



Exciting Changes Planned for 2026 Central Ohio Folk Festival

BY ROB POTTER

For nearly 30 years, the Central Ohio Folk Festival gathers a joyful community of musicians, crafters, singers, families, and all-around good people from far and wide. Those of you who have attended know that it's not something to be missed!

Trouble is...

...you *might* miss it if you don't take note of some important changes this year designed to make the festival even more fun!

First change—a new date! To ensure warmer weather, the festival is moving to the first full weekend in June, this year June 6 & 7, 2026.

Second change—a new location! This year the Central Ohio

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*Ha ha ha ha
People are laughing
Children are singing
Come join the dance*

First of May, James Taylor

A Different Strummer Newsletter Highlights

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Photo Credit Linda McDonald

Folk Festival will be in the brand-new **Bank Run Metro Park** in Lockbourne, Ohio. This new venue is even larger than where we were last year, and provides ample parking, a beautiful outdoor covered stage, room for more food trucks and a covered pavilion with picnic table seating for 300 people. Bank Run Metro Park is easily accessible via 315 or I-7. Find printable maps here in early May:

<https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/festival/maps-printables>.

Another important new thing—To allow for these enhanced experiences, there will now be a modest admission fee for the festival. Pre-sale general admission tickets are \$11.20 (including service fees). More ticket details can be found here:

<https://events.ticketleap.com/tickets/wwwcolumbusfolkmusicsocietyorg/central-ohio-folk-festival-2026>.

Now, while we can always count on some things to change, it's good to know there will be *lots* of things remaining just like they've always been! At this year's festival. You can expect:

- **Lots of great Music!** Now with four

stages featuring folk/roots/Americana artists from as near as Ohio and as far away as East Texas (Pennsylvania) and Toronto. A wide variety of genres — from singer-songwriter, old-time, bluegrass, blues, Irish, Celtic, and Americana, to neo-country, progressive stringband, and reggae. There will even be an improv jam band featuring some of the festival artists.

- **A headliner concert** on Saturday June 6 at 7:30pm. This year it features the “genre defying” Tray Wellington Band! Tray is the winner of the Steve Martin Banjo Prize and he's appeared on *SNL* with Mumford and Sons. The Tray Wellington Band has been featured at The Newport Folk Festival and The Telluride Bluegrass Festival. Check out an interview with Tray in our February CFMS Newsletter. You won't want to miss this show.
- **Traditional Opening and Closing Sing-Alongs.** This year's festival kicks off at 11 a.m. on Saturday June 6 with an opening sing-along focusing on



Photo Credit Linda McDonald

songs by well-known folk heroes—like John Prine, Bob Marley, Simon and Garfunkel, and Bob Dylan. The festival wraps up from 4:30-5:30 on Sunday June 7 with a poignant song circle.

- **30+ music workshops for all levels of performers.** If you are new to the scene, look for beginner workshops with loaner instruments available. Those who have been at it a while will find seminar topics like songwriting, fiddle, Appalachian dulcimer, guitar, mandolin, banjo, and more.
- **A family-friendly atmosphere** with our **YouthFolk Tent** serving kids and youth with music, storytelling, arts-and-crafts, and workshops. Workshop offerings include making a wooden box frame drum (and playing them)! Plus, the festival favorite **“Instrument Petting Zoo”** returns allowing children to try out folk instruments. Don’t forget to tell your kids to be on the lookout for festival mascot Darby Duck!
- **Music from the 2025 Kirby Music Scholarship Winners** starting at 1pm Saturday in the YouthFolk Tent #1
- **Five (five!) different jam tents all day, both days!** Every musician looking to jam can find a place to feel welcome, with tents devoted to bluegrass, folk, old-time, harmonies & strings, and just singing.

You don’t want to miss the start of a festival that’s both new and old at the same time.

June 6 & 7 at Bank Run Metro Park.

The festival is produced by the Columbus Folk Music Society, co-sponsored by WCBE 90.5 FM, and couldn’t happen without lots of volunteers. Check out: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/festival/volunteer> if you want to help out.



Photo Credit Linda McDonald

Volunteer Request

COFF is also looking for folks to take some videos and post to your personal TikTok and tag Central Ohio Folk Festival. Please reach out to David Maywhoor at: coffpublicity2@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org

Whether a CFMS member or not, a monthly concert goer, or one of the thousands attending our June festival.

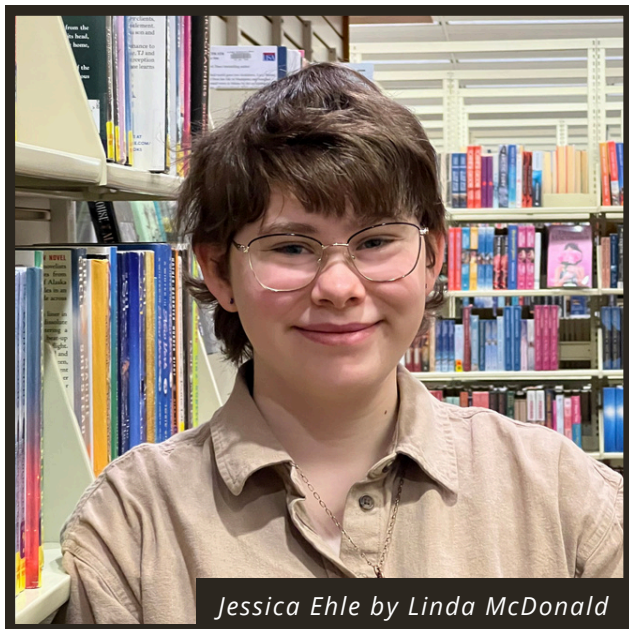
Donations may be made via the website: <https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/contact-donate.html>

via the Columbus Foundation’s Giving Store: <https://columbusfoundation.org/the-giving-store/nonprofit-directory-listing/ColumbusFolkMusicSocietyInc/6505>

Introducing the Columbus Folk Music Society's 2026 Kirby Scholarship Winners

Every year CFMS awards its Bob Kirby Music Scholarship to young aspiring musicians from the central Ohio region. In 2009 this scholarship was created to assist young people as they pursue or enhance their interest in music by giving a \$500 award. For 2026 we are pleased to announce this scholarship to these young musicians from our region: Jessica Ehle, 11th grade, Hillard Bradley High School, and Simone Edwards, 11th grade, Whetstone High School.

Be sure to catch this award ceremony, followed by a brief performance Saturday June 6 at 2:15 p.m., at the YouthFolk Performing Tent at the Central Ohio Folk Festival.



Jessica Ehle by Linda McDonald



Simone Edwards by Linda McDonald

Essay by Jessica Ehle

I have been playing violin for almost 10 years. I love this instrument, and I am fortunate to have had good teachers & directors, with many performance opportunities. I play with the top orchestra in my high school, Chamber Orchestra, led by Erin Broadhurst. We play many different varieties of music, and we recently performed at the Ohio Music Educator's Conference. Last Fall, I auditioned and was invited to play with the Central Ohio Regional Orchestra, which was a fun and challenging experience. I also volunteer for the Pit Orchestra, for the musical theatre performances at school. These experiences have allowed me to share my love of music with others. I enjoy playing in quartets and trios, making music with my friends. I regularly participate in recitals with my teacher, Devin Copfer, and while the focus of my lessons is classical music, I enjoy playing a variety of styles, including folk music. I get to play many different styles with a small group of singers called The Magpie Consort, led by Sheena Phillips.

They sing a unique blend of music from many parts of the world and from different musical traditions, including world music and folksongs. Along with accompanying them during their recent concerts, I performed a solo excerpt from "Appalachian Waltz" by Mark O'Connor in which I got to experiment with fiddling.

As you can tell, I spend a lot of time making music with a variety of groups. I also spend a good amount of time practicing, as I am dedicated to my instrument. A Bob Kirby Scholarship for Music will help me purchase a much needed new bow and possibly help pay for an upgraded violin, for which my teacher says I am ready. When I graduate high school next year I plan to continue playing the violin, and include music as part of my studies at Kent State University. Improving my bow and instrument will help me continue to perform at a high level.

Essay by Simone Edwards

Music is my safe space to create, express myself and connect with others. My day is not complete until I've spent some time playing guitar or listening to an album that gives me joy. I know how to play guitar, viola, cello, trumpet, and sing. My passion is to play my instruments with friends and write songs. I've played in two jazz ensembles, started a string quartet and folk band, and I am continuing to share my original folk music around Columbus! I also played viola with Inclement Weather last year at the Folk Festival! My current musical goal is to learn how to compose original songs for my string quartet: Ginko. I would like to sing my songs at the Central Ohio Folk Festival. Thank You!

What CFMS Does When It's Not Festival Time

Our Americana/Folk Concert Series

You can enjoy more of the festival-type performances at our Americana/Folk Concert Series throughout the year. Ten concerts presented at a variety of venues within the Columbus vicinity are rich in the experience of community. All include a pre-concert community sing-along. Those events draw good-sized crowds and present quality regional acoustic-roots performers.

Weekly Community Jams & Jam Classes

CFMS members orchestrate two very

popular regular jam classes as well as multiple open jam opportunities.

CFMS Newsletter and Notices of Events

We maintain a "Folk Events" e-list which delivers to your in-box our newsletter and also notifies you of our upcoming events. There also may be notices of other special folk-related events. And we promise, we won't send out too many e-mails. You can sign up on our newsletter page:

<https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/newsletter.html>.

What CFMS Does, from pg 5

CFMS Membership

Last but not least, if you want to become a CFMS member OR volunteer to help us put on the annual festival AND join our vibrant community of folk music enthusiasts, you can do so online. Look us up at: www.ColumbusFolkMusicSociety.org OR visit our Welcome/Info Tent at the festival to sign up or get more information.

Friends of Metro Parks

BY MELISSA MEYER, METRO PARKS

The Friends of Metro Parks have returned again to the Central Ohio Folk Festival! Our most asked question at this event is always ... how do you make your bubble juice!

It's a secret recipe. What isn't a secret? What Friends of Metro Parks does to help support the Metro Parks!

The Friends of Metro Parks is a nonprofit organization that helps support the Metro Parks through outreach, advocacy, and fundraising. We are a membership based organization that relies entirely on private donations, not taxpayer dollars. And all donations are used to help support the Metro Parks and the communities that surround them.

Right now, we are reviewing Tad Jeffrey Memorial Grants! Check out our website to see what we have funded through these grants in the past! Maybe one of your favorite park features or programs was purchased with the help of a Friends of Metro Parks grant!

Another way we are helping out the community is through our Parks Connect

grants. This helps other nonprofits, school groups, clubs, and other organizations with transportation costs in order to take people to the Metro Parks. By breaking down the transportation barrier, we hope to introduce more first-time park goers to the amazing free resources that they have all over the county.

Friends of Metro Parks has also received funding through grants to help create specific programs like our Passports! Find your Friends of Metro Parks passport in the Nature Centers at Blacklick Woods, Battelle Darby Creek, Blendon Woods, or Highbanks. Complete the passport and explore all the parks to receive a Tshirt! We also have a passport just for the dogs!

Not interested in visiting ALL the parks? Keep an eye out on our website for information about our Home Park program, where you can be the cheerleader and champion for your favorite park.

Interested in becoming a Friend of the Metro Parks member? For just \$10 a year, you can be invited to members-only activities and events, earn a walking stick during the winter hike series, and be kept up to date on various events, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities to help us support the Metro Parks.

Got questions? Find us at the Folk Festival on Saturday! Just follow the bubbles.



Welcome NEW Members

Steve Ball

Michael Holm

Jeff and Lincoln Smith

...and Welcome Back RENEWING Members!



Save the Date!

Ohio Folk Festival

Mon and Tues, June 6th & 7th

PRE-SALE ticket link:

<http://tickets.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/>.

Sign up to volunteer on here:

www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/festival#volunteer OR email the festival

volunteer coordinators:

coffvolunteercoordinator@gmail.com

Zoom Jam Sessions

Mondays and Thursdays, 10-

11:30am. Contact Jane for Zoom

logon info: vanaukj@gmail.com

In-Person Jams

Mondays, 6 - 8pm

Wednesdays 6:30 - 8pm - Gillie

Senior Center, 2100 Morse Rd. Jam class is in community room to right from entrance

SATURDAYS:

SATURDAYS MAY 2026: Spring session Making Music Together classes CONTINUE at Whetstone Community Center (9:30 - 11:30 a.m.) and at Carriage Place Community Center (12 - 2 p.m.) UNTIL May 23.

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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CFMS Photos: L. McDonald

In-Person Jams, Continued

JUNE - AUGUST: Community Centers Saturday jams often move outside!

Worthington Outside Farmers Market jam

(SouthEast Village Green) starts Saturday May 2 through October, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

ALL jam questions e-mail Jane at vanaukj@gmail.com

Americana/Folk Concert Series

Starlit Ways

Sat, May 2nd, 3pm

2pm open jam/sing-along

Food/Refreshments available. \$15 door donation / \$10 CFMS members

Venue: Reeb Center, 280 Reeb Ave. Columbus

Mama Said String Band

Sat, May 30, 8 pm

7 pm open mic & sing-along

Donations suggested

Nocterra Brewing, 41 Depot St., Powell

Cornucopia: A Feast of American Music

Friday and Sat, May 8th & 9th, 7pm

Refreshments available. \$0-\$20 suggested donation

The Magpies will donate a portion of ticket sales to CFMS. For more information visit:

magpieconsort.org

Venue: Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Okaland Park Ave



The Columbus Folk Music Society

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BECOME A MEMBER OF THE COLUMBUS FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

Date _____ New Renew Preferred Newsletter Format: Digital Hard Copy **[NOTE: if you choose hard copy, we request an additional \$15 contribution over & above dues to cover postage & handling]**

Name(s) / Band Name (if applic) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

General Age Range – Born: 1930s-40s 1950s-60s 1970s-80s 1990s-2010s

Phone _____ (Cell) _____ If Band, website _____

E-mail Address _____ Additional e-mail (if a household or band) _____

We are also a growing, vibrant community of volunteers; the awesome force behind our work! Please at least 1 box.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> May folk festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Musician | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CFMS concert events | <input type="checkbox"/> General Help | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking / Baking | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Musician | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing / Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cbus Jammer Musician | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Instructor | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE ANNUALLY ON DECEMBER 31. one of the membership levels listed below.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Band \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Friend \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$500 |

I have included an additional \$15 (postage & handling) to have a printed version of newsletter mailed to me.

To join/renew by credit card, visit CFMS' website: columbusfolkmusicsociety.org (About Us/Join)

OR click here: <https://tinyurl.com/CFMS-Join>

To join/renew by cash or check, please mail completed membership form with payment to: *Columbus Folk Music Society, PO Box 20735, Columbus, OH 43220.* Membership amounts may be tax-deductible.

My place of work matches donations:

