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# Celebration!

A Festival of The Arts & Humanities

**Contact:**  
PR Office: 217-581-2113  
Fax: 217-581-7085  
csdec1@eiu.edu

Eastern Illinois University  
600 Lincoln Avenue  
Charleston, IL 61920-3099

## For immediate Release

**Charleston** -- Eastern Illinois University's annual Celebration: A Festival of the Arts readies to return to campus's Library Quad May 2, 3 and 4. In its 26th year Celebration present a full line-up of arts entertainment.

Celebration continues the tradition of presenting a variety of arts experiences. No matter what age, visitors will surely find something of interest during the festival. The festival offers live musical performances, an arts fair on Saturday and Sunday, demonstrations, children's activities, a theatre production and a delicious line-up of festival foods.

Best described as a "Smorgasbord of the Arts," Celebration's primary purpose is to "celebrate" the wide array of arts forms available in our society. For many local residents, Celebration weekend might be the only opportunity for them to experience the arts in a direct and up-close manner. According to festival director Dan Crews, many of the events at Celebration are unique compared to those activities typically found at other area fairs and festivals. "What we try to do is present the arts--no matter what form they take." Crews went on to add the festival's organizers enjoy presenting a variety of programs and activities.

One of the festival's most anticipated highlights is the groups featured on the outdoor stage. Performance groups from Eastern along with those from the east central Illinois community will be featured throughout the weekend. Celebration also features regional touring groups. Crews went on to say the festival doesn't focus on one particular style of music. Audience member will hear not only jazz and rock, but also harp, gospel, folk and rock-a-billy. "It's a pretty eclectic mix. We try to program for a variety of tastes."

Friday is typically a day focused on Eastern's student body, many of the arts demonstrations do not arrive until Saturday. As in previous years, Celebration will feature a great line-ups of fine arts vendors. on Saturday and Sunday. Nearly 40 artists will be selling their hand-crafted works of art ranging from jewelry and stoneware to paintings and sculptures. There will be a number of artists on site who will be demonstrating their crafting skills.

One of the artisans that will be noticed will be sand sculptor Ray Wirick. Wirick has created sculptures throughout the United States and Europe. Just last month he was demonstrating in Kuwait. The artist will be creating a 15 to 20 ton sculpture throughout the festival.

A special guest at this year's festival will be Roscoe Orman. As an actor, Mr. Orman is better known by the character name "Gordon" from the popular PBS program Sesame Street. Mr. Orman played the role on the popular children's program since 1972. Roscoe Orman will appear as "Gordon of Sesame Street" for two performances at 1 and 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 3.

There will be two special theatre offerings during the festival. On Saturday, Eastern's Theatre Arts Department will present Rapunzel and the Witch at 11:30 a.m. in the McAfee North Hall and a staged reading of Frank Stokes' Bethel Grove: Sonnets from the Village Day Book will be present in the McAfee North Hall on Saturday, May 3 at 3 p.m. and again on Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m. The production will be directed by Tanya Wood.

Eastern Historical Administration students will present "Meet the Curator" on Saturday afternoon. Students will share their knowledge about artifact care with Celebration goers. Everyone is invited to bring objects and have the students analyze and suggest appropriate care.

On Saturday evening, the 98.6 Dance Ensemble will present a dance program at the Village Theatre located on 18th Street. Dance is an art form that hasn't routinely been presented at Celebration. Fans of dance will enjoy this energetic ensemble whose pieces are quite comic while others portray a deeply serious side. A workshop for younger dancers will be held during the day on Saturday.

Other events scheduled for the weekend include jugglers, the Magic of Andy Anderson, a children's activities area, sketch comedy by the Hello Dali comedy group and no festival is complete without a wide array of delicious foods. Food selections will range from Greek to Mexican to the popular festival favorites like corndogs, curly fries, and elephant ears.

There is no admission charge to the festival and the grounds are handicapped accessible. There are a number of convenient parking lots located near the festival grounds.

mark your calendars for May 2-3-4 and make plans to celebrate the arts and the return of Spring to east central Illinois at Celebration: A Festival of the Arts. Since 1977 an estimated quarter-million people have attended Celebration.

Celebration: A Festival of the Arts is hosted by Eastern's College of Arts and Humanities and sponsored by the City of Charleston; Illinois Arts Council; a state agency, Consolidated Communications; WEIU TV and the Development Campaign for Celebration For more information call the Festival Planning Office at 217-581-2113.