

News



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Mum Festival moving closer to golden anniversary

By ELIO GUGLIOTTI
STAFF WRITER

As the countdown to its golden anniversary continues, the Mum Festival is taking this year to celebrate a citywide milestone.

The 49th annual Mum Festival is weeks away. This year the fall festival is commemorating the city's 225th birthday with the theme, "Mum Festival Celebrates 225 years of Bristol."

"I feel, the Mum Festival, being a festival for the Bristol community, this would be a good way to celebrate with the citizens of Bristol," said Darlene Sawe, chairperson of the festival

committee, about incorporating the city's 225th anniversary into the theme of this year's festival.

The festival's first weekend is Friday, Sept. 24 through Sunday, Sept. 26.

The weekend, and the festival, begins with the crowning of Miss Mum and Jr. Miss Mum at Bristol Central High School on Sept. 24, before moving to Memorial Boulevard the next two days.

The festival features two full days of music, games, and family activities on Memorial Boulevard, including a "touch-a-truck" event for children and a

truck and tractor show.

Before the events begin on Memorial Boulevard Sunday, Sept. 26, the annual Mum Parade will weave its way through downtown led by Parade Marshals Jim Bosh and Cory Myers, morning personalities for Country 92.5

In keeping with the focus of celebrating with the community, Sawe said, the committee focused on ways to engage the community in the festival.

"Our goal this year was to get the community involved," said Sawe.

With that in mind, Sawe said the musical acts per-

forming on Sunday, Sept. 26 are mostly local acts.

"We felt it was a good way to get the families involved" said Sawe.

The committee has also embraced local organizations as well.

Sawe said the Bristol Veterans Council is working with the committee to bring a rock-climbing wall the Memorial Boulevard along with several military vehicles.

The second weekend of the festival, Friday, Oct. 3 through Sunday, Oct. 3 is dedicated community organizations.

There is no particular

committee sponsored events for the second weekend. Rather, Sawe said, the weekend is open for local organizations to host events and showcase themselves.

The weekend includes a concert put on by the Salvation Army that will be a fundraiser for the organization. Also, the Bristol Historical Society is hosting a concert in honor of the late Jack Denehy, the founder of the city's Military Museum.

Sawe added that a host of organizations are holding open houses during this weekend, including the Fire Department's annual open

house.

The festival will close with Mum Bingo, Saturday, Oct. 9, and the Mum Festival Road Race, Sunday, Oct. 10.

Sawe said she's hopeful that everyone in Bristol will come out to celebrate during the festival, and bring their families.

"This is going to be an awesome year," Sawe said. "Everyone's excited."

For more information and further detail about the 49th annual Mum Festival visit www.BristolMumFestival.org.

Mum Fest to honor 'Hometown Hero,' Sgt. Matthew Lavoie

By ELIO GUGLIOTTI
STAFF WRITER

For the first time in its long history, the Mum Festival is honoring a "Hometown Hero."

The "Hometown Hero" recognition highlights several new changes that are part of the 49th annual Mum Festival.

The new recognition is a way for the Mum Festival

Committee to honor the actions of city resident during the annual fall festival, said Darlene Sawe, chairperson of the committee.



Lavoie

The committee named

U.S. Army Sgt. Matthew Lavoie as the first ever "Hometown Hero."

"He's just someone I feel Bristol needs to recognize," said Sawe.

Lavoie, a graduate of Bristol Eastern High School, was injured in Iraq by a roadside bomb, Sawe said. For the past year and a half, she said, Lavoie has been receiving treatment at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C. where he has undergone

more than 50 surgeries.

Sawe described Lavoie as a great, young man who is humbled by the award. She felt the community's support would be a great lift for Lavoie's morale.

"I felt that we could make a difference. By doing it, maybe it would lift his spirits. ... He can see that he has our support and he's not alone," said Sawe.

Lavoie will be honored Saturday, Sept. 25 on Memorial Boulevard at 12

p.m. during the festival's first weekend.

As part of the weekend, the American Legion Post 2 will host a meet and greet breakfast with Lavoie beginning at 8 a.m. Sunday, Sept.

26. Lavoie will also lead the Mum Parade.

Applications to nominate people for next year's "Hometown Hero" will be available during the weekend.

Arrest made in murder

A 26-year-old man was arrested in Providence, RI last week and charged with the murder of Jose Cruz-Diaz.

Cruz-Diaz, 22, was shot multiple times and killed in front of his apartment at 81 Locust St., on Aug 15. Thirteen days later, police obtained an arrest warrant for Gliberto Marrero-Alejandro.

On Aug. 28 Bristol police working together with Providence, RI police located Marrero-Alejandro in Providence and took him into custody.

Marrero-Alejandro was charged with murder and was held on a \$5 million bond. Marrero-Alejandro was expected to be extradited to Bristol for arraignment

during the middle of this week.

Police said Marrero-Alejandro had no permanent address, but wasn't from Bristol.

The arrest warrant was sealed, and as of press time no further information was available.

Anyone with information regarding this case is asked to contact Det. Garrie Dorman at (860) 314-4564.

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