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## **JOSEPH HUGHES NAMED HOLIDAY FOLK FAIR *INTERNATIONAL* HONORARY CHAIRPERSON**

**MILWAUKEE, WI** – Organizers of the 74<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Folk Fair *International* at the State Fair Park Exposition Center, West Allis, Wis., Fri., Nov. 17 – Sun., Nov. 19, 2017 announced that Joseph Hughes will serve as the honorary chairperson of the 2017 event.

“I am humbled to be named the 74<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Folk Fair *International* honorary chairman, as I have had a long history with the Folk Fair going back more than 30 years,” Hughes said. “I remember the enjoyment I had being a chaperone when my children would attend Folk Fair on Friday on school field trips. I later spent many years volunteering at the many different venues the Holiday Folk Fair has called ‘home.’

Remembering all the fun the students had on those Fridays, I long ago made Friday my primary day for volunteering at the Folk Fair Shamrock Club food café.”

An active member of the Shamrock Club for more than 35 years, Hughes marched with the Shamrock Club Color Guard Pipes and Drums for 20 years and has twice served as the club’s President. He was named “Irish Man of the Year” in 2008, and in 2010, he and his late wife Bridget O’Brien served as parade marshals for the Milwaukee St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

Hughes has been involved with Milwaukee Irish Fest for more than 35 years and in 2017, he was named “Irish Fest Volunteer of the Year.” He has worked as a bartender and for the last several years he has been the set-up coordinator for the event’s Cultural Village.

“As honorary chairman, I believe it is more important than ever to introduce and share these multinational traditions and cultural experiences,” Hughes said. “Perhaps we can create a better understanding of, and respect for, our world’s diversity.”

A program of the International Institute of Wisconsin, Holiday Folk Fair *International* celebrates the cultural heritage of the people living in southeastern Wisconsin. This year’s theme, “Celebrate the Culture of Welcome,” will allow Fair-goers the opportunity to learn the traditions and symbolism of cultures as it relates to welcoming individuals and how it is incorporated into music, food, dance, arts, and crafts.

Special attractions in 2017 include invited international performers and artisans, including those from the Bahamas and Indonesia; the “Images of Liberty” the “Capture the Spirit of



Ramadan,” and the Thaddeus Kościuszko photographic exhibits; the Artisan Corner sponsored by Debra Stefl, featuring guest artists from Alaska and Uzbekistan; the Dirty Kettle Native American interactive display; the Kohl’s Color Wheels display; the Wisconsin Woodturners; a bonsai exhibit; and the annual Naturalization Ceremony on Fri., Nov. 17, at 2:30 p.m.

The three-day event features the All Nations Theater sponsored by Fields Auto Group, with traditional music and dance; the World Café offering traditional dishes; the International Stage where young people perform their ethnic dances; the Tanzhauz (Music Pavilion) presented by Leaf Filter, where attendees dance and sing along with a variety of musical styling’s; the Coffee House where patrons enjoy a beverage and baked goods while listening to talented musicians; Heritage Lane sponsored by Weather Tight, with unique traditions and customs through interactive exhibits; the International Bazaar sponsored by Bath Fitter, where cultural artifacts create a unique shopping experience; and the Callen Construction Chef’s Stage featuring local chefs preparing traditional cuisine, including youth representatives of the American Culinary Federation – Milwaukee Chapter.

Hours on Fri., Nov. 17 are 2 p.m. – 10 p.m.; 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. on Sat., Nov. 18; and 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. on Sun., Nov. 19.

Advance tickets will be sold for \$10 each, with family four-packs for \$36, and available for purchase on-line at [www.folkfair.org](http://www.folkfair.org). Admission at the gate will be \$12 for adults; \$8 for children ages 6 to 12; children under the age of five will be admitted at no charge. Those 62 and over will be admitted for \$10, and all military personnel with a military ID card will be admitted free.

For more information on the 2017 Holiday Folk Fair *International*, visit [www.folkfair.org](http://www.folkfair.org) or call the International Institute of Wisconsin at 414-225-6225.

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