

Morristown to Hold Second Diversity Festival

The City of Morristown will host its second annual diversity festival – *Morristown: A Celebration of Cultures* – on Thursday, September 23 from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Fred Miller Park. The event will feature music and dance, foods and other activities designed to celebrate the diverse cultures that form our community.

Nearly 1,500 people attended last year's inaugural festival, where they had the opportunity to witness a Chinese lion dance performed by a martial arts group, join in an Israeli folk dance, watch Irish step dancing and a Chinese peacock dance, sit in on a drum circle, hear gospel music, and munch on everything from soul food to sushi.

This year's festival will include two performance stages, a children's activity tent, a martial arts demonstration area, food "court", and non-profits and community service organizations who will distribute information about their activities.

Vendors and non-profits application forms are available on the City's Web site, www.mymorristown.com. They must be returned by August 30 along with the application fees. The fee for food vendors is \$50; that for crafters and non-profits is \$30.

Entertainers are being lined up by Darrell Williams, whose expertise in that field has brought a host of musicians to the Main Street (formerly Fourth Friday) Festival. One of the first to be signed is Asheville, NC musician Billy Jonas who involves his audience as members of his band. Mr. Jonas makes music on a variety of "found" instruments such as five-gallon water jugs, 55-gallon drums, cast iron skillets and other unique items. He believes anyone can make music anywhere at any time using any thing.

While in town, Mr. Jonas will visit two schools to do educational workshops with students, and will perform at the September 24 Main Street Festival. His visit is being supported by a Performing Artists grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission.

The Kuumba Watoto Drummers and Dancers from Knoxville, Lar'Juanette Williams and the Knoxville Supremes, Robert Davy, Celtic Step Dancers, Karen Webber Gilat, and Capoira are among the other performers scheduled.

The festival committee is seeking storytellers for the children's activities tent.

A Celebration of Cultures is a project of the Mayor's Task Force on Diversity and Morristown Parks and Recreation. For more information, contact Jennifer Gentry at 586-0620.