



Pere Marquette Lodge holds Peach Fest, celebrates locally grown food, art

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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GRAFTON - Hundreds of locally-grown peach lovers flocked to the **Pere Marquette Lodge** Sunday, Aug. 9, to feast upon the fruits of the harvest at the 8th Annual **Peach Fest**.

From 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., patrons of the festival were welcomed to enjoy live music, games, and other activities at the beautiful 8,000-acre national park. Local artists, designers, and craft makers displayed their goods inside of the great room in the beautiful lodge, which was built in the 1930s.

“We are having an amazing turn out,” Pere Marquette Lodge’s Community Events and Marketing Director Leslie Franklin said. “This is a family event and there is something for everyone out here today.”

“This is a special year for the Lodge,” Franklin said, “Pere Marquette Lodge is celebrating its 75th year, so this event is pretty big for us.”

Peaches were not the only vegetables on display at the festival. Fresh fruits and vegetables of all kinds were brought for sale by local farmers from Calhoun, Grafton, Godfrey and Jerseyville. Their delicious products were available for sale at low prices, with a promise that they are locally grown and cared for throughout the season.

A magician was on hand to entertain guests entering and exiting the lodge, astonishing folks with slight-of-hand tricks and an excellent sense of humor. Live music was available on the patio outside of the restaurant. That way, both diners and festival attendees were welcome to the cool sounds of The South Central Band. Face painting, arts and crafts were provided and even a balloon twister was on hand to entertain the children.

Once patrons had finished their peaches, they were welcomed to throw their leftover pits into the “Pit Pitch” game, which gave them the opportunity to win a free night’s stay at the lodge. Other prizes were available for those who got close to the winning center cups.

“It’s a great day to come out here to the Lodge and enjoy some of the locally famous peaches,” Franklin said.

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