



News release

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Festival in the Park returns to new Elmwood Park

ROANOKE, Va. (February 13, 2014) – Festival in the Park, Roanoke’s most popular community party, kicks off the summer on Memorial Day weekend bigger and better than ever in newly renovated Elmwood Park.

Celebrating its 45th year from May 23-25, Festival in the Park features five live concerts with national acts, more than 40 performances from regional and local bands, children’s performances, hands-on activities, arts and crafts, food, 5K and 10K races, a river flotilla race and much more.

The rejuvenated Elmwood Park features a new performance stage with unequaled viewing and sound, a new VIP area, handicapped access and seating and a dedicated food area inside the performance venue along with new landscaping and park entrances.

“The new Elmwood Park is the perfect backdrop to enjoy one of the Roanoke Valley’s most beloved events,” said A.W. (Skip) Brown, president of Roanoke Festival in the Park, Inc., the non-profit organizer. “We’re excited to be back in our home with more activities than ever for people of all ages and a great lineup of entertainment. It is our goal to showcase the amazing new Elmwood Park and bring its performance venue to the national attention it deserves.”

“The City of Roanoke is proud of the new Elmwood Park and we’re pleased that Festival in the Park returns to its home this year,” said city manager Chris Morrill. “The Festival embodies the mission of Elmwood Park – to be a focal point for arts, culture and community.”

Musical lineup has national acts

Music will be a focal point of this year’s Festival with five stages featuring local, regional and national acts.

Over the years Festival in the Park has hosted more than 50 headlining, acclaimed national touring artists. This year’s Main Stage concerts include **38 Special, Montgomery Gentry, John Michael Montgomery and 1964 The Tribute**. This year’s Festival will offer a Back Stage Experience package that will enable ticket holders to enter the venue in the afternoon and experience building a show, watch the sound check and possibly meet some of the artists.

- **Friday night, May 23:** 38 Special is an American rock band that was formed by neighborhood friends Don Barnes and Donnie Van Zant. The band's first two albums had a strong southern rock influence. By the early 1980s, 38 Special shifted to a more accessible arena rock style without abandoning its Southern rock roots. This shift helped to usher in a string of successful albums and singles, including “Hold On Loosely,” “Caught Up in You” and “If I'd Been the One.” The media partner for 38 Special is WROV-FM.
- **Saturday night, May 24:** With 26 major award nominations and three wins, country super group Montgomery Gentry has sold millions of albums with its blue collar roots. The group has had 14 Top 10 singles, including five No. 1s: “Something To Be Proud Of,” “If You Ever Stop Loving Me,” “Lucky Man,” “Back When I Knew It All” and “Roll With Me.” The opening act is country star John Michael Montgomery with hits such as “I Swear,” “Be My Baby Tonight,” “I Can Love You Like That,” “Sold (the Grundy County Auction Incident)” and “Life’s A Dance.” The media sponsor for Montgomery Gentry and John Michael Montgomery is WSLC FM.
- **Sunday, May 25:** “1964 The Tribute takes audiences on a musical journey to an era in rock history that will live in all of our hearts forever. They are hailed by critics and fans alike as the most authentic and endearing Beatles tribute in the world. The typical 1964 audience includes four generations of fans and yearly they are the first introduction to a new generation of kids that grow up loving the positive message music that the Beatles introduced to the world so many years ago. Choosing songs from the pre-Sgt. Pepper era, “1964” astonishingly recreates an early 60's live Beatles concert, with period instruments, clothing, hairstyles, and onstage banter. The media sponsor for 1964 the Tribute is Sunny FM.

True to the festival’s tradition, concerts on the Main Stage on Sunday are not ticketed and are free to the public. New this year will be a stage in the plaza area near the gate. This stage will feature high-energy shows while headliners get ready to take the stage.

New attractions, old favorites

Beyond the music, this year's Festival features new attractions as well as old favorites.

The Clean Valley Council Great River Race will feature boats built completely from recycled material. The goal is just to get to the finish line without sinking.

Along Jefferson Street, children's activities include a Big Wheels Race, balloon artists, face painters and caricaturists. "Children have always been an important focus of the Festival," Brown says. "This year we will be featuring four areas that are for kids only. Our children's hands-on activity area will feature guided activities for children to create, build, paint and more.

Corporate sponsors will be conducting kit build activities regularly in an activity tent. The children's performance stage will feature family friendly entertainment on Jefferson in front of the library.

The Fine Art and Craft show will be presented along Jefferson in front of the library and the Magnolia Allee (where the lily pad pools used to be) and extend toward Franklin Road.

Antique car and motorcycle shows also are planned on Saturday along Franklin Road.

New this year will be strolling musicians. "Our goal is to have music just about everywhere," Brown says. "So after you have seen your favorite group on one of the five stages, you can enjoy live music as you walk to your next area."

The Festival's performing arts include music, dance and more on three stages. Franklin Road will be the home for local and regional rock bands with performances on the hour beginning at noon. For quiet music fans, the gazebo stage will feature acoustic performers in the area near the corner of Jefferson and Elm Avenue.

The many food options include some of Roanoke's best known food trucks and return of many festival regulars.

A full list of events will be available online at www.roanokefestival.net with more details to come.

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