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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **The Return of the Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games Thrills East Tennesseans for 38 Years Running**

**MARYVILLE, Tenn., February 28, 2019** – The 38<sup>th</sup> annual Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games will offer a weekend of authentic Scottish Highland festivities the entire clan can enjoy from May 18 – 19, 2019.

The festival returns to Maryville College, or the home of “The Scots.” It is located at 502 E. Lamar Alexander Parkway in Maryville, Tennessee.

With ticket prices beginning at \$15, guests and over 200 volunteers will experience Celtic entertainment, genealogical inquiry, sheep dog presentations, kid’s activities, authentic Celtic food and merchandise, and more.

There are various ticket packages, including single-day and weekend passes. Children under 16 are free both days and first responders, seniors, veterans, active duty military and students will receive a discounted ticket price, and there is no charge for parking.

The Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games, originally founded in 1981, are East Tennessee’s original commemoration of Scottish culture and legacy. Maryville was inhabited by early Scots-Irish settlers—people of relentless bravery and an avant-garde spirit, which grants the location as the “home of the Scots.” The festival activities are a glimpse into the rich traditions and history of those settlers and takes place among the scenic Smoky Mountains.

The event offers a take on classic challenges like open stone put, hammer throw, caber toss, sheaf toss and more. All competitions have a men’s and women’s division. Over 100 athletes are set to participate in these competitions.

A returning attraction to the festival is the beloved Scottish band, Albannach. Albannach is comprised of Scottish-descent members who aspire to share their intriguing culture, history and heritage with their audience through

music. Their primal drumming and precise piping stirs the soul of anyone who hears them – both young and old. With a champion piper, the unique sounds and talents of a didgeridoo player, and the tribal style bass drumming their music draws all those at the festival to hear their authentic take on Scottish music.

On Saturday, May 18, the Festival will host Scotch tastings at Proffitt Dining Room in Pearsons Hall at 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. All tastings require a separate ticket purchase.

A 5K and half marathon, which have become increasingly popular events, now boast over 500 runners and will take place Sunday, May 19.

Last year, the event had a record-breaking Saturday and drew a total weekend attendance of 9,000+ attendees. This year, over 50 clans and societies are expected to attend with 40 vendors, 9 pipe and drum bands, 70 clan dancers, eight entertainment bands and 35 vendors.

Whether Scottish or not, Scottish Festival and Games Board Member Keith Austin assures attendees will have an enlightening and exhilarating experience.

“The Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games creates an important opportunity for the Greater Knoxville area to participate in celebrating a unique culture and heritage in our area,” said Austin. “The Festival offers something for everyone and has guests leaving with a smile on their face. We are very proud of the responses and attendance that arise from this event.”

Smoky Mountain Tourism Development Authority Director of Tourism Kim Mitchell finds events like the Scottish Festival and Games create a significant economic impact for East Tennessee.

“The Festival and Games administers educational insight into our region’s Scottish and Scots-Irish culture, but also displays allure of the Blount County area,” said Mitchell. “Many of the attendees book overnight stays in the area, which supports Blount County tourism.”

“Maryville College is excited to announce the return of the Smoky Mountain Scottish Festival and Games to our campus,” said Maryville College President Tom Bogart. “This event promotes regional and national name recognition to the area, which draws in an eclectic and favorable guest base.”

Add that it’s the single largest festival in Blount County.

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

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