



**MATTIE KELLY ARTS FOUNDATION PROUDLY PRESENTS
BLUEGRASS AT THE BEACH FEATURING
HIGHLY ACCLAIMED BLUEGRASS BAND, BLUE HIGHWAY**

*Chart-topping, award-winning, powerhouse five-member ensemble band to
headline daylong family-friendly music showcase Sept. 12*

DESTIN, FLA. – June 18, 2015 — Blue Highway, arguably one of the most influential bluegrass bands in the industry, will headline Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation's (MKAF) newest cultural event — Bluegrass at the Beach — a daylong music showcase event on Saturday, Sept. 12.

As part of its 20th anniversary celebration, MKAF and ResortQuest by Wyndham Vacation Rentals and Real Estate will present Bluegrass at the Beach at the MKAF Cultural Arts Village — located in the scenic coastal town of Destin on the Northwest Florida Gulf Coast.

Entering its third consecutive decade, the seasoned five-member Blue Highway band is indisputably one of the most esteemed and influential groups in contemporary bluegrass. The band's 11 exceptional albums and compelling live performances give proof to the stellar reviews, and numerous prestigious awards earned by the band since it first took the stage on New Year's Eve in 1994. That first performance featured the same musicians that comprise Blue Highway today, making their 21-year long career all the more remarkable.

With a deep bench of virtuosic songwriters, vocalists and instrumentalists, Blue

Highway's hallmark is an unwavering commitment to an ensemble.

Individually, Jason Burleson (banjo, guitar, mandolin), Rob Ickes (Dobro), Shawn Lane (mandolin, fiddle, vocals), Tim Stafford (guitar, vocals), and Wayne Taylor (bass, vocals) are masters of their respective roles. Together, in Stafford's words, they are “a democracy in the best sense of the word.” Blue Highway is an amalgam of five gifted artists who have seamlessly merged their talents into a brilliant group sound. As a result, the band and its impressive grows and matures with each new album.

Blue Highway's newest release, "The Game," soared to No. 1 on the national Bluegrass Unlimited Album Chart and held the top spot for a seven consecutive months (June-Dec. 2014). The album's title track — named the No. 1 Bluegrass Album of the Year by Bluegrass Today —also topped the charts at No. 1 for three months on the national Bluegrass Unlimited Song Chart (Aug.-Oct. 2014).

With 11 highly-acclaimed albums to its credit, Blue Highway has garnered two Grammy Award nominations, a Dove Award, topped the Bluegrass Unlimited radio charts, and won numerous International Bluegrass Music Association awards. Refusing to coast on past glories, Blue Highway continues to push its music to new levels of accomplishment. Artfully balanced between tradition and innovation, it remains in the forefront of contemporary bluegrass music.

The music industry continues to herald the band. Robert Buckingham with Bluegrass Unlimited said of the band's recent album, “This is powerful modern bluegrass — in touch with the past, speaking to the present, and rich enough to last into the future. Each member of this band brings in a thread, and those threads are woven into the fabric that is the sound that makes Blue Highway the lasting force it has proven to be.”

Donald Teplyske of Country Standard Time recently wrote of Blue Highway, “Everything they touch is presented to the highest degree of bluegrass musicianship, and their vocal blend — lead and harmony parts — is distinctively astounding....”

The Nashville-based band will perform in Destin as part of its nationwide tour. “Blue Highway is honored to be invited to headline Destin's inaugural Bluegrass on the Beach event,” said Blue Highway bass player and singer/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!”

Bluegrass at the Beach will feature a line up of seven nationally acclaimed artists as well as talented regional and local bands. Along with headliner Blue Highway, The Hillbenders, Run Boy Run, Willie Sugarcapps, Moore Brothers Band, Dread Clampitt and Dismal Creek will take the stage. In addition, rising star, Danielle Yother, a 16 year-old singer, songwriter and musician who was recently featured in Flatpicking Guitar magazine, will be making a special appearance.

“To have a powerhouse band such as Blue Highway headline the first ever Bluegrass festival on the Emerald Coast is both a coup and a thrill,” said MKAF CEO Marcia Hull. “Like MKAF, they too are a highly collaborative group with a 20-year history, which makes producing this first-ever event all the more exciting.”

Bluegrass at the Beach will celebrate the flavors of the Emerald Coast by featuring fare from local food trucks and some of the area’s most popular restaurants. Wine, beer, water and soda also will be available for purchase. The family-friendly cultural celebration will also feature a Kid’s Art Village with an interactive Pickin’ & Paintin’ area, interactive bluegrass-inspired activities, live folk artist demos and much more.

Doors open at 10 a.m. Parking is available on-site as well as at convenient satellite parking areas with free shuttle service. Chairs and blankets are welcome, but no coolers or outside food and beverage will be permitted.

Bluegrass on the Beach is a new annual signature event presented by the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation with support from ResortQuest by Wyndham Vacation Rentals and Real Estate. Tickets for the one-day festival are \$45/MKAF members, \$55/general admission. Children (under 12) are free. VIP tables will be sold for \$750 each. They include premium seating for eight and 16 drink tickets. Tickets are available for purchase online at www.mattiekellyartsfoundation.org.

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 or the board of directors, call (850) 650-2226 or visit www.mattiekellyartsfoundation.org.

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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

[Click here](#) for Blue Highway band images, Bluegrass at the Beach promo material and MKAF logos.

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EVENT LISTING FORMAT

Name: Bluegrass at the Beach

Description: Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and ResortQuest by Wyndham Vacation Rentals and Real Estate present Bluegrass at the Beach, a family-friendly celebration of music and culture to feature seven award-winning bluegrass bands, a bluegrass-themed interactive Kid's Art Village and a range of food and beverage offerings.

Date: Saturday, Sept. 12

Time: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Tickets: \$45 MKAF members/\$55 General; children (under 12) are free.

VIP tables are \$750 each.

Proceeds benefit MKAF's All Kinds of Art educational outreach programs.

Address: Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village, 4323 Commons Drive West, Destin, FL 32541

For more information and to purchase tickets online:

<http://www.mattiekellyartsfoundation.org/bluegrassatthebeach.html>

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