



Barbecue Again The Highlight For Osage City's Smoke In The Spring Friday And Saturday

"There's going to be lots of smoke in the air."

At least that'll be the case Friday and Saturday at Jones Park in Osage City.

"It's the 14th annual Smoke in the Spring State Barbeque Championship, April 7 and 8, with a full slate of activities for everybody. But, good eating of the most distinctive smelling gourmet will be the highlight for most," announced Corey Linton, event coordinator, dedicated enthusiast and director of the Osage City Parks & Recreation, official sponsor.

"Over the past 13 years, the Smoke in the Spring has expanded into one of the premier barbecue contests in the Midwest attracting teams and judges from 20 states as far away as Hawaii," Linton pointed out.



Smoke in the Spring is sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbecue Society (KCBS), and designated as a state championship offering more than \$15,000 in prize money.

Advertised on The BIG 94.5 Country, and promoted on WIBW, Country Legends 106.9, WibwNewsNow, and the Kansas Agriculture Network, Smoke in the Spring will feature a live remote broadcast of The BIG 94.5 Country with renowned morning show personality Jim Daniels.

Osage City's annual barbecue celebration promises to continue being the premier contest in Kansas, with 105 teams signed up to compete, making it two years in a row with more than 100 teams. "We are affectionately known now as the Little Royal," Linton said.

Smoke in the Spring got its start in 2003, and has gradually gained competitors every year since then. This year's competitor limit had been set at 120.



Corey Linton_ director of the Osage City Parks _ Recreation_ is organizer for the Smoke in the Spring state championship barbecue competition and related activities Friday and Saturday_ April 7-8_ at Osage City.

"Osage City has created a signature barbecue event for teams and judges, and a community event Osage City and the entire Osage County can support and embrace," Linton said. "Our goal is to annually offer participants, judges, sponsor and the public the very best barbecue competition possible."

In addition to selection of grand and reserve grand champions, there'll be winners in chicken, ribs, pork butt and brisket divisions, including Cook's Choice, Dessert, and

two Kids-Q Divisions.

While barbecue is the feature, the Taste of Osage City offers the chance for everyone to get a taste of what's cooking. "Everybody is invited to this special Friday evening sampling showcasing the barbecued meats from Smoke in the Spring, beginning at 5 o'clock," Linton explained.

A Kids-Q contest is planned at 5:30, Friday, with "dessert" to be the category this year. There'll be inflatable bounce houses for kids up to 14, and a live band, the Just Passin' Through, featuring country and rock and roll music, will entertain at the parks and recreation building beginning at 8 o'clock. There's no charge for the music, dancing and bouncing.

Along with competitors from nine states will come some top guns in the barbecue circuit, vying to rack up points with wins early in the barbecue season at Smoke in the Spring.

Registered to compete this year are teams such as the reigning Smoke in the Spring Grand Champion and the 2016 KCBS Team of the Year.

"Last year, 49 of the 112 teams we had in Osage City went on to win grand champion, reserve champion, or class champion titles," Linton said.

"We not only have a large group of teams, but the quality of teams is outstanding," he added.

The cooker coming the furthest distance to compete at Smoke in the Spring is Scott Richardson from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

While the public is not involved in the competition on Saturday, all are welcome to walk through the park and observe the cookers at work, being mindful that a competition is going on and the competitors should not be disturbed or interfered with.

As the competition is going on, the barbecue celebration continues in downtown Osage City with the Cruis'n and Cook'n Car Show, in its 12th year in conjunction with Smoke in the Spring.

Entries in the show in the past have exceeded 200 antique and classic cars, trucks, vans along with street rods, rat rods, and motorcycles. The show is free for spectators, who are invited to bring their lawn chairs and enjoy the day in downtown Osage City.

There will also be a "Young Eagles Rally" at Osage City Airport, Saturday morning, April 8, 9 o'clock until noon, where kids eight to 17, fly free. The event is sponsored by the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1535. "Everyone is invited to visit the airport," Linton welcomed.

Information is available at www.smokeinthespring.com, or at Smoke in the Spring's Facebook Page.

Padre Says:

"The question is not whether we will barbecue, but how we will barbecue?"



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Frank J. Buchman
Marketing Consultant

Direct: 785-228-7259 Cell: 785-499-3063

E-mail: frank.buchman@wibwradio.com
Website: www.frankjbuchman.com

PO Box 1818
1210 SW Executive Drive, Topeka, Kansas 66615

