

# George Shuffler & Laura Boosinger



An inspiring and educational program of music and stories from two of North Carolina's finest traditional musicians.

## George Shuffler-North Carolina Guitar Great

There are many guitar giants. But there are few original guitar styles. Maybelle Carter, of the Original Carter Family, set the bar for all aspiring acoustic guitarists. Her guitar style became the basis for all country lead guitar playing to follow. George Shuffler, from Valdese, North Carolina, found that the simple melody line used by Maybelle was not enough to back-up the duet singing of Ralph and Carter Stanley. Often it was George's guitar alone that filled the holes in the musical texture. Like so many other rural country musicians, George came from a family that made a living off the land and later in a small mill town. His story is one of ingenuity and perseverance.

Traditional folk artist, Laura Boosinger, presents George Shuffler in a program of North Carolina music and heritage. Through real life stories, George inspires young people to follow their dreams, and reminds all of us of the important cultural treasures that we have inherited here in North Carolina.

Each program will include George's innovative "cross-picking" guitar style and Laura's clawhammer banjo playing featured on a variety of pieces including folk songs, hymns and Bluegrass standards. George Shuffler stands along with such Bluegrass greats as Bill Monroe and The Stanley Brothers as one of the pioneers of a classic style of American music.



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or e-mail her at [lboosinger@prodigy.net](mailto:lboosinger@prodigy.net).

# George Shuffler

There are many guitar giants. Those few considered bonafide acoustic guitar styles can probably be counted on the fingers of one's right hand. Perhaps none has been more influential in traditional bluegrass circles than George Shuffler of Burke County, North Carolina born George Saunders Shuffler April 11, 1925 into a musical family. George became totally intrigued with the guitar from the age of ten, when he learned his first chords from a friend who worked with his dad in the local cotton mill. George and his mother took care of the farming, and at night he would play until he fell asleep. His love of music was nurtured in church, where he learned to read shaped notes during church singing schools.

George toured with various groups, including Jim and Jesse, and the rube comic team of Mustard and Gravy, but on December 28, 1950, he received a call from Carter Stanley, and accepted Carter's offer to work with them. That association lasted for more than 20 years, and it was during this time that his development of the unique crosspicking guitar style came to fruition. George's style entails picking downstrokes on two strings and upstrokes on one. It is difficult to master and extremely hard to duplicate. Moreover, his famous "walking:" bass fiddle lines, first recorded with the Stanleys in 1952, inspired many later prominent basses. Although he started with the Stanleys as a bass player, he later made the switch to guitar. Shuffler decided "to develop a style that would fit their singing and be a full backup instead of just single string picking."

During his tenure in bluegrass music, he received much recognition for his work both on acoustic guitar and upright bass. He was voted favorite bassist in Bluegrass Unlimited's 1967 worldwide Reader Poll. In 1990 he responded to a number of requests to do a recording of his crosspicking guitar style. Soon after its release, it was made a part of the permanent collections of the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

# Laura Boosinger

Laura Boosinger is an award-winning performer and recording artist whose primary focus is the interpretation of traditional music from the Southern Appalachian region. Laura's concerts offer a step back to a simpler time, awakening memories for the old and gently instilling important cultural lessons for the young. Her performances have included The Tennessee Homecoming at The Museum of Appalachia, MERLEFEST and Greensboro's CITYSTAGES.

Laura's recording "My Carolina Home," featured on folk programs across the nation, has received consistently glowing reviews. Her latest recording "Down the Road" is a collection of songs from many of her musical heroes and features some of Nashville's finest, including Stuart Duncan, John and Jamie Hartford, Buddy Spicher, Aubrey Haynie, Mark Howard and Roy Huskey, Jr.

