

## A Look Back On MerleFest through the eyes of the Cougar Cry

By: Loni Miller and Robin Dew, Former Reporter for the Cougar Cry in 1989

As many of you know Merlefest will be celebrating its 20 year anniversary this year. So in honor of this, the staff at the Cougar Cry has decided to do our very first Cougar Cry Past Story on Merlefest. However after looking through all of the 20 year old papers we were unable to find anything on the very first Merlefest. We did find something about the second Merlefest, written by Robin Dew, a staff member in 1989, entitled Merle Watson Festival.

*"The second annual Merle Watson Festival was held the weekend of April 28-30, 1989 on the grounds of WCC.*



*The Festival was held in honor of Merle Watson, a bluegrass and blues guitar player, who was killed in a tractor accident in Caldwell County in 1985.*

*On Friday, April 28, 1989, the festival began at 6:45 p.m. Performances were given by Doc Watson, New Grass Revival, the Smith Sisters, George Hamilton IV, and the Moody Brothers.*

*On Saturday, April 29, the festival began at 12:00 p.m. Performing on Saturday were Doc Watson, The Tony Rice Unit, Jim and Jesse and the Virginia Boys, Mac Wiseman and the Wildwood Express, Jack Lawrence, the Smith Sisters, Hot Rise, the Red*



*Knuckles and the Trailblazers, Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys.*

*Performing on Sunday, April 30, 1989, was Doc Watson with Peter Rowan and the Nashville Bluegrass Band, Emmylou Harris, Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, and John Hartford.*

*Although there were a few showers in the late afternoon of all three days, the festival was attended by approximately 9,500 people. It was a great success!"*

Looking back to when Merlefest just started to where it is now is just amazing. Last year alone Merlefest had 82,618 people for the four days on campus. Many of the names listed in that original article have played at Merlefest more than once. Last year Emmylou Harris performed on Sunday, and this year Tony Rice will be back.

For a full list of performing artists at this years MerleFest check out the MerleFest website at [www.merlefest.org](http://www.merlefest.org)

## Respiratory Care . . .

### A Life and Breath Career

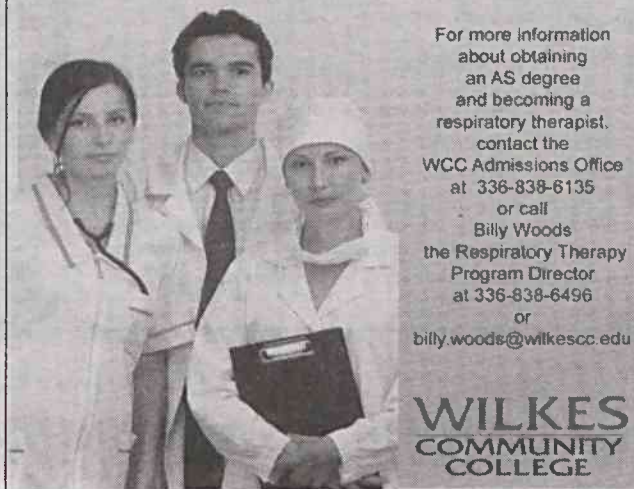
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- Respiratory therapists are the health professionals responsible for taking care of patients with deficiencies and abnormalities of the cardiopulmonary system.
- Respiratory therapists care for newborn infants, children, adults and the elderly.
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For more information about obtaining an AS degree and becoming a respiratory therapist, contact the WCC Admissions Office at 336-838-6135 or call Billy Woods the Respiratory Therapy Program Director at 336-838-6496 or [billy.woods@wilkescc.edu](mailto:billy.woods@wilkescc.edu)

**WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless

Paul Turner, Director of the NC Spit Tobacco Education Program, was recently on the Wilkes Community College campus to present the program, "Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless." He explained that spit tobacco (smokeless tobacco) comes in two forms: chewing tobacco and snuff and has more 2500 chemical compounds, 28 are known to cause cancer. Each dip of spit tobacco contains the same amount of nicotine as 2-5 cigarettes. Using spit tobacco can hurt athletic performance—the nicotine in spit tobacco narrows blood vessels, raises blood pressure, and makes the heart work harder.

Turner explained that spit tobacco is not a safer alternative to cigarettes. It is true that many people think spit tobacco is not as bad as cigarettes. Spit tobacco use is connected with a variety of health consequences. The most common are oral health problems (cavities, gingivitis, periodontal disease, and pre-cancerous lesions). The following are examples of potential health concerns. Nicotine addiction and dependence. Nicotine blood levels achieved by spit Tobacco use are similar to those from cigarette smoking. Short term - immediate artificial increase in heart rate and blood pressure. Diseases and conditions of the

cardiovascular system: Increased heart rate, stroke, complications of high blood pressure, heart attacks, delayed wound healing due to decreased blood flow, decreased stamina and endurance. Increased risk of stomach problems i.e. ulcers, indigestion, and potential Stomach cancer, staining of teeth and halitosis (bad breath), sensory effects, spit tobacco lessens a person's sense of taste and ability to smell, tooth abrasion. Substances found in spit tobacco products scratch teeth and wear away the hard surface or enamel. Periodontal disease, gingivitis, and bone and tooth loss. Constant irritation to the spot in the mouth where a small wad of spit tobacco is placed can result in permanent damage to periodontal tissue. It can also damage the supporting bone structure. The injured gums pull away from the teeth, exposing root surfaces and leaving teeth sensitive to heat and cold and more vulnerable to tooth decay. Erosion of critical bone support leads to loosened teeth that can be permanently lost. Dental decay, sugar and sweeteners are added to spit tobacco during curing and processing to improve the taste. The sugars react with bacteria found naturally in the mouth, causing an acid reaction that leads to tooth decay and Leukoplakia. These conditions may occur as a result of "chewing" or "dipping" tobacco because the irritating juices are left in contact with gums, cheeks, and/or lips for prolonged periods of time. Leukoplakia appears either as a smooth white patch or leathery-looking wrinkled skin. It can become

cancerous in three to five percent of all cases. All forms of spit tobacco contain high concentrations of cancer-causing agents (carcinogens). These substances subject users to increased cancer risk.

In 2006 Wilkes Community College was awarded a grant from the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF). A primary focus of the grant funds is to educate college students about tobacco prevention and cessation.

**ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND:** The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested over \$55 million (as of 2006) to support preventive health initiatives including teen and college tobacco use prevention, health disparities, obesity, and a medication assistance program for seniors. For more information, please visit [www.healthwellnc.org](http://www.healthwellnc.org).

*I have a new philosophy: I'm only going to dread one day at a time.*

—Charles Schulz

Quitting cold turkey alone can be difficult.



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Health Wellness

