

Mountain Heritage Festival celebrates art, crafts, music

With a rich history to look back on, the Mountain Heritage Festival is scheduled to return for a 31st year this fall. Slated for the third Saturday in September for many years, the festival returns on Sept. 19, rain or shine.

The event is sponsored by the Allegheny Chamber of Commerce, which uses the event as both an economic driver and a fundraiser to support other community efforts.

It is best known for its variety of attractions over the years, including live music, dancing and a good selection of foods, treats and arts and crafts on display by a multitude of vendors. Many shops and restaurants remain open during the event.

The event stretches down the gentle slope from the intersection of U.S. 21 (Main Street in Sparta) and N.C. 18 in the very center of the downtown area. Most of the event's food offerings are staged on North Main, while the festival's shopping and non-profit informational booths, as well as demonstrators, typically cover the areas heading southbound along Main Street. The event's dancing and various musical performances through-

out the day take place at the stage, which sits near the Courthouse at the intersection of U.S. 21 (Main Street) and N.C. 18 (Whitehead Street).

A children's area is also offered with attractions and activities.

Allegheny County's rich culture and heritage, and trademark friendliness, are always on display during the one-day event, which begins at 10 a.m. and usually winds down around 4:30 p.m. Vendors from all over the east coast converge to offer a variety of handmade items ranging from children's toys to high-end jewelry, pottery and a seemingly endless variety of crafts.

Traffic is blocked along Main Street and several side streets, but those traveling to the festival (or going around it) can follow signs to ample off-street parking and walk a short distance into the festival.

An updated schedule can be found in the Fall Visitor's Guide, published in late August, by contacting the Chamber at 336-372-5473 or visiting alleghanycounty.com/mountain-heritage-festival/.

