



HEAR THE MOUNTAINS!

2021 PROGRAM GUIDE

STEEP CANYON RANGERS • SCYTHIAN
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The Blue Ridge Music Center is operated through a partnership between the National Park Service and the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation. (See page 12)



COVID-19

As we start the summer concert season, state and federal regulations surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic are changing rapidly. While these guidelines are likely to evolve, we will continue to make decisions regarding operations with the health and safety of visitors, musicians, volunteers, and staff as our top priority. Music fans showing symptoms of COVID-19 are asked to stay at home.

For the most up-to-date concert protocols, visit BlueRidgeMusicCenter.org.

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MUSIC TO OUR EARS!

We are thankful to be able to present a full season of music this summer! Whether this is your first stop at the Blue Ridge Music Center, or just one of many, we appreciate your visit to our scenic, music-rich destination on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

From live Midday Mountain Music sessions by regional traditional musicians in the breezeway to our Saturday evening concerts in our spacious outdoor amphitheater, the Music Center is where you can hear the mountains. The theme of this summer's concert series is *Deep Roots, Many Voices*, highlighting diversity both in the types of roots music being presented, as well as in the backgrounds, ages, and experiences of the musicians taking the stage. In addition to the usual focus on bluegrass, old-time, and Americana, these 13 concerts showcase elements of traditional Irish, New Orleans street jazz, gospel, Latin American folk, honkytonk, classic country, and more.

This year, the Music Center will welcome guests four days a week (Thursday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.), however the Roots of American Music Museum will not be open to visitors. We apologize for the inconvenience.

We will continue to present our programs in a responsible manner, making the health and safety of patrons, musicians, staff, and volunteers our No. 1 priority. We are excited for you to join us, and we hope your experience here is joyful and filled with the sounds of the mountains.



Richard Emmett
Program Director



Marianne Kovatch
Associate Program Director

The Blue Ridge Music Center Team

- Richard Emmett** Program Director
- Marianne Kovatch** Associate Program Director
- Frank Martin** Lead Sound Engineer
- Charlie Starr** Alternate Sound Engineer
- Jeffrey Irving** Assistant Sound Engineer
- Holli Harris** Partner Ranger
- Aubrey Arrington** Lead Volunteer

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Valerie Glowinski Lead Interpretive Ranger
Monty Heise & Peter Hodge Rangers

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Photographers: Mike & Judy Duncan

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11/13/21 - \$30-\$35

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ABOUT THE VENUE

The Blue Ridge region is truly one of the most musical places on Earth. The Blue Ridge Music Center honors and celebrates the living musical heritage of the surrounding mountains and interprets its significance within the larger landscape of American music and culture.

For generations, small rural communities in the mountains have produced an abundance of remarkable traditional musicians, dancers, and instrument makers who have become keepers of a legacy rooted in the rhythms of African banjo and the melodies of the European violin. The region created and maintains a wellspring of

old-time, bluegrass, and mountain gospel sounds that have profoundly influenced the development of American music.

The Music Center's mission is to document and interpret the traditional musical forms of the Blue Ridge Mountains, offer opportunities for people to hear this music, and learn about the cultural context from which it emerged. The Music Center is also a gateway to the region, introducing visitors to the many musical and cultural attractions in nearby Parkway communities.

We hope you enjoy your visit!

A NEW FACE

WELCOME, VALERIE!

Please join us in welcoming Valerie Glowinski as the Lead Ranger for the Blue Ridge Music Center. Before becoming part of the Blue Ridge Parkway team, Glowinski worked as an Interpretive Ranger at Carlsbad Caverns, Glacier National Park, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, and most recently at the Manhattan Project National Historic Park in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

While much of her ranger experience has been in the west and southwest, she grew up in New Jersey and lived near Shenandoah National Park and the northern end of the Blue Ridge Parkway for a time. Having driven both the northern and southern sections of the Parkway, she's looking forward to exploring the Highlands and Plateau districts, and helping to share the story of music in the Blue Ridge Mountains.



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****Private Parties Available on Sundays****

HEAR MOUNTAIN MUSIC!

Join us on the breezeway for Middy Mountain Music, songs and tales of the mountains from noon to 4 p.m., every day the Blue Ridge Music Center is open. During these free presentations, visitors are welcomed by the sounds of the fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and guitar, played by regional musicians.



Thursdays

Willard Gayheart & Scott Freeman

Fridays

1st & 3rd of the month: Buck Mountain Band
2nd & 4th of the month: Bill & Maggie Anderson

Saturdays

1st of the month: Mountain Breeze Band
2nd of the month: Ron Ireland
3rd of the month: Sugarloaf Mountain Band
4th of the month: Blue Ridge Ramblers

Sundays

The Fisher Peak Timber Rattlers

SPECIAL FEATURES

A PLACE IN THE BAND

We invite you to an online exploration of our special project, “A Place in the Band: Women in Bluegrass & American Roots Music.” Through a series of recorded interviews and a virtual conference with female musicians and music industry leaders, the program captured the growing influence of women in music and the challenges they face. Launched in 2020, A Place in the Band was inspired by and designed to honor the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in the United States.

Interview Series

In these recordings, North Carolina singer-songwriter Laurelyn Dossett speaks with female musicians and women involved in music management and promotion. Their individual stories highlight the collective strength and the

possibilities ahead for women in bluegrass and American roots music.

Conference

To kick off the “A Place in the Band: Women in Bluegrass & American Roots Music” virtual conference, acclaimed banjo player and Compass Records cofounder Alison Brown offered career insights and experiences in a keynote address.

Brown set the stage for panel discussions and mini-concerts with women at the forefront of bluegrass and American roots music, including Claire Armbruster, Jamie Katz Court, Laurelyn Dossett, Cathy Fink, Kimberly Glick, Leyla McCalla, Missy Raines, Lisa Schwartz, Annie Staninec, and Trisha Tubbs.

Links to the interviews, mini-concerts, and conference sessions are available at BlueRidgeMusicCenter.org.



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LISTEN UP, STEP UP!

We are so grateful to everyone who supported our Listen Up, Step Up fundraising campaign. Their donations will allow us to replace the aging audio speaker system that has served the amphitheater for 18 years. With the installation

of new d&b audiotechnik line array speakers, the concert sound quality in our amphitheater will once again live up to the extraordinary talent of the master mountain musicians who grace our stage!

\$20,000

National Council for the Traditional Arts

\$10,000

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2021 BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER MEMBERS

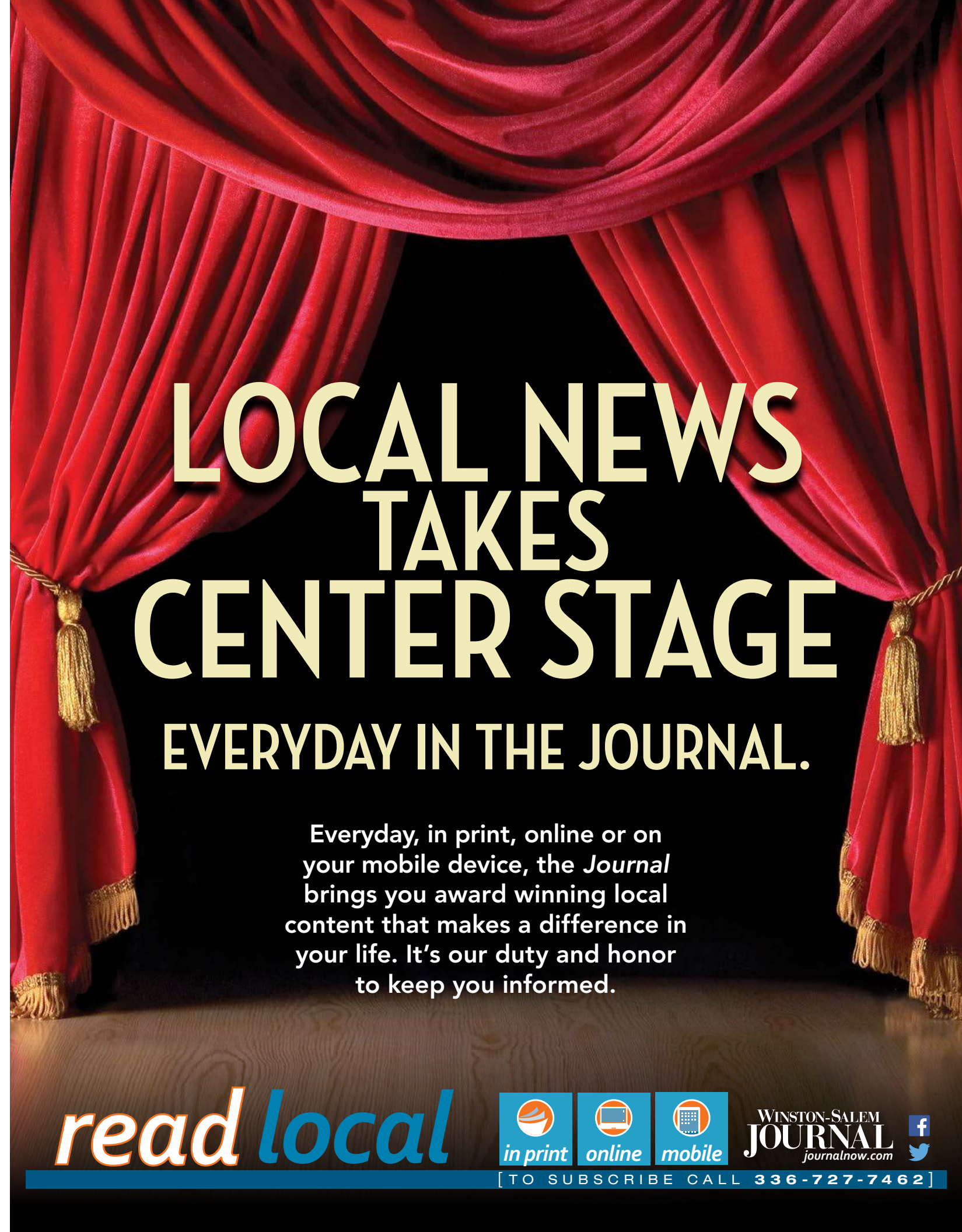
We'd also like to thank this year's Blue Ridge Music Center members. They show their commitment to the celebration and preservation of mountain music by supporting programming all year long.

Michael Deane
Gary Evans
Douglas Kivett
Victoria Lindberg

Russ & Nancy McDaniel
Bebe Purcell
Steven Saylor
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To learn more about the membership program, visit BlueRidgeMusicCenter.org/support.



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PROTECTING THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

IN 2020, THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY WELCOMED OVER 14 MILLION VISITORS.

That number exceeds the visitation at Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Grand Canyon national parks combined. People come from across the world to experience the Parkway's natural beauty, history, culture, and recreational opportunities. What many don't realize is that the park needs their help.

All of our national parks are increasingly dependent on private donations to supplement federal budgets and entry fees. Because the Blue Ridge Parkway has no entrance fee, support from individuals and communities is even more critical.

To address the needs of the scenic route, the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation collaborates with the National Park Service to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for projects and programs along its entire 469-mile length. That support includes funding for the Blue Ridge Music Center. Since 2013, the Foundation has provided financial support



for the summer concert series, educational programs, and facility updates, thanks to the generosity of donors.

You can help! To learn more and make a gift to protect the Parkway, visit BRPFoundation.org.

TRAILS & VIEWS FOREVER

Trails & Views Forever is an initiative by the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation to restore the recreational assets along the 469-mile scenic route. Working with the National Park Service, the Foundation is developing a comprehensive plan to restore and care for trails, picnic areas, campgrounds, and overlooks. With your support, the Trails & Views Forever program can:

- Upgrade many of the 369 miles of trails along the Blue Ridge Parkway
- Clear overlooks to restore iconic views
- Rehabilitate picnic areas and campgrounds
- Enhance educational resources, including informational panels and signs at overlooks and along trails
- Engage volunteers and youth conservation crews



Protecting natural resources and improving experiences for visitors are cornerstones of the Foundation's mission. Learn more at TrailsandViews.org.



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TRANS-ATLANTIC FOLK BLUEGRASS

SCYTHIAN

Sat, June 5 · 7 P.M. · \$25

Scythian (pronounced sith-ee-yin) is a headliner on the Celtic, bluegrass, and Americana festival circuits. From its start, Scythian has been a search and love for the “old time, good time music” of many cultures. The group was founded by brothers Alexander and Danylo Fedoryka, who are first-generation sons of Ukrainian immigrants.

They were inspired by a tale told by their 92-year-old grandmother of a roving fiddler who visited her farming village each year. When he arrived, everyone gathered in the barn to dance their cares away all night. The inspiration still shines through. *The Washington Post* wrote, “Scythian’s enthusiasm is contagious, and shows seem to end with everyone dancing, jumping around or hoisting glasses.”



Opening: **Spencer Branch** is the collaboration of siblings Martha and Kilby Spencer from Whitetop Mountain, Virginia, along with North Carolina native, Kelley Breiding. The band’s music draws from their mountain heritage, as well as traditional country and bluegrass. Their stunning vocal harmonies and rousing fiddle tunes are a powerful combination.

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BLUEGRASS & CLASSICAL FUSION

HANK, PATTIE & THE CURRENT

Sat, June 12 · 7 P.M. · \$25

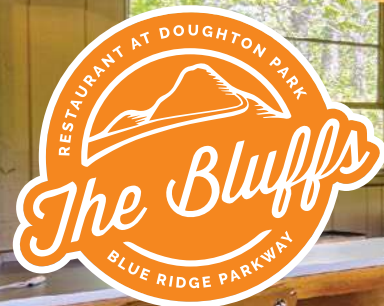
Two of North Carolina's veteran bluegrass musicians, Hank Smith and Pattie Hopkins Kinlaw, join forces with some of the most versatile musicians in the Carolinas to create modern, American, acoustic music featuring the full range of their talents as composers and arrangers.

The music is vocal and instrumental, allowing the band to experiment with arrangements and tailor the compositions to become vehicles for exploration. Smith plays banjo, Kinlaw plays fiddle and is lead vocalist. The Current includes Billie Feather on guitar and Stevie Martinez on bass.

Through the **Winston-Salem Symphony's** Symphony Unbound series, it brings music out



of the concert hall and into the community, collaborating with musicians from other genres. In this performance, a string quartet collaborates with Hank, Pattie & The Current. The evening will begin with a set by the quartet, followed by a set with Hank, Pattie & The Current, and finishing with a set with both groups.



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SINGERS & THEIR SONGS

AMYTHYST KIAH

Sat, June 19 · 7 P.M. · \$25

With an unforgettable voice that's both unfettered and exquisitely controlled, Tennessee-raised singer-songwriter Amythyst Kiah expands on her uncompromising artistry. Her standout song "Black Myself" earned a Grammy nomination for Best American Roots Song and won Song of the Year at the 2019 Folk Alliance International Awards.

The transcendent quality of her voice and sound is an extraordinary vessel for Kiah's songwriting. Her songs are a raw yet nuanced examination of grief, alienation, and the hard-won triumph of total self-acceptance.

Following up her recording with Our Native Daughters, a women-of-color supergroup, Kiah will be releasing a new solo album, *Wary + Strange*, in June.

Opening: **Aaron Burdett** is an acclaimed Americana and folk singer-songwriter and



performer from Western North Carolina. He's won top awards in multiple songwriting competitions hosted by MerleFest, The USA Songwriting Competition, Mountain Stage, the North Carolina Songwriter's Co-op, and *Our State Magazine*. His last four albums have been voted among the top 20 Albums of the Year by listeners of the popular Western North Carolina radio station, WNCW 88.7.



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INDIE FOLK MEETS ROOTS ROCK

MIPSO

Sat, June 26 · 7 P.M. · \$25

North Carolina-bred four-piece band Mipso captivates audiences with their finely layered vocal harmonies and graceful fluency in the timeless musical traditions of their home state. They have a near-telepathic musical connection that makes their live shows especially kinetic.

On their self-titled sixth album and Rounder Records debut, fiddler Libby Rodenbough, mandolinist Jacob Sharp, guitarist Joseph Terrell, and bassist Wood Robinson share their most sonically adventurous and lyrically rich work to date, each moment charged with the tension between textural effervescence and an underlying despair about the modern world.

Opening: The tale of wayfaring songwriter **Shay Martin Lovette** is shaped by an enduring



creative pursuit, an inseparable connection with the natural world, and a deep appreciation of the musical voices of the past. For his latest recording, *Scatter & Gather*, he composed most of the songs while in a remote, creekside cabin. The album solidifies Lovette's role as a versatile harmonica-wielding wordsmith, effortlessly connecting the formulas of folk, indie, and homestyle roots music.



CLASSIC COUNTRY & HONKY TONK

THE MALPASS BROTHERS

Sat, July 3 · 7 P.M. · \$20

As boys, Christopher and Taylor Malpass soaked up the music of their granddad's phonograph records. Today, they promote the influence and accomplishments of classic country artists while creating new music to make their own mark.

With sincerity and an utter ease on stage, their smooth vocal blend and skillful musicianship layer infectiously into the deep respect they pay to legends who have paved the way. Add the off-the-cuff quips between the siblings, and the engaging concert becomes a time-traveling journey to when a calmer rhythm reigned supreme. This is music steeped in the legacy of the Louvin Brothers, Johnny Cash, Marty Robbins, Hank William Sr., and others.



Opening: Galax resident **Redd Volkaert** was a successor to Roy Nichols in Merle Haggard's backing band, and is among the country's top Telecaster guitar slingers. Volkaert won a 2009 Grammy for Best Country Instrumental Performance. From the early 2000s until he moved to Galax last year, Volkaert's band played at The Continental Club in Austin, Texas, and he joined in with the club's house band Heybale! on Sunday nights.

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STEEP CANYON RANGERS

Sat, July 10 · 7 P.M. · SOLD OUT



Steep Canyon Rangers are Grammy winners, perennial Billboard chart-toppers, and frequent collaborators of the renowned banjoist (and occasional comedian) Steve Martin.

In 2020, the group released two albums on Yep Roc Records. *The North Carolina Songbook* captures their live performance at MerleFest 2019, comprised entirely of songs written by North Carolina natives. Their other release, *Be Still Moses*, is a musical partnership bringing together Philadelphia soul legends Boyz II Men and the Asheville Symphony to overhaul the Rangers' original song "Be Still Moses," which was first recorded on their 2007 breakout album *Lovin' Pretty Women*.

Opening: As a child, John Lakota Locklear (**Lakota John**) picked up his sister's discarded guitar and began fooling around with it. Not long after, a local music teacher taught him his first three chords—G, C, and D—and he never looked back. He cites musical greats like Jimi Hendrix, Reverend Gary Davis, and Etta Baker as some of his main influences.

Though John plays ragtime and blues, he still "represents native," and speaks proudly of his Lumbee and Lakota Sioux ancestry.



HONKY TONK & HEARTFELT

SIERRA FERRELL

Sat, July 17 · 7 P.M. · \$25



With her spellbinding voice and time-bending sound, Sierra Ferrell makes music that is as fantastically vagabond as the artist herself. Growing up in West Virginia, the singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist got her start belting out Shania Twain songs in a local bar at the age of 7. She left home in her early 20s to journey across the country with a troupe of wandering musicians.

After years of living in her van and busking on the streets of New Orleans and Seattle, Ferrell moved to Nashville and started landing gigs around town. Soon enough, her magnetic live show drew the attention of Rounder Records, who signed Ferrell in 2019.

Opening: Singer-songwriter and Galax native **Dori Freeman** grew up in a musical family. Her father, Scott Freeman, and grandfather, Willard Gayheart, are both regular performers during Midday Mountain Music sessions at the Music Center. Her songwriting on her latest album, *Every Single Star*, released in 2019, is as beholden as ever to the traditions that first inspired her as a young girl growing up in Galax, Virginia, but full of the same incisive eye for the human condition that's always been her hallmark.

THE CROOKED ROAD

Experience the Mountains of Music



The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail offers an array of heritage music along a 330-mile stretch throughout Southwest Virginia.

With 9 major venues and over 60 affiliated venues & festivals, this road trip invites you to wander through Southwest Virginia to experience the rich & unique musical heritage.



For trip planning information, contact The Crooked Road at info@thecrookedroad.org or call 276.492.2409

WWW.THECROOKEDROAD.ORG | [#VAMUSIC](https://twitter.com/VAMUSIC)

Photos Courtesy: Birthplace of Country Music Museum by Billie Wheeler, Floyd Country Store by Brett Lemon
Dancing at Blue Ridge Music Center - photo by Mike Duncan



BLUEGRASS SONGSTERS

BECKY BULLER BLUEGRASS BAND

Sat, July 24 · 7 P.M. · \$20



Originally from St. James, Minnesota, Becky Buller is a multi-instrumentalist, singer, songwriter, and producer who has traversed the globe performing bluegrass music. Buller is the recipient of 10 IBMA awards. She was a 2020 nominee for SPBGMA's Fiddle Player of the Year, and worked as a musician and songwriter on three albums nominated for 2020 Grammys.

An insatiable songwriter, her compositions can be heard on records by Ricky Skaggs, Rhonda Vincent, and Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, to name just a few. Buller and the band just released *Distance and Time*, their third album for the Dark Shadow Recording label.

Opening: **Laurelyn Dossett's** songs reflect the stories of her home, the Piedmont of North Carolina. She is one of the most sought-after voices in creative collaborations, and is a frequent performer at music festivals across the region. Her song "Anna Lee," was featured on Levon Helm's Grammy-winning record, *Dirt Farmer*, and was included in the documentary film about Helm's life, *Ain't In It for My Health*.



OLD-TIME, GOSPEL & SOUL

TUI

Sat, July 31 · 7 P.M. · \$20



The old-time duo Tui (pronounced too-wee) is comprised of Jake Blount and Libby Weitnauer. They draw inspiration from rare archival recordings, the music of their peers, and extensive experiences with other genres of music. They released their debut album, *Pretty Little Mister*, in June 2019.

Blount is a fiddler, banjo player, and scholar. He has performed and recorded with acclaimed fiddler Tatiana Hargreaves and award-winning old-time string band The Moose Whisperers. Fiddler and singer Libby Weitnauer earned degrees in classical violin performance from DePaul University and New York University, but she finds her voice in the traditional music of Appalachia.

Opening: Harmony is serious business where the **Dedicated Men of Zion** come from. The group came up in the singing land of eastern North Carolina, around the city of Greenville and its small neighboring town of Farmville. Each member trained in the church and at home. The group's four vocalists – Anthony Daniels, Antoine Daniels, Dexter Weaver, and Marcus Sugg – share the bond of that upbringing, as well as the bond of kinship (they're all family now through blood or marriage).

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NORTH CAROLINA SWEETHEARTS

CHATHAM RABBITS

Sat, August 7 · 7 P.M. · \$25

Chatham Rabbits exemplify North Carolina's tradition of producing artists who embrace the state's many cultural resources and diverse musical traditions. In their marriage and in their music, Chatham Rabbits' Austin and Sarah McCombie also blend their own histories into a shared musical experience. Sarah first took the stage as part of a trio known as the South Carolina Broadcasters, a band that harkened back to the old days of the Grand Ole Opry and AM radio country classics. Meanwhile, Austin played keyboards and guitar for an electronic band called DASH.

Opening: Raleigh-based songwriter **Kate Rhudy** worked alongside collaborator and producer Andrew Marlin of Mandolin Orange to create



her 2017 debut, *Rock N' Roll Ain't For Me*, which earned Rhudy nods from WUNC and INDY Week, which dubbed her "one of the Triangle's sharpest young songwriters." In October 2020, Rhudy released a 7-inch record titled *Dance It Away*, *Snake*, including the single "Dance It Away" featured on Spotify's Infinite Indie Folk playlist.

NEW ORLEANS STREET JAZZ

TUBA SKINNY

Sat, August 21 · 7 P.M. · \$25

Formed in 2009, Tuba Skinny has steadily evolved from a loose collection of street musicians into a solid ensemble dedicated to bringing the traditional New Orleans sound to audiences around the world. Drawing on a wide range of musical influences—from spirituals to Depression-era blues, from ragtime to traditional jazz—their sound evokes the rich musical heritage of their New Orleans home. The band has gained a loyal following through



their distinctive sound, their commitment to reviving long-lost songs, and their barnstorming live performances.



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WORLD BEAT BLUEGRASS

JOE TROOP & FRIENDS

Sat, August 28 · 7 P.M. · \$20



Working in a style dubbed “Latingrass,” Joe Troop’s band Che Apalache melds music from the Appalachian foothills with a traditional Latin American soundscape. As a solo artist, he composes wry and well-traveled acoustic music, sung in English, Spanish, and Japanese.

He wrenches old-time music into the world of contemporary global politics, creating a space for sympathy, solidarity, and a little humor. Jaunty, rhythmic, and tale-spinning, Troop plays fingerpicking mountain music for a progressive rural America.

Opening: **Trajan “Tray” Wellington’s** love for music bloomed at an early age while he listened to his grandpa play diverse styles of music. From learning traditional bluegrass to studying diverse genres such as jazz, progressive bluegrass, blues, rock, and more, Wellington has gone on to play with some of the most accomplished musicians in the world.

Before reaching the age of 21, Wellington has received a number of awards and accolades, including two awards from IBMA — 2019 Momentum Instrumentalist of the Year and 2019 Momentum Band of the Year (with Cane Mill Road).

MOUNTAIN MUSIC MASTERS

JEFF LITTLE TRIO

Sat, September 4 · 7 P.M. · \$20



With few exceptions, the piano does not play a prominent role in Appalachian or Americana music, and is rarely the lead instrument. The work of Jeff Little is an exception. Little and his trio stay busy traveling the country, having performed at The Smithsonian Institution, The National Folk Festival, and American Piano Masters. In 2014, Little was inducted into the Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame.

Part of the trio, Steve Lewis is one of the most respected acoustic musicians in the country, having won championships at prestigious events including the Walnut Valley Nationals, MerleFest, and the Galax Old Fiddlers’ Convention. He is also a two-time national champion on the banjo.

Featured: **Wayne Henderson’s** top-notch finger-picking is a source of great pleasure and pride to his friends, family, and neighbors in Grayson County, Virginia. His work has been enjoyed at Carnegie Hall and in three national tours of Masters of the Steel-String Guitar. Henderson is also a luthier of great renown. **Herb Key** grew up in a musical family in Wilkes County, North Carolina. He has played music for most of his life and has spent more than 30 years making, repairing, and restoring instruments.



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TRAILS AT THE BLUE RIDGE MUSIC CENTER

Parking

Hikers are asked to park at the trailhead on Foothills Road (State Route 612). On the Parkway, follow signs to the Music Center, turn into the entrance, then turn right onto Foothills Road just before the facility gates. Continue a half mile to the parking area.

High Meadow Trail

1.35 miles one-way. Easy.

This leg-stretcher trek takes hikers through a hayfield, wetland, and forest with an abundance of wildflowers and birds. Two junctions for the Fisher Peak Loop join this trail. You may turn onto the loop trail, follow the High Meadow Trail to go to the Visitor Center, or return to the trailhead from these points. This route is a **Kids in Parks TRACK Trail**, which is part

of a nationwide network of trails designed to engage children with the outdoors. Before exploring the trail, families can pick up a brochure or download several e-Adventures to an electronic device to follow along the trek. The e-activities include bug and flower identifications and forest bathing. After the hike, kids can register their adventure online to earn prizes. *To learn more, visit KidsinParks.com.*

Fisher Peak Loop

2.24-mile loop. Moderate.

Begin this trail at one of its junctions with the High Meadow Trail and wind up Fisher Peak. The path follows a stream. In May and June, Catawba rhododendron provide a spectacular floral display.



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REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS

Check out these things to do near the Blue Ridge Music Center!

Stays

Cool Breeze Campground is an RV park with full hookups, free Wi-Fi, a 24-hour bath/shower house with warm water, laundry facilities, and a Rally Center for groups. 2330 Edmonds Road, Galax, VA; (276) 236-0300; coolbreezecampground.com

Fiddler's Roost Bed & Breakfast Cabins is a group of private log cabins with hot tubs, fireplaces, full kitchens, outdoor grills, and picnic tables. 485 Fishers Peak Road, Galax, VA; (276) 236-0300; fiddlersroostcabins.com

New River Trail Cabins are next to Chestnut Creek and the New River Trail and walking distance to Galax; 307 Stockyard Road, Galax, VA; (276) 236-4022; newrivertrailcabins.com

Classes

Chestnut Creek School of the Arts promotes the cultural heritage of Southwest Virginia through classes in heritage and contemporary arts and traditional music. People of all ages and skill levels can register for workshops in music, dance, drawing, painting, weaving, basket-weaving, felting, sewing, jewelry, pottery, wood and stone carving, and more. The school hosts open studio hours and includes a gallery and gift shop. 100 N. Main St., Galax, VA; (276) 236-3500; chestnutcreekarts.org

Music

Alleghany Jubilee hosts Line Dancing Lessons on Monday nights, a Hillbilly Hoedown with the

Continued on page 34

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www.newrivertrailcabins.com



Rise and Shine Band on Tuesday nights, and an old-time mountain music concert on Saturday evenings. *Spartan Theater*, 25 N. Main St., Sparta, NC; (336) 657-1441; alleghanyjubilee.com

The Earle, a restored 1938 theater, is where WPAQ 740 AM hosts *Merry-Go-Round*, the second longest running live radio broadcast in the country, each Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Blue Ridge & Beyond concerts begin in September and feature a slate of acclaimed musicians. 142 N. Main St., Mount Airy, NC; (336) 786-2222; surryarts.org

Floyd Country Store is a renowned place to experience authentic Appalachian music. The store hosts a variety of popular music events including a Friday Night Backyard Jamboree, Sunday Music Jam, and additional programs such as dance lessons. 206 S. Locust St., Floyd, VA; (540) 745-4563; floydcountystore.com
 At **The Rex Theater**, catch live bluegrass and old-time music every Friday night during WBRF 98.1 FM's radio show, *Blue Ridge Backroads*. 113 E. Grayson St., Galax, VA; (276) 236-0329



The Floyd Country Store

The Yadkin Cultural Arts Center includes the Welborn Gallery, Willingham Theater, studios, and a café. The theater offers live music, dance, theatrical performances, and film screenings. 226 E. Main St., Yadkinville, NC; (336) 679-2941; yadkinarts.org





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New River

The New River, one of the oldest rivers in the world, provides ample chances to fish for trout and bass, kayak, or canoe. It was named a National Wild and Scenic River in 1976, and winds through Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina. There are plenty of outfitters along the way to get you ready for your adventure, including:

New River Outdoor Adventures offers bike, canoe, kayak, and river tube rentals, camping, and boat and bike shuttles.

5785 Fries Road, Galax, VA; (276) 237-8823; newriveroutdooradventures.com

New River Campground provides cabins, RV and tent sites, and river trips. 3745 New River Pkwy., Independence, VA; (276) 773-3412; canoeingthenew.com

New River Trail State Park

Explore the New River Trail by foot, on two wheels, horseback, or by boat. The 57-mile trail is Virginia's longest linear park and traces the New River for 39 miles. On land, trekkers will cross trestles and bridges and traverse tunnels along the way. To access the Galax trailhead, take Interstate 77 to the U.S. 221/U.S. 58 Exit (Exit 14) toward Hillsville/Galax. The trailhead is on the right, where U.S. 58 crosses Chestnut Creek. For equipment rentals and horseback riding, visit dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks. 115 S. Main St., Galax, VA; (276) 238-3388

Hiking on the Parkway

Cumberland Knob, milepost 217.5, is where Parkway construction began in 1935, and was the Park's first public attraction. Hikers can choose the easy half-mile Cumberland Knob Trail (suitable for children) or the challenging two-mile Gulley Creek Trail (allow two hours). Amenities include a visitor center and picnic sites.

Fox Hunter's Paradise, milepost 218.6, is a valley overlook with picnic tables and a relaxing 0.2-mile trail to an observation deck. For more trail info, visit blueridgeparkway.org.



Pilot Mountain State Park

(Above) Towering more than 2,000 feet, Pilot Mountain has been a navigational landmark for centuries, and is now a recreational landmark, offering miles of trails, camping, climbing, and spectacular scenery. The mountain summit remains the principal park area, and is connected to the Yadkin River section by a 6.5-mile trail corridor. 1792 Pilot Knob Park Road, Pinnacle, NC; (336) 325-2355; ncparks.gov

Stewarts Creek Wildlife Management Area

Visitors can enjoy a wealth of activities here, including trout fishing, hiking, horseback riding, birding, primitive camping, and hunting. The wildlife area is about seven miles southeast of Galax. To reach the upper parking area, take the Blue Ridge Parkway to milepost 209, and turn south on State Route 715, then left on Route 975 to its end. dgif.virginia.gov

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