

TIMES LEADER MEDIA GROUP

City of Wilkes-Barre's

Multicultural

Parade & Festival

Saturday, September 15





The inaugural Multicultural Parade making its way along South Main Street in Wilkes-Barre last year.

TL file photo

Food, fun and more at Multicultural Parade and Festival

By Geri Gibbons
For Times Leader

WILKES-BARRE – The second annual Multicultural Parade and Festival to be held Saturday will provide a chance for area residents to enjoy the food, music and entertainment of many cultures.

Last year's event was a hit, with many residents of a variety of cultures enjoying the parade and the chance to gather with others on Public Square.

Kings College senior Mansour Albalawi, who is originally from Morocco, is planning to attend the event for the first time.

Albalawi said he has seen both the area and the college become more and more diverse. The college's Multicultural & International Student Club is scheduled to participate in the event.

"Especially in the last two years, I've seen more cultural diversity," he said. "I'm going to go and invite all my college friends to go."

Albalawi said food is a wonderful way to bridge the gap between cultures and bring people together.

"When I prepare traditional food for friends, or bring them to a Moroccan restaurant, it gives us something to talk about," he said. "I think the festival will do that among people from a wide variety of cultures."

Patty Hughes, coordinator of special events for Wilkes-Barre, said the festival reflects Mayor Tony George's commitment to diversity.

"The mayor ran his campaign on the idea of bringing the community together," she said. "And this is one way of doing that."



Jose Luis Jr. (left) jokes with his friend Mario Velazque as he holds Bunnie his girl friends plush toy who for the past 30 years has gone everywhere with them.

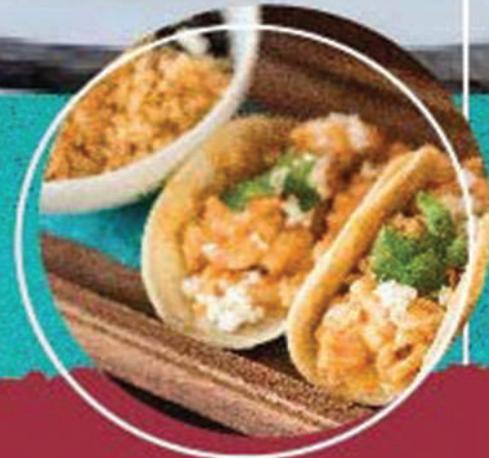
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Fun

From page 2

George said the event reminded people that they have much in common when it comes to food, family and entertainment.

The festival received a further boost of enthusiasm on Aug. 30, when the mayor named Ronald Felton, former president of the local chapter of the NAACP as grand marshal of the parade, also declaring Sept. 15, "Ronald Felton Day."

Felton said he considered both a great honor and lauded George for his commitment to diversity.

Nearly 50 individuals and organizations will participate in the parade, with city officials, colleges and churches being well represented.

WBHT's Chad Valentine, who will lead a group from the station walking in the parade, said, "Our listeners come from all different walks of life

and are an epitome of diversity. We wanted to participate in the parade and festival as a way to say thank you while showing our support for multiculturalism in the Wyoming Valley and beyond."

Hughes said the event, now an annual tradition, will stimulate multicultural awareness through food, fun and a chance to spend time with others who might be a bit different than we are.

"We all have a lot in common," she said. "The city wants to celebrate that."

The festival starts at 11 a.m. with the parade stepping off at South Street and proceeding on South Main Street to Public Square. Entertainment begins at noon on the Square and lasts until 9 p.m. Merchants and food vendors will be located on the Square.



TL file photo

Salineth Sanchez marches with the contingent from Panama in the Multicultural Parade in Wilkes-Barre.

Vendor List

Merchants

The Rock Shop
Liya Xue
Harry Karey's
Tarot for Living
Michelle's One Stop Paparazzi
Henry Duszak (Crafts)
NEPA Recreation (Bounce House)
Trading Faces (Face Painting)
Cakes by Gail
Donna Kramer jewelry
Rock the Country

Nonprofits/Information tables

Times Leader Group
Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce
NAACP Youth Council
Legendary Support Coordination

Luzerne County Community College
King's College
Catherine McCauley Center
Action Together - NEPA
Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense
Sweet Home Health Care
AFS-USA DelMarpa Team
Integrity Staffing
The McGowan Hispanic Outreach Program
King's College Multicultural & International Student Club
Red Rock Job Corp Center
Domestic Violence Service Center
Order of Demolay Susquehanna Chapter

Food Vendors

Lett's Eat - Indian
Sammy's Caribbean Grill - Caribbean/

Jamaican
Hartman's Jerk Center - Jamaican
Snook's Wings and Things (BBQ)
Manning's Ice Cream
Tony Thomas Catering - Gyros, Shish Kabobs
St. Anthony and St. George Maronite Church - Lebanese
St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church - Syrian
Tyre Square - African American
Wilkes-Barre Deli Grocery - Hispanic
J & J - Italian
St. Nicholas Church - Dominican
Nico's Pizza - Italian
Notis the Gyro King
Boyer Brothers BBQ
Wilkes-Barre Deli Grocery - Hispanic
The Sharif Express Deli and Grill

Schedule of Events

11 a.m. – Multicultural Parade begins at South Street and South Main Street

12-12:20 p.m. – Wilkes University IFARHU Dance

12:20-12:30 p.m. – Wilkes University SOL (Student Organization of Latinos) Dance

12:30-1 p.m. – Arts in Movement by Miss Courtney Dance

1-1:15 p.m. – Wilkes University SOL (Student Organization of Latinos) Dance

1:15-1:30 p.m. – St. Nicholas Church Aztec Dance

1:30-2 p.m. – David Blight School of Dance

2-2:30 p.m. – Emerald Isle Step Dancers

2:30-3 p.m. – Mt. Zion Baptist Church Abundant Praise Dancers

3-3:30 p.m. – Mt. Zion Baptist Church Youth and Young Adult Choir

3:30-4 p.m. – Salsa Dancing by Rafael Paramo

4-6 p.m. – Two Live Bands from Joe Nardone's Rockology

6:15-7:30 p.m. – Hartman Jerk Center presents DJ Shrimpy (Caribbean Music)

7:45-9 p.m. – Moodswing



TL file photo
Mason Thomas 6 blows bubbles on Public Square in Wilkes-Barre during the Multicultural Festival, Mason is a mix of Mexican, Peruvian and African American

I M A G I N E

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A world of food will be offered at festival

By Geri Gibbons
For Times Leader

WILKES-BARRE – For those with diverse palate, Saturday's Multicultural Parade and Festival will provide a smorgasbord of tastes from around the world. Wilkes-Barre city's public events coordinator Patty Hughes said the down-home feel of the festival, providing a chance for neighbors to spend time together over their favorite food, emphasizes the value of city residents coming together to begin to appreciate each other's customs and culture.

"This year we have many different food vendors," Hughes said. "To explore many different cultures, you don't have to buy a plane ticket. You can experience the diverse people and traditions of the city right on Main Street. If there's one thing that seems to unify different cultures, it's the tradition of gathering together to share a meal and socializing."

As the city has grown in diversity, businesses in its downtown area have come to reflect different culinary traditions.

"You can eat Japanese, Indian, Jamaican, French, Middle Eastern, Italian, Dominican, Thai, Greek and more, just on Main Street," she said.

The presence of King's College and Wilkes University in the city also provides a broad range of students from all over the world, bringing with them customs and foods that might first be shared with college roommates and then with residents of the city.

"I would love to see college students of all backgrounds be more and more involved in the city's events," said Hughes. "They are a great resource and source

of information."

King's College senior Mansour Albalawi, who has lived in several places across the globe, said food seems to be the universal language, as he enjoys not only sharing recipes he has brought to the United States from around the world, but trying traditional American favorites.

"Kielbasa was a new thing for me," he said.

King's College students are slated to participate in the festival's parade on Saturday and will then have opportunity to sample a variety of new foods and old favorites.

"We received an email announcing the event," said Albalawi. "And I'm looking forward to going."

Hughes is looking forward to the event having a lasting impact on the city.

"When was the last time you talked to your neighbors? Not just a passing hello, but a real heartfelt conversation?" she said. "Not just a passing hello, but a real heartfelt conversation?"

Multiculturalism in society and in the city is taking on new dimensions of complexity and practicality as social conditions, and political circumstances change.

"Just on my street alone I have Muslim, Puerto Rican and Korean neighbors," said Hughes. "Education and information break down cultural biases and give us a better perspective."

And this information is best introduced to children in a positive environment, the younger the better, she said.

"Children are the most receptive to understanding those who are different from them," she said. "Early understanding of others nurtures lifelong respect for everyone, including those who are different from us."



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Theresa Pearyer originally from Trinidad sings along with the DJ as her husband Tyrone enjoys jambalaya under the large tent at last year's Multicultural Festival

TL file photo

Felton: Wilkes-Barre has chosen tolerance, understanding

Former local NAACP president will be grand marshal of parade



By Geri Gibbons

For Times Leader

WILKES-BARRE – Ron Felton was more than honored to be named grand marshal of the city's second annual Multicultural Parade and Festival, set for Saturday.

Felton, former president of the local chapter of the NAACP, said the addition of a grand marshal signifies the growing popularity of the parade among area residents.

Still, he initially had one question.

"I asked what does a grand marshal do?" he said, laughing. "They told me 'ride and wave, ride and wave.'"

In addition to naming Felton grand marshal, Mayor Tony George also declared Sept. 15, the day of the festival and parade "Ron Felton Day."

Felton, who supported George in his successful 2015 bid for mayor, said it reflects the current administration's commitment to diversity.

Even more than that, Felton said it means that the city has come to a crossroads and has chosen understanding and tolerance.

"I believe future mayors, future administrations will now be on the course to support diversity," he said. "This is a turning point."

When Felton came to the area in 1989 to continue working at Prudential Insurance, he said he was prepared for the challenges that might present themselves.

"At that time there weren't many African Americans here," he said. "And the company provided us with support and information. They told us that the area was about 20 years behind in the area of diversity."

Felton believes the parade and festival will have far reaching effects that go beyond the city limits.

"We're the largest city in the county," he said "We can be an example to other cities, boroughs across Northeastern Pennsylvania."

Felton said he can see great strides being made in regard to acceptance of diversity, but there is still work to be done.

"I call it necessary growing pains," he said "The important thing is that we keep trying and keep moving forward."

Some of Felton's continuing concerns have been more pragmatic and data-based.

Aimee Dilger|Times Leader

Ron Felton was the keynote speaker at the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther Kings death.

See FELTON | 8

Felton

From page 7

"I'd like to see more African American teachers in the (Wilkes-Barre Area School) District," he said. "Many of our students are diverse, so the teaching pool should be too."

Felton also wants to see more diversity in local government, at the courthouse and in the private sector.

"While I was president of the NAACP, we took a tour of Historic Williamsburg with 15 high school students in 2002," he said. "Most of those students graduated from college, but did they return to the area? Were they able to get jobs here?"

Felton hopes that in future years potential employers will attend the festival offering information on job opportunities and networking with local residents.

He also hopes that any challenges that people of diversity face in succeeding economically and socially can be addressed by government and other organizations.

Felton and his wife, Peggy, are looking forward to the Multicultural parade and festival, not only for the fellowship it will provide and the platform for diversity it will offer, but for food, music and fun.

"Barbeque is a favorite," said Felton. "I hope they have barbeque."



Aimee Dilger|Times Leader

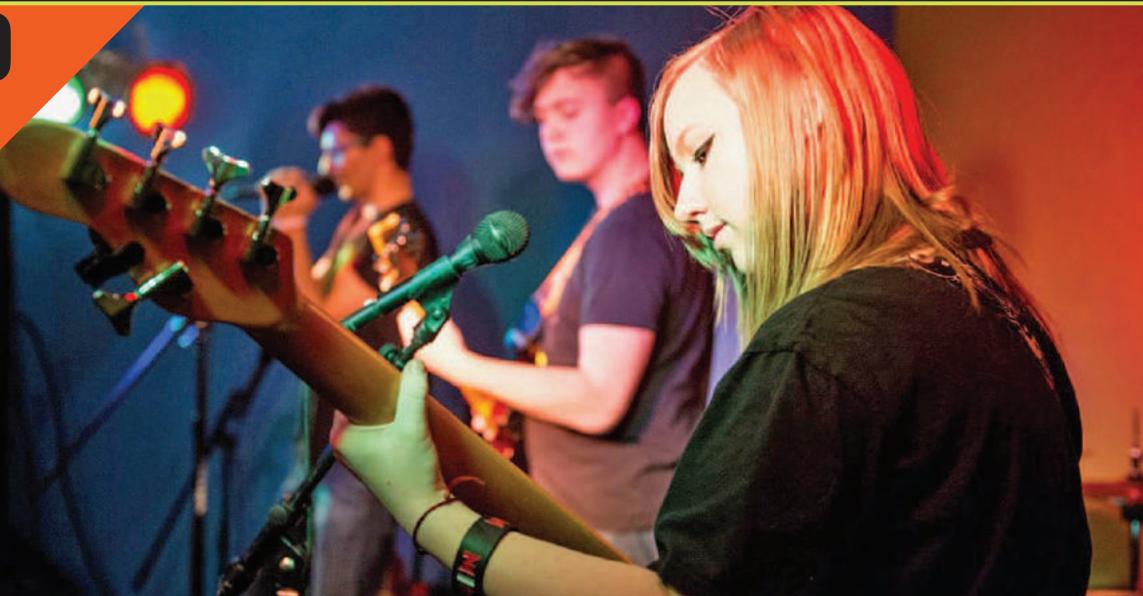
Mayor Tony George announces Ron Felton day and his appointment as Grand Marshal of the Multicultural Day Parade in Wilkes-Barre.

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The Emerald Isle Step Dancers will perform at 2 p.m. Saturday during Wilkes-Barre's Multicultural Parade and Festival. No word on whether the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders mascot Champ will be joining them.



TL file photo

Jerolita Roberts, of Kingston, and niece of co-owner Carleen Hartman wears a hat designed by her aunt for the Multicultural Festival.



Photo from Moodswing's Facebook

The band Moodswing will close out Wilkes-Barre's Multicultural Parade and Festival, taking the stage at 7:45 p.m. on Saturday.



TL file photo

Sammy James, 66, of Jenkins Twp. and originally from Montego Bay, Jamaica, cooks in his food truck Sammy's Caribbean Grill. Last year, James brought his Caribbean cuisine to the Multicultural Festival.



TL file photo

Wilkes-Barre residents of the Tapia family and their friends dance during the city's inaugural Multicultural Parade wearing chinelos, traditional Mexican costumes originating among Natives, meant to imitate the Spanish Conquistadors that enslaved them.

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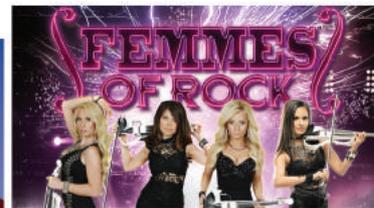
F.M. Kirby Center's 2018-2019 Season!



An Evening with Pete Rose Live - September 15, 7:30pm
 Paint Pittston Pink's Rockin' Roast - September 22, 7:00pm
 Devon Allman Project with Special Guest Duane Betts - September 28, 8:00pm
 Danny Gokey - September 29, 7:00pm
 Eddie Izzard - October 2, 7:30pm
 We The People - October 4, 10:00am
 Dwight Yoakam - October 5, 8:00pm
 The McCartney Years - October 6, 8:00pm
 Mary Shelley's Frankenstein - October 11, 7:00pm
 Catapult - October 12, 7:00pm
 Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons - October 14, 7:00pm
 Rock of Ages - October 16 & 17, 7:30pm
 Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul - October 18, 7:30pm
 The Improvised Shakespeare Company - October 19, 7:30pm
 Jay Leno - October 25, 8:00pm
 Mystery Science Theater 3000 - October 27, 5:00pm
 Wanda Sykes - November 1, 7:00pm
 Stayin' Alive: One Night of the Bee Gees - Nov. 2, 7:30pm
 Joe Nardone Pres. Chubby Checker & The Platters - November 3, 7:00pm
 Something Rotten! - November 4, 7:00pm
 The National Reserve & Miz - November 8, 7:30pm
 Live from the Chandelier Lobby
 Tommy James & The Shondells - November 10, 8:00pm
 Jo Koy - November 11, 6:00pm
 Todd Snider - November 16, 8:00pm
 Live from the Chandelier Lobby
 The Fast Lane: A Tribute to the Eagles - Nov. 17, 8:00pm
 Ray LaMontagne - November 18, 7:30pm
 Kansas - November 23, 7:30pm
 A Charlie Brown Christmas - November 28, 6:30pm
 Charlotte's Web - November 29, 10:00am
 Johnny Rivers - December 2, 7:30pm
 Ghost - December 5, 8:00pm
 Chris Tomlin Christmas- December 7, 7:30pm
 Femmes of Rock - December 12, 7:30pm
 Jackson Galaxy - December 13, 7:30pm
 Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker - Dec. 14, 7pm
 Lindsey Stirling - December 17, 8:00pm
 Billy Strings - December 18, 8:00pm
 Live from the Chandelier Lobby
 A Magical Cirque Christmas - December 20, 7:30pm
 Napoleon Dynamite Live - January 12, 7:00pm
 Freedom Train - January 28, 10:00am
 Joe Bonamassa - March 11, 8:00pm
 Laura Ingalls Wilder - March 12, 10:00am



Rogers + Hammerstein's Cinderella - March 13 & 14, 7:30pm
 Red Green - March 28, 7:00pm
 Kinky Boots - April 7, 1:30pm & 7:00pm
 One Night in Memphis - May 3, 7:30pm
 Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood Live - May 4, 2:00pm
 Aesop's Fables - May 16, 10:00am



LET'S GO OUT TO THE MOVIES! MATINEES \$3 - EVENING \$5

Before The Kirby Was The Kirby schedule (all on Fridays - 1:00 & 7:30pm) is as follows:
 Gone with the Wind (1939, G) - September 21
 Murder by Death (1976, PG) - October 26
 The Wizard of Oz (1939, PG) - November 30
 It's a Wonderful Life (1946, PG) - December 21

The W. Curtis Montz Film Series schedule (all on Wednesdays - 1:00 & 7:30pm) is as follows:
 In the Fade (2017, R) - September 19
 BPM (Beats Per Minute) (2017, PG-13) - September 26
 The Miseducation of Cameron Post [2018, NR] - October 3
 Joan Jett: Bad Reputation [2018, R] - October 10
 Sorry to Bother You [2018, R] - October 24

Splatterday III film Festival - Saturday, October 20:
 Disney's Zombies (2018, TV-G) - 5:00pm (costume parade starts at 5pm)
 Scream (1996, R) - 8:00pm
 Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975, R) - 12 Midnight



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