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New name and two outdoor music concerts are key additions to big “Roar” weekend

Downriver’s longest-running outdoor spectator event is making waves once again. With a new title partner in tow and the addition of two free evening concerts, the **“National City” Roar on the River** is set to bring record crowds to Elizabeth Park in Trenton when it makes its 58th run July 18-20.

Couple that news with the return of the Chrysler Roar over the River Fireworks, the Classic Car Show sponsored by Gorno Ford and the Typhoon Tommy Jet-Ski stunt show, and it quickly becomes apparent that this year’s Roar is destined to be the most action-packed to date.

“We’re extremely excited about our new affiliation with National City as the title partner,” said Paul Jocks, the co-chairman of this year’s event for the Trenton Rotary Club, which will continue to serve as the event’s organizer. “National City has been actively involved in this event as a sponsor and provider of volunteers for several years, so its especially rewarding to see them want to take their commitment to this high level.”

David P. Boyle, president for National City in Michigan, said, “At a time when it is evident that we could all use a little fun in southeast Michigan, we had been looking for opportunities to support and grow with events that benefit our communities by providing a relaxing entertainment venue. National City Roar on the River certainly does that, and most importantly, benefits the valuable work of the Trenton Rotary Club.”

Also joining the National City Roar on the River team this year is WYCD, 99.5 FM, which is presenting the Friday and Saturday night concerts in conjunction with National City and Trenton Rotary.

Friday night’s headliner will be local favorite 50 Amp Fuse. Saturday night’s show will feature up-and-coming national performer Lee Brice, with a featured opening act appearance by Monroe’s Hunter Brucks, a performer and promoter who was a key player in planning the first-time event.

“This is something we’ve been working toward for a couple years now,” Jocks said. “With National City coming on board and with Hunter’s involvement through Meridian Entertainment we’ve got an outstanding lineup of entertainment for our first venture of this nature.”

The major additions have necessitated some other changes to the Roar’s format.

Possibly the biggest change is the move of the Classic Car Show from Saturday to Sunday. The fourth-annual event expects up to 200 competitors/exhibitors and welcomes the return of Gorno Ford as title partner for the third consecutive year.

The changes also will allow for the expansion of “Taste of the Races,” the taste-fest-style event that serves as a kickoff party on Friday night. Last year the event maxed out with 35 participating restaurants. In recent years the restaurants have shared a tent



with a band and a dance floor. Since the Friday and Saturday concerts will be held down by the riverfront in a configuration similar to that used for the annual Jazz on the River each August, the space formerly used by the band and dance floor under the tent will be used for additional restaurants.

“We’re targeting at total of 40 restaurants,” Jocks said. “That will still allow us to spread out the floor plan a little and give people more room to move around.”

For the second straight year, The Chrysler Foundation will join the Roar team as sponsor of the Saturday Fireworks Show, which will get under way about 45 minutes later this year, right after Lee Brice is finished performing at about 10:45 p.m. In years past, many have described the Roar over the River as a 15-minute fireworks finale.

The weekend of outboard hydroplane racing will include a world championship in the 45 SST class and a state championship event in the 120 SST class.

Typhoon Tommy’s daredevil crew will perform during Taste of the Races Friday and at a various times throughout the racing days Saturday and Sunday.

Typhoon Tommy, aka Downriver’s own Tommy Nuttall, travels worldwide to thrill crowds with a wide range of exciting Jet-Ski stunts.

Advance tickets to Taste of the Races are \$40, \$45 on the day of the event. Last year nearly 1,000 visitors were on hand for the event, which was added to the Roar on the River weekend in 2001.

The Taste will run from 6:30-9 p.m. and will be followed immediately by the performance of 50 Amp Fuse. The concert is free and open to the public.

Throughout the weekend, admission to the races and the concerts is free. A \$5 donation is requested for parking inside the park on Saturday and Sunday. Free shuttles will run from nearby locations to facilitate parking.

Saturday’s schedule begins with a pancake and sausage breakfast, sponsored by Boy Scout Troup 1721. It will run from 7 to 11 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday.

Engine testing will take place for both SST classes through the morning before time trials begin at noon for the 45s and 12:40 p.m. for the 120s. Heat races will follow throughout the day, interspersed with appearances by Typhoon Tommy, Rambo Rosie and the rest of the Jet-Ski stunt squad.

The Roar in the Park will takes place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, July 20. Classic cars of all type compete in various classes, with last year’s winning classics dating as far back as a 1929 Ford Roadster-A. It was a virtual trip through automotive history, which included a 1956 Bel Air chosen as Best of Show. A large contingent of classic car buffs and car clubs will converge on Elizabeth Park for the family-friendly event.

While the classic cars look good even sitting still, the boats competing in Sunday’s heat races and world championship will be zipping around the course at speeds in excess of 100 mph with the more powerful SST 120 class.

Keep posted on all the latest news on the National City Roar on the River by visiting www.trentonroarontheriver.com.