



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - May 3, 2022**

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## **Berkshire Busk! To Be Bigger, Better and More Fun This Summer for Downtown Great Barrington**

*Free Music, Dance, Acrobatics and More  
Every Friday and Saturday starting Memorial Day weekend*

After a successful inaugural season last summer, Berkshire Busk! returns this year with more free events, a longer season and a deeper pool of support to bring music, dance and joy to downtown Great Barrington.

"You are going to see so much fun in downtown Great Barrington this summer," says Berkshire Busk! Founder & Festival Director Eugene Carr. "We learned last year that street performers can bring culture to downtown Great Barrington in all forms. You will enjoy clowns, jazz, jugglers, Italian folk music, magicians and even a giant pogo stick jumper. Our town will come alive with culture every weekend. And it is all free to anyone who is lucky enough to be here."

New features this year will include daytime Saturday performances starting at the weekly Farmers Market, a full array of events on Railroad Street (which will be closed to traffic entirely) on Friday and Saturday nights, and an extended season that will start Memorial Day weekend.

Last year's successful experiment prompted deeper community support with more than 40 sponsors, including lead sponsors Warrior Trading, Calyx Berkshire Dispensary, Départ Wine, Iredale Cosmetics and Haddad Subaru.

The immersive arts experience will place approximately 100 "buskers" (performers who play outside on the street for tips) at an array of locations throughout the downtown area on weekends from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day.

"The Town of Great Barrington sees this festival as an innovative and creative way to help ensure that the stores and restaurants in our downtown district continue to recover from the pandemic," says Great Barrington Town Manager Mark Pruhenski. "This year we're closing Railroad Street to all traffic on Friday and Saturday nights creating a new kind of community experience in our downtown area."

### **FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS:**

Saturday Morning and Afternoon Busking: Berkshire Busk! has partnered with the Great Barrington Farmers market and has programmed musicians to play from 10 AM to 12:30 PM. Then, from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM, busker groups will perform outside at six locations.

Railroad Street “Saturday Nights”: On nine successive Saturday nights from July 9 through September 3:

- Location: Railroad Street will be transformed into a walking zone “town square.”
- Outdoor Performances & Dining: The Town’s outdoor dining program will be enhanced by two “main stage” locations for performances at the top and bottom of Railroad Street
- Night Market: An array of vendor booths selling locally made goods will be onsite. All local stores and independent vendors are now being invited to participate.

WSBS Partnership: On July 23 and August 20, WSBS will bring up its mobile broadcast station to Railroad Street and will broadcast live performances and interview buskers.

Berkshire Busk! Roadside: In partnership with Berkshire Mountain Distillers (located a 10 minute drive from downtown Great Barrington), there will be musicians performing on Saturday afternoons from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM. There will be free complimentary tasting flights of their spirits as well as an outdoor bar featuring cocktails for purchase, for those 21 and over.

Family Day: On July 30, Berkshire Busk! Will host its second annual Family Day at the Gazebo in downtown Great Barrington from 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM. Giggle Park will live up to its name as kids of all ages are awed and amazed by the two different magicians and a participatory drum circle. The afternoon will end with a special performance from the beloved local performer Roger the Jester.

Broad Community Support: The festival has been supported by an increased number of local business owners, individual donors, as well as the Mass Cultural Council and the Town of Great Barrington. This summer a total of 42 business sponsors are supporting the festival, and James Taylor donated a signed guitar which was auctioned by CharityBuzz to support the project.

“Artists of all kinds loved performing for Great Barrington residents and visitors last summer, and we’re delighted that so many have decided to return,” Carr says. “The festival welcomes headline performers from Boston’s Faneuil Hall circuit, including crowd favorites Darren Yong, Wacky Chad and Cate Great.”

The festival schedule—along with names, dates and locations of performances—can be found at [www.berkshirebusk.com](http://www.berkshirebusk.com). Though the programming has largely been set, last minute applications are still open for performers to participate in Berkshire Busk!. Selected performers will be provided a stipend for their participation. Solicitation for tips is also allowed and encouraged. Online applications are now available at [www.berkshirebusk.com](http://www.berkshirebusk.com).

## **ABOUT BERKSHIRE BUSK!**

Berkshire Busk! strives to improve economic development and community engagement during the summer in downtown Great Barrington, MA, by harnessing artistic talent from the community and beyond to create a new and vibrant downtown cultural experience. Berkshire Busk! Is a project endorsed by the Town of Great Barrington, and entirely supported by sponsorship fees from companies and organizations, as well as philanthropic donations from granting organizations and individuals. It is operated under a fiscal sponsorship agreement with the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires.

## LEAD SPONSORS IN 2022:

Berkshire Busk! is made possible by support from business sponsors and individual donors. In 2022, the Gold sponsors are: Warrior Trading, Calyx Berkshire Dispensary, Départ Wine, Haddad Subaru and Iredale Cosmetics. The Silver sponsors are: Robin's Candy, The Town of Great Barrington, Triplex Cinema and Farnsworth Fine Cannabis Company. The current list of all sponsors can be viewed at: <https://www.berkshirebusk.com/sponsors-2022>.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

Festival Director: Eugene Carr is the co-founder and former CEO of technology company Patron Technology and PatronManager.com, and co-founder of ALO.ai. He lives in Great Barrington and is a social entrepreneur who has been a visionary in bringing internet-based technology solutions to arts and cultural organizations since the early days of the consumer web. Carr's first technology company in 1995 was the groundbreaking national arts listing and ticketing site Culturefinder.com, funded by AOL and Comcast Ventures. Carr began his career in arts management and event production, serving as the Executive Director of the American Symphony Orchestra and Concordia Orchestra, where he produced hundreds of concerts at venues in New York City primarily at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center.

Carr earned degrees in Cello Performance at the Oberlin Conservatory and History from Oberlin College, and is the co-founder of LaunchU, an Oberlin alumni-led entrepreneurship program. He also earned an MBA from Columbia Business School, and co-authored Breaking the Fifth Wall: Rethinking Arts Management for the 21st Century.

Festival General Manager: Carli Scolforo is a Pittsfield native and Siena College graduate. She served as a member of the Berkshire Busk! production team last summer, and was seen each week hosting nightly livestreams on the Berkshire Busk! Instagram account where she filmed and interviewed performers and fans.

Scolforo majored in English and Communications-Journalism at Siena College and spent her spare time exploring her love for music and theater. Scolforo wrote music-based articles for multiple student and professional publications, hosted a weekly radio show on WVCR-FM, and worked as a theater technician/audio engineer for the Siena Creative Arts Department. In 2020, amid COVID-19 restrictions, she acted as sound designer for Siena College's production of radio play *The War of The Worlds* and received two regional awards from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival for her work. Scolforo's experience with live events began in high school where she spent four years on the promotional "Fun Team" at the Pittsfield Suns, in Pittsfield, MA.

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