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September 30, 2009
For Nov/Dec issue of Carolina Festivals

Community Holiday Events are Plentiful and Parades are Bigger Plus We're Bringing in the New Year with Two Shagging Events in Rocky Mount!

November brings locally grown talent to the area. Dan Finch Pottery Open House is on November 8th. Talented local potters offer their crafts for sale just in time for holiday gifts. The Pottery is also home to the non-profit "Homes for Bluebirds, Inc." houses.

On November 12th at the Dunn Center for Performing Arts the Sounds of Gold, a local cappella ensemble of 35 voices, known from New York City to Dublin, Ireland perform popular classics of both sacred and secular choral literature. On the 14th the Dunn Center presents "*Celebration*" featuring music of Dr. Jack Stamp and the premier of "*Concertino for Solo Percussion and Band.*" NC Wesleyan College also continues the tradition of "*The Lighting of Wesleyan*" and the "*Best Christmas Pageant Ever*" on December 1st. December 5th the Dunn Center presents the "*Hunt Family Christmas,*" a family of nine performing a high energy mix of traditional and Celtic selections. Another holiday event at the Dunn Center is "*Christmas with Destino*" on December 18th. A Canadian classical crossover, this style, heard at the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, will be infused into spiritual Christmas selections.

November 21st Nash Arts presents "*Holly Leaves and Christmas Trees*" with Elvis. Alvin Smith, an Elvis tribute artist, provides the entertainment. Nash Arts continues a season tradition with the performance of "*A Christmas Carol*" December 3-5. It's a little different presentation of a Christmas Classic.

December also begins the celebration of the holiday season with parades, celebrations and special events. Spring Hope celebrates with "Christmas in Spring Hope" on December 3rd. A living nativity, live music, stores open late with free refreshments and a raffle rounds out the day. Of course there are area parades. On December 5th Bailey and Nashville both bring in Santa. Nashville adds a local small-town flavor with children on decorated bikes and strollers followed by carols and a visit from Santa. Bailey celebrates with floats, music, vendors and marching bands. On December 6th at 3PM, the "The Rocky Mount Christmas Parade" struts through downtown with traditional holiday floats, marching bands from all over Eastern North Carolina, huge floating balloons and US Postal workers who follow Santa along the parade route collecting letters for the North Pole. A community band concludes the evening with holiday music and Santa takes off in an unexpected way for his next destination.

The Imperial Centre of Arts and Sciences will provide a full month of December activities. The Children's Museum Cummins Planetarium's presents a Holiday Planetarium Show and a Laser Light Concert. Daily except Mondays. Call 972-1166 for information. In the Playhouse November 13th-21st on selected dates the play "*You Can't Take It With You,*" will be performed on stage. This is a madcap visit to the Sycamores that will enliven your evening. The 41st Annual Christmas Chorus will perform on December 3rd, 4th & 6th. The Art Center Gallery Shop is a wonderful place to find unique North Carolina hand-crafted holiday presents. The Festival of trees also returns featuring

over 20 Christmas trees custom decorated with themes representing local businesses and organizations.

Celebrate the season in The Imperial Centre on December 18th at “*Winter Wonderland.*” The flurries fly every hour and during your visit you can visit with Santa or leave a letter in the North Pole Express Mail Box. There will be seasonal art activities, a petting zoo, hot cider and horse-drawn carriage rides.

In addition, the Art Center presents ten galleries of local, regional and national art. The Children’s Museum and Science Center will be exhibiting “Inside Africa,” a wonderful experience on the cultural and history of Africa.

At MLK Park, the Martin Luther King Memorial Park Walkers sponsor the Christmas Luminaries Celebration. This service honors loved ones during this special holiday. This special ceremony is at 7PM on December 21st.

Something new has been added to say goodbye to 2009 and welcome 2010. To celebrate New Years there will be two great Shag events. New Years Eve will be celebrated at the Gateway Convention Center as DJ Ricky Viverette brings in the New Year as MC to a benefit dance to provide needed materials to NC troops serving overseas. On New Years Day the party continues at Nash Community College with the popular Coastline band. Information and tickets at 800 649 6825 or www.RockyMountTravel.com.

It’s easy to see that Rocky Mount and Nash County is the place to be during this holiday season. Visit and enjoy the events as well as our year-round good old “Southern Hospitality.” For more information visit www.rockymounttravel.com, call the Nash County Visitors Bureau at 1-800-849-6825 or visit the Visitors Bureau in its new location at the Gateway Convention Center.