

Orangeville Rotary Ribfest set for return with great eats, activities and live music

By Sam Odrowski

Live music, delicious BBQ and classic cars can be enjoyed all in one place this weekend.

The 14th Annual Orangeville Rotary Ribfest is taking over the Alder Street Recreation Centre grounds from July 14 to 16. More than 20,000 people are expected over the three-day event, where they can watch local acts such as the Campfire Poets, Dufferin County Line, the Hit Disturbers and Larry Kurtz. Several other bands are on the lineup, and DJ Swankenstein is this year's emcee.

"There's something for everyone. Great music and entertainment is available," said Orangeville Rotarian Lorna Hashem, who's helping to organize Ribfest. "It's a great way to spend the weekend."

This year's event will feature a handful of award-winning ribbers: Brickyard BBQ, Billy Bones BBQ, Gator BBQ, Bubba Lou's Bar-B-Q, Silver Bullet BBQ, and Camp 31 BBQ. Several food trucks will also be set up, such as Paco's Tacos, F.N. Good Burgers, Ontario Corn Roasters, Nella's Jerk, Mr. Kettle Corn, Rico's Churros, Cookies by Gia, Rasmi Falafel, and Heavenly Dreams Ice Cream.

There will also be a vendor's market where attendees can shop.

The Orangeville Rotary Ribfest tradition of holding a Classic Car Show is continuing this year, with vehicles set up from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 15, at the Alder Street Recreation Centre's soccer fields.

There are lots of activities for children at this year's Ribfest with numerous community organizations, such as crafts and painting with Artsploration, bucket truck rides with Orangeville Hydro, a fun activity with Orangeville Public Library, and EarlyON will have materials to engage children's creativity. Music Together Orangeville will also be at the Ribfest, along with the Museum of Dufferin, which will run a button-making workshop.

There will also be a face painter and balloon animals at the Ribfest.

Kids Fest is returning on Sunday with an entertainment schedule featuring Dan the Music Man, a performance by Elsa from Frozen, storytime, the Bubbleology show, and a magic show by Steve Baker.

Last year saw a record amount of money raised through Ribfest as people were eager to get out to community events after three years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Just under \$100,000 was the net fundraising total, which enables the rotary club to do charity work and donate to worthwhile causes.

The six ribbers at this year's event will be judged to see who has the best sauce and ribs, and the winners will walk away with bragging rights and a big trophy.

"Come out and experience several [ribbers]. Share with your family, and try a few of them," said Hashem.

Ribfest is free to attend, but the Orangeville Rotary Club is accepting donations at the door.

The event is the rotary club's largest fundraiser of the year and enables the not-for-profit organization to spearhead community projects and contribute locally.

Roughly 150 volunteers are helping put this year's event together, but more are always welcome, and anyone interested in joining the

rotary club is encouraged to reach out.

?We are always open and welcome to new members joining us, especially for this big undertaking. We can't do it alone. It takes a town.?

She added that she'd encourage everyone to come out and enjoy Ribfest.

?If you're looking for something to do, take a walk down, bring your family, come see what it's all about,? said Hashem.