

DO YOU HAVE WINTER CABIN FEVER? GRASSROOTS FESTIVAL IS THE ANTIDOTE

When it's cold outside, you can have a heart-warming experience at the West Virginia Winter Music Festival on Jan. 27 in Lewisburg, W. Va. Good music and a good cause combine at the festival, which raises funds for needy musicians.

More than 50 bands offer a variety of musical genres, with performances spread out among venues around town. Lewisburg is a 260-mile drive from Washington, D.C., in the southeastern part of the state.

The festival features "homegrown regional music," according to festival co-founder Jim Snyder. Musicians are drawn from southern West Virginia and Virginia. Some are professional musicians and others are "weekend warriors" who have other jobs, but like to play music on the side. Performers volunteer their time.

The festival is "open to all genres," said Snyder, but the music generally includes folk, rock, Americana, bluegrass, and blues.

Snyder, a West Virginia native and a professional musician, will perform at the festival. He plays acoustic guitar and has an eclectic repertoire. He said his influences range from the Beatles to the Carter Family; one venue calls him "West Virginia's Jimmy Buffett." He performs solo or as part of a duo or trio.

A \$20 festival wristband gives entrance to



Greenbrier Co. Tourism

The West Virginia Winter Music Festival takes place in several venues around Lewisburg.

seven venues: The Asylum, Greenbrier Valley Visitors Center, Hill and Holler, The Irish Pub, Lewis Theatre, The Sweet Shoppe, and The Wild

Bean. For \$5, you can sample performances at the Hub/Barn All-Ages Stage.

Some local hotels have festival packages and at least one has a shuttle, though venues are within walking distance.

The grassroots event began in 2013 as a fundraiser for a local musician who needed help after fire destroyed his home. Community support was so enthusiastic the event was continued annually with the goal of providing assistance to West Virginia professional musicians in need — and not only in a crisis situation. With the tough economy, some musicians need help paying the rent or fixing the car, Snyder explained.

In addition, the festival funds music-related projects in local schools.

The festival

What: West Virginia Winter Music Festival

When: Jan. 27

Where: Lewisburg, W. Va.; seven venues

Info/tickets: wvmusicfestival.org

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