

Strawberry festival offers more

Newark Kiwanis' goal is to market to wider audience

With an eye on becoming a tourist attraction, the Newark Kiwanis Club is expanding the strawberry festival this year, the 25th anniversary of the Strawberries on the Square event.

The Kiwanis Club has joined the Ohio Festivals and Events Association and renamed the event The Newark Strawberry Festival with the goal of marketing the festival to a wider audience. In addition, the event itself will welcome almost double the performers and craft merchants than in years past, said Chuck Jackson, event coordinator.

Conducted Friday through Sunday on the Courthouse Square, the festivities will begin at 10:45 a.m. daily. Closing times are at 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 6 p.m. Sunday.

"We will have virtually non-stop entertainment for the three days," Jackson said. "It will be a good opportunity for people to come down and have a really good time."

The 2008 concert schedule includes such entertainers as the nine-piece dance band New Creations; the rock band After Midnight; and the mother-daughter team Roz and Lynn,

BEST BET

- **What:** Newark Strawberry Festival
- **When:** 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday
- **Where:** Courthouse Square, downtown Newark
- **Cost:** Free
- **FYI:** www.newarkohio.kiwanis.org; call Chuck Jackson at (740) 983-4797.

who will sing tunes from the World War II era.

"Everything's going to be a little bit bigger this year," said Chris Miller, Kiwanis president.

The Newark Strawberry Festival also will include the Miss Strawberry Pageant, midway rides by Bates Amusement and food vendors. A 15-foot redwood log that has been converted into a camper is among the unusual attractions.

A traditional highlight of the festival is the Kiwanis Club's "world's best" strawberry shortcake. About 250 flats of strawberries are used in making the festival's signature dessert,

ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

Friday

Noon: Roz and Lynn, gazebo

5 to 7 p.m.: Strawberry Pageants, gazebo

7 p.m.: The Foreclosure Band, gazebo

8 p.m.: The Angels Band, main stage

Saturday

11 a.m.: Dynamic Mention Drum Corps., gazebo

Noon: Hayley Watson, noon, gazebo

1:30 p.m.: Brothers and Co., main stage

3:30 p.m.: Simba Jordan, gazebo

which also features shortcake by Riley's Bakery and Velvet Ice Cream.

The Strawberry Festival began as a one-day event sponsored by the Downtown Newark Alliance. Newark Kiwanis became a co-sponsor and eventually took over hosting the festival, which

5 p.m.: Christina Barth and Ohio's Youth Entertainers, main stage

6:30 p.m.: Jenny Dyer, gazebo

8 p.m.: After Midnight, main stage

Sunday

11 a.m.: Snap Back, main stage

Noon: Mandy Neff, gazebo

1:30 p.m.: Back Porch Swing Band, main stage

3 p.m.: Adelphi Community Band, gazebo

4 p.m.: New Creation Band, main stage

generally draws 15,000 to 20,000 visitors.

Proceeds benefit Camp O'Bannon, the Licking County Sports Association and other children's projects.

During the festival, South Park Place and Second Street will be closed to traffic.

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