



MEDIA RELEASE

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FESTIVAL IMAGES MAY BE DOWNLOADED HERE: <https://bit.ly/2Q4Rd45>

80th National Folk Festival and Salisbury are Together Again!

Salisbury, MD - Today the National Folk Festival confirmed it will return to downtown Salisbury September 10-12, 2021, with performances, special family and Maryland folklife programming, diverse food and beverage offerings, and more—all presented free to the public on three outdoor stages. This year's event will mark the celebration of the 80th National Folk Festival as well as the third year of the National's residency in Salisbury. The festival will be a key moment in the city's recovery from the global pandemic and will welcome audiences to enjoy the recently completed revitalization projects throughout the heart of downtown.

The nation's oldest multicultural celebration of traditional arts, the National Folk Festival presents the country's highest-caliber grassroots artists. It debuted in Salisbury in 2018, and the city's tenure as host city was scheduled to conclude in 2020, until the 80th National was postponed to 2021 due to the coronavirus.

In a joint statement, Salisbury Mayor Jake Day and City Administrator Julia Glanz shared, "The 80th National Folk Festival will say that the city is ready to emerge stronger from the pandemic and be a catalyst for the newly completed renovations in our downtown. The National has been a major driver of the physical, social and cultural renewal of the city, and we are so pleased to be 'together again' this September."

The National Folk Festival is produced in partnership with the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA), and its executive director, Lora Bottinelli, added, "With the 80th National Folk Festival, the NCTA is thrilled to have the nation's longest-running celebration of the roots, richness, and variety of American culture back in the heart of downtown Salisbury. Audiences can expect the same combination of diversity and excellence when we announce the artistic program later this summer. There will be performances, artist demonstrations, food and concessions, and more--something for everyone!"



The national visibility of the event will continue to spur the long-term revitalization and transformation of the City of Salisbury and the region. Supported in part by the federal American Rescue Plan, the event has been identified as a driver for the recovery of the local, regional and state economy.

Enthusiasm for the festival's return extends all the way to Annapolis. "The first lady and I are pleased to once again serve as honorary co-chairs for the National Folk Festival in Salisbury, Maryland," shared Governor Larry Hogan. "Now more than ever, we recognize the economic and cultural impacts events like the National Folk Festival can have in our communities. As organizers for the festival proceed with planning, we know that a commitment to safety and adherence to local and state ordinances will be crucial."

Local festival manager, Caroline O'Hare, explained, "For those many event participants, supporters, and volunteers who are eager to get involved with this event, please know we are preparing for your involvement. The event has been reconfigured to ensure the safety of artists, staff, and attendees, and we will be making periodic updates as event planning continues."

Support for the festival continues to grow throughout the region, including from returning sponsors. Today, Randy Day, CEO of Perdue Farms, shared, "At Perdue Farms, we're thrilled that the 80th National Folk Festival is returning to Salisbury this September, and look forward to celebrating as the event's presenting sponsor for the third year in a row. This event in downtown Salisbury has proven to be wonderful for our local community and regional economy, and for boosting Salisbury's civic pride. This year's festival will be an especially welcome celebration as we collectively move toward a return to normalcy, especially in our own backyard. We look forward to again supporting this great event!"

TidalHealth Peninsula Regional, formerly Peninsula Regional Medical Center, has also renewed their sponsorship for this year's festival. "TidalHealth is pleased to support the National Folk Festival and looks forward to gathering safely in downtown Salisbury this September," said Chris Hall, vice president and chief business officer at TidalHealth Peninsula Regional. Additional sponsors will be announced as they are confirmed.

The National Folk Festival is seeking private support to match the public investments made for this event as an economic development, recovery, and revitalization opportunity. The event is supported in part by public funding from the City of Salisbury, the American Rescue Plan, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Maryland State Arts Council.



To stay current, be sure to follow the National Folk Festival on Facebook (facebook.com/NFFMaryland), Twitter (twitter.com/NFFMaryland), and Instagram (Instagram.com/nffmaryland).

Later this spring and summer, organizers will announce festival performers and other details of the event with press announcements and updates to NationalFolkFestival.com.

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About the National Folk Festival

Since it was first presented in St. Louis in 1934, the National Folk Festival, the National Council for the Traditional Arts' (NCTA) flagship event, has celebrated the roots, richness and variety of American culture. Championed in its early years by Eleanor Roosevelt, it was the first event of national stature to present the arts of many nations, races, and languages on equal footing. It was also the first to present to the public musical forms such as the blues, Cajun music, a polka band, Tex-Mex conjunto, Peking Opera, and many others. Today, the National is an exuberant traveling festival, produced by the NCTA in partnership with communities around the country that embraces the diverse cultural expressions that define us as a people in the 21st century. <https://www.nationalfolkfestival.com/>

About the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA)

A leading non-profit in the field, the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA) is dedicated to the presentation and documentation of folk and traditional arts in the U.S. Stressing excellence and authenticity, the NCTA presents the nation's finest traditional artists in major festivals, tours, concerts, workshops, demonstrations, exhibitions, media productions, school programs, cross-cultural exchanges and other activities. It works in partnership with American communities to establish new, sustainable traditional arts events that deliver lasting social, cultural and economic benefits. Over 7,000 hours of the NCTA's archival audio recordings dating from the 1930s are permanently housed at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The NCTA champions the interests of folk and traditional artists and organizations in the arena of public policy. <http://www.ncta-usa.org>

About the City of Salisbury, Maryland

Founded in 1732, Salisbury is the county seat of Wicomico County, a place where John Smith touched land in 1608 during his exploration of the Chesapeake Bay. Situated on Maryland's historic Eastern Shore at the crossroads of the Delmarva Peninsula, Salisbury is now one of the region's largest cities, and serves as the capital of the Eastern Shore, a rural area defined by its agricultural and maritime traditions, landscapes and industries. The Chesapeake Bay is central to this distinctive identity. Though a relatively small city, Salisbury is the geographic and economic hub of one of the nation's fastest-growing Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Led by a dynamic mayor, the City of Salisbury is working to build its reputation as an arts and culture destination, and is aligning its downtown development and revitalization efforts with the arts. Salisbury believes hosting the National Folk Festival is the perfect catalyst to further a cultural renaissance and urban renewal. <http://www.salisbury.md>