

Wilkes Community College's



MerleFest®

Music. Moments. Memories.™

ON THE CAMPUS OF WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WILKESBORO, NC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHANGES MADE TO INSTRUMENT CONTESTS FOR MERLEFEST 25

WILKESBORO, N.C. (January 24, 2012) —**MerleFest 25**, presented by Lowe's and slated for **April 26 – 29, 2012**, is excited to announce some great changes for the annual Instrument Contests held during the four-day festival. This year, both the guitar and the banjo contest will be held on **Friday, April 27, 2012**. The first place winners from both contests will be invited to perform on the Cabin Stage Friday evening following a performance by the winners of the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest.

Another change to the Instrument Contest is a **required online pre-registration**. Pre-registration will begin on **April 1, 2012**, and conclude on **April 15, 2012, at 5 p.m.** The online registration form may be accessed at www.merlefest.org. Registrants will be notified by April 18, 2012, to confirm time slots in the competition.

“The online pre-registration will eliminate some of the scurry typically felt on the day of the competitions,” says Laurie Brintle, coordinator of the Instrument Contests. “Also, it will allow contest participants to know ahead of time where on the competition lineup they are scheduled.”

There is not a registration fee to participate in the Instrument Contests; however, participants must be paid festival ticket holders and must pre-register for the contests.

Prizes for the Instrument Contests include a Deering Eagle banjo (banjo competition), a TKL banjo case from Separk Music (banjo competition), a Boucher guitar from Musiquip, Inc. (guitar competition), gift certificates to Jackson's Music and gift certificates to John Pearse Strings.

MerleFest, which takes place on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, is an annual homecoming of musicians and music fans, gathering to celebrate the memory of musician Eddy Merle Watson, beloved son of American music icon Doc Watson.

Ticket purchases for MerleFest 25 can be made on the web at www.merlefest.org or by calling 1-800-343-7857. An **early bird ticket discount** is available through **March 12, 2012**.

With over 90 artists performing on 14 stages during the course of the event, MerleFest 25 is an excellent entertainment value. A complete list of confirmed performers is available at www.merlefest.org. Additionally, up-to-the-minute lineup additions for the festival can be obtained through the festival's e-newsletter and through Facebook and Twitter.

MerleFest, considered one of the premiere music festivals in the country, is held on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. MerleFest was founded in 1988 in memory of Eddy

Merle Watson and is a celebration of what Doc Watson calls “traditional plus” music, meaning the traditional music of the Appalachian region plus whatever other styles we were in the mood to play.” The annual festival has become the primary fundraiser for the WCC Endowment Corporation, funding scholarships, capital projects and other educational needs.

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