

*Wilkes Community College's*



**MerleFest**®

**Music. Moments. Memories.**™

ON THE CAMPUS OF WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WILKESBORO, NC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MERLEFEST 2013 VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS OPEN OCTOBER 1**

WILKESBORO, N.C. (September 18, 2012)—Beginning October 1, **MerleFest**, presented by Lowe's, will begin accepting online applications for its popular volunteer program for the 2013 festival. MerleFest 2013 will take place April 25-28.

Volunteer applications will be accepted online at [www.merlefest.org/volunteers](http://www.merlefest.org/volunteers). Those who prefer a hard copy application may request one by emailing [merlefest.volunteer@wilkescc.edu](mailto:merlefest.volunteer@wilkescc.edu) or calling 336-838-6262. Anyone wishing to volunteer should complete an application early because slots fill up quickly. The Volunteer Opportunities section of the MerleFest website, [www.merlefest.org](http://www.merlefest.org), provides additional details about volunteering at MerleFest.

With over 800 individuals participating each year, MerleFest volunteers are considered vital to the success of the festival. While some come from the surrounding community to help out, volunteers for the festival also come from all over the world, many of whom make their work at MerleFest an annual event.

An obvious benefit to being a MerleFest volunteer is admittance into the festival: each volunteer receives free entry for each day a shift is worked (usually three to five hours long); volunteers can work one, two, three or all four days of the festival. Also, all MerleFest volunteers receive a commemorative pin as a gift for their service.

In addition to being an exciting opportunity to experience a world-renowned festival of music, moments and memories up-close, the vast network of volunteers who support MerleFest help make the festival a highly successful fundraiser, as well. As the festival benefits Wilkes Community College, volunteers – while working on campus – get to experience the buildings, gardens and instructional programs that the monies raised through MerleFest make possible each year.

Lee K. Cornett, the new MerleFest volunteer coordinator, urges music fans to consider the MerleFest volunteer program. "Volunteering is a great way to give back. And, it is so much fun to volunteer at MerleFest - you walk on campus and feel the excitement in the air," says Cornett who has, herself, been a volunteer since the early '90s. "It's a special homecoming, meeting new friends and seeing old ones that you only see once a year at the festival. At the end of the day, you feel like you have made a difference and been a part of something really big."

“MerleFest is recognized around the world as one of the best festivals ever. But most of all, it is known for being family-friendly entertainment, something that always made Doc Watson proud.” Cornett added.

Cornett joined the MerleFest Events Team on August 1, when volunteer coordinator Mona McRae decided to step down from that position. “During my time working with MerleFest, I went from volunteer to volunteer coordinator assistant to volunteer coordinator - and now back to volunteer!” said McRae. “While I definitely look forward to being ‘re-retired,’ I plan to return to future festivals as a volunteer. It will continue to be a homecoming for me.”

MerleFest, considered one of the premier music festivals in the country, is an annual homecoming of musicians and music fans held on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. MerleFest was founded in 1988 in memory of the late Eddy Merle Watson, son of American music legend Doc Watson who passed away May 29, 2012. MerleFest is a celebration of “traditional plus” music, a unique mix of music based on the traditional, roots-oriented sounds of the Appalachian region, including bluegrass and old-time music, and expanded to include Americana, country, blues, rock and many other styles. The festival hosts over 90 artists, performing on 14 stages during the course of the four-day event. The annual event has become the primary fundraiser for the WCC Endowment Corporation, funding scholarships, capital projects and other educational needs.

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#### PHOTOS:



Caption: Lee K. Cornett



Caption: Mona McRae

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