

## FSU Celebrates Region's Unique Culture and Resilience With Appalachian Festival

Written by FSU News and Media Services  
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Frostburg State University's much-anticipated Appalachian Festival will return for its 12th year from Thursday, Sept. 14, to Saturday, Sept. 16. The free, family-friendly event brings together artists and craftspeople to celebrate all that makes the region unique – its history, culture, music, food and more – with performances, workshops, displays, discussions and activities.

The capstone of the festival is the concert, “An Evening of Appalachian Music – Old-Time, Blues and Bluegrass,” on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the Palace Theatre at 31 E. Main St. in Frostburg. Three masterful ensembles will be featured, including Back Porch Blues, an all-star, down-home acoustic trio consisting of the incredible guitar and vocal work of Eleanor Ellis, the blues harmonica virtuosity of Jay Summerour and the percussion talents of Eric Selby; the Critton Hollow String Band, who with fiddle, hammer dulcimer, banjo and guitar, tend a stable of songs from the first settlements of Appalachia to the best of contemporary American folk music; and The Church Sisters, a duo whose mesmerizing music chronicles their childhood with a haunting sound and bluegrass twist. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$5 for FSU students and youth 18 and under. Tickets can be purchased at the door.

This year's festival focuses on “Sustaining Community and Community Wealth Building,”

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featuring stories of community-based economies and socially responsible benefit corporations.

Exploration of the topic will begin Thursday with the film "Look and See: A Portrait of Wendell Berry" at 7 p.m., also at the Palace Theatre. "Look and See" is a cinematic portrait of the changing landscapes and shifting values of rural America in the era of industrial agriculture, as seen through the mind's eye of writer, farmer and activist Wendell Berry. Afterwards, there will be a discussion of the film by organic farmer Anthony Flaccavento.

The theme of community wealth building continues Friday on FSU's Upper Quad with the Appalachian Symposium, beginning at 8:30 a.m. with a presentation by Flaccavento, author of "Building a Healthy Economy From the Bottom Up," who will introduce the audience to the innovators who are creating thriving, locally based economies and provide a road map for others who are interested in doing the same. Following his talk, at 10 a.m.

, Katie Parker, a research associate at The Democracy Collaborative, will present "Community Wealth Building: Strategies That Invest in People and Place." Her work focuses on how hospitals and health systems can leverage their business practices to support inclusive economic development. At

11 a.m.

, Mike Battle, senior vice president and chief operating officer for EA Engineering, Science and Technology, Inc., PBC, will present "Embracing Conscious Capitalism," focusing on EA's journey to becoming a public benefit corporation and its alignment with the company's environmental mission, employees' interest in supporting their communities and EA's commitment to corporate social responsibility. Friday's events will also feature roundtable discussions with community leaders and conclude with a tour of what was once Brownsville, the home of Frostburg's African-American community that is now part of the FSU campus.

On Saturday, the Session/Jam Tent returns again this year. Musicians of all levels can gather on the Upper Quad throughout the day and play their instruments to the tune of Appalachian genres, including bluegrass, mountain music mix, Celtic and old-time.

Also on Saturday, two stages will host a variety of musical groups from across the region. Blue Hill Bluegrass, Dearest Home, Highland Grass, Brush Creek Bluegrass, the Davis & Elkins College Appalachian Ensemble, Black Diamond Bluegrass, New Creek Station, Old Pitch, and the Barnstormers and RockCandy Cloggers will perform on the Compton stage. On the Thomas Subaru stage, the Rev. Frankie; Time Travelers; Rachel Eddy and Ken Kolodner; Cory and Heather Wharton; Sparky and Rhonda Rucker; Loretta Hummel and Paul Dix; Amy Lough Fabbri; Dakota Karper, Pete Hobbie and Steve Ritz; Jay Smar; Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer;

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and Carrie and Michael Kline will appear. In addition, the Garrett Highlands Pipes and Drums and Frostburg Arion Band will perform on the grounds.

Chapel Happenings will include a Community Singalong focusing on songs of hope, peace and healing at 11:30 a.m. in Cook Chapel. Those interested in stories and music can check out Storytelling in the chapel from 12:30 to 3:15 p.m. Accomplished storytellers Adam Booth, Thomas Burnett, Katie and Otto Ross, Stas' Ziolkowski, Jo Ann Dadisman and Ray Owen will enchant the audience with stories and lore inspired by their Appalachian upbringings. Then at 4:15 p.m., join capstone performers The Church Sisters for an interactive harmony-singing workshop.

Throughout the day, attendees can visit the Explorations Tent. Featured are Preservation Maryland, dedicated to preserving Maryland's historic buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes and archaeological sites; Scales to Tales, an educational program using non-releasable birds of prey and reptiles; a discussion of refugee resettlement in Appalachia; Adventure Capital, an economic initiative launched through the nonprofit advocacy group Engage Mountain Maryland; the Allegany County Women's Action Coalition, which works to help local communities thrive; and Stop the Potomac Pipeline, dedicated to stopping fracked gas from being shipped from Pennsylvania to West Virginia.

In the Folkways Tent, festivalgoers can learn how to play the dulcimer or join a dance workshop, as well as learn about smaller-scale local food production and the ballad traditions of the area.

In addition to plenty of food and entertainment for all ages, the festival will provide activities and programming specifically for children, who can enjoy an interactive performance by Grammy Award winners Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer; join in singalongs with multi-instrumentalist Ray Owen; join the Sunnyland Band and play along on spoons, jugs, washboards and all kinds of instruments from other countries; paint goat-shaped silhouettes at the Capering Kids 4-H Goat Club display; and make traditional Appalachian toys at Hands-on Arts.

A variety of artisans are also featured throughout the festival, offering tatting, mountain dulcimers, pottery, jewelry, knitting, baskets, portrait art, nature photography, decorative gourds, fiber arts, multicultural arts, sassafras root beer, woodworking, pewter and botanical drawings. Also on the grounds are the Heishman HoneyB Hut, the Nettle Patch, the Western Maryland

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Chapter of the Archeological Society, Engage Mountain Maryland, Appalachian Mountain Books, Wynter's Haven, the Frostburg Museum Association, Yellow K Records, the Allegany County Women's Action Coalition, the Allegany and Garrett County Bird Club and the Appalachian Laboratory.

To learn more about the FSU Appalachian Festival, visit [www.frostburg.edu/events/afestival](http://www.frostburg.edu/events/afestival) or email Dr. Kara Rogers Thomas at [krogersthomas@frostburg.edu](mailto:krogersthomas@frostburg.edu)

Situated in the mountains of Allegany County, Frostburg State University is one of the 12 institutions of the University System of Maryland. FSU is a comprehensive, residential regional university and serves as an educational and cultural center for Western Maryland. For more information, visit [www.frostburg.edu](http://www.frostburg.edu) or [facebook.com/frostburgstateuniversity](https://facebook.com/frostburgstateuniversity). Follow FSU on Twitter [@frostburgstate](https://twitter.com/frostburgstate)

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