

Slew of activities scheduled to welcome new governor

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

RALEIGH - Governor-elect Mike Easley and the state's top elected officials will take office on Saturday, Jan. 6, in an 11 a.m. ceremony launching a day-long family-oriented festival in downtown Raleigh.

"Celebrate One North Carolina," is a family-oriented event highlighting the incredible diversity and talent in this state.

This landmark day marks several firsts in Inaugural Ceremonies history, including making the cere-

monies and festivities a day-long family festival and featuring the popular state museums of history and natural sciences.

"Mike Easley has long been a champion for working families," said Shirley Frye, chair of



Easley

the Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies. "We wanted his first day in office to honor these families, along with our state's leaders. Saturday's celebration gives all North Carolinians a chance to meet our new leaders and enjoy the incredible talents and diversity of this state."

"Celebrate One North Carolina" will begin at 10:30 a.m. with an inaugural morning concert at the Archives and History - State Library presented by the Jam Band from N.C. Central University, Mike Easley's alma mater and where

Mary Easley teaches at the law school.

Swearing-in ceremony performers include the 440th Army National Guard band, the N.C. Theatre's Kids on Broadway chorus, and the Mount Zion Baptist choir. Broadway star Terrence Mann, who originated the role of the Beast in "Beauty and the Beast," will give a special reading.

After the swearing-in, the governor and the Council of State will proceed on foot - rather than the traditional car procession - from the

State Library to the parade-viewing stand on the Capitol. The N.C. State University Pipe and Drum Corps will lead them to the stand.

About 50 acts from throughout the state are expected in the parade, including military and high school marching bands, the Silver Chalice Boat from Roanoke island and two entries from the state's community colleges: the Catawba Valley Community College Racing Team and the Wilson Community College Heavy Equipment Project.

Antique cars, horse patrols,

cheerleaders, step teams and the Tryon Palace African-American traditional holiday celebration will also march in Saturday's parade, set for noon.

"Our acts are meant to represent our state, from the seven Native American Indian tribes to our Nascar tradition," Frye said.

At 1 p.m., activities will begin inside the state's downtown museums, the Museum of History and the new Museum of Natural Sci-

See Easley on A8

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