



**MATTIE KELLY ARTS FOUNDATION PRESENTS DYNAMIC LINEUP
FOR BLUEGRASS AT THE BEACH FESTIVAL, SEPT. 12, 2015**

***From headliner Blue Highway to teen sensations Moore Brothers Band and
Danielle Yother, Bluegrass at the Beach offers up something for everyone***

DESTIN, FLA. – July 30, 2015— From seasoned Bluegrass veteran bands to contemporary twists on Bluegrass sound to sensational rising stars, the inaugural Bluegrass at the Beach produced by Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF) will be a sizzling, family-friendly musical showcase that appeals to all ages.

Presented with support from ResortQuest by Wyndham Vacation Rentals and Real Estate as part of MKAF's 20th anniversary celebration, the daylong Bluegrass at the Beach music festival will be presented at the Cultural Arts Village — located in the scenic coastal town of Destin on the Northwest Florida Gulf Coast — on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Blue Highway will headline this year's event, which also features performances by The HillBenders, Willie Sugarcapps, Run Boy Run, Moore Brothers Band, Dread Clampitt and Dismal Creek along with a special guest appearance by 16 year-old rising bluegrass star, Danielle Yother.

The following is a closer look at the local, regional and national performers who will hit the stage at first ever Bluegrass at the Beach festival this fall.

Blue Highway

Headlining Bluegrass at the Beach is **Blue Highway** out of Kingsport, Tennessee. The five-member award-winning band is comprised of founding members Jason Burlison (banjo and vocals), Rob Ickes (dobro and vocals), Shawn Lane (mandolin, fiddle and vocals), Tim Stafford (guitar and vocals), and Wayne Taylor (bass and vocals). Blue Highway, honored with awards including 24 collective IBMA Awards, six SPBGMA Awards, one Dove Award, and two Grammy nominations, is known for its tight three- and four-part harmonies, sharp instrumental work, memorable songs and welcoming stage presence. The band members share a rare decades-long history of playing, performing and songwriting together, creating an undeniable synergy and connection on stage.

Blue Highway vocalist and guitarist Tim Stafford describes the draw of bluegrass music. “It’s the simplicity of the music and simultaneously the high technical proficiency required to play it well,” says Stafford. “It tells great stories and requires precise singing, and exact three- and four-part harmony. It’s down-home and upscale at the same time. It’s *real* music. As society gets more complicated and music more technically inaccessible, bluegrass gets more popular.”

The band’s inspiration comes from the member’s musical heroes including Merle Haggard, Tony Rice, J.D. Crowe, Ricky Skaggs, Django Reinhardt, Harley Allen, The Seldom Scene, The Country Gentlemen, the Stanley Brothers, Bireli Lagrene, and Sylvain Luc to name a few.

Blue Highway recently released “The Game,” which soared to the No. 1 spot on the national Bluegrass Unlimited Album Chart, a spot it held for seven consecutive months. The album was named Bluegrass Album of the Year by critic Daniel Mullins in his Top 20 Albums of 2014 for Bluegrass Today magazine.

“Blue Highway is honored to be invited to headline Destin’s inaugural Bluegrass at the Beach event,” says bass player, vocalist and songwriter Wayne Taylor. “It’ll be a blast, and we look forward to seeing old friends from East Tennessee, as well as meeting lots of new friends from Destin and Northwest Florida on the beach in September.”

The HillBenders

The HillBenders, named 2010 National Single Mic Champions, is a high-energy collaboration of musicians Mark Cassidy on banjo, Gary Rea on bass, Jim Rea on guitar, Nolan Lawrence on mandolin and Chad “Gravy Boat” Graves on dobro. The Springfield, Missouri band is known for its high-octane shows, tight

harmonies and powerful musicianship and has recorded three albums including “Down to my Last Dollar,” “Can You Hear Me?” and most recently “Tommy: A Bluegrass Opry” — a unique newgrass approach to the Who’s rock opera “Tommy.” Like many modern bluegrass groups, The HillBenders aim to bridge the gap between bluegrass and more contemporary music. The band does this by reaching into their own musical tastes pairing bluegrass with good old-fashioned rock and roll as well as jazz, funk and Americana.

The band member’s authentic love and passion for creating music and playing to a crowd is evident in their lively interaction with festival-goers and listeners. The personalities of the band members come alive on stage as they charm crowds.

On the band’s official website, www.hillbendersband.com, guitarist Jim Rea addresses the band’s longevity, stating, “To keep the band together this long with its original members is something special. We always knew we had something special; we still know it’s something special.”

Willie Sugarcapps

A true-life musical example of the sum being even greater than the parts, **Willie Sugarcapps** is the coming together of five distinct artists each successful in his and her own right. The newly-formed band developed organically from ongoing crossed paths and jam sessions at a musical gathering called The Frog Pond at Blue Moon Farm in southern Alabama.

Willie Sugarcapps is the collaboration of Will Kimbrough (vocals, guitar, mandolin, banjo and ukulele), Grayson Capps (vocals, guitar and harmonica), Corky Hughes (guitar), and musical duo Sugarjane Cane which is Anthony Crawford (vocals, guitar, mandolin, banjo, bass and kickdrum) and Savana Lee (vocals, guitar and snare.) Each brings a unique style to the jamboree, yet together they are inspired and produce sincere, organic and harmonious musical art.

The Alabama based-group pulls from the talent and history of each individual artist and has created artisanal music that is laid-back and coming from roots in rock, classic country, blues, and the best of New Orleans.

With its deep connection to the Alabama Gulf Coast region, Willie Sugarcapps is anticipating “good people, good weather, good food, and great music,” at the inaugural Bluegrass at the Beach. Band spokesperson Sara Vale says, “We are all from lower Alabama. I think of the Gulf Coast as its own world, so we’re part of the same mini universe!”

Dismal Creek

Dismal Creek comes to Bluegrass at the Beach from just down the road from Destin, Fla., at the Florida-Alabama line. The four-person band embraces its heritage of Southern tradition and hospitality, exemplified in its lively stage presence and nods to forefathers in the bluegrass genre. Dismal Creek includes Rick Stanfield on banjo, Dub Bryant on upright bass and vocals, Neil Sebree on mandolin and vocals and Jim Hall on guitar and vocals. The band members are influenced and inspired by trailblazers in the genre such as bluegrass founder Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, and the Stanley Brothers. Dismal Creek arrives at shows ready to “pick till the cows come home,” and Bluegrass on the Beach will be no different. Dismal Creek was named “Best Bluegrass, Country & Folk Artist” at the 2015 Beachcomber Awards.

Run Boy Run

Arizona-based **Run Boy Run** is a family affair created by brother and sister Matt Rolland (fiddle and guitar) and Grace Rolland (cello, octave mandolin, guitar and vocals), along with sisters Bekah Sandoval Rolland (fiddle, guitar and vocals) and Jen Sandoval (mandolin, octave mandolin and vocals) and Jesse Allen (bass). The band’s beautiful three-female lead vocals blend effortlessly as the band masterfully dips into bluegrass, folk and Americana music.

The dynamic band has participated in the 2012 Telluride Bluegrass Festival and appeared on NPR’s “A Prairie Home Companion” with host Garrison Keillor who raves about the up-and-coming band saying, “When I hear Run Boy Run, it all comes back to me, why I started doing that show back then. I hope they go on forever.”

The applause for this Tucson band does not stop there. The Portland Tribune calls Run Boy Run “one major country—Celtic—bluegrass—Appalachian punch,” while the Seattle Times praises the group’s balance of old and new stating “three female vocalists and jazzy touches add something new, but its lyrics call back to simpler times.”

Moore Brothers Band

Bringing a youthful fire to the bluegrass stage is family band **Moore Brothers Band** made up of 16 year-old Jacob on mandolin, banjo and fiddle; 20 year-old Daniel on bass and 11 year-old Isaac on guitar. The South Bend, Indiana-based band is self described as a “roots & wings” band, “simultaneously traditional and

progressive, hot while being on the verge of old-timey, almost flashy while being tied to the mountains.” The brothers’ musical talent and improvisational skills make this blend possible and lend to a refreshingly unique show.

Patti Moore, mother and manager of the Moore brothers, says the band will bring a “high energy show, with a mix of tradition and pushing the edge of the bluegrass genre.”

The band plays selections from Americana, blues, newgrass, grass, country, jazz and gospel and often includes classics from the ‘60s and ‘70s as well as originals from middle brother Jacob.

Dread Clampitt

Local Northwest Florida boys **Dread Clampitt** will take the stage with their unmistakable mix of funky bluegrass fusion, folk rock and Americana. The trio grew from its roots at south Walton County’s famed Red Bar in Grayton Beach, Fla., and the band has gained a regional and national following in recent years. At the 2015 Beachcomber Awards, the band was named “Best Americana Artist” and honored in the Beachcomber Awards Hall of Fame.

Dread Clampitt is Balder Saunders (mandolin, electric mandolin and vocals), Kyle Ogle (guitar, electric guitar and vocals) and Kenny Oliverio (upright bass, electric bass and vocals). A touch of humor as well as sincere lyrics are always in the musical mix with this band that has been called “blue-eyed soul grass” and “hipbilly.” The eclectic band pulls sounds from bluegrass, rock, blues, jazz and Louisiana Bayou funk.

Dread Clampitt was a crowd-pleasing participant in Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation’s early performance series and the band’s performance at Bluegrass at the Beach is a full-circle moment for the MKAF community of leaders and supporters.

Danielle Yother

Also breaking the age boundary at Bluegrass at the Beach is special guest artist 16 year-old **Danielle Yother** of South Carolina. She is a singer/songwriter and accomplished musician playing guitar, mandolin and bass, who was recently featured in Flatpicking Guitar magazine. Yother has already made an impression on the bluegrass and country worlds having played with or for renowned musicians

such as Blue Highway, Wayne Henderson, The Boxcars, Steve Martin, Vince Gill and Rhonda Vincent.

Faith is at the core of Yother's music as she plays and writes bluegrass, country, contemporary Christian, gospel and Americana music. The young powerhouse began her musical journey at age eight as a part of Young Appalachian Musicians, and now she is paying it forward by occasionally teaching at the program when she is not traveling. She is also active in Kids on Bluegrass, The Henderson Guitar Club, Beta Club, Tomorrow's Bluegrass Stars, and Pickens First Baptist Student Worship Leader Team and serves as one of the directors for the Houston Fest Youth Bluegrass.

Yother is looking forward to her first visit to Northwest Florida's Gulf Coast saying, "I can't wait to see white sand in person for the first time, play and sing for y'all, miss school and fish!"

Tickets for the one-day festival are \$45/MKAF members, \$55/general admission. Children (under 12) are free. VIP tables are \$750 each. They include premium seating for eight and 16 drink tickets. Tickets are available for purchase online at www.mattiekellyartsfoundation.org/pr/newsreleases-bluegrass.htm.

Doors open at 10 a.m. Parking is available on-site as well as at convenient satellite parking areas with free shuttle service.

For more information on how you can become a member of MKAF, gain benefits as an event sponsor, provide a donation or explore opportunities to get involved on a committee of the Board of Directors, call (850) 650-2226 or visit www.mattiekellyartsfoundation.org/pr/newsreleases-bluegrass.htm.

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ABOUT MATTIE KELLY ARTS FOUNDATION

Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation (MKAF), a 501(c)3 not-for-profit charitable arts organization, was founded in 1995 on the cultural, educational and spiritual beliefs of the late Destin Matriarch, Mattie Kelly. The champion of cultural arts and education in Northwest Florida, MKAF's vision is to impact lives through art and culture.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Wordplay Ink

info@wordplayink.com

(850) 218-8805