

Three parades that put pizzaz into the Festival

Highlighting the roster of Festival events are three colorful parades. The AAA Michigan Heritage Parade will kick off the series of parades 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 8. This year's theme will celebrate anniversaries of several transportation companies. A parade full of antique autos and motorcycles will highlight the 100 year anniversaries of Ford Motor Company and Harley-Davidson.

The Touchstone Energy Junior Royale Parade will showcase the hard work of parents and elementary students alike as 31 entries take to the streets at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 10.

R. Kelley Johnson, director of the Junior Royale Parade said the theme this year is Wishes and Dreams.

"It goes along with 'what I want to be when I grow up,'" he said. "There will be some real colorful floats this year. One year it rained terribly, and I jokingly said we got the award for the most umbrellas." Though rain is always a possibility, more often than not the weather is clear and hot, Johnson said.

"There's popsicles at the grade school because of the kids in band uniforms in July," he said.

The Prince and Princess Program, sponsored by Cherryland Electric, offers first-graders the opportunity to represent each elementary school in one of the Nation's largest kids-only parades. Registration begins at 4:30 p.m. at F&M Park for all children wishing to participate.

One of the Midwest's largest parades, the DTE Energy Cherry Royale Parade, starts at 11:15 a.m. Saturday, July 12. Over 130 units will add to the pomp and pageantry of marching bands. In its second consecutive year, DTE Energy's "Rooted in the Community" float will highlight the energy company's partnership with community organizations.

This year, the Company's float will feature DTE Energy's partnership with TART Trails- a system of recreational trails winding throughout the region. A 38 foot-long replica of the Tart

Trail system, complete with park benches, trees, shrubs and markers acknowledging the destinations along the regional trails that stretch from Suttons Bay to Traverse City to Acme will be on display.

"The parade is somewhat representing the culmination of the week-long events," said Jerry West, director of the Cherry Royale Parade. "People get to see the granddaddy of the parades. The governor will be here, and it's very family focused."

West said a special treat this year will be the appearance of the famous Budweiser Clydesdales.

"We're fortunate to have

them here this year," he said. "That's always a tremendous unit."

West also said visitors should expect some surprises, but declined from further comment.

"It wouldn't be a parade if we didn't have some surprises," he said.

The Second Time Arounders Band features the music of Alumni band members from throughout the area.

All three Festival parades are broadcast live on the Festival Parade Network, ABC 29&8. For more information on parades and all Festival events, visit the Web site at www.cherryfestival.org or call (231) 947-4230.



Record-Eagle file photo

Children enjoying the Junior Royale Parade, which takes place this year at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 10.



Record-Eagle file photo

The Second Time Arounders Band is presented by local law firm Smith, Haughey, Rice and Roegge.

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