

Tommy Bledsoe Bio

Tommy Bledsoe is a storyteller, musician, actor, writer, director, and educator. He grew up in the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia, where he learned the value of passing along cultural wisdom through dance, songs, and stories.

He toured the U.S. and abroad from 1980-1998 as a member of Roadside Theater Company, a division of Appalshop, Inc., a multimedia arts center based in Whitesburg, KY. Tommy recorded on and produced audio and video productions for June Appal Recordings, Mountain Empire Community College Home Craft Days Festival, Tour St. Augustine, and Kentucky Educational Television programs *Old Music for New Ears*, *Telling Tales*, and *Winter- Season of Darkness and Light*, which he co-wrote with his wife Joy D'Elia.

Since moving to St. Augustine, he has been Operations Manager of the St. Augustine Amphitheatre, a classroom teacher and Program Specialist for the Visual and Performing Arts. Tommy is retired from the St. Johns County School District. He is past president and current board member of the St. Johns Cultural Council, the local arts agency of St. Johns County, and a board member of EMMA Concert Association, where he co-chairs the Jack Page Projects, which provides support for music education.

Tommy's performances include storytelling, traditional music and dance calling on various instruments, including guitar, fiddle, mandolin, bass, harmonica and banjo, on which he won titles of Florida Old-Time Banjo Champion in 1999 and 2011. He is married to Joy D'Elia and has three daughters, Delia, Rosa, and Shannon Kiser, who has given him five grandchildren.