



## A History of the Middle Spunk Creek Boys

The Middle Spunk Creek Boys bluegrass band was formed in 1968 by Alan Jesperson (guitar), Ron Colby (banjo) and C. J. (Craig) Anderson (mandolin). The Boys' first performance was at an open stage at the famous 10 O'Clock Scholar Coffeehouse.

Rudy Darling was the first newcomer to join, adding fiddle to the group. Craig left to be a private detective, and was replaced on mandolin John Bellville. Steve Block joined on bass. John had to quit to complete his schooling. Ron Colby departed, to be replaced by Al Struthers.

Steve Block moved on and Jerry Flynn took his place on the bass. Peter Ostroushko joined on mandolin. After Peter left, the Boys recorded their first album "The Middle Spunk Creek Boys," recorded live in 1976 at the Walker Art Center.

John Niemann joined, initially to play mandolin, although he is about one of the best fiddle players ever anywhere. Rudy moved to California. Mark Briere joined on mandolin. Al Struthers left and was replaced on the banjo by Pete Anderson.

John moved (temporarily) to Alaska. Mark and Pete also quit, to be replaced by John Bellville on mandolin and fiddle, and Jim Tordoff on banjo. Andy Kozak added his Dobro to the band. In 1983, John Bellville left for parts far away, to be replaced on mandolin and fiddle by Bruce Jaeger. Jim Tordoff was replaced by Barry St. Mane on banjo. When Barry briefly moved to Colorado. Tom Nechville filled in for a year or so until Barry decided he liked it here better and moved back. This was in 1993, when we recorded "I'm With the Band."

Andy left, and the multi-way-too-talented Mark Kreitzer joined, initially on fiddle. When Barry left, Mark added banjo to his fiddle (and guitar) duties.

*Continued on reverse...*

### The Middle Spunk Creek Boys are:

**Alan Jesperson** (guitar, vocals). Alan is the founding father of the Creek Boys.

**Bruce Jaeger** (mandolin, fiddle, vocals). Bruce sings any part from bass to tenor, and has written many songs that are now part of the MSCB repertoire.

**Jim Tordoff** (banjo). We're thrilled to report that ace banjoist Jim Tordoff is back with the band!

**Ken Sherman** (fiddle, vocals). Ken is a magic music fiddle picker and is nearly uncontrollable, so he fits in just fine. He has ideas he hasn't even thought of yet.

**Patti Gilman** (bass, vocals). A terrific, slap-happy bassist and songwriter, Patti is the first non-boy Boy in the band's 40+-year history. Well worth the wait!



**Booking:**

**Alan Jesperson**  
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**That Interweb Thing:** <http://www.msccb.com>

# The MIDDLE SPUNK CREEK BOYS

...History continued



In 1998-1999 we recorded our third album, “No One Else.” Of the 13 songs, nine are originals (eight by Mark). The national magazine *Bluegrass Unlimited* praised it very highly, giving it a “Strong Recommendation.”

In 2000 we recorded our fourth album, “Table for One.” Like its predecessor, it’s largely original material, with some selected songs by from the outside world. For this album, we played around with styles a bit more, using old-timey “frailed” banjo on two cuts, and a bodhran (Irish drum) on one cut.

In 2001, Jerry Flynn decided that 27 years was enough, and retired from the band. Mark drafted his classically-trained brother Chuck to play the bass.

In 2002, the Boys ignored decades of fan pleading and released their first all-Gospel album, “A House of Gold.” It features Gospel songs from the “standard” bluegrass Gospel repertoire, plus two locally-crafted songs, “Alone With the Lord” by Leo Rosenstein and “Preachin’ to Myself” by the first MSCB banjo player, Ron Colby.

In 2004 the band held its 35th Anniversary concert, with appearances by almost everyone who’d been a member. Soon after, we released a DVD of the entire concert. It was videotaped by a single camera (with the sound off the mixing board) by our friend and unofficial band documenter, the late Larry Blokzyl. In 2005, banjoist extraordinaire Jim Tordoff rejoined the group, making it five-piece again.

In 2007 the Middle Spunk Creek Boys were inducted into the **Minnesota Rock and Country Hall of Fame**. Later that year, fiddler Ken Sherman started sitting in with the band while Bruce was on sabbatical.

In 2008, Mark and Chuck Kreitzer left the band. Bruce was able to return, Ken Sherman became an Official Member, and the marvelous bass player and songwriter Patti Gilman joined.

## Recordings



### “A House of Gold”

*The Middle Spunk Creek Boys’ first all-Gospel CD! Fans had begged the band for years for a Bluegrass Gospel album, and in 2002 finally got their wish!*

*Far more of a vocal workout than a string-pickers’ fete, the disc accomplishes the sometimes difficult task of making Sunday-morning music sound as fun and energetic as Saturday-night fare.*  
Chris Riemenschneider © 2002 Minneapolis Star/Tribune



### “Table for One”

*Recorded in 2000, this CD features lots of original songsdone in that Middle Spunk style.*

*Table for One is a great album!*  
Frank Blissett, WLSO-FM

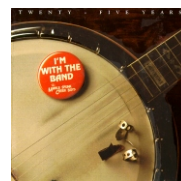
*“Great album, boys.”*  
Adam Granger, Inside Bluegrass



### “No One Else”

*A critically-acclaimed album with mostly original songs by Mark Kreitzer. (Recorded in 1999.)*

*“Strong Recommendation”*  
*Bluegrass Unlimited Magazine*



### “I’m With the Band”

*This was recorded as part of our 25th anniversary celebrations, and includes most of the musicians who had been part of the band up through 1993. Lots of variety!*



### “Middle Spunk Creek Boys”

*The Middle Spunk Creek Boys’ first album, recorded live at the Walker Art Center in 1976. Originally released on vinyl, we’ve converted it to CD for new audiences.*

“A Tantalizing presentation of imaginative bluegrass...” *Bluegrass Unlimited*

“Great listening...” *Bluegrass Unlimited*

“Very smooth and professional, good listening!” *Bluegrass World*



Minnesota Music Awards