

NEWS RELEASE

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VOLUNTEERS AT THE HEART OF THE ANNUAL CITYFOLK FESTIVAL

June, 2009 – It would be understandable if you thought you heard faint strains of “It’s a Family Affair,” the old Sly Stone hit, as you wander through the **2009 Cityfolk Festival** at RiverScape MetroPark this summer. It takes **thousands of hours of volunteer time to pull together the three-day celebration of music, dance, culture and the Fourth of July** and many of those hours are contributed by all varieties of family units.

Elvita Harris has been bringing her four children and five grandchildren to work at the downtown Dayton festival for the past six years. “I bring the whole family,” she said. “Volunteering is part of community service. It gives them a sense of belonging and giving back.”

Plus, she said, “They’re exposed to different cultures, different foods – they’re broadening their horizons.”

This year, the Cityfolk Festival will be Friday, July 3, through Sunday, July 5, and **organizers are looking to sign up volunteers for three- or four-hour shifts** during the festival as well as during set-up and tear-down. **People interested in helping out can visit the Cityfolk website, <http://www.cityfolk.org> or call (937) 223-3655, ext. 4006.**

Harris’ daughters, T’Kara and Tiesha Weaver, at just 14 and 15 years old respectively, are old hands, having assisted their mom at the festival since they were just 8 and 9 years old. These days, the girls have responsible jobs, selling Cityfolk commemorative pins and monitoring stage areas for handicap accessibility. Other volunteer opportunities for the festival range from helping the new Green Team encourage festival patrons to recycle, to serving food to the artists, to selling t-shirts and CDs.

Elaine Fultz and Matt Moyer’s first official date was volunteering at the 2006 Cityfolk Festival. “We worked our beverage crew shift and then hit the dance floor,” Fultz said. The two continue to be part of a loyal beverage crew which calls itself, wryly, Teachers Enjoying Summer.

For Gordon and Gale Heller, co-chairs of volunteer staffing for the Cityfolk Festival since 2005, volunteering is central to their lives. Gordon, retired IT development manager for a number of large corporations, also serves as president of East End Community Services Corporation. He and Gale, CFO of the Dayton Red Cross chapter, are both active in the Huffman Historic District in east Dayton. This year, they’re focusing on recruiting groups of volunteers for the festival – family, civic organizations and companies – but note that they still needs hundreds of individuals.

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“I am passionate about the Cityfolk Festival,” Gordon Heller said, “because it is one of our city’s outstanding cultural events.”

But it couldn’t happen without a lot of volunteers. To sign up, visit <http://www.cityfolk.org> or call (937) 223-3655, ext. 4006.

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CITYFOLK IS A MEMBER OF CULTURE WORKS

Celebrating its 27th season of arts presentation in 2007-2008, Cityfolk is Dayton’s premier traditional and ethnic arts organization. In 2005, Cityfolk recently received a 2009 Governor’s Award for the Arts from the Ohio Arts Council in the category of Community Development and Participation. The organization also won the first CMAcclaim Award, awarded by Chamber Music America for outstanding presenters in the ensemble music field. Through its year-round season of concerts, in-school educational activities, the annual Cityfolk Festival and other programs, Cityfolk brings the Dayton area the finest in traditional music and dance from around the world. For more information on Cityfolk’s history, commitment to education and programming updates, call (937) 223-3655 or visit Cityfolk on the web at www.cityfolk.org.