Fans will have several opportunities to interact with local celebrity Donna Fargo over the weekend. The Grammy-winning country music/pop singer will serve as grand marshal Saturday in the Mount Airy Christmas Parade, which kicks off at 9 a.m. After the parade travels up Main Street and concludes at the Southern end of the Main Street business district, Fargo will stop by the Earle Theatre for a brief noon appearance with Kelly Epperson of WPAQ. The singer will next be whisked off to the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History for a meet-and-greet and autograph signing slated to begin about 12:30 p.m. On Sunday, Nov. 27, a book signing will begin at Pages Book Store on Main Street at 2 p.m. until closing. Representatives from the bookstore indicated that Fargo will be releasing a new book but did not provide any additional details.

“I think you will not find a famous person with more affinity for her fans than she has,” said Matt Edwards, museum director. “She loves her fans as much as they love her.” Edwards noted that he grew up “functionally post-Donna Fargo,” and that his appreciation for Fargo was developed after he began work at the museum. “I didn’t have a clue,” he said, but became familiar with Fargo’s historical significance while developing her exhibit at the museum. “Working with her, she’s a great lady,” he said. “I cannot say enough good things.”

Fargo is best known for her music career, during which she released hits such as “The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A.” in the 1970s. But a lesser-known detail impressed Edwards as far as her historical contribution. “She was the first woman to host her own TV variety show,” he said. “That’s pretty impressive. Everybody remembers Barbara Mandrell because her show ran for several years, but Donna’s show preceded that.” The show, which was produced by the Osmond Brothers, ran for a year beginning in 1978 and ended so Fargo could address serious health concerns. “It wasn’t because it wasn’t popular enough and it wasn’t because people didn’t love it,’ Edwards said. “She made the decision to step away.”

Though the museum meet-and-greet is scheduled to continue until 5 p.m., the director said fans won’t be turned away. “She will stay until everybody gets the opportunity to do so,” he said. “In many cases it’s really an old home feeling,” he said, a reunion of sorts for those who knew Fargo back in the day. Edwards said, “Even if you aren’t one of those people, she treats you like you are.”