



a DOWNTOWN INDIANA Event

NORTHERN APPALACHIAN FOLK FESTIVAL
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FREE PERFORMANCES BY NATIONAL RECORDING ARTISTS HIGHLIGHT FOURTH ANNUAL NORTHERN APPALACHIAN FOLK FESTIVAL IN DOWNTOWN INDIANA, PENNSYLVANIA

Fine artists, skilled craftsmen, and free performances - including concerts by national recording artists - return to downtown Indiana, Pennsylvania September 9, 10 and 11 for the 2016 Northern Appalachian Folk Festival (NAFF).

Held annually the weekend after Labor Day and entering its fourth year, an improved and expanded NAFF adds more than a full day to its schedule and an additional downtown block to its footprint. The festival celebrates the region's diverse and widespread influences on art and culture, offering "something for everyone."

2016 headliners include singer-songwriter, Dar Williams. Williams recently released her ninth studio album and draws accolades for her live performances, including Newport Folk Festival appearances. NAFF will also feature Southern Culture on the Skids, the long-running rockabilly trio known for boisterous shows and encouraging audience participation. Joining them on the bill are chart-topping Pittsburgh R&B legends, The Jaggerz and Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, Ray Owen. Owen will perform American classics on the main stage as well as a special program for children. Western Pennsylvania-based band, The Stickers, currently enjoying success on the country charts with their single "Countrified," are also slated to perform. Additional acts will be announced throughout the summer.

To open the weekend, The Lively Arts at IUP is sponsoring a Thursday night performance by Alaskan poet, fiddler and storyteller, Ken Waldman. Waldman invites comparisons to Garrison Keillor and raves for connecting with audiences.

Tony Boiano, an executive officer with Downtown Indiana's board of directors and festival administrator, describes NAFF as a family-friendly event with regional appeal. Free admission, interactive opportunities through workshops and friendly competitions, as well as activities for younger festival-goers in 'Children's Alley,' contribute to that mission.

"We're excited about the diverse and vibrant crowds a multi-faceted event like NAFF draws," said David Janusek, executive director of Downtown Indiana.

According to festival founder, Dr. Jim Dougherty, the idea for NAFF grew from Indiana University of Pennsylvania hosting a national conference of the Appalachian Studies Association in 2012. Dougherty, a retired sociology professor, is also a former director of IUP's Center for Northern Appalachian Studies.

Indiana, 60 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, is located in the heart of Northern Appalachia—a region that covers 86 counties in five states that also include West Virginia, New York, Maryland and Ohio.

NAFF still has artist and vendor spaces available for its fair, Saturday and Sunday, with improvements and amenities for exhibitors added. Information and applications are available on the festival website, NorthernAppFolkFest.org.

Ongoing fundraising initiatives include sponsor and partnership opportunities. Contact Janusek for more information: 724-463-6110.

Partners to date include: educational programming sponsors First Commonwealth Bank and Indiana University of Pennsylvania, official media sponsors Indiana Gazette, WDAD, U92, WCCS and Cat Country, official healthcare provider Indiana Regional Medical Center, preferred service providers Lively Arts at IUP and Evergreen Boys and Girls Club of Indiana County, media provider WYEP, area sponsor (hospitality) Park Inn by Radisson, and staged performer sponsor S&T Bank.