

Plymouth hosts Fall Festival in renovated downtown

By KEVIN BROWN
STAFF WRITER

This year's Plymouth Fall Festival features entertainment, crafts and food booths — but the nearly-finished downtown streetscape project could steal the show.

"People are going to see the downtown. It's something they will tell other people," said Joe Bida, who does publicity for the festival.

Bida said food booths would be going up Thursday, in preparation for the start of the festival Friday. The 40th annual festival runs through Sunday.

"The streets will be ready," said Downtown Development Authority Director Steve Guile. He said paving was scheduled to happen on Main Street on Tuesday and Wednesday, to allow booths to set up late today.

The main (streetscape) features are in on Main Street except for two planters, at Ann Arbor Trail and Main and Penniman and Main. Guile said, adding some brick work has yet to be completed.

So watch your step, festival goers. "The weather looks like it's going to be cool, that could help," Bida said. "Let's hope everybody has a good time and nobody gets hurt."

Some new activities and entertainment this year include a pleasuring contest, Civil War encampment and Plymouth Paralel Promenade.

There will be strolling entertainment around the park from 6-9 p.m. Friday, featuring Buffalo Bob on Stilts and an organ monkey.

Main Stage entertainment continues with the Optimist Club Fall Show 9:30-11 a.m. The Detroit Edison Enviro-Magic Show is at 11 a.m., followed by the Polish Centennial Dancers at noon and the Famous Dancing Dinosaurs at 1 p.m.

Tom Hodgson performs "Sounds of the Earth" at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. and ventriloquist Tom Smith performs at 3 p.m. Chautauque Express performs

at 5 p.m., magicians Scorpio and Fantasy perform at 6 p.m., celebrity karaoke is at 7 p.m. and a karaoke contest is at 7:30 p.m.

Strolling entertainers are chosen from noon to 4 p.m. Fred the Smooch, 2-4 p.m. Charlie Chaplin 5-8 p.m. and Bobo Bunyon on stilts 6-8 p.m.

A pie-eating contest is scheduled in front of Central Middle School at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, for elementary, middle school and high school kids. All day Sunday, an Antique Car Show happens outside city hall. And from noon to 2:30 p.m. on the Main Stage Benny Reeves and the Groove Company perform, followed by the Ten Most Wanted Band 3-6 p.m.

Strolling entertainers Sunday are Zeemo the Magnificent, the Dixie Band and clowns. Sunday is also Rotary Chicken Barbecue. Dinner tickets are \$8 in advance and \$9 on Sunday.

On Saturday, the day kicks off with the Pet Parade 9:30-11 a.m. on the Main Stage. Also on tap are 11 a.m., Detroit Edison Enviro-Magic Show with the Louie the Lightning Bug; noon, the Polish Centennial Dancers; noon to 4 p.m., clowns strolling the festival site; 1 p.m., The Famous Dancing Dinosaurs; 2 p.m., Tom Hodgson "Sounds of the Earth"; 2-4 p.m., Fred the Smooch; 3 p.m., ventriloquist Tom Smith and Friends; 4 p.m., Tom Hodgson "Sounds of the Earth"; 5 p.m., Chautauque

Express; 5-8 p.m., Charlie Chaplin, strolling; 5-8 p.m., Bobo Bunyon on Stilts; 6 p.m., magician and illusionists Scorpio and Fantasy; 7 p.m., celebrity karaoke; 7:30 p.m., karaoke contest.

On Sunday, the entertainment is: noon to 2:30 p.m., Benny Reeves and the Groove Company; noon to 3 p.m., Zeemo the Magnificent; strolling; noon to 3 p.m., Dixie Band, strolling; noon to 4 p.m., clowns; 3-6 p.m., Ten Most Wanted Band.

The Rotary Chicken Barbecue starts at noon Sunday and runs through 5 p.m. There are about 16,000 chicken dinners served at The Gathering during the festival, which draws its roots from the cookoff. Tickets are available at booths around the festival site.

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Festival highlights

The 40th annual Fall Festival gets under way at 6 p.m. on Friday with opening ceremonies at the Main Stage on Penniman between The Gathering and Kellogg Park.

Here are some highlights from the three-day event:

■ Friday entertainment: 6-9:30 p.m., bingo by the Plymouth BPW; 7-9:30 p.m., Plymouth Community Band; 9-9 p.m., organ monkey, strolling entertainment; 9-9 p.m., Buffalo Bob on Stilts, strolling entertainment.

■ On Saturday, the day kicks off with the Pet Parade 9:30-11 a.m. on the Main Stage. Also on tap are 11 a.m., Detroit Edison Enviro-Magic Show with the Louie the Lightning Bug; noon, the Polish Centennial Dancers; noon to 4 p.m., clowns strolling the festival site; 1 p.m., The Famous Dancing Dinosaurs; 2 p.m., Tom Hodgson "Sounds of the Earth"; 2-4 p.m., Fred the Smooch; 3 p.m., ventriloquist Tom Smith and Friends; 4 p.m., Tom Hodgson "Sounds of the Earth"; 5 p.m., Chautauque

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