

Published September 6th, 2015

22nd Annual Lafayette Art and Wine Festival set for mid-September

By John T. Miller



Mark Mitchell (front center) and Mayor Mike Anderson (hand on white shirt) at last year's festival Photo Gint Federas

After a year of floods, falling trees and even a ruinous fire, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce is more than ready to celebrate its 22nd annual Art and Wine Festival the weekend of Sept. 16-17, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday.

Since the fire, the Chamber of Commerce has been operating out of temporary quarters at the Lafayette School District offices next to Stanley Middle School.

"It's certainly been a challenge," said Chamber Executive Director Jay Lifson, "but the fire is out and the festival is on!"

Luckily for the Chamber, most of its materials were stored off site and all the files were backed up in the cloud. "We're not sure exactly what we might have lost, but with a standing committee of 35 people and nearly 400 volunteers, the festival will open without a hitch and with several new features," Lifson said.

A new family stage will be located at the main entrance at Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Oakhill Road, with Saturday's entertainment including acts from Lamorinda Theater Academy, Town Hall Kids, and the Lamorinda Idol contest winners. Sunday will showcase primarily local teenage cover bands.

Three stages will feature music, including the Fiesta stage sponsored by PG&E, The Bank of the West stage, and the Premium Wine stage, sponsored by 92.1 KKDV. Opening the festival at 10:30 a.m. Saturday morning will be the Roundup Battle of the Bands winner One Night Stand (aka The Jesters), with the rest of the weekend filled with rock and roll, country and western, jazz, and other local musical acts.

As usual, Eckerstrom Productions will be bringing in over 200 regional artists and crafts people, as they have done since the inception of the event.

In addition to exhibiting pieces from many Lamorinda artists, local artist and chairman of the art committee Tom Taneyhill has invited members from Studio Seven Arts, the Bay Area's largest art and framing gallery located in Pleasanton, to share their artwork.

Wine Thieves owner Jim Meyers will coordinate the wineries and oversee the Premium Pavilion. The Lamorinda Wine Growers Association, a group that includes nine bonded wineries and dozens of growers, will also feature wines under the recently designated Lamorinda AVA wine appellation.

A wide variety of microbreweries will be represented and pouring at the Beer Booth along with over 20 restaurants serving food.

"We started this to show off downtown Lafayette, which has changed quite a bit in the last 22 years," Lifson said. He also mentioned that a brand new Peruvian restaurant, Barranco, will open on Mt. Diablo Boulevard during the weekend.

The event raises money for the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and its programs as well as for at least a dozen other nonprofits, including the largest recipient, Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE).

Mt. Diablo Boulevard will be closed for the festival. Road closures of Lafayette Circle, Mt. Diablo west from Oak Hill Road to Dewing Avenue and Mt. Diablo east from Dewing to Moraga Road will begin at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15 through 11 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 17.

Participants are urged to take public transportation or park for free at BART. Shuttle service will run from all of the BART lots. Bike valet parking will be available for free at Lamorinda Music, 81 Lafayette Circle.

The Lafayette Art, Wine and Music Festival is one of the largest annual festivals in Contra Costa County. Admission is free, with an individual wine or beer glass costing \$7 and admission to various Kids Zone activities costing between \$1-5. Combination packages are available with big discounts. For more information, visit lafayettefestival.org.

In addition to the whirlwind of activity going on to prepare for the festival, Lifson has also been searching for a new location for the Chamber of Commerce. He announced that they will hopefully sign a lease soon.



Photo Gint Federas

Reach the reporter at: john@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA