**Ohio County feud nearing end**

Kentucky Supreme Court won't review name ruling

Posted: Thursday, September 26, 2013 12:00 am | *Updated: 12:15 am, Thu Sep 26, 2013.*

[**Ohio County feud nearing end**](http://www.messenger-inquirer.com/content/tncms/live/www.messenger-inquirer.com/news/local/article_5062b889-5d50-51ee-b511-9d7f6ba1084f.html) **By Keith Lawrence Messenger-Inquirer Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer |** [**0 comments**](http://www.messenger-inquirer.com/news/local/article_5062b889-5d50-51ee-b511-9d7f6ba1084f.html#user-comment-area)

A long-standing Ohio County feud may be nearing its end.

Last week, the Kentucky Supreme Court denied a motion by the Ohio County Industrial Foundation and Ohio Fiscal Court to review the January ruling by the Kentucky Court of Appeals that said the Jerusalem Ridge Bluegrass Music Foundation can use Bill Monroe's name to promote the Jerusalem Ridge Bluegrass Music Celebration and for tours of the Monroe homeplace.

That means the Court of Appeals ruling stands.

But Campbell Mercer, executive director of the Jerusalem Ridge Bluegrass Music Foundation of Kentucky Inc. — formerly the Bill Monroe/Bluegrass Music Foundation of Kentucky Inc. — said Wednesday that there's still one more legal hurdle to go.

In 2005, the industrial foundation and James Monroe, Bill Monroe's son and the executor of his estate, obtained a temporary injunction in a Tennessee state chancery court prohibiting the Jerusalem Ridge Foundation from using Bill Monroe's name.

"We still have to go back to Tennessee and ask the judge to lift the injunction," Mercer said. "There's a little more legwork. He said in the past that he would give deference to the Kentucky courts. So, we're hoping when we show him the Kentucky Supreme Court decision that this will all be over."

In a prepared statement, the Jerusalem Ridge Foundation said it plans to "reassume the Bill Monroe name and to use it to further the tourism and economic development interests of Ohio County, its citizens, the surrounding area and the entire state of Kentucky."

Mercer said the foundation's board will have to vote on changing the name back to Bill Monroe/Bluegrass Music Foundation.

But he said he expects Monroe's name to be on the 2014 bluegrass festival at Jerusalem Ridge.

There's not enough time to change it before the next Jerusalem Ridge Bluegrass Celebration scheduled for Oct. 3-6.

The Court of Appeals ruling in January reversed a Sept. 12, 2011, Ohio County Circuit Court decision, which found that the county and the industrial foundation held the intellectual property rights to Monroe's name and could stop the Jerusalem Ridge Foundation and its festival from using it.

Monroe, known as the "father of bluegrass music," was born on Jerusalem Ridge near Rosine in Ohio County in 1911.

He died in 1996.

The Jerusalem Ridge Foundation's news release says that in 1999, the industrial foundation acquired the Bill Monroe intellectual property rights from James Monroe for $250,000.

It said that in April 2001, a group of industrial foundation directors and officers incorporated the The Bill Monroe/Bluegrass Music Foundation of Kentucky, Inc. and hired Mercer to run it.

By 2004, the news release said, "personal differences" between Mercer and the Monroe Foundation and the leadership of the industrial foundation resulted in the industrial foundation's decision to prevent the Monroe foundation from using Monroe's name.

That order caused the foundation to change its name to the Jerusalem Ridge Bluegrass Music Foundation.

In 2007, the Jerusalem Ridge Foundation and Ohio County filed suit, seeking the right to use Monroe's name.

Now, nearly a decade of legal wrangling seems about to end.

Keith Lawrence, 691-7301, klawrence@messenger-inquirer.com