

# NO SPEED LIMIT

SWEET VIRGINIA



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ARHOLLE 521

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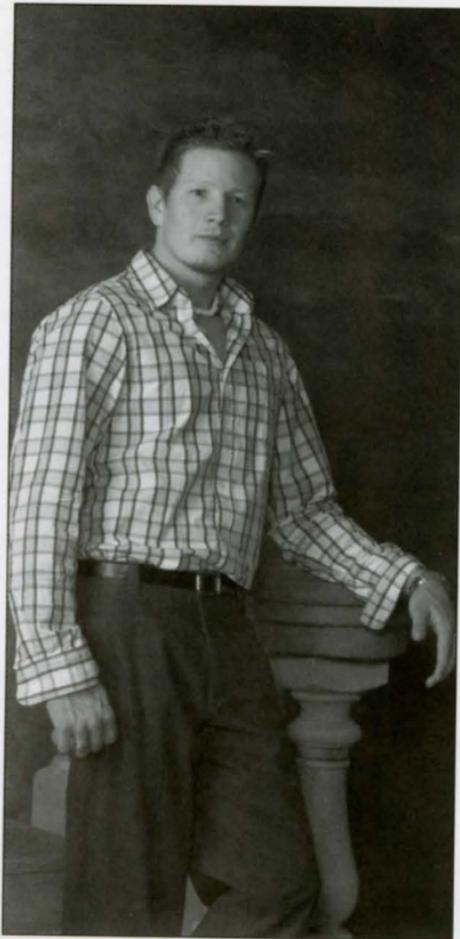
1. **SWEET VIRGINIA** (Randal Eller)  
(Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  2. **BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAIN HOME**  
(P.D.) (arr. by Steve Barr – Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  3. **NEW EAST VIRGINIA BLUES**  
(arr. by Ryan Blevins) (Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  4. **BORN A RAMBLER** (Steve Barr)  
(Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  5. **HENRY BOX BROWN** (Steve Barr)  
(Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  6. **WHIPLASH** (Josh Pickett)  
(instrumental) (Tradition Music Co. & Pickett Music Co.)
  7. **BLUE NIGHT** (Kirk McGee)
  8. **WAYFARING STRANGER** (P.D.)  
(arr. by Amber Collins & Josh Pickett – Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  9. **HOMETOWN** (Steve Barr)  
(Tradition Music Co. & Mountain Heritage Music Co.)
  10. **BLUEGRASS LULLABY** (Steve Barr)  
(Tradition Music Co. & Mountain Heritage Music Co.)
  11. **JESUS IS ALIVE AND WELL**  
(Terry Breedlove) (Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
  12. **GRAYSON COUNTY BLUES** (Steve Barr)  
(Tradition Music Co. & Mountain Heritage Music Co.)
  13. **THERE'S YOU** (Josh Pickett) (Tradition Music Co. & Pickett Music Co.)
  14. **QUECREEK** (Mine) (Julie Ann Miller)
  15. **RUBY** (Are You Mad At Your Man)  
(Cynthia Mae "Cousin Emmy" Carver)
- AMBER COLLINS** – vocals  
**STEVE BARR** – banjo  
**JOSH PICKETT** – guitar & vocals  
**RYAN BLEVINS** – mandolin & vocals  
**JACOB ELLER** – bass
- Produced by Chris Strachwitz, Joe Wilson,  
& No Speed Limit  
Recorded live at the Blue Ridge Music  
Center's small indoor theatre off the Blue  
Ridge Parkway near Galax, VA  
Engineered, mixed and mastered by David  
McLaughlin (Shepherd Productions –  
Winchester, VA)  
All photos by Sandy Worrell / Delp's  
Photography – Galax, VA,  
[www.delpsp photography.com](http://www.delpsp photography.com)  
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It was at the National Folk Festival in Richmond, VA that I encountered this dynamic, young, talented band of musicians from the western part of Virginia with powerhouse teenager, Amber Collins as lead singer. When she belted out Cousin Emmy's "Ruby" I felt that traditional country music was indeed alive and well in that part of the country. Joe Wilson of the NCTA (National Council for the Traditional Arts) in Washington, D.C., producer of this fine festival, who had known Steve since childhood, introduced me to the band. I was also impressed by the wonderful mix of original songs, contributed by several members of the band, and traditional material arranged in unique ways. All band members seemed deeply steeped in the marvelous local traditions – and their songs reflected the same good taste, most of them from the pen of banjo player, Steve Barr.

Although the members of No Speed Limit are still very young, they are totally devoted and determined to make music their careers. They are also very

conscientious and disciplined and were able to make this recording at a "live" performance with no overdubbing or other "repair" jobs that are possible in a more formal studio setting. On the morning of the first day of this two day recording session (when we also recorded the Whitetop Mountain Band – note Arhoolie CD 522) the banjo player, Steve, broke the head of his banjo. Although he struggled playing with a new head throughout the afternoon, the banjo just wouldn't stay in tune! On the second day Steve was able to borrow Sammy Shelor's banjo (he of the Lonesome River Band) who was acting as the assistant engineer. As a result the group decided to use only the selections recorded on the second day! The invited audience was rather small by that time of the evening, and so we decided to omit the applause even though it was warm and appreciative. As with many folks in that region of the country, the band members are deeply religious as you will notice from several of the songs they sing or have composed.

Banjo player and the band's main composer, **Steve Barr**, is the son of



Rebecca and Thomas Barr. I was very impressed by the many songs Steve had composed, especially by his song "Henry Box Brown" which is based on the true story of a slave who had mailed himself to freedom in Pennsylvania. Steve was born in 1975 in Galax, VA where he still makes his home today and has been playing music since he was four years old. If you call Steve on his phone you will hear a message in a delightful, heavy regional accent telling you that he is indeed thankful, glad and proud to be from Grayson County, VA. Steve has worked most of his life in his dad's fiddle shop in Galax and gives credit for all his musical abilities to the local and regional musicians of Southwest Virginia. He says: "Without them this beautiful art would no longer be here for us to enjoy." Steve is also a superb teacher of just about all string instruments, especially of children who come to his father's shop in Galax for lessons in groups of about half a dozen and he has over one hundred of them!

In 1986 Steve made his first recordings, a cassette release, featuring blue-

grass banjo classics. When he was 13, Steve traveled to Italy where he played his banjo wherever he could. Later that year he met and got to play with the master himself, Earl Scruggs. Five years later the state of Virginia sponsored Steve to play his music in France and subsequently he also appeared at a big 4th of July celebration in Switzerland. Steve credits Joe Wilson as his #1 hero who he feels taught him the importance of originality and tastefulness of music. Steve was asked to join the NCTA's "Masters of the Steel Stringed

Guitar" which toured up and down the East Coast. One of the highlights of Steve's life was just recently when No Speed Limit was asked to play at the inauguration of Virginia's new governor, Tim Kaine in 2006.

Singer **Amber Collins**, still a teenager, is from Saltville, Virginia, and is a founding member of No Speed Limit. She has been singing gospel music since she was two years old, first only in local churches, but later she toured with the Country Gospel Music Association where she was the Teenage,



Young Performer, and A capella Artist of the Year from 1998 – 2002. She was introduced to bluegrass music in 2004 at the “Saltville Jam” held in that town every Monday night. Her biggest bluegrass influences in the last year and a half have been Dan Tyminski and Russell Moore.

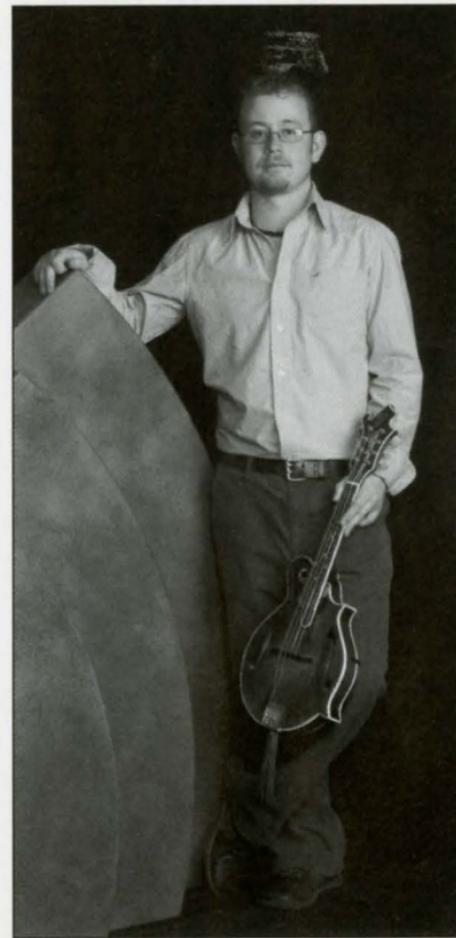
Guitarist **Josh Pickett** is from Hillsville, VA and sings harmony as well as occasional lead, as he does here on his own composition, “There’s You.” Josh became interested in music at age eleven when he heard a cousin

play at a family gathering. After getting a guitar from his parents for Christmas he has hardly let it out of his hands! He started playing professionally with the local group, Fast Forward which played mostly on week ends and cut a record called “1420 Broken Heart Avenue.” By the time Josh graduated from high school, he had several accomplishments under his belt including winning the International Guitar Championship at Merle-Fest in 2001 when he was 17. At the time he was the youngest to ever hold that title.



After that Josh went to Nashville to play music full time and toured widely with the hot bluegrass band, Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike. Josh obviously fits in well with this high energy band, No Speed Limit but he also teaches at the Surry Arts Council in Mt. Airy, N.C. as well as at Barr’s Fiddle Shop in Galax. He has over 50 students both in North Carolina and Virginia besides doing studio session work at his recording studio in Hillsville.

Mandolinist **Ryan Blevins** grew up in the small rural community of Cleghorn Valley, VA and developed a love for traditional music from his father. At age six he started to take banjo lessons from Carson Cooper, which soon led to guitar, mandolin, and fiddle. During high school, Ryan and Jacob Eller had their own rock band and both played with their fathers in the family and friends’ band, Cleghorn. After high school, Ryan attended Berea College in Kentucky and was a founding member of the Berea College Bluegrass Band along with his college mentor, Al White. With this band Ryan toured Ireland in





2004 and Japan in 2005 and had just recently returned in time for this session with No Speed Limit where his smooth vocal harmonies have added depth to the band.

Bass player **Jacob Eller** is the rock solid foundation of the band's driving rhythm. He was born into a family of traditional musicians and instrument makers. With his father, Randal Eller (who composed the title song on this CD) along with his brother Josh, Jacob played in the family band, Cleghorn for the past decade. Jacob and Josh also played in the band, Canebreak, along with Ryan Blevins. In high school he played drums with Ryan, but received a string bass for Christmas in 1997 and that ended his drum career. Jacob is also one of the original members of No Speed Limit and counts bassists Barry Bales, Jason Moore, and Mike Bub as his major musical influences.

*Chris Strachwitz – 2006  
bios based on notes from the musicians*

### 1. Sweet Virginia (Randal Eller)

Sit down here and listen to my story  
I'm a long, long way from home  
A homesick girl who came out here  
Looking for a place of my own.

I rode into town with a dream in my  
Head and hopes for the future looked strong  
But it didn't take long to realize  
I'd be better off at home.

My job ran out and so did my money  
I'm as broke as I can be  
I soon found out that back on the farm  
The dog eats better than me.

I'm sittin' right here on the side of my bed  
Can't believe I'm all alone  
Gonna swallow my pride and call my  
Mama for a one way ticket back home.

Chorus:  
Sweet Virginia, are you calling me tonight  
Sweet... Virginia  
You can make everything alright.

I'm standing in line at the railway station  
Waiting for my chance to say, "Give me a one  
Way ticket towards Old Dominion  
(Cause I) won't last another day."  
I'm sittin' on the train trying to be  
Patient, my feet just won't sit still  
By this time tomorrow I'll be back home  
Eating Mama's home cooked meals.

Chorus

### 2. Blue Ridge Mountain Home (PD)

### 3. New East Virginia Blues

(PD, arr. by Ryan Blevins)

I was born in East Virginia, North Carolina I did go  
There I met a fair young maiden, name and age I  
did not know  
Name and age I did not know.

Oh her hair was dark and curly,  
and her cheeks were rosy red  
On her breasts she wore white lilies,  
where I longed to lay my head  
Where I longed to lay my head.

I don't want your greenback dollars,  
I don't want your watch and chain  
All I want is your heart darling  
Say you'll take me back again  
Say you'll take me back again.

The ocean's deep and I can't wade it  
And I have no wings to fly  
I'll just get me a blue-eyed boatman  
For to row me o'er the tide  
For to row me o'er the tide

I'll go back to East Virginia  
North Carolina ain't my home  
I'll go back to East Virginia  
Leave those North Carolinians alone  
Leave those North Carolinians alone.

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#### 4. **Born a Rambler** (Steve Barr)

I was raised up in a cabin, underneath that lone-  
some pine  
I was born to be a rambler, I've rambled all my life.

Roll-on, roll-on rolling down that railroad track  
Long gone, long gone, I ain't never coming back  
I was raised up in a cabin underneath that lone-  
some pine  
I was born to be a rambler, I've rambled all my life.

Late at night, I'm all alone, there's no one to call  
my own  
I'll go back to Carolina and I sing a rambling song.

Roll on ... rolling down that railroad track  
Long gone I ain't never coming back  
I was raised up in a cabin underneath that lone-  
some pine  
I was born to be a rambler, I've rambled all my life.

Roll on ... rolling down that railroad track  
Long gone, I ain't never coming back  
I was raised up in a cabin underneath that lone-  
some pine  
I was born to be a rambler, I've rambled all my life.

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#### 5. **Henry Box Brown** (Steve Barr)

All the days, of his life  
Worked so hard, just to survive  
All the nights, that he cried  
So much pain, he could not hide.

Day and night, he was told just what to do  
Forced to work, so that he could get some food

Then one night he slipped away  
So freedom could be found  
The day they mailed the man  
Henry "Box" Brown

Standing there, now on the run  
He found a friend, there in Richmond  
Placed him down, flat on his face  
Closed the box, with no escape.

Day and night, he was tossed from side to side  
In the dark, he could feel the bumpy ride  
Each hour as he rolled around  
He prayed to God out loud  
The day they mailed the man  
Henry "Box" Brown

Two feet wide and not very deep  
The box was small, he could not sleep  
Two whole days he could not eat  
His head was pressed against his feet.

Far away in a little Pennsylvania town  
The box arrived, all the folks were standing 'round  
They pulled him out, he gave a shout  
He's thankful he was found  
The day they mailed the man  
Henry "Box" Brown

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#### 6. **Whiplash** (Josh Pickett) - instrumental

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#### 7. **Blue Night** (Kirk McGee)

Blue night I got you on my mind  
Blue night I can't keep from crying  
You met someone that was new  
You quit someone that you knew was true

Blue night I got you on my mind  
Blue night, blue as I can be  
I don't know what'll become of me  
Where we used to walk I walk alone  
With an aching heart because my love is gone  
Blue night blue as I can be

Blue night I'm all alone  
I used to call you on the telephone  
I used to call and it made me glad  
Now I call and it makes you mad  
Blue night 'cause I'm all alone.

Blue night all by myself  
Since you put me on that shelf  
There's just one thing that you must know  
You're gonna reap just what you sow  
Blue night, all by myself.

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#### 8. **Wayfaring Stranger**

(PD, arr. by Amber Collins & Josh Pickett)

I'm just a poor, wayfaring stranger  
While traveling through this world below  
There is no sickness, toil or danger  
In that bright land to which I go.

I'm going there to see my mother  
I'm going there no more to roam  
I'm just going over Jordan  
I'm only going over home.

I know dark clouds may hover o'er me  
I know my path may be rough and steep  
But golden fields lie out before me  
Where weary eyes no more shall weep.

I'm going there to see my father  
I'm going there no more to roam  
I'm just going over Jordan  
I'm only going over home.

When life for me down here has ended  
And they place me 'neath the sod  
I drop this cross of self-denial  
And enter in my home with God.

I'm going there to see my Savior  
Who shed for me his precious blood  
I'm just going over Jordan  
I'm only going over home.

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#### 9. **Hometown** (Steve Barr)

I see you, you see me  
Walking down old Main Street  
Back in the place that we call home  
Come on in and gather round  
Lots of joy can be found  
I love the old hometown.

Chorus:

Then you go far away another time another place  
Missing ones that you love now that they're gone  
Making plans to return find your soul before it burns  
Take the chance all alone then you'll come back home.  
Come on in and gather round  
Lots of joy can be found  
I love the old hometown.

One by one you will find  
The folks down here they treat you kind  
You will meet new friends before you go  
Come on in it's time to eat

Fellowship and rest your feet  
Kick right back and make yourself at home.

Chorus 2X

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### 10. Bluegrass Lullaby (Steve Barr)

Way up in the mountains, where I go on  
Friday night

Play some mountain music as we dance all  
through the night

Sing a bluegrass favorite, all these things I've not  
forgot

James, he played the fiddle loud and clear, he  
played it hot.

All the years as he played the late night dance  
James was waiting for the chance

Maybe he would find romance

Then one night as he played the notes real high  
There standing in the light, with a sparkle in her eye  
Was his bluegrass lullaby...bluegrass lullaby.

Down beside the river she became his lovely wife  
All that I remember was there, right by his side  
Then I seen him kiss her on her lips for quite a while  
Live happy for ever, on her face she had a smile.

Then it changed as they drove home late one night  
His car began to fly, it landed on its side  
On his knees it was James he was all right  
But what an awful sight on the ground that lone-  
some night  
Was his bluegrass lullaby ... bluegrass lullaby.

Way up in the mountains where I go on Friday night  
Folks they stop and listen and they ask if he's all right

James he's very sad now he has lost his lovely wife  
Still he is so lonely but he's thankful for his life.

Now you know how this tragic story goes  
All these things that I have told was because I  
loved her so

Looking back, all the days they passed me by  
And still I wonder why my sister had to die  
She's my bluegrass lullaby ... bluegrass lullaby.

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### 11. Jesus is Alive and Well (Terry Breedlove)

Gather round children I've a story to tell  
I've read in the bible I remember it well  
How a Savior from heaven came down to this world  
A miracle baby, to a virgin girl.

He brought comfort to the weary, gave sight to  
the blind

He fed the hungry, turned the water to wine  
He fought every battle, He never did fail  
He still has the power, He's alive and well.

Jesus is alive and well  
He still holds the keys to heaven and hell  
He knows all about us like the woman at the well  
Jesus is alive and well.

Then came the dawning of the world's darkest day  
They came to the garden and led Him away  
Betrayed and forsaken, He died for our sins  
But there's more to my story, no this wasn't the end.

For on the third morning at the breaking of day  
Mary came to the garden where my Jesus lay  
She looked in the tomb there seeking the dead  
He was out there walking on the outside instead.

Jesus is alive and well  
He still holds the keys to heaven and hell  
Mary ran from the garden, they heard her yell  
Jesus is alive and well.

Jesus is alive and well  
He still holds the keys to heaven and hell  
The world don't believe it but I'm gonna tell  
Jesus is alive and well.

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### 12. Grayson County Blues (Steve Barr)

Over in the valley, down Elk Creek Road  
Drove up to the mountain and watched the river flow  
Mamma's in the kitchen, daddy's on the farm  
I looked down and I saw a man grab my daddy's arm.

Took off down the hillside, opened up the door  
As I landed on my feet, I raised a .44  
Then I pulled the trigger, watched him hit  
the ground  
Scared me half to death and I took off for the town.

Chorus:  
Let her roll, on down the road  
I'm on the run, nowhere to go  
No turning back, no time to lose  
I think I've got the Grayson County blues.

Rolling down the highway, nowhere to run  
Thinkin' I've just shot a man, I killed him with my gun  
Running ninety five, fast as I can go  
Now my engine's running hot, I hope that it don't blow.

Rain is falling, the air outside is cold  
Day has turned to night now the stars don't  
even show

Flying down the mountain, feeling mighty low  
Did I do the right thing, well I guess I'll  
never know.

Chorus

Driving through the valley, blue lights  
straight ahead  
A man was down on the ground and his rights were  
being read  
Walked up to my window, "Why are you alone?  
Two men escaped from prison, now one of them  
is gone.

I told 'em they could find him at home on  
the ground  
He tried to rob and kill my dad so I shot that  
man down  
Drove out to the farm the man was not yet dead  
In my mind I can't forget the last words that he said.

Chorus

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### 13. There's You (Josh Pickett)

After endless night of wondering what I was  
gonna do  
Wondering if I'd find the one to help me walk  
life through  
Just when I'd given up and thought that I was through  
I turned around and there stands you

Chorus:  
There's you from somewhere up above  
There's you with your everlasting love  
There's you, you'll never give up  
And if I wonder just what I'm gonna do, there's you

Well I can't help but wonder how you come along  
 I've never felt a love or feeling quite this strong  
 And if I ever feel all alone  
 You're always there with a love that carries on

Chorus

As the years they roll past us were still hanging on  
 Nothing comes between us, we're still standing strong  
 We'll be right here together until our dying day  
 We've got something special that no one can  
 take away

Chorus



Sammy Shelor & Steve Barr.

#### 14. Quecreek (Mine) (Julie Ann Miller)

In the Quecreek mine, nine miners went down  
 Two hundred forty foot deep in the ground  
 The night shift went a mile when there came  
 a shout  
 Somebody's hit water, everybody get out.

It was over their heads and too fast to outrun  
 Together they were tied to live or die as one  
 Help came from above but then the drill stripped  
 and broke  
 So the men penned goodbyes and wives hoped  
 against hope.

Chorus:

When the water come up  
 When you go through the flood  
 In the Lord you can trust  
 He will be there with us

Now Jesus was laid in a hole in the ground  
 He was dead but on the third day God's hand  
 brought him out  
 And the miners were buried three nights and  
 three days  
 But like Jesus Sunday morning all nine men  
 were raised.

Chorus 2X

#### 15. Ruby (Are You Mad At Your Man)

("Cousin Emmy" Carver)

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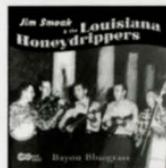
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Recorded "live" at the  
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small indoor theatre near Galax,  
Virginia, by David McLaughlin



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FILE UNDER: BLUEGRASS

