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**For Immediate Release, please
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Ronnie Milsap and Celtic Crossroads Headline Opening Weekend at the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival

Soulful country and high energy Irish music open the 48th season of the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival.

On Friday, July 23rd at 8:00 p.m. in Orkney Springs, VA, the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival kicks off its 48th summer season with a live performance by country legend, Ronnie Milsap. Irish act, Celtic Crossroads, will perform the following night, Saturday, July 24th at 8:00 p.m.

Ronnie Milsap's story is fascinating. The young, talented kid from Robbinsville, North Carolina almost ignored an early developed passion for music for a career in law – until a chance encounter with R&B legend Ray Charles encouraged him to pursue his dreams of professional music. Before his first major hit in 1974, Milsap teamed up with famed producer Chips Moman and played piano for Elvis Presley. He has won countless awards, including seven Grammys and has racked up 40 number-one hits to his name.

During his first performance ever at the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival, Milsap will play some of his biggest hits and some selections from his most recent album, "Then Sings My Soul: 24 Favorite Hymns and Gospel Favorites," that put his spiritual side on display.

Celtic Crossroads brings high energy music and dance to Orkney Springs all the way from the Emerald Isle. The acclaimed "super-group" was formed in 2005 when seven of Ireland's most talented performers came together to produce a show that rocks the world of traditional music and beyond. The show begins with a performance of more traditional Irish styles of music and dance but then unleashes the styles that have evolved out of Irish music including bluegrass, folk and others. Their show and their style is very similar to Festival favorite Eileen Ivers, of Riverdance fame, Festival Director Dennis Lynch said.

The Festival venue is a rustic pavilion on the grounds of the old Orkney Springs Hotel, now part of the Shrine Mont Camp and Conference Center in Orkney Springs, VA., about 13 miles west of Mount Jackson. The hotel is a National Historic Landmark. Reserved pavilion tickets for the Ronnie Milsap show are \$42 and general admission lawn tickets are \$37. For the Celtic Crossroads show, reserved pavilion tickets are \$30 and general admission lawn tickets are \$25. The concerts go on rain or shine. Visit www.musicfest.org or call (800) 459-3396 for tickets or more information.

The Shenandoah Valley Music Festival's 2010 summer season Gold level sponsor is Shenandoah Memorial Hospital – Valley Health. The Silver level sponsors are Cave Ridge Vineyards, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance and ShelRand Enterprises and the Bronze level

sponsors are Graves Light Wealth Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors; Lenhart Obenshain PC, Mountain Valley Management, Inc., Rodney Shepherd-Woodbury Financial Services, Inc., Shentel, Tracy Miller-Edward Jones Investments and Virginia Savings Bank FSB.

In addition to the Holiday Inn Express, the official hotel of the 2010 Music Festival, the Festival's 2010 Official Caterer is Shaffer's Barbecue and Catering and the ticket sponsor is Bryce Resort.

The 2010 Media Partners are The Northern Virginia Daily/nvdaily.com, The Free Press, WUSQ 102.5 FM, WHSV TV-3 Winchester, WSIG 96.9 FM, WMXH 105.7 FM/WRAA 1330 AM, WMRA 90.7 FM/WEMC 91.7 FM, WSVG 790 AM, SIMPLY LOCAL on Shentel Cable, Shenandoah Living, WVPT-Public Television, WZRV 95.3 FM/WFTR 1450 AM and WBTX 1470 AM/WNLR 1150 AM.

- 30 -

NOTE TO EDITORS, REPORTERS, NEWS DIRECTORS, BLOGGERS, WEBMASTERS, ETC.: There are photos of Ronnie Milsap and Celtic Crossroads on the Festival's website, www.musicfest.org (follow the Media link on the right hand side.) The artists are available for advance phone interviews. Please call the Festival office at (540) 459-3396.