FESTIVAL HONORS OUTSTANDING NEW JERSEY RESIDENTS

Accomplished bluegrass singer-songwriter Jim Murphy will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 34th annual New Jersey Folk Festival on Saturday, April 26, 2008. The ceremony, which also acknowledges others, will take place on the festival’s Skylands Stage during the event, which is free of admission and held from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on the lawn of the Eagleton Institute. The lawn is located at George Street and Ryders Lane, on the Douglass Campus of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. This year’s heritage theme highlights German-American heritage and traditions.

Murphy, distinguished front-man of Jim Murphy & the Pine Barons, will received the award in honor of his contributions to the local and national music scene. A native of Brick N.J., Murphy became the Garden State’s first inductee into America’s Old Time Country Music Hall of Fame in 2007, and was recognized by the National Traditional Country Music Association (NTCMA). This year also marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of Murphy’s band. The singer-songwriter has written an assortment of original songs in his journey around the tri-state area over the past four decades. The Pine Barons were voted Band of the Year and its front-man Male Vocalist of the Year in 1998 by the Traditional Music Association, while his album NewBilly Music was its 1998 Album of the Year. The band has been featured in several local and national media outlets, including The New York Times, The Star-Ledger, New Jersey Monthly, and on New Jersey Network (NJN) news.

Murphy’s illustrious music career started in 1963 with his radio program “Country and Folk Concert” on WJLK, based in Asbury Park. In addition to writing and performing his own material, Murphy pays homage to the country music scene through his involvement with the Hank Williams International Society. He still performs in the area with his band, and is a fixture at the legendary Albert Music Hall in Waretown, N.J.

The festival is also honored to announce Pastor Edwin Achenbach as the 2008 Honorary Chair. Pastor Achenbach is the General Director of Fellowship Deaconry, a non-profit, non-denominational organization in the United States and Canada celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. In a constant effort to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of its people, the Fellowship Deaconry offers a variety of events and

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opportunities, as well as charitable outreach.

The organization got its start during the late 1800s in a time of spiritual awakening in eastern Germany, tying into the 2008 festival’s German heritage theme. As honorary chair, Pastor Achenbach will deliver the festival’s invocation in both English and in German.

Pastor Achenbach also serves as the Director of the Liberty Corner Mansion in Central Jersey and is the Founder and Director of the Unique Opportunity Program, which now trains Chinese students for the Christian missionary and evangelical ministries at home and abroad. He has served for several years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia College of the Bible in Langhorne, Pa., now Philadelphia Biblical University, a fully-accredited Bible College. He attended Tabor Seminary in Marburg/Lahn, in Germany, and holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Theology from Northeastern Bible College in Essex Fells, N.J.

Dr. Marie T. Logue, Assistant Vice President for Academic Engagement and Programming in the Office of Undergraduate Education at Rutgers, will serve as the festival’s Grand Marshall this year. Dr. Logue has worked as an administrator in academic and student affairs for 25 years. As the associate dean for student development at Rutgers College during that span, she worked closely with students and faculty to develop co-curricular programs and activities. Her role also includes bringing students, faculty, and deans together through new educational opportunities.

In addition to the three stages of music, dance, workshops, and a wide array of American and ethnic food vendors, the festival offers a diverse craft market of approximately 75 booths, craft demonstrators, and a folk marketplace – where performer CDs and information on area folk concerts are available. For children, there is a designated activities area with games, a clown, a juggler, and crafts to make and take. The festival will also welcome the Rutgers Army ROTC and the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

The New Jersey Folk Festival is the oldest and largest continuously-held festival of its kind in the state. Wheelchair accessible, it offers selected programs with ASL interpretation; large-print program books and audio assists are also available. Preferred parking is a nominal $5 charge.

The festival is only five minutes off of exit 9 on the New Jersey Turnpike. For further details, including stage schedules and directions, visit the festival’s Web site at http://www.njfolkfest.rutgers.edu or call the festival office at (732)-932-5775 or Rutgers Campus Info Services at (732)-932-INFO.

The 2008 New Jersey Folk Festival is presented by Rutgers University and Douglass Residential College. It is sponsored in part by the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission. Additional sponsorship is provided by The Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of Rutgers, Picture-It Awards, Inc., the Middlesex County Improvement Authority, the City of New Brunswick Department of Parks, the Indian Cultural Society of East Brunswick, and CF Martin and Company. The festival is produced by the Department of American Studies at Rutgers, the State University, under the technical direction of Angus K. Gillespie and Erin Clarke.