

WESTCOTT STREET CULTURAL FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

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25th Annual Westcott Street Cultural Fair Sunday, September 18, 2016

The 25th Westcott Street Cultural Fair -- Sunday, September 18, 2016, 12:30-6:30 p.m., 500 block of Westcott St. -- brings an impressive lineup for fans of local music and dance. Founded by a creative group of neighborhood volunteers over 25 years ago, the Fair's mission continues: to promote a strong sense of community among the diverse people who live and work in the Westcott neighborhood. The WSCF seeks to increase awareness of the attractiveness and viability of Westcott as a great place to live, work, shop, socialize and play.

Twenty-five years ago the future did not look so bright for the Westcott neighborhood. It is hard to believe now, but in 1992 the neighborhood was at risk due to the state of its housing and the changes in the business district. Today the WSCF is still organized by a cadre of volunteers and staffed on the day of the fair of volunteers from Syracuse University, Nottingham High School and the neighborhood.

The Fair kicks-off at noon with a parade down Westcott Street, guided by Grand Marshalls and longtime neighborhood residents Karen Mihali and Dik Cool. Founding WSCF organizer Grace Flusche will also help lead the parade.

This year's WSCF is funded through major sponsorships by businesses such as Alto Cinco, Tupper Property Management, NYS Department of Health, WAER, Andrew Besemer, University Hill Realty and over twenty additional business, individuals and organizations. Grant funding comes from Onondaga County (thanks to County Legislator Linda Ervin), UNSACC (Syracuse University and the City of Syracuse), CNY Arts & Kinney Drugs.

There will be over 120 booths featuring handmade items such as jewelry, hats, pottery, candles, soaps, and clothing. A signature feature of the WSCF is the diverse non-profit groups that have a booth at the fair, from neighborhood organizations such as the WNA (Westcott Neighborhood Association) to causes such as animal rights, reproductive rights, civil rights and the environment; to educational and governmental agencies. The attached list shows all the booths.

Entertainment

The Center Stage, once again sponsored by WAER and located in the Dorian's parking lot on Westcott Street, will feature artists with long ties to the neighborhood and the fair, such as Joe Driscoll, Sophistafunk and the Hoffman Family. Closing out this stage will be Grupo Pagan at 4 pm and last but not least the Blacklites at 5:30 pm.

The Dell Street Stage, sponsored by Tupper Property Management, will feature Earth Jam, Akuma Roots, Jane Zell & the Zelltones Band, Major Player and the Lightkeepers.

Appearing on the Westcott Street Acoustic Stage are Jess Novak; Dana Cooker with a Side of Stantons, Bog Brothers, Chris James and Mama G; All Poets & Heroes; and closing at 5:05 pm, Mountains & Valleys.

The Harvard Dance Stage, located in the community lot in front of the Wacheva Cultural Arts Studio, features a diverse line-up: Drumlife Irish Dancers; Bassett St. Hounds; Thornden Park Morris Dancers; St. Sophia's Greek Dancers; Dance Theater of Syracuse; South Indian classical dance group, La Familia de la Salsa, and a range of performances from Wacheva's own dancers and drummers.

Be sure to swing over to the Beech St. Belly Dance stage near Casa de Cuse (formerly Abdo's). Along with the always-entertaining mix of local belly dancers, this year the stage closes at 4:45 pm with Kambuyu Marimba Ensemble.

The fair has plenty to offer in the way of children's entertainment with hands-on activities all day long near Petit Library. The New York State of Health Kids Stage will showcase a variety of engaging acts, including Savanna Juvanis at 12:30; The McCarthy Family at 1:10, DDI's Beat Squad at 1:50; Open Hand Theater at 3:30 pm, and closing at 4:25, Bells and Motley. Kids' Races will be held at 2:30, with free registration available on-site starting at 12:30. Awards will follow the races.

All performances are free and open to the public. Limited seating will be available at all stages, but fair goers are encouraged to bring their own chairs. Handicapped parking is available as well as parking for bicycles.

For more information about the 2015 Westcott Street Cultural Fair, visit us on the web at <http://www.westcottstreetfair.org> or our Facebook page Westcott Street Cultural Fair.