

Embrace Our Bavarian Heritage at Mount Angel's 44th Oktoberfest

The sounds of oom pah pa, the aromas of grilled chicken and sizzling bratwurst, and the cries of prosit herald the arrival of the 44th Annual Oktoberfest in Mount Angel, Oregon. The festival kicks off with a traditional German Webentanz (May pole dance) performed by Mount Angel school children at noon on Thursday, September 17, and continues through Sunday, September 20, 2009.

For four full days, Mount Angel invites its many guests to eat, drink, sing and dance at the Northwest's favorite folk festival. Oktoberfest hours are from 11:00 a.m. to Midnight Thursday through Saturday and from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday

Mount Angel's Oktoberfest began as a traditional fall festival to celebrate the bounty of the earth and the goodness of creation. The Oktoberfest tradition is still going and growing strong; carrying with it the quality, warmth and fun of a community effort unparalleled in the Northwest.

For entertainment, the festival offers Friday and Saturday night street dances, a traditional Biergarten, Weingarten, Kindergarten and family Alpinegarten. Highlights of the 44th Oktoberfest include the "Original Donaumusikanten," a world class Bavarian band, flown directly from Germany by Lufthansa, the official airline of Oktoberfest. The German band plays daily in the Weingarten.

The family Alpinegarten features lively interactive entertainment with a wide variety of Bavarian folk music. Entertaining in the Alpinegarten are Salzburger Echo, an alpine style band, the Al Gruber Bavarian Dance and Show Band, the Greg Meier Quartet and others. The Alpinegarten features superbly crafted beers including Bavaria's famous Spaten, Paulaner and Erdinger beers and select wines.

The Z Musikmakers from Mount Angel – voted one of the best local bands in the Mid-Valley, the Little Bohemian Band and the Canadian Gordanairs entertain in the Weingarten. The Biergarten feature the German band Die Schlauberger, America's number one German Band, the Fabulous Polkatones and other great brassy bands.

Mount Angel's own village band plays at the opening ceremonies and every day from the bandstand. Enjoy the fabulous sounds of Master Yodeler Kerry Christensen. The Gordanaires, a German-Canadian band from Vancouver, BC, play and perform fabulous alpine folk songs and dances each afternoon at the Bandstand and evenings in the Weingarten.

Oktoberfest is great fun for the youngsters as well, according to Vice President Bill Bischoff, Director of Youth Activities. The Kindergarten features a 4H-petting farm, inflatable slides and

other amusements. The Kindergarten Pavilion features Family Fun Follies with magician Arthur Atsma and Rhys Thomas. And, by all means do not miss our newest festival event – the great Wiener Dog Races. This is a wonderful spot to spend some quality time with the kids and it is all free.

Oktoberfest attracts many serious shoppers to its large arts and crafts show featuring more than 120 juried crafters and artisans from Oregon and throughout the northwest. fifty non profit organizations offer a wide variety of ethnic and regional foods from their charmingly decorated little alpine food chalets. Each chalet takes a great deal of pride in preparing their succulent sausages, pastries and other delicacies to the delight of all who come to Mount Angel for its festival.

The festival offers men's and Coed's softball, golf and volleyball tournaments, a high school football classic and more. A 5 and 10 kilometer road race on Saturday starts from Humpert Park at 10:00 a.m.

The Cruz-n Car Show on Saturday and Sunday is actually two shows in one. It features 100 classy vehicles on Saturday and a whole new group on Sunday. More than 25 awards will be presented each day. The award winners from Saturday will be back on Sunday and on display in the 'Winners Circle.'

Die Fruchtsaeule is a traditional harvest monument constructed of seeds, fresh fruits, nuts and vegetables. It is located in the center of the festival area and is a great place to meet and gather up your family and friends.

Since it began 44 years ago, Oktoberfest has donated over 2 million dollars to schools, church groups, civic organizations, youth activities, senior services, hospitals, and a score of other worthwhile causes. This does not include money earned by food booths, each sponsored by civic, charitable and non-profit organizations. For most of these groups Oktoberfest is their major fund raising project of the year.

The diversity of events scheduled and the uniqueness of Mount Angel and its surrounding countryside promises something to do and see for everyone. You will not find any better food, entertainment, or dancing in the Northwest.

For more information, visit Oktoberfest at www.oktoberfest.org.