

IT'S TIME FOR BONIFEST: Annual event again plans exceptional entertainment, rides, fun for all

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Ryan Hentz is once again leading the **Bonifest** in Edwardsville and action rolls out tonight with the kickoff.

Food, rides, games and the beer garden open at 4 tonight with a kickoff by the Edwardsville Catholic Schools Band at the festival, held each year at Bonifest Catholic

Church area in Downtown Edwardsville. The festival runs both Friday night and the majority of the day and night on Saturday.

For Hentz, Bonifest has gone full circle. He started his involvement when he was a youth in Catholic schools, now his kids have followed his footsteps. Hentz said while he might get some spotlight about the event, it is the large group of volunteers who make the event such a success.

“I appreciate the history of Bonifest,” Hentz said. “My family has been involved with Bonifest for years. It is one of the biggest things of the year each year in Edwardsville.”

One of Hentz’s key focuses is booking the exceptional entertainment acts for Bonifest. This year “Ryan Ideus and the Feudin’ Hillbillies” will perform and Hentz said it will be a treat because of the band’s talent.

“They are an up and coming band and I can’t say enough about them,” he said of “Ryan Ideus and the Feudin’ Hillbillies.”

"Dirty Mugs" is a band that always has everyone up dancing and singing along, Hentz said and he looks forward to hearing them perform again on Saturday night. Dirty Mugs’ lead singer is originally from Edwardsville, Hentz added.

“They put on one of the best shows,” he said of the band. “People always have a big smile on their faces when they talk about listening to Dirty Mugs.”

Bonifest is known for its top-notch entertainment acts and this year is no different.

At 4:30 to 7 tonight, “My Friend Mike” will perform, followed by Ryan Ideus and the Feudin’ Hillbillies, a country act, from 8 to 11 p.m.

Saturday’s highlights begin with the Run for Bonifest 5K and 2-Mile Walk at 8:30 a.m., followed by a book sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bluejay Happy Hour Discount Food is available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Bluejay Happy Hour wristbands can be obtained from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

At 2 p.m. Saturday, “Late 4 Work” kicks off the musical entertainment, followed by “Carrie and the Catapults” from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The popular “Dirty Mugs” returns again this year from 8 to 11 p.m. At 9 p.m. the Big Bona \$10,00 drawing will be held.

There will be plenty of rides, several new ones for this year, and games for children, Hentz said.

For additional information, visit www.bonifest.com.