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NEWS RELEASE

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Renaissance Fair and Medieval History Symposium to be Held at WLU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEST LIBERTY – Medieval history will come alive on Oct. 1 on the West Liberty University campus as the WLU History Club joins with historians, librarians, literature and theater scholars to host the inaugural Wheeling Regional Pre-Modern Symposium and Renaissance Fair.

The day's activities will include academic lectures and workshops as well as medieval games, fencing tournaments and other traditional Renaissance fair activities. All events will be held on the WLU campus and are free and open to the public.

WLU history professor Darrin Cox explained, "It is our intention to create in northern West Virginia an annual event which will bridge scholarly research with popular reenactments centering on the pre-modern era. Research will be presented and critiqued, and classes and workshops on the history, arts and life skills of the pre-modern time will be held for those with a more scholarly interest in the period. At the same time, attendees can enjoy performers, tournaments, martial arts exhibitions, food from the era, a Viking living history encampment and merchants at the Renaissance Fair.

"Members of the local Society for Creative Anachronism will participate and portray characters at the fair and the market, providing the historic atmosphere that will color the event and draw the general public," Cox said.

He added, "We should have a number of merchants on site selling items from period clothing, books, and other materials you might find at a typical renaissance fair."

Events start at 9 a.m. Lectures, panel discussions, classes and workshops will be held in Main Hall on the hilltop campus. At 4 p.m., Carol Symes, Helen Corley Petit Scholar and associate professor of history and medieval studies at the University of Illinois will present the keynote address, "That was Entertainment? The Problems and Possibilities of Medieval Performance."

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Other scholars participating in the symposium include Patrick W. Conner, an authority on Anglo-Saxon culture; John Lennox, internationally recognized fight (swordplay) theatrical director; Eleanor Congdon, who has published numerous articles on late medieval Mediterranean trade history; James Matter, an expert on medieval cookery; and Steven Huff, founder and director of the Historical Martial Study Society.

Martial arts exhibitions, period demonstrations, the fair and market events will be held outdoors with most events on the Quad. In the event of rain, activities will be moved into the student union, the Academic, Sports and Recreation Complex or Blatnik Hall. Alcohol is not permitted. For more information, contact Dr. Cox at (304) 336-8087 or dcox@westliberty.edu.

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