75 years for murder, loosely organizes a support group of other women in the same situation who can relate to, say, the agony of not sleeping with their husbands.

"It kills me that I can't have sex with him," LaQuisha, 33, says in the worst choice of words.

LaQuisha says she was "booty buddies" with her husband back in school and reconnected with him via social media (What? One can Facebook in prison?). Only she'd soon realize dating him would require indefinite visits to his place. Their marriage of one year was sealed in a 30-minute prison ceremony and still hasn't been consummated.

They attempt to keep the love alive during supervised, 30-minute Skype-like ipay.com ("Your Home for Corrections Services") calls, though, LaQuisha says, "It's expensive, and it's censored. You have to walk a fine line so you're not cut off." Also interrupting them is her young daughter from her previous marriage with a seemingly normal, nice, educated — and most notably free — man.

The other two cast members are Jhemini, 25, and Kate, 28, both of whom are married to men serving

See DAME on Page 3E

MUSIC

Composer of the year is the star of the week

ERIC E. HARRISON
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

John Corigliano will have a pretty full plate for the next week, between the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, for whom he is the 2014-15 composer of the year, and Hendrix College, where he'll be an artist in residence.

Perhaps a bit too full, he says. "They've added a [Saturday morning] session at the Wildwood Academy of Music, and that fills up any spare second I could have had to breathe," he explains.

Corigliano, 76, and a lifelong resident of New York, says every "conductor of the year" gig is different, but "I always ask them for a rest period because I'm getting on in years and you can only do too much."

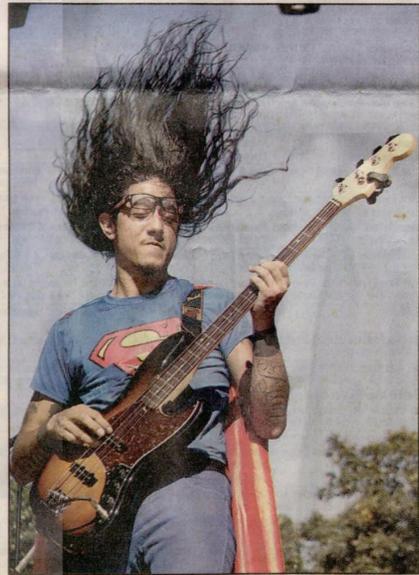
See COMPOSER on Page 6E

STYLE



The Oh Hello's of Texas employ philosophical lyrics set against a wild, elemental sound that borrows from pop, folk and even punk.

In tune



Steve "Supa Man" Castillo of Los Angeles, bass player for Andy Frasco and the U.N., says his super talent is making people dance.

Harvest Music Festival lineup had it covered, whether it's bluegrass, folk or blues

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CHEREE FRANCO
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

ZARK — If June's Wakarusa music festival is a purple-dreathed starlet whirling barefoot in the grass, a flash of body paint, bikini bottoms and chemical-haze, October's Yonder Mountain String Band's Harvest Music Festival is her well-studied older sister, maxi-skirt swaying to the beat, moonshine rounding the campfire and pungent smoke rising from the crowd.

Except that Harvest Fest is two years younger (and much less-hyped on social media) than Waka, and both of these Mulberry Mountain events are multi-tiered and more complex than those "festy" cynics might admit.
Waka is known for electronic dance

and jam bands, while Harvest is noted for roots and old-time acts. But actually, they both deal in punk, funk, reggae and blues, sometimes in a single set. This year's Harvest featured roughly 90

sets and 78 bands (nearly half of which are fronted by women, a welcome news flash in the festival scene), which means that someone arriving at noon on Thursday (Oct. 16) when the music officially started, and staying till the wee-morning hours of Sunday, when it ended, could swing about 25 complete sets. And while Waka draws crowds of 23,000 for four days running, and Harvest Fest peaks at under a third of that, many attendees swear

that Harvest is the best festival — not just on Mulberry Mountain, but anywhere.

"If I had to go to one festival throughout the year, Harvest would be it," said Jan Massey, 60, of Missouri. "Waka's gotten too big. The young, young people that party too hard are a drain. Harvest is full of loving, generous people."

This is 26-year-old Missourian Tom Herbig's first Harvest, but he said he'll never miss it again: "Everyone is so helpful and loving and giving. ... When I went to Austin City

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