

Folk Faire unites music, materials and minds in Takilma

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Residents from Takilma and throughout the Illinois Valley shared resources and ideas Sunday, May 29 on Dome School property in the first-ever Takilma Folk Faire.

Dancing, local food, a discussion of resource management and other activities highlighted the event while talented musicians played throughout the day on two stages. Setup started as early as 7:30 a.m. and entertainment lasted well into the night.

There was no shortage of goods for guests to choose from, with booths featuring dreamcatchers, alpaca from Suri Futures farm, herbs and plants from gardeners, musical instruments and countless other locally-produced handmade crafts and goods.

Selma resident Carol Valentine, who organized the musical side of the event, said the Faire came together from the work of many individuals, often going beyond expectations to help things run smoothly.

According to Valentine, frequent local musicians Tim Wallace and Michelle LeComte had a wedding gig the night before, wrapped up at midnight, and showed up at 7:30 the next day to set up and run the sound equipment in Takilma.

"That's what it takes: that's really what [this event] was focusing on with the community coming together to create this," Valentine said. "A couple of work parties happened before where people cleared out the area [for the stage] and really spiffed up the grounds to be able to do this. The whole community benefits."

Americana groove folk musician Alice DiMichele was the headlining act after dinner, making a rare appearance in Takilma with bassist Rob Kohler.

DiMichele has performed and recorded with more than a few well-known artists, including Mikey Stevens from Maynard Ferguson and Gypsy Soul, and has shared the stage with blues singer-songwriter Bonnie Raitt. Valentine also credited Kohler for how well his playing mingled with DiMichele's talents.

"He was awesome — just a wonderful musician," Valentine said. "He seemed very intuitive and had a great sound coming out of that bass. The music really grooves, and hav-

ing the bass in there kicks it up another level of energy."

Fonta Earthsong from Takilma FM also helped with MCing the event, Valentine said.

In late afternoon, residents gathered in a circle outside the Takilma Community Building, brainstorming ideas for becoming more sustainable not just in Takilma, but throughout the Valley.

Takilma resident Stephanie Moor said the discussion on resource management was inspired by an idea generated last year in meetings at the Frog Farm, a solar-powered permaculture farm near Hope Mountain.

"It's about how we integrate and use all of our land and resources here in the Illinois Valley holistically," Moor said. "It was an idea based off of resource mapping, understanding what everybody has available to contribute... and different ways to function in our own local economy."

According to Moor, rising costs in food, transportation and so much else are stimulating residents to find ways to better manage local assets and pool them together, so those with a particular resource or commodity can reach out to those lacking that resource.

"That talk in the circle was really about inspiring people to remember that there's more than what we're doing here as individuals," Moor said. "There is always a higher bar and standard to reach for."

In the discussion, Moor said people brainstormed ideas like solar power community wells, having a central community building, rotating crops and livestock, and uniting groups such as loggers, truck drivers and millworkers to help manage products locally.

Dome School students demonstrated the biochar project, involving nutrient-rich compost incorporating charcoal and waste products, led by Kelpie Wilson, a freelance writer and engineer who is working with the International Biochar Initiative.

"The point of the Folk Faire was to remind people by gathering together and having a marketplace, as well as sharing music, is part of sustainability," Moor said. "It takes all kinds of people to make a functioning, holistic community. We have so many resources...we can direct that energy by showing people how to care for ourselves and for each other."



(Photos by Darcy Wallace, Illinois Valley News)

(Above) Activities at the Takilma Folk Faire Sunday, May 29 included tile making with peace signs.

(Below) The East Fork band was on of many musical acts entertaining guests.



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