

Highland Festival

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Now in its 17th year, the McHenry Highland Festival still will offer a full day of fun with music, Scottish athletic games, pipe bands, dancing competitions, clan booths, military encampments, livestock shows, sheep-dog demonstrations, a British car show, Celtic craft and food vendors, and plenty of musical entertainment.

More activities are being added to the festival for visitors who want to keep busy all weekend. They include a kick-off dinner and concert Friday night, Ceilidh Saturday evening and golf tournament Sunday, as well as the Kirkin' of the Tartans at St. John's Episcopal Church.

World renowned fiddler Bonnie Rideout returns this year. Celtic band Coyote Run, Scottish folksinger Carl Peterson and area band Wolf Creek Session are among the day's entertainers. More children's activities are being added, Celtic dog show, a falconry demonstration, and Irish Jaunting cart rides.

"There is always something new," said festival coordinator Jerry McGee. It is becoming Garrett County's main spring event, similar to Autumn Glory.

This year's festival also will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Garrett College Pipes and Drums. The band will wear new uniforms, with kilts made in Scotland. The Colquhoun (Calhoun, anglicized from Gaelic) tartan will honor Fred Thayer, who founded the band along with Chip Evans. Thayer continues to pipe with the band, as does John Grant who was in the first pipe class in Garrett County.

Advance ticket sales are encouraged. Not only can people save money, \$7 versus \$10 at the gate, plus each ticket will include a chance to win a door prize of a large screen television, donated by Mountain Properties. Ticket holders do not have to be present to win.

Last year's wet festival proved it can go on and everyone still can have a good time rain or shine. Most activities can easily be moved indoors. Souvenir festival umbrellas will be on sale this year, ensuring a dry festival.

Lots more information can be found at the festival website, www.highlandfest.info or e-mail McGee at jmcgee@garrettcollege.edu.

