

FIDDLERS' JAMBOREE

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As the result of the dreams and determination of Congressman Joe L. Evins and Berry C. Williams, the Jamboree continues the preservation of country, folk, bluegrass and Appalachian music and Appalachian arts and crafts. In recognition of their dedication, the beautiful Joe L. Evins Appalachian Arts and Crafts Center was built overlooking Center Hill Lake. The Center is dedicated to the training of self-reliant and self-supporting craftspeople and to preserving the unique qualities of the rich crafts of the Appalachian region.

Each year, as a reminder of the great contribution Berry C. Williams has made to our area, a Junior and Senior Fiddle-Off Grand Champion

Title and the Berry C. Williams Trophy Award is given the Grand Champion Fiddler.

In 1993 the James G. (Bobo) Driver family made possible a trophy to be given to the outstanding Overall Grand Champion Beginner Fiddler Musician.

In 1997, the Smithville Jamboree, became "The Official Tennessee and National Jamboree and Crafts Festival and National Championship of Country Musician Beginners, the Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree and Crafts Festival was among the very first and today the "Granddaddy of 'em all!"

The 2018 Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree and Crafts Festival will be held on the square in downtown Smithville on Friday, July 6th and Saturday, July 7th commencing at 9 a.m. both days.

This well-respected bluegrass festival, celebrating its 47th year, is committed to preserving Appalachian music, dance and craft – a mission that is apparently being accomplished judging from the thousands of spectators that come to the event from every state in the U.S. as well as many visitors from abroad. Over 200 craft booths filled with handmade creations, plus a variety of food vendors, will fill the streets surrounding the courthouse this year. Featured entertainment will come in the form of bluegrass and Appalachian music and dance competitions on the stage situated on the east side of the square. Folding chairs are provided for the audience, yet those who plan on staying a while often bring softer seating in the form of lawn or camp chairs. For those just

looking to "jam" rather than perform, "shade-tree picking" can be found all around the courthouse lawn. These impromptu sessions are just as much fun as the onstage show and often provide a cooler setting to take in the old-time music.

A new addition to the Jamboree competition is a category for Old-Time Appalachian Folk Singing: Duet, Trio or Quartet. This new category will enhance the already comprehensive line-up of events including Flat Top Guitar, Clogging (Junior and Senior), Buck Dancing (Junior and Senior), Dobro Guitar, Mountain and Hammer Dulcimer, Novelty Event, Old-Time Fiddle Band, Autoharp, Gospel Singing (Solo and Group), Country Harmonica, Old-Time Banjo, Mandolin, Fiddle (Junior and

Senior), Old-Time Appalachian Flatfoot Dance (Junior and Senior), Bluegrass Banjo, Bluegrass Band, Contest Fiddle, Square Dancing and the culmination of the festival – the Fiddle-Off. This festival also features a special set of events just for beginners. On Saturday, children aged 0-12 compete in Buck Dancing, Clogging, Dobro Guitar, Mandolin, Banjo, Flat Top Guitar and Fiddle. Saturday, July 7 will begin at 9 a.m. and feature the finals of events, including buck dancing, clogging, guitar, mandolin, banjo and fiddle. There will also be the Junior and Senior Fiddlers' fiddle-off for the Grand Championship and the Berry C. Williams Memorial Trophy. The finals usually begin between 5 and 7 p.m. depending on the weather.

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