

Alan Jackson First Headliner Performer Announced for Merlefest

Written by Submitted

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MerleFest, presented by Lowe's and slated for April 24-27, 2014, kicks off its 27th year with the announcement that country superstar Alan Jackson will be part of the festival's Thursday schedule. MerleFest, a four-day event that is an annual homecoming of musicians and music fans, will once again take place on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina.

"We are very pleased that Alan Jackson will be joining us for MerleFest 2014. With his new bluegrass album, he will be sure to please both the diehard country and bluegrass fans at MerleFest," says Ted Hagaman, festival director. "His accomplishments in the music industry are huge and have left their mark on country music history. Jackson's songs are timeless and will be recognizable to the MerleFest crowds. We know his performance on Thursday night will offer a MerleFest moment as he focuses his set toward his bluegrass project. It is sure to kick off a very successful festival in April."

Alan Jackson is one of the most successful and respected singer-songwriters in music. He is in the elite company of Paul McCartney and John Lennon among songwriters who have written more than 20 songs that they have recorded and taken to the top of the charts.

Jackson has sold nearly 60 million albums worldwide, topped the country singles charts 35 times, and scored more than 50 Top 10 hits. He has written or co-written 24 of his 35 No. 1 hit singles. Jackson is an 18-time ACM Award winner, a 16-time CMA Award recipient, and a two-time Grammy-winning artist whose songwriting has earned him the prestigious ASCAP

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Founders Award and an induction into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame as a 2011 Songwriter/Artist inductee.

Jackson's The Bluegrass Album, released September 24 on ACR (Alan's Country Records)/EMI Records Nashville and produced by Keith Stegall and Jackson's nephew, Adam Wright, has garnered rave reviews in its first week of release. The new album boasts the talents of such bluegrass greats as Sammy Shelor (banjo), Adam Steffey (mandolin), Tim Crouch (fiddle), Tim Dishman (bass), Rob Ickes (dobro) and Ronnie Bowman and Don Rigsby (vocals) and Scott Coney (acoustic guitar), also a member of Jackson's touring band.

Additional performers for MerleFest 2014 will be announced in the coming weeks. Fans can get the latest news about this year's festival by signing up for the MerleFest e-newsletter at www.merlefest.org or by following MerleFest on Facebook or Twitter.

Tickets for MerleFest 2014 go on sale November 12 and can be purchased at www.merlefest.org or by calling 1-800-343-7857. An early bird ticket discount is available through March 10, 2014.

MerleFest, considered one of the premier music festivals in the country, is an annual homecoming of musicians and music fans held on the campus of Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. MerleFest was founded in 1988 in memory of the late Eddy Merle

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Watson, son of the late American music legend Doc Watson. MerleFest is a celebration of "traditional plus" music, a unique mix of music based on the traditional, roots-oriented sounds of the Appalachian region, including bluegrass and old-time music, and expanded to include Americana, country, blues, rock and many other styles. The festival hosts over 90 artists, performing on 13 stages during the course of the four-day event. The annual event has become the primary fundraiser for the WCC Endowment Corporation, funding scholarships, capital projects and other educational needs.