

“The weather is changing, the leaves are changing and that can only mean one thing, it is time for Autumn on the River,” stated David Abbott, Co-Chair of Autumn on the River. “With the cooler morning temperatures growing into warmer afternoons, the weather tells us it is time for the festival. Autumn on the River, in it’s 21st year, is always a great, family fun festival. This always seems like a big family reunion to me. It seems like we have families that come every year and meet with friends to spend the weekend in Bethlehem.” Abbott continued, “With the food booths and live entertainment, a family can come down over the hill and spend the day without spending a lot of money. They can get something to eat, listen to great music and reminisce with old friends.”

Historic Bethlehem, LLC held the last meeting Saturday before the big event to make the final preparations for this weekend’s festival.

“With President Joe Madera leading Historic Bethlehem, Andi (Oles) and I (co-chairs of Autumn on the River) have worked with the many volunteers to help make this festival a great event. I believe we are all ready for the festival. Everyone has been committed to make sure this festival is a success. Without the dedicated volunteers who have been to the meetings to help plan the festival to those who show up on the morning of the festival to volunteer, we could not do this without them each year. The volunteers are truly the reason why this festival is a continued success.”

The festival will be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 19 and 20 on the grounds of the old schoolhouse in Bethlehem. The festival originated as a way to raise funds to restore the old 1927 schoolhouse. Since the restoration is complete, the funds now go toward the upkeep of the building and school grounds. The hours of the festival will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 12 noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

This year’s festival will kick off with the annual live auction beginning at 10 a.m. on Saturday. The auction will have many donated items. The committee will take donations through the beginning of the auction. If you would like to donate to the auction please contact Joe Madera at 812-293-4197.

Along with the live auction, a silent auction will be held on Saturday and Sunday. The winning bid for items will be declared on Saturday and again on Sunday. Items will be awarded to the highest bidder for silent auction items on Saturday. A new list of silent auction items will be out on Sunday with the highest bid taking the item on Sunday.

“Many of these items have been collected by Eric Schnatter. He has definitely stepped up to the plate for us and hit a home run this year,” Abbott stated. “He has done a great job for us with the auction this year,” he continued.

Donated items include: tickets for: Indianapolis Colts, Indiana Pacers, Kings Island, Derby Museum, Kentucky Science Center, Indianapolis Children’s Museum, Colts Museum, Frazier History Museum; new chainsaw, carpenters and mechanics tools, power tools, Craftsman Radial Arm Saw, shotgun, 16 bales of straw and an autographed Chuck Pagano Colts football.

Other items include: four rounds of golf with cart donated by the Elks Club of Jeffersonville; a round of golf for four with cart donated by Hidden Creek; Hoosier Hills (Hanover) donated golf related items; a gift certificate donated by Jacobi Sales; a collectible car donated by Bubby Vissing; Tailgate package donated by Judge Dan Moore; Toy John Deere tractor and wagon donated by Mac Spainhour; Tutu and matching hair bow donated by Pumpkins Hair Bows; Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas appliqued shirts (sizes 12 months, 18 months and 2T) donated by Darlene Frazier; Ocean Breeze Decor Candle donated by Zondy's Smelly Gelly's; IU tote full of IU goodies donated by Captain Brian Meyer of the Clark County Sheriff's Department; Gift certificate donated by Angel Salon & Spa; Up-cycled bench made from head board donated by Main Street Chic; Jay C Food Store gift certificate donated by Clark County Commissioner Jack Coffman; two yards of hardwood mulch, you pick up at EarthFirst in Sellersburg donated by Graf Hauling; \$50 Gift Certificate from Rural King donated by Clark County Commissioner Rick Stephenson and a LG 26" Class Slim LED 720P 60Hz HDTV donated by Clark County Sheriff Chief of Detectives Major Donnie Bowyer.

"We also would like to thank The New Washington State Bank, Nugent Sand and Gravel and Wiggam Lumber, they continue to support our festival throughout the year," Abbott stated. "Without these kind donations, it would be really tough to make this festival happen every year."

The festival will have the official opening at 11:45 a.m. with a welcome from President of Historic Bethlehem, LLC, Joe Madera and Autumn on the River Co-Chairs Andi Oles and David Abbott.

Bethlehem's Got Talent will take the main stage at 12 noon on Saturday. The talent show will feature 17 local acts.

"It is remarkable how Tracie (Madera) puts this together. It just amazes me how she can coordinate all those acts in such a short amount of time," Abbott stated. "The Talent Show spots are completely full. Tracie has taken the Talent Show to whole new heights. Clark County truly has a lot of talent. I am looking forward to being able to listen to all the acts."

This year's sponsors for the Bethlehem's Got Talent include: Abbott's Lawn & Fence Company, Hoopsters Sports Bar & Grill, Candice Edwards of "Mom's Music", The Ivy Vine Florist, 62 Twist, MVP Sports, Orschelen Farm & Home Store and CD Graphix.

"We also want to give a special thank you to Jamie Campbell. She will be running the sound system during Bethlehem's Got Talent. She did a fantastic job of organizing the recent Rockin' the School Yard Concert Series and running the sound system through the concert series," Abbott said.

After Bethlehem's Got Talent, the spot light will turn to the Veterans. Autumn on the River will recognize the local veterans as they are honored during the Veteran's Tribute hosted by David Broughton.

The flag tribute will also be on display again this year. Over 4,000 flags will be on display

representing those soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice. Bill Hostetler and Bob Beaty of the Clark County Sheriff's Department Inmate Program have led this awesome display of sacrifice this year.

Abbott continued, "Bill has done a fine job over the last several years. This year with the help of Bob, I am sure this will again be a breath taking display. It is always something to see when you look at all the flags so perfectly placed and then to realize what they represent."

Abbott added, "I also want to thank Bill for his continuous help in bringing the inmate program to help with the set up of tents, booths and decorations for the festival. Bill always jumps at the chance to help us with the festival. We are continually thankful for his dedication."

The Veterans will also be honored during the annual Autumn on the River Parade to begin at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. The Grand Marshals of the parade will be Bethlehem's own Veterans Bobby Stutesman and Robert Bladen. The honorary Grand Marshal will be 93-year old Dale Reed, the oldest Veteran to attend this year's festival. Parade line up will begin at 1:30 p.m. Participants in the parade should report to the Autumn on the River Parade Information Booth located in front of the school before lining up.

"We encourage anyone who wants to be a part of the parade to come down and enjoy this yearly parade through Bethlehem. The parade is always a good time. People begin lining the streets of Bethlehem early to get the best spot for the parade," Abbott added.

Some featured parade entries include: New Washington High School Band, Teddy Roosevelt interpreter Gib Young and representatives for the Clark County Sheriff's Office, Indiana State Police, Jeffersonville Police Department and New Washington Volunteer Fire Department.

Festival goers will also have the opportunity to try their chance at an old game of horseshoes. A horseshoe tournament will begin at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

Live entertainment will begin on Saturday with the winners of the recent Rockin the School Yard Concert Series. The music will be held from 3 to 6 p.m. with each of the People's Choice Winners from the Bluegrass Night, Country Night and Rock Night playing a hour set. Spare Change, the winner of Bluegrass Night will kick off from 6 to 7 p.m. Rinker's Creek, the winner of the Country Night, will follow as Rock Night winners Burning Daylight will take the stage conclude the entertainment for Saturday.

"We are in for a real treat. I have seen these bands and they will definitely rock Bethlehem!," Abbott added with a smile.

Saturday only Bethlehem will get a visit from our 26th President of the United States, Teddy Roosevelt. Gib Young will be visiting Bethlehem for the first time on Saturday. He is a Theodore Roosevelt interpreter. Young has the physical resemblance of Roosevelt circa 1915 and has developed the uncanny ability to mimic the former President's voice and behavior. He has entertained audiences from New York to Seattle and from Houston to Marquette. Young has been honored to appear at Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, Washington's Mt. Vernon, JFK

Library, the Smithsonian and many more.

The Red Cross Bloodmobile will be in Bethlehem on Saturday afternoon only.

“The Red Cross can always use blood donors. You can take a few minutes out of your day and save a life,” Abbott stated.

The festival will conclude at 6 p.m. on Saturday and open for the final day on Sunday at 12 noon. David Broughton will entertain the crowd with beautiful Gospel music from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m.

The ever-popular Marlinaires will hit the stage at 2 p.m. and entertain the crowd until 5 p.m. For more information on The Marlinaires visit www.themarlinaires.com.

During scheduled break times of The Marlinaires from 3:30 to 5 p.m., the Historic Bethlehem, LLC/ Autumn on the River Committee will host a Dessert Auction. This year’s Dessert Auction will honor one of the group’s own. Last year, the Monday morning after the festival, Dan Waterfill passed away unexpectedly. The Committee has found a way to honor him. All proceeds from the Dessert Auction will benefit the New Washington High School Scholarship Fund in memory of Dan Waterfill. Rachel Bussey has overseen the Dessert Auction. If you would like to make a donation to the auction please contact Rachel Bussey at 812-406-6323. You may also drop off desserts at the New Washington Fire Station located on Highway 62 in New Washington this Friday, October 18 from 7 to 9 p.m. and Saturday, October 19 from 1 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. Refrigerated storage until Sunday’s Dessert Auction will be provided. You may also drop your dessert off at the festival on Sunday by the stage at 3 p.m. Just find Bussey and she will gladly accept your donation to the Dessert Auction.

“When I heard that Rachel was going to head the Dessert Auction I knew it would be a fantastic success. I knew with Rachael at the helm this would be an amazing event,” Abbott added. “Rachel is a local woman that seems to always jump when it comes to help others. The entire time I have known Rachel, she is always finding ways out of the box, to help those in need in the community,” Abbott stated with a smile.

The festival will also include helicopter rides, antique tractor and car display and carriage rides on Saturday and Sunday. Also throughout the weekend you may purchase raffle tickets at the Information Booth for a 50/50 Drawing.

Autumn on the River will feature over 65 booths including homemade crafts, candles, and lots of one-of-a-kind items.

Of course, no festival would be complete without yummy festival food and Autumn on the River will not disappoint the festival goer again this year. The Clark County Cattleman’s Association will be on hand grilling their delicious ribeye steak sandwiches. Festival goers can also grab a funnel cake, kettle corn, hot dog or for your sweet tooth homemade persimmon pudding, pumpkin pie or fresh baked cookies inside the schoolhouse! The Charlestown American Legion

Post 335 Women's Auxiliary will also be busy in the basement of the old schoolhouse cooking up beans and cornbread, chili and hot dogs.

After filling your belly be sure to visit the old schoolhouse for historical tours, the Veteran's Wall of Honor, the Clark County Homemakers Quilt Raffle or research the local history and genealogy in the Heritage Room. Also on hand will be Bethlehem Church and Cemetery information and records.

New this year in the Gathering Room (the large room upstairs in the school building) visitors will be able to see a wonderful exhibit of Civil War, World War I and World War II memorabilia. The collection is on loan to Historic Bethlehem by Pam Rudd-Beaufait and her brother Jeff Rudd. Also on the second floor there will be a Meet and Greet Area. The festival committee encourages you to come in, kick off your shoes and meet old friends. You may even run into our 26th President Teddy Roosevelt! Be sure to have your camera ready for a picture with the former president.

Girl Scout Troop #6208 of Scottsburg will also be on hand both days this weekend to help with parking.

The 21st Annual Autumn on the River festival will have something for everyone, the young and the young at heart.

"This year's festival will be filled with lots of Autumn time fun. It will be the perfect weekend to come down to Bethlehem, spend the day and make lots of lasting memories," Abbott stated. "It is time to get Mom, Dad, the kids, Grandma, Grandpa, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins and neighbors in the car and head down the hill to visit Autumn on the River. They are forecasting the weather to be a nice Fall day, just pack the cars up and come on down! We will have a great time this weekend in Bethlehem!"

Abbott added, "My goal each year for this festival is to make it the most enjoyable event possible for those who attend. I like to look over the crowd and see people sitting on the hay bales or picnic tables, tapping their foot to the music with a funnel cake in one hand and a cold soda in the other just laughing with friends. We all keep this festival like a small town atmosphere, it is what we like about the festival... Family and friends coming together and having a great weekend."

Abbott concluded about the one who will be so missed this year, "This will be our first year without one of our leaders and our dear friend, Dan Waterfill. Dan made the festival special every year. He always wanted to make sure everyone came down and had a great time and made lasting memories. Dan always wanted things to go smooth. He always addressed each problem with a kind word. Dan was always the first person there each morning and the last person to leave each night. My memory of Dan was he was always smooth under pressure. He was a leader that will truly be missed. Dan always helped make the festival a success and we hope that we can continue his tradition of a great, family-fun festival filled with ever lasting memories."

For more information about Autumn on the River please visit www.autumnontheriver.wordpress.com or call Joe Madera, President of Historic Bethlehem, LLC at 812-293-4197 or David Abbott, Co-Chair of this year's Autumn on the River at 502-931-4669.