

Pere Marquette to Host 17th Annual Peach Festival This Weekend

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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GRAFTON - Pere Marquette's 17th annual Peach Festival invites you to come out and enjoy fresh fruit this Sunday, Aug. 6.

The Peach Festival runs from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center. Vendors, kids' activities and the beloved Peach Pit contest are just some of the attractions you can check out in between bites.

“Obviously, we’re highlighting peaches,” said Arielle Niemeyer, Pere Marquette’s director of marketing and events. “So we’re going to have multiple peach vendors. The majority of them are going to be from Calhoun County, which, you know, they’re known in the nation for their peaches.”

Attendees can sample peaches from across the area. Other local produce vendors from Alton and Godfrey will be there, as well as 30 craft vendors spread throughout the lodge and outside.

With face painting and other kid-friendly activities, many families are expected to come out and enjoy the day. But there’s something for everyone; wine from the nearby wineries and live music on the patio will also flow freely.

Peach Festival is the second largest event that Pere Marquette sponsors. Niemeyer expects 800–1,000 attendees, though over 25,000 people have expressed interest on the [official event page on Facebook](#). She explained that this event is a fun kickoff to the peach season while also recognizing local agriculture. And of course, it wouldn’t be the Peach Festival without the Peach Pit contest, which Niemeyer calls the Festival’s “main thing.”

“So you can purchase a peach from one of the vendors, and then eat the peach, keep your pit, and then bring it over. And it’s basically, you’re throwing your pit into a cup for a chance to win a free night’s stay,” she explained. “People come out for that. That draws a really big crowd, and it’s just fun.”

For your chance to win, stop by the Peach Festival on Aug. 5 and support local farmers and vendors. Admission is free and live music begins at noon. Visit the [official Pere Marquette Lodge and Conference Center website](#) or the [Peach Festival Facebook page](#) for more information.