Dealer Spotlight

Over the years, Nechville has enjoyed a positive working relationship with shop owners around the world. We’ve visited shops across the US, Canada and throughout Europe, giving workshops to players and technical assistance to stores that carry Nechville products.

We learn a lot from visiting our dealers in their place of business. This information is helpful to us in working with the dealer to make them highly successful in selling Nechville banjos and accessories.

We’d like to share a profile of a couple of these dealers with you. First, Turtle Hill Banjo Company and then Penny Lane Emporium.

Turtle Hill Banjo Company
La Plata MD

Open Since: 1989
Nechville Dealer Since: 1998

Dave Schenkman officially opened Turtle Hill Banjo Company in 1989. From a small building on the perimeter of his property, he at one time has over two hundred banjos in stock, from vintage collectibles to brand new quality instruments. He began his Nechville dealership in 1998, and over the years he has become one of the Nechville’s top dealers. A serious banjo player who can play any banjo he chooses, Dave’s banjo of choice is a Nechville maple Galaxy Phantom.

A few months ago, Dave and his wife moved to La Plata, MD, closing down the shop and running his banjo business primarily on his web site. That changes in August, when he opens a storefront in La Plata just three blocks from his new home.

A visit to Turtle Hill is a great treat for banjo enthusiasts. An appointment gets you into his inner sanctum to sample a variety of banjos. He is knowledgeable and well-versed in all things banjo. When we asked him his secret to selling so many Nechvilles, he replied, “Well, I work at it. I know banjos and a lot of customers rely on me for technical advice. I can explain details on this banjo or that banjo and answer all their questions. People are able to play several banjos side by side and decide for themselves.”

Turtle Hill’s new location’s opening is slated for August 15 in La Plata MD, next to Island Music.

Penny Lane Emporium
Ft Lauderdale, FL

Open Since: 2010
Nechville Dealer Since: 2010

(Continued on page 2)
While some stores struggled in recent years, Penny Lane Emporium has experienced remarkable growth. Starting out first as an Internet store in 2010, owner Armando Zuppa moved into his first brick and mortar store shortly thereafter. In 2013 he moved again, to a larger storefront with more retail and instructional space. Carrying a cross section of guitars, mandolins, banjos and ukuleles, Penny Lane has become a gathering place for musicians in south Florida.

Zuppa’s association with Nechville goes back much further. An accomplished banjo player and teacher in Colorado, he first heard and saw a Nechville at an Alison Brown concert in the late 1990s. Intrigued by the sound, he approached Alison after the show and asked about her banjo, a Nechville Nextar. She offered to let him try it. It wasn’t long after that Armando had a Nextar of his own. Today, he still has that Nextar, as well as a custom Phantom and a Meteor, all of which he plays regularly.

When Zuppa moved from Colorado to Florida and started his own business, Nechville was the first line of banjos he carried. He quickly became one of the top dealers in the country.

His secret?

“Well, first, they are very good banjos. The moment people hear or try a Nechville, they know there’s a huge difference. They are very well made, and when you play them, they feel great. Its easy to sell an instrument that you believe is a great instrument.”

Why yes, we do custom work!

- Custom inlays
- Carved heels and pegheads
- Custom finish and color
- Built-in sliding capo
- Numerous tone ring options
- Bound peghead
- Heli-Mount frame finish options

Sales: 747-2BA-NJOS Shop: 952-888-9710
Nechville Gives You Control with Tone that is Pure, Playable & Personal.

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Discuss Options - Find Qualified Dealers and Banjo Rev Associates - Schedule a Video Consultation - Plan an In-Home Trial.
Product Spotlight

The All New Moonshine EX Openback Banjo

Nechville’s Moonshine openback banjo has been an integral part of their product line for many years. Using the same Heli-Mount frame as their resonator banjos, it brought all the advantages of the Heli-Mount found on its resonator counterparts: easy neck adjustment, the simple, uniform tensioning of the head and clean, clear sound.

In 2010, Nechville introduced the Atlas openback. Using an all wood, traditional pot and offering the option of a twelve inch head, this became a choice for many looking for the deeper, warmer sound so often found in old time banjo.

At the same time, the Atlas gained a following with singer-songwriters as a top notch solo accompaniment instrument. Like the Moonshine, it uses Nechville’s Quick-Cam neck mounting technology.

It was in 2013 that Nechville began to look at ways to enhance the design of the Moonshine. Until that time, the Moonshine frame was created by removing the flange of a resonator frame. The additional time and work this took meant additional cost.

Tom Nechville and crew set to work on something unique. They designed a frame that is built specifically to bring out the sound of an openback banjo.

This Heli-Mount frame came to be known as the Excelsior. It became an integral part of Nechville’s redesign of the Moonshine. But it didn’t stop there. They looked carefully at different inlay patterns, choosing the Diamond Blossom inlay as the new standard for the Moonshine. They explored the use of tone rings that are used in other open backs, and after some testing and experimentation chose the Tubaphone style tone ring as the standard (as pictured above).

Further exploration brought about the idea of offering the option of a press on pie plate style resonator, useful for those wanting a banjo equally at home in a clawhammer or three finger picking environment. And for the clawhammer player, a bridge was developed with a raised fifth string, dubbed the High Five Bridge (pictured).

All this resulted in a brand new openback-the Moonshine EX.

The Moonshine EX uses the same easy tensioning technology found on other Heli-Mount banjos. A different process was used to create this frame, giving it a punchy openback tone.

The use of Cyclotronic tone spheres enable the smooth tightening of the head. And the optional press on resonator makes it an ideal crossover instrument capable of running with the bluegrass crowd.

The Moonshine EX offers a multitude of customizations. Numerous wood and tone ring options are available, from the Timbr-Tronic tone ring to Tubaphone and Whyte Lady designs to the same 20 and 40 hole tone rings found in Nechville’s resonator banjos.

These can be quickly changed out due to the elegant simplicity of the Heli-Mount design. Thumb scoop? Sure, it can be done. Full scoop? Also available. Standard scale, short scale, radiused or flat fingerboard. No one offers as many options as Nechville. If you are looking a banjo that is smooth sounding, versatile and can be easily adjusted, look no further. The Moonshine EX is the one for you.
A User’s Guide to Nechville Terminology

We at Nechville have a number of products and terms for our products, features and parts that may be unfamiliar to some. Here’s a quick guide to the meaning of some of those terms:

**Acoustic Harness** - Multi-pickup system with controllers for acoustic banjo.

**Banjo Revolution** - Ralliing cry and slogan championed by Nechville to further its quest to enhance the design of the banjo to be more flexible in use and user friendly, as well as to increase the use of the banjo in all forms of music throughout the world.

**Capability** - Built in sliding capo system, as found in our Nuvo banjo.

**Classic peghead** - A traditional shaped peghead design, as found on our Classic and Saturn banjos.

**Compensated bridge** - A bridge that is curved to compensate for difference in distances of strings from the tailpiece to the tuner. Enables the banjo to intonate properly up and down the neck, as found on our Enterprise bridge.

**Compound radius** - The radius of the neck varies as you move up or down the neck, designed to fit the contour of the hand at that location.

**Corona** - Nickel polished Heli-Mount frame.

**Cyclotronics** - Ball bearing support system found in Heli-Mount banjos. Enhances tone and facilitates smooth turning when tensioning the head.

**Eclipse** - Black Heli-Mount frame. Standard for most models.

**Enterprise** - Our compensated banjo bridge, shaped like a certain starship.

**Excelsior** - Heli-mount frame for openback banjos, as found on our Moonshine EX model.

**Flex-Tone** - A banjo that has a traditional pot and a Nechville neck. Connected by the Flux Capacitor.

**Flux Capacitor** - Wedge-shaped adapter used to connect a Nechville neck with a traditional pot, thus making it a Flex-Tone banjo.

**Fluxification** - The act of using a Flux Capacitor to convert a conventional banjo to a Flex-Tone.

**Geometric peghead** - Peghead design used on our Phantom and Geometric banjos. Strings stay in line all the way down to the peghead.

**Heli-Mount** - The frame designed by Nechville which houses the tone ring, rim, Cyclotronics and head. Cast from aircraft grade aluminum alloy to be strong but significantly reduce weight of the banjo.

**Heli-Mount wrench** - Special geared wrenches used to tension the head on a Heli-Mount banjo.

**High Five** - A frailing bridge with a raised fifth string.

**Inline Tailpiece** - A banjo tailpiece that keeps strings in a straight line from the bridge. Keeps strings in tune and assists in a clear, pure tone. Nechville tailpieces have an inline design for this very purpose.

**Megaphonic** - Nechville’s 40 hole tone ring.

**Nechville** - Not a clever play on words. Its the last name of our founder, Mr. Tom Nechville.

**Nextar peghead** - Peghead shape with one tuner on one side and three on the other, as found on the Nextar and Zeus banjos.

**Nuvo** - A super custom banjo built to order but including Nechville’s Capability system.

**Phantom** - A banjo with a tunneled fifth string.

**Radiused** - Curved fingerboard. Standard on several Nechville models. Built for comfort and for speed.

**Renaissance** - A translucent head made by Remo used on many of our banjos. Known for their clarity and even tone.

**Rolling fifth string nut** - A rolling nut that fits on the fifth fret of a Phantom. Reduces drag on the string as it enters the tunnel. Available as an option on many Phantoms, standard on walnut Phantoms.

**Six Shooter** - Six string electric banjo. Very popular with contemporary country artists.

**Synth Banjo** - Midi-capable electric banjo when paired with a midi-processor such the Roland GR-33. Integral part of Nechville’s Cosmos and Universal models.

**TimbrTronic** - Exotic hardwood flathead tone ring w no skirt. Designed to mount on Cyclotronics system. Reduces weight of banjo by three pounds or more compared to standard tone ring.

**Triple T (aka TTT)** - A TimbrTronic tone ring with a fitted Titanium hoop mounted to it. Gives additional metallic sound to a TimbrTronic tone ring.

**Tone Spheres** - Ball bearings used in Nechville’s Cyclotronic system. Includes bearings made of steel, Delrin and ceramics. Each material has its own unique tonal qualities.

**Tunneled Fifth String** - Found on our Phantom banjos. A brass tube is inserted into the neck before applying the fingerboard. Fifth string slides into the tunnel and comes out to a tuner found on the peghead. Used in place of the fifth string tuner found at the fifth fret on most banjos.

**Turbo Module** - Electric banjo body insert that fits into a Heli-Mount frame.
The Banjo Revolution
By Tom Nechville

The banjo of Earl Scruggs survives nicely in the unchanging world of traditional Bluegrass, but has not been a big part of the pop scene until recent groups like Avett Brothers and Mumford & Sons have given it some popular attention.

While coolness has recently adopted banjos, the challenge I see for players is to continually find new ways for the original Americana instrument to fit into today’s live performances. The old banjo is a bucket of nuts, bolts, hoops and rods, something like a tambourine on a stick. Just what the doctor ordered for a jingle-jangling old time jam, or in the context of an intense jam band crescendo, to produce the acoustic substitute for a fuzzy distorted electric guitar.

Lou Meyers, former executive director of the Folk Alliance conference, reports that a new banjo is emerging within the quickly expanding world of roots, acoustic and jam bands music. Nechville has been quietly building their brand of re-engineered banjos for over 20 years.

Tom Nechville has been trying to let the banjo out of its cage ever since the 70′s when he first heard Earl do the boogie-woogie on the banjo. Nechville has always felt that the banjo needed a new thicker voice to gain acceptance in more popular music. His designs facilitate a wider range of tonalities and choice for banjo playing artists. His “Banjo Revolution” is more than a slogan that hints at his original patented designs.

It is the Nechville sponsored format by which more players can connect within the exploding world of Folk, Americana and Country music through membership in these trade associations. Nechville’s Revolution encourages growth of musical connections by facilitating membership to one of the major folk or roots associations with purchase of a banjo from their factory.

Working musicians can become associates of the Banjo Revolution to receive discounts on Nechville products and gain rights to represent and distribute them while on tour.

Nechville instruments have been built since 1986 and have received exposure in the hands of players like Bela Fleck, Alison Brown and Emily Robison of the Dixie Chicks.

Country music has embraced Nechville designs, especially his new class of electric banjos for guitarists. Keith Urban and crew have their own model called the Urban Meteor. Its look is unmistakable for a banjo, but has power to rock the house.

Jam band veteran Mike Gordon, young bands like Chicago’s Commeals and San Francisco’s Hot Buttered Rum and even dead-head icon, Bob Weir were early adopters of Nechville’s cutting edge instruments. Now country/roots superstar Zac Brown is jumping on stage with his own co-branded Nechville Turbo-Charged Heli-Mount 6 string.

The future of the banjo is clearly here. We will continue to see and hear the nostalgic, primitive old charm of tradition through collectors and producers of music from former times. All other forms of music will benefit from the lingering charm of America’s instrument as long as the instrument itself can rise to the challenge.

Progressive playing techniques coming from players like Alison Brown and Bela Fleck and Noam Pickelny challenged Nechville to supply a banjo tone that better fit their “New Acoustic” music. Early recordings from these masters ring with a familiar shrillness that is lacking in their more recently adopted “modern” sound. Fleck, Brown, and more recently even Tony Trischka have undergone transformations in tone, lending a fuller, rounder edge to their notes. They have arrived at their jazz-friendly tone by a variety of means, which Nechville explains as a combination of setup factors like bigger bridges, and tasteful playing technique. Tony’s sound seemed to transform most dramatically when he first tried Nechville’s 3/4″ Enterprise compensated bridge. Little things in banjo set up can make a big difference in tone.

Players are generally willing to experiment with bridges, heads, even tone rings and rims sometimes, but to change the whole concept of how a banjo works is a different story…

Tom Nechville takes pride in saying his company is the world’s leader in innovative banjo design. Nechville has 2 patents on his Heli-Mount banjo and adjustable neck connection.

The Nechville banjo replaces a combination...
of seventy odd pieces of hardware with an innovative one-piece cast metal frame. You tighten or loosen the head of the Helimount by rotating a threaded flange ring encircling the banjo’s drum pot. A pair of geared T wrenches similar to a chuck key on a drill, moves the flange ring around until you reach hide-busting tension. It’s a little like operating a lid of a jar. The Heli-Mount system perfectly produces an even tension across the head of the banjo.

Moreover, the patented Helimount frame stands to be the chief structural component, rigidly attaching the neck while still allowing adjustment. This eliminates the need to have sound-choking coordinator rods inside the resonating chamber of the banjo.

Nechville’s patented solid neck connection to the frame allows for easy raising and lowering of string height and interchangeability among necks and bodies.

The sound quality from a Nechville banjo has been called “musical”, “balanced” and “thick” due to the absence of dozens of metallic parts and coordinator rods that are normally clamping the whole thing together.

The tone ring and rim assembly, most commonly made from bell brass and 3 ply hard maple, is literally suspended inside the framework of the Helimount insuring the most purity to the banjo sound.

Nechville’s Phantom banjo (as pictured left) combines contemporary engineering with the old English tunneled fifth string idea. The absence of the fifth peg on the Phantom allows unobstructed left hand maneuvering, particularly when using your thumb to fret the fifth string.

Because no hole is drilled in the middle of the neck, it is stiffer, lending a dense woodiness to the tone. The neck profile is a bit wider, but with a slim feel for great playability.

Even more radical, but useful, is Nechville’s patented Nuvo neck. The neck is more guitar-like and all 5 strings are playable to the nut. A sliding 5th string capo can be placed anywhere from the zero fret to the top of the neck, and a main rolling capo is built right into the neck for rapid key changes without the need to retune between settings.

Innovations from Nechville seem to never cease. He has pioneered synthesizer banjos, electric/ acoustic banjos and guitars, and a new class of Hybrid instruments he calls “Flex-tones”.

Nechville uses his recently patented “Flux capacitor” (right) to marry an old style banjo pot to his modern, comfortable engineered necks, lending better tone, easy adjustability and portability to the old banjo.

Look for more to come from Nechville. This is one little company working behind the scenes that has the determination to change music for the better.

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**New Banjo Checklist**

Make sure you get the best return on your investment when choosing a new banjo by looking for these features:

- Smooth dressed frets
- Ergonomically contoured playing surface
- No excessive weight
- Neck angle adjustability
- Evenly tensioned head
- Low enough string height with high enough bridge
- Beveled non-metal clamping
- Bridge properly compensated for intonation and optimal action on each string
- Easy head changing
- Wide and generous neck-to-body interface
- Dual point anchoring for tailpiece
- Easy string changes
- Straight-line tailpiece design
- Two-way adjustable truss rod
- Flexibility of options

Nechville Orion, available at www.nechville.com or select Nechville dealers.
TAKE THE NECH STEP!

PERSONALIZED DESIGN
...inspires creativity. Work with us to blend our ideas and your desires. Bring your banjo dreams to life.

LIGHT WEIGHT
Ringing with every ounce of power without the extra pounds the Saturn launches your bluegrass to new heights.

OPENBACK
Our Atlas and the all new Moonshine EX echo times past using user-friendly design features for the perfect feel and that sound.

FLEX-TONE
Using the Flux Capacitor, the Flex-Tone transports a traditional bluegrass pot to the 21st century. All pro in every respect, this may be your ideal next banjo.

Learn more and see all the models at nechville.com | (952) 888-9710