

Campfire Poets to headline Shelburne's final summer concert at Jack Downing Park

Written By **Sam Odrowski**

Are you looking for something fun to do on the Labour Day long weekend?

The final event for the Town of Shelburne's '6 Fridays in the Park' is coming to Jack Downing Park on Sept. 1, offering families an excellent opportunity to enjoy some quality entertainment before school starts back up.

The event will feature the Campfire Poets at 7 p.m. and the Drew Ripley Balloon Show at 6:15 p.m.

In addition, magician, juggler and comedian Noah Nogueira will be roaming through the crowd, entertaining attendees. Turn it Out Dance Group Studio will also be in attendance, and other activities include caricatures, face painting, interacting with the event's special guest Pikachu, and a vendor's market featuring local businesses.

'It's going to be a really packed evening, and it should be a lot of fun for families,' said Shelburne's economic development officer Carol Maitland.

The 6 Fridays in the Park event series kicked off on June 16, and five events have taken place to date, featuring a variety of performers, including the Jay Kipps Band, Sharon, Lois & Bram, the Boomerang Band and the Sidemen Classical Jazz Band.

Each event has featured music, children's entertainment and community activities.

Shelburne's economic development officer Carol Maitland said past concerts in the event series brought out anywhere from 160 to 240 attendees, and she's anticipating the Campfire Poets show will be no exception.

'This event might attract more [attendees] because they are so popular,' said Maitland. 'I would say of the musical bands that we had had, definitely they would be probably one of our biggest draws.'

The Campfire Poets perform covers of popular music from the 60s to now, with a focus on crowd participating and getting people moving. Some genres they perform include rock, country, dance, reggae and Celtic.

'We wanted a band that would that had a large repertoire [of music], which they do,' said Maitland of why the town booked the Campfire Poets. 'They also play all types of music, and we were trying to have a band that would reach as many people and appeal to as many people as possible.'

Ryan Hancock, manager of the Campfire Poets, said people who come out to the Sept. 1 show can expect 'lots of singing and dancing, with some great music and some laughs.'

The vendor market running alongside the concert will feature crafts, woodwork, food, clothing and unique items.

'There's definitely a nice range of different vendors,' Maitland said. 'We certainly have a lot of new businesses that are making use of the opportunity for a vendor booth, and a lot of them are using the feedback they're collecting from participants to help develop their business plan.'

The Town of Shelburne budgeted \$20,000 to hold the 6 Fridays in the Park event series this year, and the initiative is meant to bring more people to the downtown core.

"This will hopefully encourage people to stop in some of the stores," said Maitland.

She added that the town offers coupons to attendees of the concert series to incentivize attendance and stimulate business downtown.

Looking ahead to 2024, Maitland said it will be up to Shelburne council to budget for the event to take place again next year.

But she noted that it has been very well received and a great success overall.

"The community has been very responsive and very appreciative of the events that are being presented," Maitland noted. "I think the community is hopefully looking forward to more of the same."

She told the Free Press the final event is a great way to cap off the summer while appreciating live music.

"Come out and bring your family and friends," Maitland said. "It's an enjoyable, free evening, with great family entertainment."