

First ever Jazz and Wine Festival draws huge crowd to the Alton riverfront

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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ALTON - The Alton Amphitheater's Jazz and Wine Festival kicked off it's first year in a huge way as people gathered to the riverfront for wine, food, art and music from the

Ptah Williams Quartet, Funky Butt Brass Band, Dawn Weber Group and Keyon Harrold on Saturday night.



After only an hour of opening the gates Robert Stephan, Chairman of the Amphitheater Commission, said the event had already surpassed what was anticipated after selling out of VIP tickets.

“Exceeding expectations,” Stephan said. “For our first event this is more than we had planned for, and that’s always a good thing. All the VIP seats are sold. We’re very pleased. Jazz, wine, food, art, that’s a good day on the Alton riverfront.”

With a much more relaxed and calm atmosphere the festival drew in people from all around the area.

“We’ve gone through our list of VIPs and more than half of them are from outside of Alton,” Stephan said. “That’s a really good thing. That’s exactly what we’re trying to do is bring people into Alton. This is not Lynyrd Skynyrd, for sure. It’s a pretty chill day.”

Having such a great turnout, Stephan said he hopes to see the Jazz and Wine Festival return next year.

“People are already asking about next year,” he said. “We’re looking forward to it. It’s unique. Definitely something we look to do again.”

Events like the Jazz and Wine Festival require tons of effort from a lot of people to help the community utilize the amphitheater and the riverfront.

“This venue is a beautiful venue but it was not built to on events for large crowds, so there’s a lot of extra work to make this happen,” Stephan said. “I really want to thank the Jazz Committee, all of our sponsors, and all the park and rec and public works staff. We are really thankful for all of them because that’s what makes this work.”





