



25th Joe Val Bluegrass Festival

February 12 - 14, 2010

Sheraton Framingham, Framingham, MA

Presented by the Boston Bluegrass Union



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOSTON BLUEGRASS UNION ANNOUNCES 2010

BBU HERITAGE AWARD WINNERS

BOSTON – The Boston Bluegrass Union (BBU) is proud to announce the recipients of the 2010 BBU Heritage Awards. The awards are presented each year by the BBU to honor those who have made substantial contributions to furthering bluegrass in New England. The awards will be presented during the 25th annual Joe Val Bluegrass Festival, Presidents Day Weekend, February 12 – 14, 2010, at the Sheraton Framingham, Framingham, MA.

This year's Music Industry winners are:

The Founders of Rounder Records: Ken Irwin, Marian Leighton Levy, and Bill Nowlin – In 1970, three Boston-area students – armed with a passion for traditional music and little else – embarked on an odyssey that now spans forty years and over 3,000 albums. Celebrating its fourth decade in 2010, Rounder Records has remained a bastion of independence in the increasingly corporate music industry. Along the way, they have released a staggering number of classic bluegrass, folk, and stringband albums, bringing American roots music to an audience that spans both dedicated enthusiasts and curious newcomers. In doing so, they have helped to insure the music's survival and continued growth. In their first decade alone, Rounder issued influential recordings by the likes of J.D. Crowe, Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerard, Tony Rice, Norman Blake, Tony Trischka, David Grisman, New England's own Joe Val, and many, many others, alongside essential archival releases. In 1987 they issued the debut album by Alison Krauss, then a humble young fiddler from Illinois, who eventually became the genre's most popular and decorated act. The past decade has seen Rounder survive industry-wide turmoil to become not only the leading roots music outlet in America, but the premier independent label across the board, dealing in an eclectic array of sounds and styles, from contemporary pop to traditional music from around the world. They have been home to an astonishing percentage of today's top bluegrass stars, including Krauss, Dan Tyminski, Claire Lynch, Rhonda Vincent, the Grascals, Blue Highway, IIIrd Tyme Out, NewFound Road, and Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, and Rounder tirelessly continues to scout out and develop new talent, such as Michael Cleveland, Dailey and Vincent, Sierra Hull, Danny Paisley, and the Steeldrivers.

This year's Musician award winners are:

White Mountain Bluegrass – Mac and Hazel McGee, transplanted southerners residing in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, started White Mountain Bluegrass in 1970, and have since lead it through myriad incarnations and endless gigs. From modest beginnings in coffeehouses and pizza parlors to prestigious festival slots and European tours, the McGees have proudly spread their musical heritage via a uniquely soulful music that blends strong bluegrass roots with touches of vintage country, gospel, and Appalachian balladry. Mac and Hazel's performances are marked by an understated charm and warmly informal demeanor, and through their winning personalities and musical gifts, they have helped introduce bluegrass music to new audiences both in New England and around the world.

Eric Levenson – Bassist Eric Levenson is a Boston bluegrass fixture, whose good nature, rock-solid timing, and warm tone has graced innumerable recordings, jam sessions, club shows, and festival slots. As a member of the pivotal ensemble Joe Val and the New England Bluegrass Boys for eight years, Levenson toured extensively both at home and abroad, and was heard many times on NPR's Prairie Home Companion program. Other artists he has performed or recorded with include Hazel Dickens, Bill Grant and Delia Bell, Jack Tottle, Jim and Jennie and the Pinetops, Boston City Limits, the Charles River Valley Boys, and many others. He is a regular at the Bluegrass Picking Party at the Cantab Lounge in Cambridge, MA, which has evolved into a crucible for young bluegrass talent. Outside of music, Levenson is an award-winning theatrical set and lighting designer, and a scenic artist for films.

The Boston Bluegrass Union is a 501(c)3 non-profit, all volunteer organization, dedicated to preserving and promoting this original American music genre. Celebrating our 33rd season, the BBU is the premier source for events, education, and information on bluegrass music in the Northeast.

Additional Media Information: Contact Gerry Katz at gkatz@bbu.org or (617) 515-8383 for additional information, images, or interview requests. Visit www.bbu.org for festival details, including Main Stage and Workshop schedules, artist biographies, and more.