

## **LETTER: MusicFest 'n Sugar Grove Will Continue**

Written by Submitted  
Friday, 15 November 2013 13:11

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On Nov. 15, GoBlueRidge.net received the following letter from Willard C. Watson, III, and Ashley Wilson, concerning the Doc & Rosa Lee Watson Musicfest 'n Sugar Grove.

Dear friends and community members,

For 16 years MusicFest 'n Sugar Grove has been a tradition in the High Country, and it will continue to be in the years to come. We hope you will join us on July 11 and 12, 2014 at the Historic Cove Creek School in Sugar Grove.

We are committed to advancing the legacy of the festival imagined by a dedicated group of people who refused to let their community fall into the shadows. While Doc Watson was the voice and face of the festival for many years, there have been many people behind the scenes who were instrumental in the event's creation and success.

With heavy hearts, we will carry on the work of Amy Shelton and Tommy Walsh, who will not be here to enjoy the festival with us next year.

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Because of Cove Creek Preservation and Development, of which Amy and Tommy were an integral part, thousands of people from around the globe have been introduced to the community of Sugar Grove and have been allowed to discover its many treasures.

Through their work, the Historic Cove Creek School was saved from demolition and turned into a center for jobs, community, and one of the most successful and well-attended events in the High Country. They turned the school from a symbol of what had been into a beacon of possibility and participatory community development.

Amy worked selflessly and tirelessly for the betterment of her community. She pushed relentlessly for the survival and revitalization of the home she loved. The number of hours she put into the music festival and other efforts to promote Sugar Grove are too many to count.

Tommy was a bridge builder, connecting people and businesses with causes he believed in. MusicFest 'n Sugar Grove was one of the many he promoted throughout his long and fruitful career.

For us, what began as an interest in the music festival turned into an investment in the success of a mountain community with much to offer. As young people who became engaged in community development, Amy and Tommy were incredible mentors to us.

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It's been an honor and privilege to work with and learn from Amy and Tommy in these few years we had with them. But those lessons are timeless and the impact that they made on the community and the people around them will live on forever.

Amy and Tommy exemplified the values of altruism, humility, and empathy while carrying a vision for the future of the communities they loved. It would be a mistake for us not to continue their work.

The best way to do honor to what has been built in Sugar Grove by so many good

people--Amy, Tommy, and Doc among them--is to uphold the work that has been done and sustain it into the future. With the support of the community and our faithful attendees, we will accomplish this. MusicFest 'n Sugar Grove will experience positive growth in the years to come.

Thank you Amy and Tommy for your leadership and your kindness. We will miss you tremendously and hope to make you proud.

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With gratitude,

Willard C. Watson, III

Ashley Wilson

Doc & Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest 'n Sugar Grove Co-Chairs

**The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the author do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of GoBlueRidge.net and High Country Radio.**