

Podunk Wins National Award

Nashville, Tenn. – On September 30th the International Bluegrass Music Association presented their annual awards in Nashville, TN. The 14th Annual Podunk Bluegrass Festival was chosen as the “Event of the Year”. This award recognizes events (festivals, concerts, other live performance productions) for their outstanding accomplishment and service to bluegrass music in the field of event production. The event must have been active and the accomplishments evident within the general eligibility period for all IBMA Awards in that particular year. The recipients are judged by the committee for their: overall contributions to the field of event production, professionalism and quality of presentation, work furthering bluegrass in their area of service and demonstrated ability to foster bluegrass music's image.

Longevity of an event (number of years produced) may be a contributing factor for extending the award, but length of service alone is not an acceptable reason for recognizing an event. All candidates must be judged and compared equally for their contributions within the stated eligibility period and nothing within these criteria prevents an event from winning the award more than once or in consecutive years.

Podunk was a finalist along with the 30th Annual Minnesota Bluegrass Festival held in Minneapolis Minnesota and the Red White and Bluegrass Festival in Morgantown, West Virginia. Ironically the Red White and Bluegrass Festival is run in conjunction with the local parks and recreation department similar to the partnership Podunk has with the Town of East Hartford.

C. Roger Moss, accepted the award on behalf of the festival board. In his acceptance speech he said, “Live music is a once in a lifetime experience. Presenting a festival gives us a chance to make life lasting impressions. It has been our goal since beginning this adventure in 1996 to present the very best Bluegrass has to offer. Through a volunteer board that works all year and a group of volunteers that work four long days we are proud to receive this award.” Moss added, “The 2010 Event of the Year award is an honor that we are proud of and gives cadence to future festivals in the Bluegrass State of Connecticut.”

Moss closed by thank the sponsors “...without whom we would not be standing on this stage today. They include; USA Hauling and Recycling, D’Addario Foundation, Deering Banjo, Kaman Music, Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford Fine Arts Commission, Thurston Foods, The Gengras Motor Group, The Hartford Courant, Sheraton Hotel, Green Mountain Coffee and lastly and most importantly the Town of East Hartford who provide a beautiful venue and support to present a first class event.”

In addition to Podunk winning the first time it made the final selection, other winners included many who have performed at Podunk. They include Russell Moore, was recognized with his third IBMA award for Male Vocalist of the Year. A longtime fan favorite along with his band, IIIrd Tyme Out, who performed at the 2009 festival.

Michael Cleveland won his eighth Fiddle Player of the Year trophy. Later in the evening Marshall Wilborn received his second Bass Player of the Year Award, and the entire Flamekeeper band was

named Instrumental Group of the Year for the fourth consecutive year. They performed at the festival this year.

Claire Lynch took home the 2010 Female Vocalist of the Year trophy, an award she received previously in 1997. Claire was in the line-up for 2009 and has performed as part of the indoor concert series and Sounds of Summer.

The award for Emerging Artist of the Year went to The Josh Williams Band. Josh and his band performed at Podunk this summer.

The Gibson Brothers, Eric and Leigh accepted the award for Gospel Recorded Performance of the Year for "Ring the Bell," written by Chet O'Keefe. Later in the evening they received the Song of the Year trophy for the same composition. The Gibson Brothers are a fan favorite at Podunk and performed this year as well.

The 21st International Bluegrass Music Awards ended with a "Gentle on My Mind" finale, Hall of Fame inductee John Hartford's most well-known song, featuring Tim O'Brien, Sam Bush, Peter Rowan, Jamie Hartford and Alison Brown backed by the John Hartford Stringband. The Awards were broadcast live on Sirius XM Satellite Radio (Bluegrass Junction, channel 14), and will be syndicated to more than 300 U.S. markets and 14 foreign networks thanks to the sponsorship of Martha White, GHS Strings, Sugar Hill Records, Deering Banjos, Compass Records and the International Bluegrass Music Museum.

The International Bluegrass Music Awards are voted on by the professional membership of the IBMA, which serves as the trade association for the bluegrass music industry. The IBMA Awards Show is the centerpiece of World of Bluegrass week (September 27-October 3, 2010), which includes the industry's business conference and Bluegrass Fan Fest.