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For more information: Toddi Darlington, toddid@rtconnect.net or bighornbasinfolkfestival@gmail.com

BIG HORN BASIN FOLK FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS THE YEAR OF THE WYOMING WOMAN AND HERSTORY, ALONG WITH CELEBRATING ARTISTS, CRAFTSMEN, MUSICIANS, AND STORYTELLERS

The Fifth Annual Big Horn Basin Folk Festival will be held Saturday and Sunday, August 3 and 4, 2019, in Hot Springs State Park, Thermopolis, Wyoming.

The Festival celebrates the handwork and creativity of Wyoming's own artists, craftsmen, musicians and storytellers. It includes musicians performing at the Pavilion, a Fine Art and Folk Art Show, the Kiwanis Trading Post with additional items for sale, a Folk Master Craftsmen Tent, artisan and guild demonstrations, and hands-on activities for kids. As part of the state-wide celebration of the Year of Wyoming Women-the 150th anniversary of Women's Suffrage, The Storytelling Circle will present "Women in Herstory".

The festival is open to the public without charge. Sponsors include the Hot Springs Greater Learning Foundation, Kiwanis Club of Thermopolis, and Hot Springs State Park with support from, Wyoming Arts Council, Wyoming Humanities Council, Pinnacle Bank, Las Fuentes, and Hot Springs Travel & Tourism.

As part of the declaration announcing 2019 the 'Year of Wyoming Women,' Diane Shober, executive director of Wyoming Office of Tourism, described Wyoming as "the home of many firsts for women in the country and the world. Determination, resiliency and the pioneering spirit is built into the DNA of the West, so it's no surprise to me that the strong women of Wyoming helped to pave the way for women's suffrage".

The Storytelling Circle at the Festival provides an ideal venue for showcasing

Wyoming women's special place in the history of the Big Horn Basin region and our state. The Storytellers will focus on narratives and skits about women who settled Wyoming and women who contributed to the growth of our state through politics, medicine, homesteading, and as entrepreneurs. A story or two may even be told about female outlaws and other ruffians! Storytelling takes on a bit of a twist Saturday night with the telling of ghost stories beginning around 7:30pm (after the Gift of the Waters Pageant).

Hot Springs County Museum and Cultural Center will host a special tent featuring Wyoming Artists and stories about Wyoming. The Folk Masters Craftsmen Tent will feature skilled individuals dedicated to passing on their art and craft to others. Some are family members; others are talented dedicated individuals who show promise of carrying on the traditions.

Folk Masters and crafts men and women who will be demonstrating will include old favorites and new faces. The same goes for the musicians performing in the Hot Springs State Park Pavilion. The popular Buffalo Pan Steel Drums (Buffalo) will be back this year.

Our demonstrator's circle features hands-on family friendly activities such as how to make drums and other musical instruments, work with clay, create items from leather, weave and how to rope. Additional new "For the Kids" activities include Michelle King, a master storyteller and an officer of the National Storytellers Guild, working with young attendees to engage them in the art of storytelling. The youth will be given stage time to tell their stories. There will also be a children's story time segment each day.

Food will be available throughout the day on both days. The Thermopolis Kiwanis Club will serve their always popular burgers and brats lunch on Saturday and a Food Court will feature a variety of eats on both Saturday and Sunday.

A Kiwanis Fine Art and Folk Art show and sale will have items made of paper, clay, metal, fibers, wood, leather and animal byproducts. Other vendor art will be paintings, photography, jewelry, sculpture. The Kiwanis Trading Post will include other arts and crafts for sale.

The festival is held the same weekend as the Gift of the Waters Pageant Days. The Pageant tells how the hot springs were given to the state by the Native Americans on the Wind River Reservation. It will be performed starting around 6 pm in the area around the Big Spring, Saturday and Sunday evening.

Contact bighornbasinfookfestival@gmail.com for specific inquiries.

Note: A more detailed roster of artists, performers, and programs will be published.