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## **MICHIGAN IRISH MUSIC FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2017 LINEUP 4-Day Festival Returns Sept. 14-17**

The Michigan Irish Music Festival will kick off the 2017 festival with a **Pub Preview Party** again on Thursday night. The Pub Party will give patrons a preview of the weekend with food, beverage, and entertainment in the pub tent only. Admission is \$5 (cash only Thursday). Three bands will play Thursday. The full festival opens Friday, featuring six stages and an extensive selection of food, beverages (domestic beer, Irish whiskey, Irish cider, and local craft beer), shopping, and cultural/dance offerings. The music line-up is being finalized with over 20 bands on tap.

**We Banjo 3** - We Banjo 3 has claimed the # 1 position in Billboard's World Music charts; top honours from the Irish Music Rights Organization (IMRO); and the distinction of entertaining an American president, an Irish Prime Minister, and members of the U.S. Congress at the annual "Friends of Ireland" luncheon on Capitol Hill. All the way from Galway, Ireland, We Banjo 3 plays a blend of traditional Irish, old time, and bluegrass music they call "Celt Grass."

**Lunasa** - This band is internationally acknowledged as being the finest traditional Irish instrumental outfit of recent times. They are renowned for their stunning shows, honed by superb musicianship and a constant touring cycle. Lunasa has performed over 1,500 shows across 36 countries since the band formed in 1997.

**Cara Dillon** - Cara possesses a rare and unique voice that has been lauded since her very beginnings: winning the All Ireland singing trophy at only 14 years old. Recent years have seen her return wholeheartedly to her Irish roots, creating fresh interpretations of traditional standards with stunning results.

**The Elders** - The Elders were founded in 1998 by six individuals with a passion for music rooted in Americana and Celtic folk rock. From the beginning, their ability to bring together the art of storytelling, with elements both musically progressive and rooted in tradition, has won them a broad international fan base.

**Old Blind Dogs** - A Scottish musical group featuring traditional Scottish folk and Celtic music, Old Blind Dogs were named "Folk Band of the Year" at the Scots Trad Music Awards. The band has toured extensively, performing in Britain, the USA, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Spain, Italy, and Russia.

**Goitse** - This multi-award-winning quintet came together at Limerick University's Irish World Academy. Recently crowned Live Ireland's Trad Group of the Year and Chicago Irish American News' Group of the Year, they have made a name for themselves as one of the most sought-after bands playing Irish Traditional music.

**Ten Strings and A Goat Skin** - Members of this bilingual band hailing from Prince Edward Island, Canada are multiple nominees for the 2013 Canadian Folk Music Awards, East Coast Music Awards, and Music PEI Awards. Together, they form a trad/folk/fusion trio.

**Danny Burns** - Danny learned his craft on the road while playing and living in New York, Nashville, New Orleans, and Chicago. His music pulls influence from his traditional upbringing as well as legendary singer-



songwriters like John Martyn, Van Morrison, Richard Thompson, and Christy Moore.

**Dave Curley** - A multi-instrumentalist, singer, and dancer, Dave is no stranger to the festival. While his accolades are endless, Dave's best known in our community for being a member of award-winning bands Slide and Runa. His most recent record, "A Brand New Day," features a contemporary sensibility rooted in tradition.

**Moxie Strings** - The Moxie Strings is the electrifying combination of fiddler Diana Ladio and electric cellist Alison Lynn. Their ear-catching originals and dance-worthy traditional tunes have made the Moxie Strings one of Michigan's most promising and well-loved instrumental acts.

**Seamus Kennedy** - A fan favorite of the Michigan Irish Music Festival, Seamus' trademark is his ongoing interaction with the audiences. Fast-paced humor is very much a part of what Seamus does, whether he's telling a series of rapid-fire jokes or launching into a lyrical parody.

**Blackthorn** - Tradition combines with Ireland's best contemporary songs for a musical experience that captures the history of Ireland. Each member of the band plays multiple instruments, complementing the lead vocals of Belfast native Richard McMullan and the band's tight blend of five-part harmony.

**Kennedy's Kitchen** - Kennedy's Kitchen has been making Irish music together since 1998, playing everything from backyard parties and weddings to pubs, concert halls, and national festivals. Their music is rooted in traditional Irish jigs, reels, hornpipes, stories, and songs - adding their own compositions along the way.

**Tallymoore** - Tallymoore is a contemporary Irish folk band from Milwaukee that performs a range of Irish and Scottish folk tunes, ballads, reels, and classic pub songs. Tallymoore has made appearances at major Irish music festivals across the United States, including Milwaukee, Kansas City, Syracuse, and Indianapolis.

**Stone Clover** - Stone Clover's original approach to songwriting is a melding of pub-style tunes mixed with aspects of rock, punk, gypsy, folk, and Americana. They affectionately call this style of their own "Paddy Slag," as it clearly comes from Irish tradition but has so many other influences as well.

**Conklin Ceili** - Formed in 1997 after a weekend of jamming, chatting, and laughing, the Conklin Ceili Band has established itself as one of West Michigan's most beloved purveyors of Celtic and Irish-American music with two studio albums under its belt.

**Brother Crowe** - Hailing from Detroit, Brother Crowe has hammered through over 100 shows in a year, sometimes playing three gigs in a day. The band, led by brothers Derek (vocals/harmonica/bodhran) and Paul (guitars/banjo/vocals), hones in on country/indie-folk roots that still possess a traditional Celtic sound.

**Max & Ruth Bloomquist** - Ruth and Max celebrate 40 years of performing their style of Acoustic Americana, with roots in folk, bluegrass, and traditional country music. The pair has toured in southern France nearly every year since 2008. A live CD was released in 2012 and a Christmas EP in 2015.

The Michigan Irish Music Festival returns to Heritage Landing in downtown Muskegon September 14<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>. The festival features Irish and Celtic music on six covered stages. In addition to live music, the Celtic Kitchen and beverage stations serve authentic Irish food and beverages, including Irish Fest Stout, Irish Cream, Magner's Irish Cider, Irish whiskey, wine, local craft beer, and Budweiser products. The Tea Room provides non-alcoholic choices and treats in a relaxed atmosphere. Other festival activities include the Irish Market and



the Irish Store, children's activities, a cultural center, and a session tent. The Highland Games will also return. On Saturday, we host the FEIS, an Irish dance competition. On Sunday morning, a Catholic mass will be held at 9AM, followed by a traditional Irish breakfast. This year, Celtic Canines is back at the festival on Sunday, which provides patrons with the opportunity to learn about and meet Irish dog breeds.

Advance tickets and a festival pass are available online. Patrons can save \$5 per ticket versus the gate price when they buy online. The festival offers an Early-In Free promotion on Friday only from 5-6 PM sponsored by Family Financial Credit Union. Other major sponsors of the festival include G&L, Waddell & Reed, and Budweiser. The Holiday Inn Muskegon-Harbor and Shoreline Inn are the host hotels for the festival. For complete festival information, visit [www.michiganirish.org](http://www.michiganirish.org). Additional bands will be announced on the website.

For media information, call 231.683.2065.