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News Release

March 20, 2009

NR09031

Public invited to Presque Isle's 150th Birthday Bash April 4 at NMCC

Presque Isle - The public is invited to attend the official birthday party marking the 150th anniversary of the day Presque Isle was incorporated on Saturday, April 4, 2009, between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the Northern Maine Community College campus.

The event, which is part of the city's year-long Sesquicentennial Celebration, is free and open to the public. It will take part in the Edmunds and Christie buildings at NMCC and promises fun for the entire family, including children's activities, crafters, a County photo exhibit, entertainment, carriage rides, food vendors and the cutting of Presque Isle's Sesquicentennial birthday cake.

"Presque Isle was first incorporated as a town on April 4, 1859. The Presque Isle Historical Society is pleased to join with Northern Maine Community College, in celebration of National Community College Month, to host this commemorative event. It offers something for all ages, history buff or not. I strongly encourage every one to stop by and join us for a piece of history – and birthday cake," said Kim Smith, president of the Presque Isle Historical Society and chair of the Sesquicentennial Committee.

Smith has been working collaboratively with a team of NMCC employees for the past several months to plan for one of the largest Sesquicentennial activities on the year-long calendar of events.

"We are looking forward to welcoming the community to a birthday party 150 years in the making," said Jason Parent, NMCC director of development and college relations and a member of the event planning committee. "Like all birthday parties, this event will provide an opportunity for family and friends to come together for a great time, and we promise a fun time with a little something for everyone."

Musical entertainment featured will include the Wednesday Evening Fiddlers, Gallagher Brothers, area barbershoppers, and the Presque Isle Middle School Jazz Band. The performances will be held in the Edmunds Conference Center, which will serve as the entertainment center for the event, and include a ceremony at 12:30 p.m. with local and state dignitaries on hand to read official proclamations and cut the “Star City” cake. Sentiments are expect from Governor John Baldacci, Maine’s two U.S. Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, Second District Congressman Michael Michaud, the Maine State Legislature and the City of Presque Isle.

A crafters’ pavilion will be set up in the College Library and will feature several artisans demonstrating traditional crafts and displaying their work. The exhibit, coordinated by NMCC business administration student Buffy Guyan, will include a wide variety of crafters, some of whom will have items available for purchase.

The Library and the Edmunds building lobby will feature an exhibit of beautiful photographs of Aroostook County landscapes by Caribou photographer Ray Burby. The collection, which will be on display throughout April – National Community College Month – at NMCC, features dozens of familiar sites and events of Aroostook. In addition to the photo exhibit, a slide show display of historic Presque Isle photos, arranged and narrated by Smith, will be shown on television monitors throughout the duration of the event.

For children, the event will include several activities and games including a potato picking challenge, stringing beads, and painting fabric lunch bags among others. Coordinated by Heidi Broad-Smith, NMCC early childhood education instructor, the events promise a mix of traditional activities that children enjoyed in the late 1850’s when Presque Isle was incorporated and activities enjoyed by kids today.

Attendees of all ages will have the opportunity to test their knowledge of Presque Isle’s history with a trivia quiz prepared by the Presque Isle Historical Society and transformed into an electronic format by NMCC’s information technology department. The computerized trivia contest will allow participants to be entered into a Sesquicentennial prize drawing.

Weather permitting the event will include outdoor horse-drawn carriage rides provided by Maple Meadow Farms and Model T Ford rides provided by Presque Isle Historical Society member Craig Green.

For more information on the event, contact the NMCC college relations office at 768-2808.

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