



PRESS RELEASE

City of Akron 166 S. High Street Akron, Ohio 44308

(330)-375-2345 Fax:(330)- 375-2468

Web: www.akronohio.gov

For Immediate Release

Contact: Stephanie York, Director of Communications
syork@akronohio.gov or 330-375-2345 (w) / 330-289-1467 (c)

Rib, White & Blue Festival returns for 37th year

Fourth of July Festival Event Schedule

The Fourth of July in Akron will be a three day extravaganza of grillin' and groovin' on South Main Street in Downtown Akron with great music from Lock 3's Akron General Stage.

Rib, White and Blue, Akron's National Rib Festival is Northeast Ohio's largest FREE rib burn-off, and traces its history as an annual event to Akron's Sesquicentennial celebration in 1975.

This year, eight rib vendors from four states vie for cash prizes and bragging rights in the "best of" competition. The masters of the barbeque will be coming from Texas, South Carolina, Ohio and Tennessee. Food service begins during the lunch hour Monday, July 2, and continues through the fireworks show Wednesday night.

For the third year, the Akron Symphony Orchestra will perform a July 4 pops concert with patriotic favorites and a grand fireworks finale at 9:45 pm at Lock 3.

Music during the 3-day festival features tributes to the Beatles and the Eagles along with two popular local bands, plus the Symphony's tribute to the legendary trumpet player Louis Armstrong.

**One of the Nation's Largest Free Rib Festivals,
Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 11:00am – 11:00pm**

This year's ***Rib, White & Blue Festival*** brings back Akron favorites, plus new vendors who have not participated in the burn-off previously. Returning chefs include:

Carolina Rib King, Moore S. Carolina, recipient of the 2011 Akron awards for both "best sauce" and "best ribs;"
Texas Pit BBQ, Magnolia Texas;
Cowboys BBQ & Rib Company, Aledo Texas;
Old Carolina BBQ, Massillon, Ohio;
Pigfoot BBQ, West Salem, Ohio; and,
Smokin' Joe's BBQ, Columbus Ohio.

New to the Rib Festival this year are:

Big Boned Barbeque, Hixson, Tennessee, and,
Bg's Main Event, Rittman, Ohio

In addition to barbequed pork and chicken favorites, the festival also features fresh roasted corn, pierogies, Italian sausage and Stromboli, blossom onions, funnel cakes, birch root beer, and fresh squeezed lemonade.

There will also be inflatable rides for children, and the "Magical Train" will be doing tours of the Towpath along the canal. Rides are available by purchasing tickets at the site.

Music from the Akron General Stage at Lock 3 is FREE

Monday, July 2: (Gates Open 11:00am)

7:00pm The Get Back Band

8:30pm 1964, The Tribute

Tuesday, July 3: (Gates Open 11:00am)

7:00pm Zach and the Bright Lights

8:30pm Hotel California, the Tribute to the Eagles

Wednesday, July 4: (Gates open 11:00am)

5:00pm Brass Band of the Western Reserve

8:00pm Akron Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Christopher Wilkins,
with Byron Stripling as "Satchmo"

9:45pm Fireworks Show at Lock 3

Notes About Festival and Concerts

- The Rib, White & Blue Festival and 4th of July Concert is at Lock 3, 200 S. Main Street.
- Parking is FREE at all city owned parking decks and lots plus the Summit County deck on South High Street.
- Handicapped parking is available at the State Street deck, which has an elevator to the Lock 3 level, or at Cascade Plaza, where handicapped parking is available by entering at Mill Street and following the ramp up to Lock 4 (parking level 2, Orange).
- South Main Street will be closed Wednesday night between Exchange and Market for the fireworks show. Traffic should enter downtown via Route 59, Dart Avenue, Bowery or Mill Streets.

Sponsors Make Free Entertainment Possible

Lock 3 entertainment in 2012 is supported by a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, with marketing support from the Tramonte Distributing Co. and Coca Cola distributors. The stage sponsor for a fourth year is Akron General Health System.

Rock the Lock concerts on Fridays are sponsored by WONE Radio. Lock 3's Saturday "legends" series is sponsored by Merrill Lynch Wealth Management.

Other sponsors include The University of Akron, G. Stephens Construction, Miller Rental, HfA Advertising, Downtown Akron Partnership, Akron Civic Theatre, and Lee Hyder Financial Services.

About the Akron Symphony Orchestra

For 60 years, the Akron Symphony Orchestra has been a driving musical force throughout the Greater Akron area. Operated by the Greater Akron Musical Association (GAMA), the Akron Symphony is committed to enhancing the quality of life of our community through education and musical excellence by providing quality symphonic and choral music, through performances and educational programs, to the largest number of people possible. For more about the Akron Symphony, visit akronsymphony.org.

About Byron Stripling

"Mr. Stripling is a powerful trumpeter, at ease with the most complicated and detailed bebop lines and an open-armed Armstrong swagger." Peter Watrous, *New York Times*

Columbus Jazz Orchestra Artistic Director and trumpet virtuoso, Byron Stripling, has become a favorite throughout the country, soloing with the Boston Pops, Cincinnati Pops, and symphony orchestras in Seattle, Baltimore, St. Louis, Vancouver and The American Jazz Philharmonic. He has also been a featured soloist at the Hollywood Bowl and performs at jazz festivals throughout the world.

An accomplished actor and singer, Stripling was chosen, following a worldwide search, to star in the lead role of the Broadway musical, "Satchmo." He had a featured cameo performance in the television movie, "The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles."

Stripling earned his stripes as lead trumpeter and soloist with the Count Basie Orchestra, and has also played and recorded with Dizzy Gillespie, Woody Herman, and Lionel Hampton in addition to The Lincoln Center Classical Jazz Orchestra and The Carnegie Hall Jazz Band.

Stripling was educated at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and lives in Westerville, Ohio.

-end-

Editors: For interview opportunities and photos please contact Maria Nagel at maria_nagel1@yahoo.com.