

NEWS RELEASE



*Where the Sun Rises
on the Smokies*

HAYWOOD COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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DOZENS OF EVENTS SCHEDULED TO CELEBRATE PARK'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Local Businesses, Organizations Partner to Present 10 Days of 'Play in the Park'

HAYWOOD COUNTY, N.C. (AUGUST 14, 2009)—Local businesses and organizations have partnered to present dozens of events over the course of 10 days, titled Play in the Park, to commemorate and celebrate the 75th anniversary of the most-visited national park in America.

From Friday, August 28, to Monday, September 7, visitors and locals alike can choose from a wide array of events, festivals and activities in Maggie Valley, Waynesville and Canton to participate in this momentous occasion for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and its surrounding communities. From guided hikes in the park to a classic car show, from elk viewing to golf tournament and folk music festival, there's something for everyone.

“Play in the Park was conceived as a method to get visitors and local residents alike to touch, feel and smell the park,” said David Stubbs, co-owner of the Waynesville Inn Golf Resort & Spa, who has taken the lead in organizing the celebration. “We have put together a wonderful array of events both in the Park and events just for fun.”

Best of all, many of the events are free to attend; those that do require a fee, Stubbs said, will donate a portion of the proceeds to Friends of the Smokies, the primary source of charitable funding for the national park.

Among the many highlights, including the Smoky Mountain Folk Festival and the 75th Masters Golf Tournament, downtown Waynesville will come alive for a Rockin' Block Party on the night of Saturday, September 5. From 7 to 10 p.m., Main Street will be the place to be, with live music and dancing, a variety of eats and treats available, a classic car show, and open restaurants, galleries and shops.

“In the interest of protecting and preserving the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, we are proud to join in the 75th anniversary celebration with activities in downtown Waynesville, featuring The Hominy Valley Boys, a well-know bluegrass band, accompanied by the Fines Creek Flat Footers clogging group,” said

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Buffy Phillips Messer, executive director of the Downtown Waynesville Association. “We invite everyone to join in the fun at this free mountain hoe down.”

For more information about Play in the Park, log on to www.smokeymountains.net and browse the “Events/Festivals” calendar for specific details—dates, times and locations—of individual events. A downloadable brochure is also available at www.smokeymountains.net/files/PlayInPark.pdf.

“We hope that this event will remind everyone on its 75th anniversary of the national treasure that is right in our backyard,” Stubbs said, “and that Western North Carolina will begin to take a much more active place in the stewardship of Great Smoky Mountain National Park.”

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