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Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games to Kick Off 35th year of Festivities in East Tennessee

MARYVILLE, Tenn. – Fierce competition and brute strength will meet a healthy dose of haggis and bagpipes at the 35th annual Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games, which will take place for the sixth year at Maryville College May 21-22.

The Festival and Games will begin at the Clayton Center in Maryville on Friday night, May 20, with a gala celebrating the event and its patrons.

For \$25 per weekend pass, guests and over 200 volunteers will take a trip back in time to experience Celtic music and dancing, genealogical research, sheep dog demonstrations, hard-to-find Celtic food and merchandise, and much more.

There are several ticket packages available at early buy discount prices, including the full weekend package. Early buy discounts end on May 19. Children under 16 years old are admitted free, and there is no charge for parking.

The Games' Highland Heavy athletic competitions represent a must-see spectacle for guests. Hearty competitions of strength and agility are a large part of Scottish heritage, and the event offers its take on such classic challenges as the open stone put, hammer throw, caber toss, sheaf toss and more. All competitions have men's and women's divisions.

There will also be a dog parade, dance competition and a pipes and drums competition featuring groups from throughout the region. Two concert stages featuring Celtic music will entertain guests for the entire duration of the event.

While the weekend of family fun and festivities celebrates the area's Scottish roots, the event appeals to a wide range of guests – whether their ancestors were Scottish or not.

“We appreciate the approximately seven thousand individuals who attend the Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games each year,” said board member Keith Austin. “Spending a weekend celebrating a unique culture and all the fun that goes along with it is certainly a sight to see.”

In addition to educating the public, the Festival and Games aims to create a significant and lasting impact on the East Tennessee community. Revenue raised at the event funds two \$250 dance scholarships each year. Additionally, 10 percent of the event's revenue surplus goes to Maryville College for scholarships. The Festival and Games has funded more than \$11,000 in Maryville College scholarships since its founding.

“Maryville College is delighted to once again welcome the Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games to campus,” said Maryville College President Tom Bogart. “We believe in developing the whole person, and the combination of history, food, athletics, music, dance and fun found at the festival certainly fulfills that. It's also a chance to highlight our Presbyterian connection with Scottish and Irish roots.”

In addition to the festival and gala, the Festival and Games will host Scotch tastings at Profit Dining Hall on Saturday, May 21 at 1:30 and 5:30. All tastings require separate ticket purchases.

For more information about the festivities and ticket sales, visit smokymountaingames.org or contact Keith Austin at kaustin@lamar.com. The SMSFG is an IRS 501(C)(3) charitable organization.