

NEWS RELEASE

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29th Annual Folkmoot USA Festival Begins July 18

A Diversified Cultural Vacation Opportunity in Waynesville and surrounding Haywood County

Waynesville, NC - The 29th Folkmoot Festival will take place July 18 – 29, 2012. Dancers and musicians in colorful traditional costumes from the countries of New Zealand, France, Belgium, Indonesia, Peru, Philippines, Serbia, Puerto Rico, Ukraine and Hawaii, USA are expected to appear in over 70 performances during the two-week event.

Folkmoot USA, The State International Festival of North Carolina, is a two-week celebration of the world's cultural heritage through folk music and dance. Held each summer across the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina, Folkmoot features performances, a parade and workshops by up to 350 performers from about ten countries. Folkmoot USA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures through traditional dance and music.

Haywood County vacationers are immersed into the diversity that not only Haywood County offers in general, but international diversity during Folkmoot. Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased online [here](#) or by phone by calling toll-free 877-365-5872. Lodging information can be found [here](#).

Performers demonstrate cultural heritage through colorful, authentic and original reproduction costumes, lively dance and traditional music. During its 28-year history, over 200 folk groups from more than 100 countries have shared their heritage and culture at the Folkmoot Festival.

The Festival kicks off on Wednesday, July 18 at the Folkmoot Friendship Center for HomeTrust Bank's Haywood County Family Night. This very affordable performance of two groups is family-centered and includes sodas, freeze pops and popcorn, all for \$10 adults and \$5 children.

A full schedule of all 24 public events is listed [here](#) or by calling 877-FOLKUSA.

International Festival Day Scheduled on Saturday, July 21

On July 21st, from 10am until 5pm, historic downtown Waynesville's Main Street will be transformed into a world bazaar where over one hundred artists, craftsmen, and international guests sell a wide range of art and craft. Waynesville is located in Haywood County.

International Festival Day includes regional performances by international folk dancers and musicians from Folkmoot USA.

Art lovers can browse booths filled with handcrafted items and even catch a demonstration or two by artisans including flame workers, potters, and woodworkers. From Russian nesting dolls and Vietnamese embroidery to Seagrove pottery and traditional Appalachian baskets, festival goers will find treasures at every stop.

The international festivities also include food courts featuring a wide variety of choices including Gyros, Asian spring rolls, Crepes, Beignets, Caribbean Shawarmas, Fajitas, and—a North Carolina staple—pulled pork barbeque.

The Passport to the Arts children’s area, located in the United Community Bank parking lot, issues “passports” to children who “travel” to countries like Austria, Togo, Ecuador, and Japan where they create crafts unique to the country. Examples of crafts include rain sticks, abstract inkblots, fiesta Headdresses, finger knitting, origami, and more.

Festival entertainment will be provided by the Celtic Rock group Uncle Hamish and the Hooligans, Folkmoot USA’s international dancers and musicians, Appalachian dance and music, plus more. The lively cultural exchange takes place at staging areas near the old Courthouse and just beyond Town Hall at opposite ends of Main Street. Performers move along the street with impromptu performances throughout the day.

Haywood County’s International Festival Day is a family event for all ages. Whether you’re an art lover aiming to browse booths of jewelry, paintings, photography, and woodwork; a child traveling the world at Passport to the Arts; or a family out to get a glimpse of Folkmoot USA’s dancers and musicians, you will experience one of the finest festivals in the southeast.

Along with its cultural, music, family-fun activities and special events throughout the year, Haywood County is situated in a beautiful, mountain setting. With 554 scenic square miles of spectacular country, more than a dozen of Haywood County’s mountain peaks soar to elevations of at least 6,000 feet (more than any east of the Mississippi River), and the county is one of the highest, with a mean elevation of 3,600 feet, east of the Rockies. The county sits at the western edge of the state, with the Blue Ridge Parkway running along its southwestern border. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Pisgah National Forest are located in the northern section of the county. For more information about Haywood County, call 800.334.9036 or visit <http://www.visitncsmokies.com/>.

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