

Club sees bandshell relocation, new park layout a plus

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Beltrano said the bandshell move would result in some minor changes when it comes to the actual layout of the field for the festival, but forecasted it will actually help provide for an even better experience for the throngs of festivalgoers expected.

As to Kiwanis' shuttle, which ferries visitors throughout the festival from parking arrangements at nearby Artpark to the festival grounds, Beltrano said the new arrangement should work out fine.

"It looks like it's situated where the shuttle buses can still stay in the same area that it's in, and we can bring people in (there)," Beltrano said.

He added Kiwanis sees the new bandshell's location as a plus. In addition to it now being more convenient for shuttle visitors to check out the entertainment and attractions as soon as they enter Academy Park, it also gives Kiwanis the advantage of better overall planning and siting the festival's layout at the park.

"With this stage being in the corner, if you know the flow of the field, where the stage was, (this location is better)," Beltrano said. Noting its earlier location, "You either had to go behind it or you had to go in front of it to get around the park. Now with the stage back in the corner, you just created an entire circle. You can circle around the park and go up and down the aisles."

As a result, he said visitors would no longer have to contend with navigating the maze of fences, trailers and vending locations in order to get from one point to another in the park.

As to visitor arrangements at the bandshell itself, Beltrano said the bleachers, a familiar part at the earlier location, are not in-

cluded in the new festival setting. Standing areas will also be provided in a fenced-in setting.

"One of the biggest things we're going to have to key in this year, really getting it out to people (is) that they're going to have to bring their own chairs or blankets," he said. "And we're going to hopefully be able to fence off a certain amount of space. (So) this is all the seating (area). Whether you're going to bring blankets, a chair or stand, this is all the seating area (we have). And (like) in the past, we'll fence off a smaller area for judges and things like that for some of the events."

Beltrano noted all planned festival on-stage events – from concerts, to cheerleading, the Peach Fuzz and Peach Blossom youth events, to the preliminary and crowning Peach Queen ceremonies – are all on schedule to take place at the relocated facility.

"Everything is just going to transition to where the stage is," he said.

As far as adjusting to the ongoing COVID-19 state protocols, Beltrano said Kiwanis planners intend on proceeding full speed ahead as in prior years.

"Right now, we're not looking at any restrictions at this point. What we are waiting to see – well, my philosophy is we're just going to go full out, the entire festival, running it like there are not restrictions," he said.

Beltrano said the club views this approach as providing greater latitude to adjust, should it have to change things down the road.

"And then as we get closer to the event, if there are restrictions, (then) it's a lot easier for us to back off and say, 'OK, we need to space vendors out more,' or 'We need to place sanitation stations,' whatever it is," he said. "It's easier



The Peach Festival midway will be back, as shown in this 2019 file photo.

for us to scale back than it would be for us to start where we say, 'Let's pretend it's lockdown and try to catch up after it's over.'

"At this point, we're not (planning for restrictions). We're going full steam ahead as if there are no restrictions."

He said that includes the return of the Peach Festival midway operated by Amusements of America. Beltrano said the company, which is scheduled to operate its midway at three other New York state events this year, is fully prepared to handle whatever COVID-19 protocols and restrictions may be in place come September. "The ride company, they have

a spray that they can do on the rides once every two hours that will take care of any bugs, viruses, bacteria, anything. And they will spray the rides down, shut them down once an hour, spray them down and open them back up," Beltrano said. "It's nothing that's going to affect them. (For the club), the only thing we might have an issue with is whether or not we can space them right next to each other, or if we have to have a certain amount of distance between them. Other than that, I don't think there's anything else that we can really do or that's really going to affect us at this point."

As to vendors, Beltrano said the club envisions no major changes from prior years, where upward of 90-100 vendors were a part of the festival.

"We're still looking at the same number," he said. "We're going to invite them and, with the stage being moved – and with no grandstand or anything like that – we'll have a better layout."

"Where the stage is going, we're going to lose some of the vendor space at that end, but we gain so much more at the opposite end where the stage was. So, we'll extend (the vendors) out that way."

Beltrano said the annual Lewiston Kiwanis 5K run would not be part of this year's festival weekend. But the annual Peach Festival Parade is on for Saturday morning on Center Street.

"We had to cancel the 5K this year, mainly because we don't know what it's going to be like at that point for a 5K," he said. "We know we've had discussions ... that we wouldn't be able to bring in as many people; we would have to stagger the start times; we would have one group start at one time; we would have one group start at another."

"But with our parade starting at 11, there would be no way we could get two 5Ks in. The parade is on, all of our applications should be up online shortly."

Beltrano closed by advising readers to visit www.lewiston-peachfestival.org for complete information, including applications, volunteer opportunities, sponsorship information, ride tickets and planned events.

"You can get your applications for the Peach Fuzz, Peach Blossom, Peach Queen, the parade applications here," he said. "And send them in."

NTHS and NWCS D revised graduation plans, protocols

The North Tonawanda and Niagara-Wheatfield Central school districts recently released revised graduation plans and pro-

ocols based on the most recent New York state guidelines.

The NTHS graduation will take place at 10 a.m. Saturday,

June 26, at the North Tonawanda High School All Sports Athletic Complex, with a rain date of 10 a.m. Sunday, June 27. Family and guests may enter the All Sports Athletic Complex at 9:30 a.m.

The NWHS graduation ceremony is scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday, June 26, in the new athletic stadium located behind the middle school/high school complex. Entrance opens at 8:30 a.m. (guests must present an

admission ticket). At 5:30 p.m., students will gather at the high school for the car parade. That begins at 6 p.m.

The following COVID-19-related information from both districts is accurate as of June 15:

For events (i.e. graduation ceremonies) above the state's social gathering limit of 250 attendees indoors and 500 attendees outdoors:

✓ Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear masks or

be socially distance. (Niagara Wheatfield will have socially distanced seating for families. North Tonawanda will have socially distanced seating for graduates, no masks required.)

✓ Neither proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test result is required for admission to the ceremony.

✓ Children under the age of 16 who are not yet vaccinated may be seated with a vaccinated adult.

✓ Unvaccinated individuals and those who have an unknown vaccination status must continue to be socially distanced (masks will be optional for unvaccinated individuals seated outdoors while socially distanced).

✓ Unvaccinated individuals will be expected to wear a mask until seated and socially distanced.

Both districts have said they will be abiding by a 33% occupancy limit. Niagara-Wheatfield will allow three guest tickets per graduate. North Tonawanda will allow two guests per ticket.

For more information on North Tonawanda High School's graduation plans, visit www.nts.schools.org/Page/2#calendar1223/20210617/event/19935.

For more information on Niagara Wheatfield High School's graduation plans, visit www.nw-csd.org/o/nwhs/article/480771.

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Sept. 22 - Sprague's/Casino **SOLD OUT** (Waiting List)

Oct. 6 - **NEWLY ADDED DATE** - Sprague's Maple Farm - Turkey Dinner/Casino

Oct. 7 - Lucy Tour - **SOLD OUT** (Waiting List)

Multi-day Tours

Aug. 31 & Sept. 1 **NEW** - (2 days) Finger Lakes/Skaneateles Boat Cruise/Belhurst Castle/Wine tour & tasting

Sept. 14-16 - Ohio Amish/2 shows/Antiquing/Flea Mkt.

Sept. 28-Oct. 4 - Memphis/Graceland/Nashville/Grand Ole Opry

Nov. 8-10 - Amish Holiday-Lancaster, PA - "Queen Esther" & Christmas Show

Nov. 14-21 - Caribbean Cruise

Nov. 26-30 - Nashville Country Christmas - Opryland Hotel/Grand Ole Opry Oak Ridge Boys Dinner Show/Gen. Jackson Showboat

Bus pick-ups in N. Tonawanda & West Seneca

Ramblin' Lou Family Band Concerts

July 15 - Ramblin' Lou Family Band Free Concert at Veterans Park - Depew 582 Terrace Blvd. 7-9pm Bring your lawn chair & enjoy!

Aug. 11-22 - Erie County Fair - Daily Show 6:00-7:15pm (not appearing 8/17 & 8/18)

Dec. 11 Ramblin' Lou Family Band Christmas Show & Live Radio Broadcast 11am-1pm Luncheon/Show at Classics V - Amherst, NY Tickets \$39.00 pp

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