

HILLIARD NORTHWEST NEWS

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OLD HILLIARDFEST

Festival bigger, better for 2011

By GARY BUDZAK

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New

A fifth stage and more breathing room are part of this weekend's 26th annual Old Hilliardfest.

"We are going to stretch a little farther down Main Street to North Street than we ever did before," said festival chairman Ed Daniel. "We've added a stage just for entertainment around the art fair."

"We wrote a grant with Greater Columbus Arts Council, and they gave us funding to do acoustical music (on the new stage)," said Christy Clark, executive director of Destination Hilliard, which has helped the festival's organizers.

In addition to Friday evening's concerts and the "Friday Night Lights" event (see page A7), there's a whole slate of free activities from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10.

Daniel said the festival's five stages include one that any local performer can play on, another for dancers, and one for local music students.

"For the second year in a row, we'll have a sunflower show," Daniel said. "This was created by the returning popularity of Hilliard's flower and presence of the sunflower around town."

The Sunflower Funshow will contain entries in classes such as the largest head, tallest, smallest, best floral arrangement, most unusual and best sunflower photograph.

The festival's juried art fair will feature 40 artists from Hilliard and central Ohio, said Hilliard Arts Council executive director Ken Brenneman. The art, in all media, will be for sale.

A car show will have 50 to 60 custom and classic cars on display, Daniel said. A raffle and 50-50 drawing will benefit the Hilliard Area Community Assistance Council.

Sometime Saturday afternoon, some 300 motorcyclists who have participated in the first American Legion Post 614 charity "Poker Run" will roar through Old Hilliardfest, too.

Commander Bill Ihrig said the post on Lattimer Street (which is just outside of Old Hilliard), will feature a tailgate party with the Ohio State game on television.

Another bonus to Old Hilliardfest is the First Responders Park, which is part of Old Hilliard.

"Old Hilliardfest is always a great opportunity to showcase the historic part of Hilliard," said Mayor Don Schonhardt. "But having that many people come and view the park, which they may not have had the opportunity to do during its dedication, really is making that a special weekend for the city of Hilliard."

"This is going to be a historically important weekend, not just for the country, but for other people around the world," Daniel said. "It's nice that (First Responders Park) is an automatic built-in attraction. It gives the public an opportunity to see the park that they may not even know is there."

Daniel said he likes putting on Old Hilliardfest, although he hopes to pass the torch some day.

"I like to throw parties," he said. "I like seeing the people come down and filling the street. It's the only time of year when the street is closed, and families can come down and fill the street in an old-fashioned street fair sort of way."

For more information, visit www.oldhilliardfest.org.

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