

## **McPherson (KS) Scottish Festival Named One of America's Top 100 Best Events**

Photos available. For more information, contact Kathy Kajinami at 620-241-8507

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McPHERSON, KAN. – The McPherson Scottish Festival has been named one of America's 100 Best Events for 2009 by the American Bus Association (ABA). According to McPherson Convention and Visitors Bureau director Judy Casey, inclusion in the Top 100 list, published as a supplement to the September/October issue of *Destinations* magazine, indicates that the McPherson Kansas Scottish Festival offers excellent entertainment value to both tour groups and individual travelers from around the world. Casey also indicates that the honor gives McPherson an important boost in visibility among professional tour planners.

This year's festival planned for Sept. 26-28 in Lakeside Park, McPherson, features children's activities with children 12 and under admitted free to both day and even activities, when accompanied by an adult. Children's activities – including Kids' Highland Games with caber and sheaf toss -- will be featured this year, in addition to the customary lineup of Celtic music, dancers, bagpipe competitions, food and vendors.

The weekend kicks off Friday evening with a free clan fire ceremony and concert by balladeer Alex Beaton, North America's most popular and beloved Scottish folksinger, at 7 p.m. at the bandshell. The virtuoso guitar player and Glasgow, Scotland, native will also perform throughout the weekend. Joining Alex Friday evening will be members of the McPherson Arts Council Children's Choir.

Saturday festivities begin with Highland dance, athletics (including several professional class athletes), and a pipe and drum competition at 9 a.m. The massed bands and Parade of Tartans will be at noon, and athletic awards presented at 4:30 p.m. A rugby demonstration match between the Wichita Barbarians and the Salina Crusaders will start at 2 p.m. Saturday. Sunday begins with a nondenominational Kirking of the Tartan church service at 9:30 a.m.

Both Saturday and Sunday feature sheepdog herding, Renaissance-style fencing in addition to musical entertainment by Ellis Island, Tairis and the Shortleaf Band, plus a couple of Celtic jam open mic sessions. Sunday music also features the Celtic harp, country and Irish dancing, and the Sunflower Stompers cloggers.

Children's activities and games as well as Celtic product vendors, British car display and clan tents will be featured both days. A free shuttle will operate from McPherson High School parking lot from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Lunch choices range from savory Scottish meat pies, German sausage sandwiches, to buttery bits of Scottish shortbread.

Special Saturday evening entertainment includes a concert by the featured music entertainers – Alex Beaton, Shortleaf Band, Tairis and Ellis Island – at 7:30 p.m. at the Holiday Manor. The cost is \$15.

A Scottish Country Dance Gala is planned for Saturday evening at 7:30 p.m. at Lakeside Cabin for \$8.

Last year nearly 7,000 people from various states nationwide and several foreign countries attended the festival. Adult festival tickets are \$11 for Saturday and \$9 for Sunday. A \$1 off coupon is available by visiting [www.macfestival.org](http://www.macfestival.org).

*This program is presented in part by the McPherson Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Kansas Arts Commission, a state agency, and by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency which believes that a great nation deserves great art.*