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Popular Midsummer Bluegrass Music Festival returns

**MANITOWISH WATERS** – Set among the towering pine trees and lake-dotted landscape in Manitowish Waters comes some of the sweetest bluegrass music you will ever hear. The 30th annual Midsummer Bluegrass Music Festival on Thursday-Sunday, July 25- 28 will feature music by artists and bands from all over the nation. Hosted by the Cozy Cove Tavern & Restaurant, this year's outdoor event (Wisconsin's longest running bluegrass festival) features six headline artists/bands: Blue Highway, a Bluegrass super group from Virginia, Kristi Stanley & Running Blind from West Virginia, HillBilly Fever, hailing from North Carolina, Chicago-based Truman's Ridge, WheelHouse and Down From The Hills from Madison.

While there will be innovative tunes from a number of genres including folk, blues, Texas Swing, rock, roots, Americana, acoustic jazz, Cajun and Celtic, this Bluegrass cast represents the most approachable and accessible of all the genres of music. For example, at the scheduled Bluegrass Institute of the Northwoods Sponsored Question & Answer sessions, patrons may ask Blue Highway's band leader, Tim Stafford, about his recollections of touring with Allison Krause & Union Station and their performance at the Cozy Cove for the 3rd Annual Midsummer Bluegrass Festival on July 25, 1992.

Blue Highway rolls on with a rich legacy carried on by three powerhouse songwriters and vocalists in **Tim Stafford**, **Wayne Taylor**, and **Shawn Lane**, whose harmonies soar over the dynamic banjo of **Jason Burleson** and the tasteful Dobro of **Gary Hultman**.

Momentum continues to build for the 25 year strong band, esteemed amongst the elite performers in Bluegrass. Blue Highway has earned a collective 28 IBMA Awards, 6 SPBGMA Awards, one Dove Award, plus three Grammy nominations as a band.

The mark of a stellar bluegrass show is its inclusion of Bluegrass Royalty to the lineup. Kristi Stanley meets this lineage by being the daughter-in-law of the legendary Ralph Stanley. Dr. Stanley played at the 4th and then at 10th Annual Midsummer Bluegrass Festival when Kristi's husband, Ralph Stanley II, performed with his father.

Kristi Stanley is making her own inroads into the Bluegrass Genre as she has become well known for performing a diverse catalogue of roots music for her audience. She says it's all about making a connection between them and the music, delighting the fans and brightening their days. Kristi hopes through her music she and her band are able to create emotion and bring back memories of days gone by. Kristi's shows include a vast array of Americana, Bluegrass, Gospel, Traditional Country and even the occasional Classic Rock song. Her fan base continues to grow nationwide and patrons will be pleased to know that Kristi Stanley & Running Blind have a scheduled Meet and Greet at 2:15 PM Friday to reveal her first hand take on being part of the Stanley Bluegrass legacy.

Another underlying intrigue that adds to the stature of a top-notch Bluegrass Festival, is to contrast the subtleties of Bluegrass' regionalism. HillBilly Fever hails from North Carolina, not far from the residences of this year's other bands living in Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee. Their band's motto is: everybody needs a shot of HillBilly Fever, while the upper Midwest band, WheelHouse, carries shots of its own namesake whiskey brand. Truman's Ridge adds to the medley as they have been dubbed "Chicago Style Bluegrass at its finest." At the Meet & Greet opportunities scheduled inside the 1930s vintage Cozy Cove for HillBilly Fever Friday at 1:15 PM and Truman's Ridge at 5:15 PM Saturday, a person might easily be amused that both bands talk and sing with a charm and nuance distinct from one another, yet fit perfectly under the umbrella of Bluegrass Music.

The line-up for Thursday, Friday and Saturday includes Blue Highway, WheelHouse, Kristi Stanley & Running Blind, Truman's Ridge, HillBilly Fever, Down From The Hills, Hand Picked (Tomahawk) and the intriguing HurleyWoodz (Hurley/Ironwood). Sunday's Gospel line-up allows for farewell performances by HillBilly Fever, (10 AM) followed by Truman's Ridge as the artists premiere songs of their recently released Gospel Recordings.

Daily and weekend, family special and all access pass (includes walk-in camping on-site) are among your ticket options. RV or trailer camping is also available; all campsites are rustic, but a call ahead to reserve is encouraged because of a limited number of on-site spaces.

Cozy Cove is located on 5786 U.S. Highway 51. Bring a blanket or lawn chair for the musical performances. Make it a full week of fun by staying at one of the local lodging facilities. A serene natural Northwoods beauty frames the township of Manitowish Waters. Just across the street is a paved hike/bike path leading to the downtown and elsewhere. So, bring your bike and walking shoes for an excursion in between sets.

For more information, contact bluegrass festival founder and Cozy Cove owner Jerry Florian at 715-543-2166, [info@MidSummerBluegrass.com](mailto:info@MidSummerBluegrass.com) Visit [www.MidSummerBluegrass.com](http://www.MidSummerBluegrass.com) to see the full schedule and detailed ticket information.