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Tomato Festival Adds "Vines" to the Mix

he Tomato Festival is now the Tomato & Vine Festival. After 28 years, the Tomato Festival is evolving to better reflect Fairfield's major cash crop — grapes! While tomatoes will always be the star, the Festival will also begin featuring wine and wine-related vendors. To phase in our local wine-country, wines from both Suisun and Green Valley will be featured at both Beer & Wine Gardens. Look for our enhanced wine garden experience!

Today, few local growers are producing Heirloom Tomatoes and the Main Street Association has struggled to source enough tomatoes to supply the Festival the past few years. While there may not be as many varieties this year, tomatoes will certainly be plentiful at the Tomato Marketplace, which will also feature other produce.

To celebrate the love of the vine, visitors can purchase tickets to the VIP Wine, Food & Brew event at the Solano County Events Center. Hosted by the Fairfield Suisun Chamber of Commerce, this event usually sells out. Tickets are \$50 and are available at www.FairfieldSuisunChamber.com.

As always, the Tomato Festival will offer free tomato samples at the Heirloom Marketplace, located at Texas and Jackson Street. Luigi's famous Tomato Jam, Bloody Mary's, tomato ice cream, and of course the tomato eating contests are all still a big part of the Festival. This year, visitors will also enjoy grape samples!

The Tomato Recipe Competition is hosted by II Fiorello Olive Oil Company. Contestants can compete in four categories including; sauces, soups, salads, and salsas. Entry information is available at www.IIFirorello. com. Next year's cooking competition will also include "vines", featuring produce that grows on vines.

Tomato & Vine Festival souvenirs are available at the Fairfield Main Street information booth located near Texas and Webster Street. Tee shirts, bobble headbands, and wine glasses are always a big hit. Come check out the new Tomato & Vine artwork!

Plans for next year's Tomato & Wine Festival will begin immediately following this year's festival so if you'd like to share your input, please message the Fairfield Main Street Association at info@ FairfieldMainStreet.com. Volunteers are always needed and very much appreciated.



















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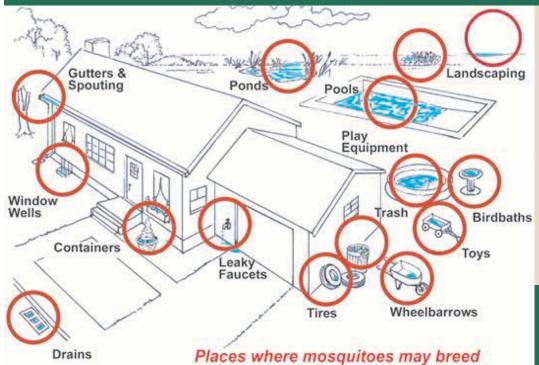
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Tomato Cooking Competition at Il Fiorello Olive Oil Company

olks who like to participate in the annual salsa recipe contest will have a chance to compete in four categories this year. The Tomato Festival Cooking Competition will be hosted at II Fiorello Olive Oil Company at 10 a.m. on Saturday, August 17.

Contestants can enter their original recipes for sauce, salad, salsa, and soup. There are two divisions this year — Junior and Adult. Finalists will attend the awards presentation at 3 p.m. on Sunday, August 18 at the Tomato Festival, located at the Jefferson and Texas Street Stage. Cash prizes in both divisions will be awarded for all 4 categories; First place wins \$60, second place wins \$40, and third place wins \$20. All finalists will also receive a Commemorative Tomato Festival Tee Shirt.

Please remember that the salsa recipe contest will not take place at the Tomato Festival this year. Participants will compete at Il Fiorello Olive Oil Company located at 2625 Mankas Corner Road, Fairfield, 94534.

Entry deadline is Friday, August 16 at 5 p.m. Entry forms and contest rules are available online at www.FairfieldMainStreet. com or in person at Il Fiorello Olive Oil Company.



















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Tomato Festival Over the Years

By Margaret Manzo

It seems like yesterday when I took the helm of the Fairfield Main Street Association and experienced producing my first Tomato Festival. What a whirlwind! Now 9 years later, I'm having a blast coordinating the festival with our dedicated Event Manager, Yolanda (Yolie) Ramirez. With a staff of two and nearly 100 volunteers, the Tomato Festival is truly a labor of love. We love that the festival is free to all. We love that we can provide a safe, family-friendly environment for the community to gather. And we love the attention that the Festival brings to downtown Fairfield.

Current Board President, Mike Aliscad, also appreciates the influx of visitors to downtown Fairfield. "As a business owner

in downtown, I love the crowds that these special events attract.

Back in 1991, Laura Cole (Rowe) was the Executive Director for what was then known as the Downtown Improvement District. Laura shared some of the details about how the Tomato Festival came to be. "The downtown had finished its renovation and in 1991 we had a huge celebration; and the board wanted another huge event in addition to the annual craft fair we held back then. It was meant to draw foot traffic, but also to celebrate the tomato. After doing some research, we also found out that tomatoes were the #1 crop for Solano County, came up with the Tomato Festival."

Emily Lowe participated in the festival for many years both as a volunteer and later

as staff. "I was especially happy with the coverage we received in 2006 and 2007 with the Travel Channel and Eye on the Bay. It was really exciting to host a national film crew and wait and wait and wait until the episode broadcast on local television. The two television programs gained lots of regional attention for our little tomato party and established the festival as a destination event for many Bay Area guests".

Interim City Manager, Sean Quinn has been joining the fun for many years. In fact, Sean was at the very first Tomato Festival! Whether he's chopping tomatoes or judging one of our competitions, you will find Sean pitching in to help. Several City Council Members have also Joined in the fun as well. And you can always find city staff helping

us chop free tomato samples all weekend long. It's hard work and we could not do this without their help!

So here we are in the 28th year. The Tomato Festival draws crowds of up to 25,000 visitors to the downtown area. While this is a fantastic family-friendly event, the hope is that festival goers will notice the unique shopping, international dining, and professional services that make downtown so special. The mission is to expose more people to the district, which in turn will increase business downtown. We ask that visitors take a few minutes to visit all of the great new shops and restaurants that have opened recently and come back after the festival to explore downtown Fairfield.





Emily Low with film crew.



Eye on the Bay Host, Liam Mayclem interviews Sean Quinn.



Duane Kromm, John DeLorenzo, and Sean Quin chop tomatoes.



Schedule of Activities & Entertainment Saturday, August 17th

11:00am - 7:00pm: Tomato Market (Jackson & Texas St)

Free samples of Heirloom tomatoes and other gourmet delights. A wide array of tomatoes available for purchase at Jackson Street intersection.

11:00am - 7:00pm: Grape Stomp Experience (Jackson & Texas Street)

Jump in the wine barrel for a fun photo-op!

11:00am - 7:00pm: Wine Grape Sampling (Vintique Marketplace, 735 Texas)

Free samples of wine grapes, honey, and jams.

3:00 – 6:00pm: VIP Wine, Food, and Brew – Hosted by the Fairfield Suisun Chamber of Commerce Tickets available at the door: \$50.00 each. Solano County Events Center. 601 Texas Street.

11:00am - 7:00pm: Kid's Zone

Water Ball Walkers, Pony Rides, Petting Zoo, Bungee Jumper, Zippy Pets, and more! Located at Jefferson & Texas Street

2:00 - 2:45pm: Tomato Eating Contest

Participants face-off in 3 categories: Children, Men, and Women. See how fast you can eat 3 delicious Heirloom tomatoes! Jefferson & Texas Street

Live Music at the Madison Beer & Wine Garden (Texas & Madison Street)

11:00am - 1:30pm: The Desert Moon Band (Country)

1:30 - 4:30pm: Hey Jude (Classic Rock)

5:00 - 7:00pm: The Fender Benders (Blues/Swing)

Live Music at the Webster Beer & Wine Garden (Texas & Webster Street)

11:00am - 1:30pm: Delbert Bump (Latin Jazz)

2:00 - 4:30pm: Matt Applin & the Midnite Band (R&B/Motown)

5:30 - 7:00pm: The Moon Cats (Oldies/Classic Rock)

Community Performances (Jefferson & Texas)

11:00am - 11:45am: DJ Music

12:00pm - 1:30pm: Danc-Sing Stars Studio Show 3:00pm - 3:45pm: Sass'ay Belly Dance Troupe

4:00pm - 5:00pm: TBA 5:30pm - 7:00pm: DJ Music



Schedule of Activities & Entertainment Sunday, August 18th

12:00pm - 5:00pm: Tomato Market (Jackson & Texas St)

Free samples of Heirloom tomatoes and other gourmet delights. A wide array of tomatoes available for purchase at Jackson Street intersection.

12:00pm – 5:00pm: Grape Stomp Experience (Jackson & Texas Street)

Jump in the wine barrel for a fun photo-op!

12:00pm – 5:00pm: Wine Grape Sampling (Vintique Marketplace, 735 Texas)

Free samples of wine grapes, honey, and jams.

12:00pm - 5:00pm: Kid's Zone

Water Ball Walkers, Pony Rides, Petting Zoo, Bungee Jumper, Zippy Pets, and more! Located at Jefferson & Texas Street

2:00 - 2:45pm: Tomato Eating Contest

Participants face-off in 3 categories: Children, Men, and Women. See how fast you can eat 3 delicious Heirloom tomatoes! Jefferson & Texas Street

3:00 - 3:30pm: Tomato Cooking Competition Awards

Winners announced from the cooking competition held at II Fiorello Olive Oil Company. Come by and cheer for the winners!

Live Music at the Madison Street Beer & Wine Garden (Texas & Madison Street)

12:00 - 2:00pm: Outta-Kontrol (Today's Hits) 2:30 - 5:00pm: Bautista Band (Latin Jazz)

Live Music at the Webster Street Beer & Wine Garden (Texas & Webster Street)

12:00 - 2:00pm: Notes of Choice (Jazz)

2:30 - 5:00pm: 5 0' Clock Somewhere (Classic Rock)

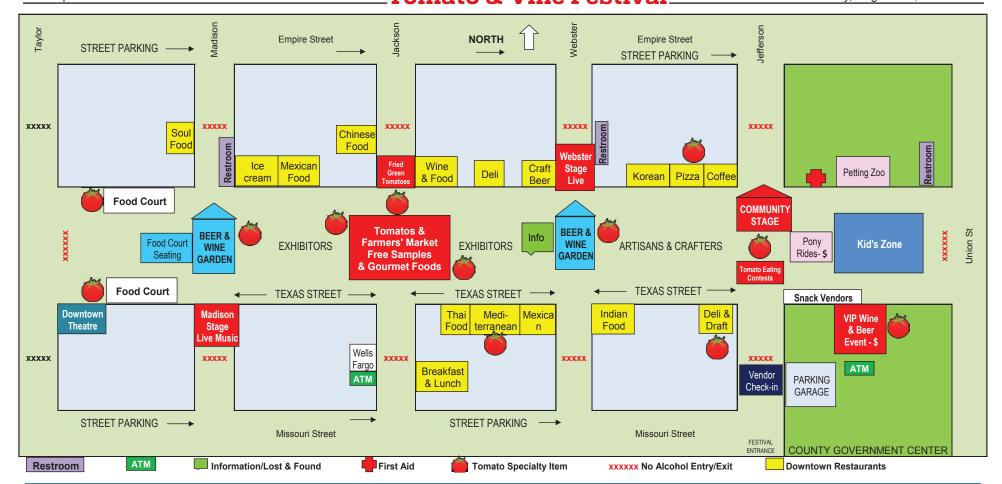
Community Performances (Jefferson & Texas)

12:00pm -1:30pm: Danc-Sing Stars Studio Show

3:00pm - 3:30pm: Recipe Contest Awards

3:30pm - 4:00pm: Folklorico Dancers

4:00pm - 4:30pm: DJ Music



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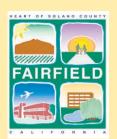
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Did you know that the Tomato Festival is the only free event of its kind in the area? Most festivals charge an admission and parking fee. We're determined to keep our Festival free and thanks to our sponsors, we can!





















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Main Street Board of Directors All Have Fairfield Roots!



Fairfield Main Street Association Board of Directors left to right; Erin Steiger, Mario Antuna, Mike Aliscad, Brian Tubis, Harry Pettersen.

hey say that many hands make light work. Well, it doesn't take too many hands when it comes to the Fairfield Main Street Board of Directors. This small core group of volunteers are always ready to step in and help whenever and wherever needed. Especially when it comes to the Tomato & Vine Festival.

President, Mike Aliscad is the owner of The Spot Gift and Flower Center and is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to marketing and promotion. As an active member of the Promotions Committee, Mike always has great ideas to help attract visitors to downtown. Mike is also Chair of the Economic Vitality Committee, which supports

fellow downtown business owners. Look for Mike's booth during the Festival nearby his shop at 720 Texas Street.

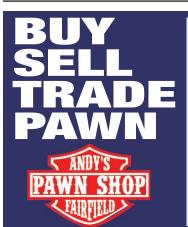
Vice President, Mario Antuna joined the Association because he wanted to part of improving our downtown. As Chair of our Design Committee, Mario puts his talents as a Realtor with Lions Gate Real Estate to work. The eyes of a Realtor are essential when recruiting new businesses to locate downtown. Mario spend much of his time patrolling the downtown area noting any issues of blight or beatification opportunities. Mario has been awarded the "Chill Trophy", as he always stays cool and calm during our crazy Tomato Festival setup!

Treasurer, Brian Tubis, is a Family Law Attorney with Mattice Law Offices on Jefferson Street. Brian is Chair of our Promotions Committee and serves doubleduty as the Board Treasurer. Brian is our vendor go-to guy. He helps chalk the vendor spaces and mans the vendor check-in booth during the festival. Just don't trust him with the keys to the golf cart!

Local resident, Erin Steiger, is our trusted Secretary. Erin is a lifelong Fairfieldian and is devoted to helping improve downtown Fairfield. You will find Erin managing the tomato chopping and sampling area during the Festival. Erin's enthusiasm and energy are the perfect addition to the Board.

Longtime downtown business owner, Harry Pettersen of Harry's Sportsman Lounge is our newest board member and has been a wonderful addition. Harry has joined the Design Committee and has adopted the 800 block of Texas Street keeping an eye out for any potential issues. More eyes looking out for our downtown is a huge help!

This Board of Directors certainly contributes a unique mix of knowledge and skills to help to make our mission possible. In fact, we have two board seats open if you think you might like to join the team. Just remember our motto; We welcome all ideas and suggestions. We look forward to hearing how you plan to implement them!



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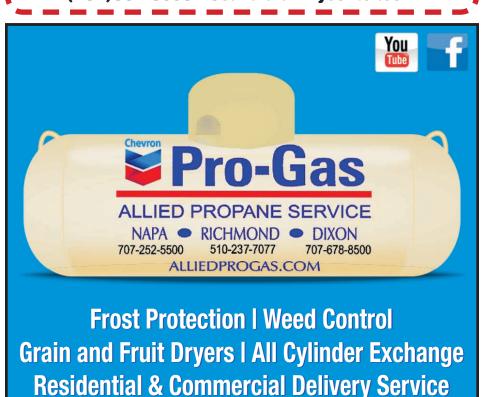
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Meet the Main Street Team



Left to right Yolanda Ramirez, Mayor Harry T. Price, Margaret Manzo.

t might surprise some folks that the Tomato & Vine Festival is produced by a nonprofit organization. The Fairfield Main Street Association is managed by a small staff of two who believe in doing big things.

Executive Director, Margaret Manzo has been overseeing this Festival for the past 9 years. "It's truly a labor of love. After all the hard work, seeing the smiling visitors all weekend makes everything worthwhile" says Manzo.

Event and Program Manager, Yolanda Ramirez, manages the vendors and amusement rides along with a million other details. Planning and attention to detail are what keeps the festival running smoothly and Yolanda is the master planner.

She recalls one time things didn't go as planned; "No matter how much we plan and prepare, there are always little surprises. One year, all the tables loaded with tomatoes collapsed into a giant pile because the ground was too soft. It was a near-disaster!"

Disasters aside, this team keeps smiling and does their best to ensure visitors enjoy the festival. And attracting visitors to the downtown area is the main goal. As a business Association, the mission is to continually draw crowds to the business district.

The Main Street Association also produces the Taste of Downtown & Restaurant Week, the Independence Day Parade, the Veterans Day Parade, Small Business Saturday, and the Christmas Tree Lighting & Holiday Festivities. The Association is busy planning a new "Spirit Stroll" event this fall. Visitors can enjoy cocktails and mocktails at various downtown locations. There will also be costume contest and cooking competition. Stay tuned for more details.

With a staff of two, volunteers are the true key to success. If you enjoy seeing these fun events in downtown Fairfield, you may be just the person to join the Promotions Committee. It only takes a few hours a month to make a big impact. Please contact us at info@fairfielmainstreet.com. Join the fun!

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