

4B LIFESTYLE

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CIRCLEVILLE PUMPKIN SHOW

Pumpkin-palooza!

'Greatest Free Show on Earth' back for another go

By Dustin Egan
Circleville.com

CIRCLEVILLE — Giant pumpkins and squash, daily parades and one of the world's largest pumpkin pie sales will draw thousands of spectators to the Circleville Pumpkin Show this month.

Billed for years as "The Greatest Free Show on Earth," the popular event begins with a Tuesday evening preview of concessions, rides and a performance by the Pumpkin Show Band. The event will continue through Sunday in downtown Circleville.

What started as an agricultural exhibit and event fair in October 1933 has grown into the sixth-largest festival in the United States, with an annual attendance of more than 200,000, many who have driven down U.S. 23 during the event can attest to its popularity. It's common to see traffic backed up along the east ramps and down the far right lanes of the highway trying to get into the event.

Nathan O'Brien, a member of one of the public relations committees, said there are several highlights that truly draw a crowd.

"The giant pumpkins and the weigh-in always draw a large, dedicated crowd on Wednesday, and then since the largest pumpkin is in the field, it's a favorite spot to have your family picture taken."

In addition, the selection of Miss Pumpkin Show always draws a large crowd. The parade of bands on Thursday night is one of the favorites, too. There are lines every year at Lander's Bake Shop to see the large pumpkin pie and to buy pumpkin donuts.

The giant pumpkin weigh-in is held annually, as growers bring their best and biggest out to compete. The 2010 winner was the 'Big Lopper,' whose giant pumpkin tipped the scales at 1,622 pounds — 442 pounds heavier than the second-place entrant.

For growers' wives that don't require a fertilizer or even to plant, one showing spot is for displaying fruits, vegetables, and other produce. The show has replaced the 50-year-old walk on West Street. Betsy Kuhnke and Eagle Stone number, constructed the new walk.

O'Brien said the festival is about as many different things for many different people, ranging from midway rides to live entertainment to good food. For him, it's all about being friends, checking out the large number of daily parades and "getting my daily apple."

The festival preview evening begins at 5 p.m. Tuesday, with concessions and amusement rides open until 10 p.m. The Circleville Pumpkin Show Community Band will perform from 6 to 7 p.m. that night, then again Wednesday and Friday at the Circleville-Pickaway Visitors Pavilion.

The festival's opening ceremony begins at 9 a.m. Wednesday at Court and Main streets, followed by the giant pumpkin weigh-in at 11 a.m.

O'Brien highlights the week as:

Wednesday
The Little Miss Pumpkin



The baby parade is one of several parades during the Circleville Pumpkin Show. (M.J. PHOTO)



Parade of all shapes and sizes are new in their supply during the Circleville Pumpkin Show. (M.J. PHOTO)

Show Parade kicks off at 10:30 a.m. and the Miss Pumpkin Show Parade is held for 11 a.m. Little Miss Pumpkin Show judging begins at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Main Street Stage, followed by judging for Miss Pumpkin Show at 9 p.m.

The Pickaway-Franklin Street Stage will showcase a performance from the Circleville High School cheerleaders at 6:45 p.m. and the Circleville High School Band will entertain from 7 to 7:30 p.m.

Thursday
Parade includes the Baby Parade at 10:30 a.m. and the Parade of Bands at 11 a.m. A fashion show presented by Marston's is slated for noon to 12:45 p.m. at the Circleville-Pickaway Visitors Pavilion, where an Irish dancing presentation will be offered from 2 to 2:45 p.m.

Friday
A performance from the Pin Band Chaperon from noon to 12:45 p.m. and the Pin Band Chaperon from 5 to 5:45 p.m. at the Circleville-Pickaway Visitors Pavilion.

ON THE WEB

For a full schedule and history of the Circleville Pumpkin Show, visit www.pumpkinshow.com

Enjoy live music from Mathews from 4:15 to 5 p.m. at the Main Street Stage, followed by Green City Newwave Big Band's head of head from 6 to 7 p.m. and Rockin' After Midnight performing classic rock from 9 to 10:30 p.m.

Friday's street parades are the Pin Parade at 4:30 p.m. and the Parade of Frankford and Civic Organizations at 11 a.m.

Saturday
The festival wraps up with performances by the Pin Band Chaperon from 11 to 11:45 a.m. at the Circleville-Pickaway Visitors Pavilion, along with the Pickaway Brass from 5 to 5:45 p.m.

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