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### Rotary Ribfest kicks off Friday



By Andrea Tingey, Standard Staff  
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Rotary Ribfest is returning this year with the same great flavour and sound.

“If you want to taste real ribs made by a professional, this is where you have to come,” said Ribfest co-chair Ron Fast.

The free event will take place Friday and Saturday from noon to 11 p.m. and Monday from noon to 8 p.m.

“We’ve always got a great new lineup of bands,” said Fast. “We’ve got a formula that works and people seem to love it so we’re going to make sure this is the best festival of the summer.”

Fast said his favourite part of the festival is the ribs.

“You cannot beat these professional ribbers,” he said, adding that they’ve added a new addition to the rib vendors. “They’ve got the smoke they’ve got the grills, they’ve got their secret recipes, they’re ribs that you can’t just get in your backyard barbecue. They’re really worth coming down to check out.”

There will be ribs from across North America, including local favorites like Billy Bones from Fort Erie, Boss Hogs from London, and Silver Bullet from Guelph. there will also be barbecue masters from south of the border, including Alabama’s Camp 31 and Uncle Sam’s.

The event raises an average of \$85,000 for the Rotary Club of St. Catharines, which is then donated to initiatives such as the Niagara Children’s Centre and Rotary Park. The Rotary club is asking for donations at the gate to support these initiatives.

“We’ve got major projects in the works,” said Ribfest co-chair Joel Chatterton.

There will be live music playing throughout the festival. Broken Cadence and The Caverners will be playing Friday night.

On Saturday, enjoy Karen Thornton, Leaky Faucet and The Drips, and The Killing Time Band.

There will also be plenty of vendors.

Another highlight is the Hospice Niagara Five-Car Draw, taking place Monday at 6:30 p.m.

“Every year there is always one or two people in the audience who come screaming up to the stage thrilled that they won a new car. You can see it and watch the people run up, so that’s always a lot of fun.”

The organizers are prepared for all kinds of weather. They have plenty of tents and benches to keep rib eaters dry and shaded, rain or shine.

Children can enjoy a bounce on a Niagara inflatable, face painting and crafts.

Chatterton stressed there will be something for everyone.

“There are really two aspects to this rib fest,” he said. “During the day it’s really nice we have live music playing, it’s much more laid back in the afternoon. Once the sun goes down the vibe it gets a little bit more of a party feel.”

You can find more information on the festival at [www.stcatharinesribfest.com](http://www.stcatharinesribfest.com)

Correction: An earlier version of this story stated the Five-Car Draw was taking place Monday at 6:00 p.m.

[atingey@postmedia.com](mailto:atingey@postmedia.com)

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