

2024 Festa Italiana



From left, Korbyn Howard, Seth Nutt, Karter Howard, Kirbie Nutt, Giuliani Nutt and Kruz Howard pose in their Festa Italian shirts in 2023. COURTESY PHOTO

Food, Festa and Family

By Antjea Wolff
awolff@morningsun.net

FRONTENAC, Kan. — From fried chicken to fried ravioli to French cookies, Festa Italiana is sure to have something for everyone this Saturday.

Exactly 80 groups of people have volunteered their time, funds and cooking skills to make delectable dishes for the thousands of hungry folks that will swarm the Frontenac Sports Complex from 5 to 11 p.m.

These cooks have been working hard for days or weeks to prepare for this event which will feature

more than 70 different appetizing eats.

One of the cooks, Seth Nutt, first became involved in Festa Italiana by volunteering for the planning committee more than 15 years ago.

“When you live in Frontenac, you kind of live and breathe Frontenac,” he said. “So, anything that needs to be done, we get behind and support.”

After spending several years on the committee, Seth Nutt and his family decided to start cooking for the event.

“It’s fun to be a part of this event that celebrates

our town’s heritage,” he said. “And who doesn’t like eating good food, right?”

Nutt said he has been making cheesy tortellini for the event for more than 10 years and making food for Festa Italiana has become a tradition for his family.

On the morning of Festa Italiana, Nutt, his wife, Kirbie, and their children, Korbyn, Karter, Kruz and Giuliani along with Nutt’s parents Dwayne and Lisa, will make cheesy tortellini, spaghetti with butter and garlic sauce and caprese pasta salad to-

gether as a family experience.

Nutt said they use a mix of family and online recipes to create the dishes. He said they have continued to cook the same dishes every year because they are always popular.

“We’re looking forward to having another successful event and bringing the community together to support our students and celebrate Frontenac,” Nutt said.

Seth and his family will serve their delicious noodles in tent two at Festa Italiana.

The list of other cooks, what they are serving and

their location is as follows:

- Tent One:**
- Rick and Jacque Simoncic - Smoked Pulled Pork Sandwich
 - Jordan Simoncic and Marissa Simoncic - Smoked Baked Beans
 - Kevin Fry and Denise Grasso - Cheese Stuffed Manicotti
 - Frontenac Rotary - Polish Sausage, Hot Dogs, Sauerkraut
 - Midwest Medicare Solutions - Lisa Hemby, Bobi O’Neal - Fancy Fruit Salad
 - Laughing Rooster Eats - Chuckie Hessong and Family - Vietti Salad
 - Medicalodge -

Chicken and Noodles

- Dan and Nikki Knaup - Aspy’s Spicy Crackers
- Lindsey Greve - Variety of Cookies
- Sean and Hannah Anderson - Bruschetta
- Shayne and Barry Anderson - Cornflake Cookies
- Barto’s - Fried Chicken

- Tent Two:**
- Seth and Kirbie Nutt - Cheesy Tortellini
 - Korbyn, Karter, And Kruz Howard - Spaghetti w/ Butter Sauce
 - Dwayne and Lisa Nutt - Caprese Pasta Salad
 - JD and Lori

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Festa Italiana turns 25

Staff Reports
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A celebration of history and heritage

For a quarter of a century, the community of Frontenac has celebrated its rich heritage with an event that showcases food. Festa Italiana will take place on Saturday, Sept. 21, in the Raider Sports Complex in Frontenac.

Festa, as it is most often known, is both a celebration of the region's Italian heritage and a fundraiser for the Frontenac Education Foundation.

The centerpiece

of the celebration is the work of about 80 volunteer cooks or teams who prepare homemade specialties. Some of the fare on offer recalls recipes handed down from generation to generation, while others are favorite modern dishes.

Tara Grassie, president of the Frontenac Education Association, also serves as co-chair of Festa Italiana, along with Ann Brown. Grassie said some of the food at the event will be familiar dishes prepared by repeat cooks well known



Residents line up to buy tickets for Festa Italiana 2023. Longtime attendees buy tickets in advance in order to be first in line at their favorite cooks' tables. FILE PHOTO

for their skills. Others will showcase newer and different options.

The variety of foods prepared reflects the reality that while many Frontenac residents may be able to trace their family back to Italy and are per-

fectly comfortable preparing Nona's polenta, other residents have different histories and traditions.

Whatever the cuisine, Grassie said, it all goes quickly. Despite the fact that each of the 80 cooks will prepare 120-300

servings, much of the food is sold out within an hour to 90 minutes after the gate opens at 5 p.m. Longtime participants in Festa buy their tickets in advance so while those who didn't are in the ticket line, they can be first to

get their favorites.

Advance tickets may be purchased at a number of downtown Frontenac businesses, including Raider Express, Pallucca's, the Frontenac City Hall, and Labette Bank - Frontenac.



Festa attendees leave the tents with samples of recipes lovingly prepared by volunteer cooks. COURTESY PHOTO

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Some Festa cooks share treasured family recipes with roots in Italy while others prepare tasty fare with a more American vibe. FILE PHOTO

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SEPTEMBER 21
 RAIDERS SPORTS COMPLEX
 GATES OPEN AT 5:00 P.M.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SEPT. 15, 2024
 7:00 P.M. MARIO'S MARKET SILENT AUCTION OPENS
 - VIRTUAL SILENT AUCTION ON FB

SEPT. 21, 2024
 3:45 P.M. COOKS ARRIVE/CHECK-IN
 5:00 P.M. FOOD SERVICE LINE OPENS
 LIVE MUSIC BY MORGAN ROHR
 5:30 P.M. KID ZONE OPENS (ROTARY PARK)
 6:00 P.M. PERFORMANCES BY:
 - FHS CHOIR
 - FHS BAND
 - FHS CHEER
 - FHS DANCERS
 6:30 P.M. CANNOLI EATING CONTEST
 6:45 P.M. LIVE MUSIC BY MOVIN ON
 7:30 P.M. MARIO'S MARKET SILENT AUCTION CLOSSES
 RAIDER RAMBLE (FIELD #2)

FOOD, LIVE MUSIC, GAMES, KID ZONE, BEER GARDEN, WINE TENT, SILENT AUCTION, DJ

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FESTA

CONTINUED FROM 1C

Simpson - Shrimp Etouffee

• USD 249 Food Service-Julie Engle, Jeanine Standlee, Tiffany Deckard - Cinnamon Rolls

• Emma, Bill, and Christine Call - Dirt Cake

• Dustin and Teresa Franklin - Macaroni and Cheese

• Courtney and Mike McCartney - Lasagna

• Curtiss and Kris Hemby - Alfredo

• Tammy Carrozzo and Emma Fredericks - Fruit Pizza

• Frontenac Education Foundation - Cannolis

• Mike and Heather Relph - Bruschetta

Tent Three:

• Ryan and Delina Stewart - Lasagna

• Kim Froman, Kelly Duffin and Angie Saporito - Polenta and Red Sauce

• Mark and Gena Coomes - Bagna Cauda

• Kale, Korbin and Kyler Coomes - Antipasto

• Gebhardt's Chicken - Fried Chicken

• David and Jackie Fornelli - Cheesy Potatoes

• Frontenac Bakery -David and Cole Robinson - Cinnamon Rolls

• Ryan and Annie Varsolona - Cookies

• Derek, Jamie, and Crew Clayton - 5 Cheese Ziti

• The Lattimer Family-Doug, Jennie, Raygan - Oreo Balls

• Roxy Cramer and Cheryl Hartzfeld - Sausage and

Tortellini Soup

• Maria, Ellie and Remy Thompson - Alfredo Pasta

Tent Four:

• Brandon Wright, Chris Falletti, Syllas Hicks - Meat Ravioli

• Logan Wright, Ann Falletti, Julia Falletti - Braised Pot Roast Rigatoni

• Chris and Jennifer Merando - Fried Ravioli

• Eric and Anna Gudde - Cinnamon Rolls

• Larry, Tracy, and Hunter Lee - Macaroni and Cheese

• Katy Beck, Lilly and Remi Sullivan - Carrot Cake Bars

• Chicken Annie's - Original Fried Chicken

• Ariana Miller and Davyn Miller - Caprese

• Reece Nichols Sunflower Realty Group - Chocolate Chip Cannolis

• Kaitlyn and Nolan Melson - Chocolate Banana Muffins

Tent Five:

• Heather McCully, Chloe McCully, Madison Spaur - Rigatonis

• Rex and Katie Douglas - Sweet and Spicy Bacon Wrapped Chicken Bites

• Charleen Geraghty and April Bunney - Bacon Wrapped Cheesy Jalapenos

• Jennifer Ruth and Shaileen Owens - Gumbo

• Linda Grilz and Theresa Hudson - Bruschetta

• Jenny Snow and Julie Lillich - French Cookies

• Fred, Aiden, and Stanson Lillich - Pasta Salad

• Jason and Pam Clemensen, Bee Wilson - Antipasta



The Nutt Family's cheesy tortellini and spaghetti with butter garlic sauce COURTESY PHOTO

• Landon and Easton Clemensen, Uealene Pingree - Italian Wedding Cake

• Crawford County Democrats - Strawberry Shortcake

• James and Meagan Swafford - Caramel Brownies

• Papa John's Pizza - Pizza

• Lakyn, Greg, and Stacy Sullivan - Chocolate Chip Cookies, Snickerdoodles

• Bill and Erin Sullivan - Carrot Cake

• Amanda and Brady Hill - Cheesy Rigatoni

• Janelle, Lydia and Hattie Pyle - Cake Pops

• Patty Gintner, Debbie Cameron, Joetta Boyd - Gnocchi

• Roger and Brandy Stanley - Pasta Salad

• Pallucca's - Rigatoni and Sausage

• Amanda Boyce and Jeannie Magan - Texas Sheet Cake

• The Winemillers - Pasta Primavera

• Mandy, Dawson and Chester Merando - Farfalle w/ Sausage in Toma-

to Cream Sauce

• Mandy Merando, Emily and Keaton Bolinger - Italian Meatballs

• Jon Merando and Todd Merando - Italian Sausage

• Susie Murray and Janae Coronado - Ravioli

• Karen Johnson, Mary Ellen Zafuta, Kendra Zafuta - French Cookies

• Karlie Zafuta, Hope Zafuta, Abby Johnson - Manicotti

• Brandon Johnson, Karl Zafuta, Nick Zafuta - Kielbasa

• Alex Johnson and Morgan Estrada - Bierocks

• Knights of Columbus - Fried Fish

• Granny's Chip Chocolate Ice Cream - Spumoni Ice Cream



Korbyn Howard, left, takes a break from serving cheesy tortellini at Festa Italiana to pose with Seth Nutt. COURTESY PHOTO

Tent Seven:

• Michela Smith, Waylon Hudson, Glenn Harrison - Italian Parmesan Popcorn

• Stephanie Kotzman, Faith Naccarato - Panzanella Salad

• Bill and Vicki Moody - Cappal ettis

• Mandy, Dawson and Chester Merando - Farfalle w/ Sausage in Toma-

to Cream Sauce

• Mandy Merando, Emily and Keaton Bolinger - Italian Meatballs

• Jon Merando and Todd Merando - Italian Sausage

• Susie Murray and Janae Coronado - Ravioli

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Foundation supports education

Staff Reports

news@morningsun.net

Festa Italiana is a celebration of history and culture, but its overall purpose is to support education in the local public schools. Proceeds from the event provide scholarships for Frontenac High School graduates and other types of financial aid to USD 249 through the Frontenac Education Foundation.

The Frontenac Education Foundation was formed in 1993 by five charter members (Gus Bosetti, Gary Cinotto, Anne Marie Krusic, Dick



Festa features the talents of many Frontenac students including the marching band. FILE PHOTO

Pallucca and Patricia Terlip.) The primary focus at the time was to provide school books to USD 249 and to channel bequest money to scholarships.

Since its beginning, the Foundation has expanded

its efforts substantially. Today, the Foundation has three current charitable areas of focus: awarding student scholarships; funding character development initiatives; and dispersing annual semester

scholarships to every graduate of USD 249.

Over the years, the foundation has awarded more than \$1.2 Million to Frontenac students. In 2023, alone, the foundation:

- Awarded

\$31,200 for semester scholarships for every graduate

• Raised semester scholarships from \$150 per semester to \$200 per semester

• Awarded \$3,500 for service scholarships

- Donated \$504

for National WWI Museum admission fees

• Donated \$5,390 for the purchase of Young Author books for elementary students

• Donated \$4,850 to support FLE for SFA Curriculum

and training

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Beyond the good feeling that comes with helping raise money for scholarships, cooking for Festa brings together families and friends. COURTESY PHOTO



Early arrivals at Festa make a bee line to the tents that feature their favorite fare. COURTESY PHOTO

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