



St. Mary's Oktoberfest to once again mark area's German heritage

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - St Mary's Oktoberfest is an event that celebrates the area's German heritage and it is set for Friday, Saturday and Sunday on the church and school grounds with an abundance of festivities.

The activities get underway on the evening of Friday, October 7th at St. Mary's.

Carolyn Simansky, a St. Mary's Oktoberfest spokesperson, said this year's edition of the large-scale Alton event should be as good as any before. St. Mary's began the Oktoberfest in 2008.

"It is our main fundraiser," Simansky said. "We have a committee of 20 to 30 and we have a core of us that began with it in 2008. We add a couple new people each year to the committee. It is a great way to raise money for the parish and build community."

This year, some German food has been added, so those offerings will be even better.

"We reassess everything at the end of the year," she said. "We figure out what went well and we see what may need to be paired down. Fredbird will be back again and he is always a big hit."

The silent auction, raffle and basket raffle are focal points of the celebration. A Sunday Mass in the Park is always popular, along with first-class entertainment.

Oktoberfest will have a live auction at 6 p.m. Friday. A silent auction is set from 1 to 8 p.m. on Saturday and closes at 3:30 p.m. Sunday.

The Sweepstakes Raffle has a \$10,000 grand prize, \$5,000 second prize, \$3,000 for third prize, \$1,000 each for fourth and fifth prize, and \$500 for sixth through 10th prize. Proceeds benefit St. Mary Parish. Tickets can be purchased at the parish office at 519 E. 4th St., Alton.

Teen Zone is back again this year and includes a Wrecking Ball, 2-Lane Bungee Run, and a 52-foot obstacle course. There will be kids' games and inflatables once again. A basket raffle closes at 3:30 p.m. Sunday. Baskets are displayed in Suddes Hall on Saturday and Sunday.

Mass times for the Oktoberfest Celebration are at 5:15 p.m. on Saturday in the church and at 6:30 and 8 a.m. Sunday in the church, and at 11 a.m. the Anniversary "Mass in the Grass" will be held at Garfield Park at Sixth and Langdon Streets in Alton.

For Oktoberfest information, visit www.st.marysoktoberfest.com or call (618) 465-4284.

The Schedule is as follows:

Friday

6 p.m. – Beer tent, wine garden, hamburgers, hotdogs, brats, turkey legs, loaded potatoes

6 -10 – Adult games open, pull tabs, cards

7-11 – Glendale Riders play on main stage

Saturday

1 p.m. – Grounds open, keg tapped on main stage, silent auction and basket raffle opens, Suddes Hall has inflatables, games, raffles, food concessions, etc., begin on parish grounds.

1-4 p.m. – St. Louis Czech Express, main stage

2-5 p.m. – Dixie Dues Festival Stage

5:15 p.m. – Vigil Mass, Church

6:30-7:30 – Fredbird appears

6:30-10:30 0 The Owlz, festival stage

7:00 – 11:00 – Baywolfe, main stage

9:00 – Children's games, rides shut down, band plays until 11 p.m.

Sunday

6:30 & 8:00 – Masses in the church

11:00 – Outdoor Anniversary “Mass in the Grass.”

Noon – After Mass, food starts

12:30-4:30 – Big Shake Daddies, festival stage on the square

12:30-4:00 – St. Louis Czech Express, main stage

3:30 – Silent auction closes in Suddes' Hall

3:30 – Basket raffle closes

4:00-6:00 – Harman Family Band, dining tent on 3rd Street

6:00 – Live auction, dining tent on Third Street

6:30 – 10:00 – Back in the Saddle, main stage

7:00 – Children's games and inflatables close

8:00 - \$10,000 Sweepstakes Drawing main stage

10:00 – Oktoberfest closes.