



For further information contact:

Judy Current

jpcurrent4@gmail.com

For Immediate Release

Christmas In July Announces Festival Plans

West Jefferson, NC –When Christmas In July opens on June 30, 2023, it marks its 35th year for Ashe County's longest-running festival. The festival received the designation of "Finest Festival" by Carolina Country magazine in 2022 and reinvented its footprint last year, moving to Jefferson Avenue in Downtown West Jefferson. This year, it promises to be one to remember.

The large professional stage in the middle of Downtown West Jefferson will return, and Eric Hardin, Josh Scott, and Steve Lewis will kick off the entertainment at 5:30 on Friday afternoon, following the opening ceremony at 5:00. This local band is sure to delight the crowd with their talent and crowd-pleasing selections. Food vendors will be open on Friday evening, so bring the family for dinner and enjoy Cane Mill at 7:00 PM. Then at 8:30, get your dance shoes on, and if you love Beach music, plan to shag in the street while the Special Occasion Band entertains on stage.

On Saturday, July 1, the Ashe County Farmers Market will open at 7 AM, offering a variety of handmade items, fresh produce, and baked goods. Then at 9 AM, the festival craft vendors and local non-profits will open along Jefferson Avenue, leaving sidewalks clear for walking and browsing the shops. Ashe County Arts Council will host children's activities, performers will be roving the streets showcasing their magical talents, and Santa & Mrs. Claus will arrive straight from the North Pole.

The entertainment for Saturday begins at 10 AM when the Jeff Little Trio will mesmerize the crowd with his fast work on the ivories and the band's distinctive style. Tim Elliott described as a genuine rising country star, has Ashe County roots and will bring his band for a special appearance starting at 11:45. Wayne Henderson, always a local favorite

with his stories and playing, will follow Tim Elliott. Then Lucky Strikes will perform a variety of Motown, Beach, Swing, and Classic Rock to close out the festival entertainment. Special sponsorship opportunities exist for businesses wishing to sponsor a band, and there are sponsorship opportunities for naming rights to other areas of the festival.

The festival is accepting food, craft, and non-profit applications. Jane Lonon, a long-time festival volunteer shares, "Vendors are encouraged to commit before March 31, 2023, to take advantage of discounted booth fees. There is an increased interest in the mountains on July 4th weekend in a popular venue with cool mountain breezes." The festival is interested in adding local food vendors to the food court this year and encourages any vendor or non-profit to download the application at www.christmasinjulyfestival.com.

The Christmas in July Festival celebrates the Christmas tree industry and mountain heritage with arts, crafts, and local entertainers representative of the region. The Christmas in July Festival is a non-profit organization whose Board of Directors and committee members are unpaid volunteers who work tirelessly throughout the year to host a fun, safe, family-friendly event for the entire community and those visiting Ashe County.

For more information and updates on the festival, follow us on Facebook at Christmas In July Festival or visit www.christmasinjulyfestival.com to learn more about the music lineup, food vendors, fun, and festivities planned. Make plans to visit Downtown West Jefferson on June 30 and July 1, 2023.

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