

New Food and Music Festival hopes to draw hundreds this weekend

Written By MARNI WALSH

The first ever Family Fun Food and Music Festival, presented by Alethia Stephenson, Max Lewis, and DJ Cool from 102.7 FM, will take place at Fiddle Park in Shelburne this Saturday, August 17. The group says they are anticipating between 500 and 800 guests.

Alethia Stephenson told the Free Press, "The multicultural family event will feature music artists from Shelburne, Barrie, Kitchener, Brampton, Toronto and Montreal." Musical styles at the festival will include Country, Indie Rock, Soft Rock, Pop and Reggae.

The inspiration for the Food and Music Festival came from "the need to have a fun family activity in town that everyone can enjoy without having to leave Shelburne," says Alethia Stephenson.

Ms. Stephenson has lived in Shelburne with her family for the past five years. "When we assessed the size of the park, we realized this was the perfect location to host something that the entire community could get behind and participate in."

A committee began to mobilize with an initial meeting in February, and the group finalized the performer line-up in early summer.

Alethia Stephenson says, "The committee is made up of individuals with different backgrounds and experience." Shelburne resident, Max Lewis, for example "has several years of experience working with entertainers, as well as DJ's and promoters, and he brings a wealth of industry experience to the table." He played a key role, along with DJ Cool, in securing a number of artists for the event, she says.

"DJ Cool, from 102.7FM, is a graduate of McGill University and a multi-award winning radio host who brings 20 years of experience hosting events both on and off the air, as well as working with international and local entertainers," says Ms. Stephenson.

Lead volunteer and activities coordinator, and Shelburne resident, Martina Breunig McLennon, "brings community experience to the table as well as help with marketing and promotions," says Alethia Stephenson. Ms. Stephenson, herself, brings "years of leadership experience to the table to coordinate logistics and planning of the event." Organizers are grateful to their many behind the scenes volunteers, as well as Town staff and Public Works, for all their help.

Musical headliners for Shelburne's newest event include: one of Canada's most engaging musical artists, Dufferin's own award winning and critically acclaimed singer-songwriter Ed Roman. Also on deck, Tasha T., Devon Irie, Elle Trema, Empress Divine, Jimmy Reid, Laza Blaza, Glory Empire, and many more, including local band, Visual Negative. There will be a selection of food trucks on site, from both Shelburne and Toronto, ready to serve hungry patrons, and the event promises a variety of fun activities for children as well.

Alethia Stephenson says the main goal is simply to ensure that everyone has a good time. She says a portion of the funds raised at the Food and Music Festival will be donated to a local charity. Students will have a chance to win a free backpack, compliments of Faith Believers Fellowship, and door prizes will include a LED TV, a gift certificate, and dinner for two.

Organizers invite everyone to "bring a lawn chair and prepare to have fun." The Family Fun Food and Music Festival will take place at Fiddle Park 515677 Dufferin County Road 11 in Shelburne on August 17th from noon until 10 pm. The event is alcohol free and smoke free.

Early bird tickets can be purchased for \$20/person at the following locations: The Town of Shelburne office: 203 Main St. E, Shelburne; Blavish Hair and Beauty Supply: 104 Main St. E, Shelburne; online at Eventbrite.com: Family Fun Food and Music Festival Shelburne 2019; or call Alethia at 647-210-1939. Tickets purchased at the gate on event day are \$30. Children 12 and

under are free. An official after-party will be held at The Dufferin Public House, located at 214 Main Street, starting around 10 pm, August 17th.