

Czech it out

Prague Kolache Festival still polka-ing after 60 years

By Van Mitchell

The first Saturday in May, the citizens of Prague welcome people from around the world to join them in celebrating the Czech culture that played a role in the city's founding.

The Prague Kolache Festival will be held Saturday, May 4 on Main Street at City Park, located at 1010 Main Street from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. This year's festival theme is, "Still Polka-ing after 60 Years."

Celebrate Czech Style

WHEN: May 4

WHERE: Main Street, Prague

The festival celebrates the Czech heritage of Prague with polka music, dancing, food, Czech costumes, a parade, beer garden, wine tasting booths, Made in Oklahoma foods, a carnival, pony rides, mechanical bull and free entertainment, said Sharon Maggard, festival publicity coordinator.

"Besides being a festival celebrating our Czech heritage, it is also a celebration for the founding of Prague in 1902," she said. "It is a lot of fun. We put it on as a town celebration."

Activities kick off at 9 a.m. with a costume contest followed by Prague Czech Folk Dancers and the opening ceremony. Entertainment continues throughout the day with live music at the grandstand. At 11 a.m., one of Oklahoma's largest parades starts at 7th Street on Hwy 99 and makes

its way through downtown Prague ending at the grandstand at the city park on Highway 62.

Residents dressed in colorful Czech costumes can be seen along the parade route. Floats, bands, horses, clowns and more make up the two-hour parade.

Maggard said the festival has plenty of free entertainment.

A polka band will play at the City Park gazebo, where guests will also find an arts and craft show featuring jewelry, face painting, wood art, ceramics, yard art and clothing. Guests can also enjoy the wine booths, carnival, and car show and beer garden on the premises.

Visitors to the Prague Kolache Festival can feast on locally made smoked Czech sausages, Klobase and their favorite flavor of kolache.

Other ethnic foods such as Indian tacos, roasted corn on the cob and funnel cakes will also be available at 25 food booths.

The Czech Beseda Dance will be performed at 5 p.m. followed by the royalty crowning at 6 p.m. The Polka street dance runs from 7-10 p.m. followed by a fireworks display.

Maggard said the festival normally attracts about 20,000 a year.

"Everything is done on a volunteer basis," she said. "We have around 20 committees that put on the festival. A lot of the people have been working years on those committees. We do it because we love our town, and we want to promote our Czech heritage."

Maggard said the Prague Kolache Festival has something for everyone.

"What brings people back is the fun atmosphere," she said. "It is like a

big party. It is a time for people to come back home."

For more information call (405)-567-4866.

www.praguekolachefestival.com



Kolache Festival Royalty: Junior Queen- Elle Standlee-Daniels; Queen- Julie Brydon; Princess- Madelyn Shepard They welcome everyone to Prague on Saturday, May 4, for the 60th Kolache Festival.