

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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On Sunday, September 2nd, the 16th Annual Papa Joe Smiddy Mountain Music Festival will honor the memory and legacy of Dr. Joseph “Papa Joe” Smiddy. The event is presented by the Cove Ridge Center Foundation and will be held at Natural Tunnel State Park in Duffield, VA. This annual gathering seeks to promote the musical heritage of the area’s Appalachian mountain culture and also honors the tireless work of “Papa Joe”, who promoted the music of our region for many decades. In addition to being an accomplished old-time banjo player, entertainer, and educator, Smiddy was Chancellor Emeritus at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise. This year’s performers will be Popular Hill Reunion, UVa-Wise Bluegrass Band, Dr. Joe Smiddy & Reedy Creek, the ETSU Old-Time Ramblers and Bluegrass Pride Band, and Miss Ellie String Band, which is named in honor of Sue Ella Boatwright-Wells, who was instrumental in starting the School of Mountain Music at Mountain Empire Community College. Tyler Hughes will call a Square Dance (no experience needed) to the music of Andrew Barnes & Friends. Radio personality Tom Taylor will serve as the emcee. This year there will be a special presentation and revealing of a permanent sculpture of Papa Joe during the afternoon festivities.

Dr. Joe Smiddy & Reedy Creek, have played together for more than four decades. Reflecting the broad musical tastes of Papa Joe, the band plays a variety of old-time music and original songs. Papa Joe started “Pickin’ in the Park”, the summer Sunday afternoon get-togethers at Natural Tunnel designed to encourage children and families to play music.

The ETSU Bluegrass and Old Time Pride Bands feature students enrolled in East Tennessee State University’s Bluegrass, Old Time and Country Music Studies program. Founded in 1982 it is the longest standing established program of its kind and aims to preserve the musical traditions rooted in Appalachian culture, while at the same time encouraging creativity among its students. Students from all over the world come to ETSU to study in the program and to immerse themselves in the rich cultural heritage of our region.

Festival-goers are encouraged to bring a lawn chair or blanket. All tickets are general admission and may be purchased for \$10 in advance or \$15 at the gate. Children 12 and under are free with a paying adult. To purchase tickets by phone, call (276) 940-2674. Tickets are also available at Natural Tunnel State Park, the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce, and Addington Oil in Weber City.

Proceeds from the festival go into the Cove Ridge Foundation’s Papa Joe Smiddy Scholarship Fund. The Papa Joe Smiddy Mountain Music Festival is an official event of Duffield Daze and is an affiliated site on the Crooked Road.