

Gary's Jammandments*

I. THOU SHALT TUNE THY INSTRUMENT.

If people are giving you sour looks, tune that thing!

II. THOU SHALT KEEP STEADY RHYTHM.

Watch the fiddle player's foot...whatever you do, don't watch the banjo pickers' feet!

III. THOU SHALT TAKE TURNS CHOOSING SONGS.

Announce the key. Vocalists always get to pick the key for their songs---even if it's in F!

If no one knows the song, pick another 'un.

IV. THOU SHALT NOT SPEED.

Start songs at reasonable tempos.

Don't be afraid to say, "Can we slow down?"

V. THOU SHALT SIGNAL WHO HAS THE SOLO.

Make eye contact with others. Give everyone a chance to play the lead, unless they shake their head "No".

VI. THOU SHALT LISTEN TO OTHERS.

If you can't hear the lead, then YOU are playing too loudly.

VII. THOU SHALT WELCOME OTHERS.

Include everyone in the jam.

Yes, even trumpets, tubas and didgereedoes.

VIII. THOU SHALT NOT "SHOWBOAT"

A jam is a place for people to make music TOGETHER. Don't use it to show off.

If you think you're better than everyone else...you're in the wrong place.

IX. THOU SHALT TRY NEW MATERIAL.

If you don't know the tune, listen to it a couple times before jumping in.

X. THOU SHALT BE CONSIDERATE OF ALL PLAYERS.

Make ALL players welcome.

Even if seven banjos and five bass players show up...deal with it!

It's not about anyONE....it's about having musical FUN!

**This adaptation of the famous "Ten Jammandments" is a memorial to our wonderful, open-minded and good-humored friend, Gary Elder. Rest in peace, Gary. We will always smile and think of you when the trumpet players arrive at our bluegrass jams...*