

Fiddlestick Extravaganza returns to Greenfield

At 95 years old, Pope's Concessions has traveled thousands of miles, brought smiles to children and adults across the south with rides and games, and filled carnival-goers' tummies with plenty of hot dogs, hamburgers and other treats of yumminess.

What they didn't do is invent the item for which they are most famous and that serves as the namesake of the four-day festival provided free in Greenfield each spring.

"My family nor the Sullivans came up with the fiddlestick," acknowledged third generation owner James Roy Pope and the current force behind the annual Fiddlestick Festival scheduled for Wednesday – Saturday along Greenfield's Front Street. "According to legend, a guy out of Texas came through with the idea of ice cream on a stick dipped in chocolate and rolled in nuts and they stole it."

The "they" is "Popcorn Johnny" Sullivan and Pope's grandfather Roy Pope. Pope initially worked for Sullivan before later partnering with his boss' son Earl Jay and then eventually pulling away with his own son (and current owner James Roy's dad) Jimmy Pope. The Sullivans took the larger venues like those in Texas and Canada and the Papes focused on small fairs in the area. Now Pope's Concessions can be found in three to four states each year, employing up to 50-60 in the high season.

But in April, they come



home to Greenfield for the Fiddlestick Festival, a tradition that's been going on since 1996.

"Dad always wanted to give back to the community and to help the town know what we do," explained James Roy who continues in that community service mentality in his current roles as both a city alderman in Greenfield and as a Weakley County Commissioner.

The free rides and musical entertainment are made possible because area industries, small businesses and individuals invest in sponsorships that help to cover the costs (that can be as high as \$20,000).

"There's a lot of hidden costs that carnival goers don't see," said Pope of expenses the event assumes

like sound equipment, diesel fuel, insurance and entertainment costs. "We are dependent on and looking to add more sponsors at \$50 to \$500, any amount is a good amount."

That investment nets up to 10,000 visitors each year, Pope estimates.

This year the footprint of the rides and food booths will shift one block south to adjust for construction of the new home of the Greenfield Banking Company, one of the local sponsors.

Returning will be what have become traditions in the long-running festival. Prairie Farms will host the ice cream eating contest, the Greenfield Fire Department will provide free rides on the fire truck, the Predator Monster Truck will be rev-

ving its engine once again, and Miss Lisa's Girls (Lisa Hillard's voice students) will perform.

A bigger, vintage carousel – "perfect for pictures" – is planned and different games will be available, said Pope of new additions. Taylor Totty, Miss Fiddlestick 2019 who was crowned this month, will also be present.

Scheduled to perform are the Church of Christ on Wednesday, Andrea Goodman on Thursday, West Tennessee Strangers including Greenfield native Steve Cothran on Friday and Andrea Goodman and her band on Saturday.

Rides open at 3 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday and 11 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

23rd Annual Fiddlestick Extravaganza Wednesday – Saturday Front Street, Greenfield, TN

Sponsored by Pope's Concessions, The Greenfield Advancement Association, local businesses industries and individuals.

Wednesday:

Festival Opens at 3 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 6:30 p.m.
with Mayor Cindy McAdams
Church Services will be held by Greenfield Church of Christ, with Bro. Jim Garner

Thursday:

Festival Opens at 3 p.m.
"Andrea Goodman and the Redneck Revival" sound by Hawk Specialty Entertainment
Sponsored by Greenfield Banking Co.

Friday:

Festival Opens at 11 a.m.
West Tennessee Strangers Band
Sponsored by Shelton's Restaurant & Shelton's Home Improvement

Saturday:

Festival Opens at 11 a.m.
Free firetruck rides 10:30-12:30
Sponsored by Greenfield Fire Dept.
Ice Cream Eating Contest 2 p.m.
Sponsored by Turner Dairy
Miss Lisa's Girls 4 p.m.
"Andrea Goodman and the Redneck Revival"
Sponsored by Garner Farms & MTD Products

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