

## 2021 SCHULENBURG FESTIVAL PRESS RELEASE

After a break last year due to the pandemic, the Schulenburg Festival is back on, and everyone is invited! The annual event, also known as “The National Party of Texas”, will be held on August 5<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>, with most events taking place in Wolters Park in Schulenburg.

“It was really tough last year, having to cancel the Festival only a month before the event,” says longtime President Michael Zweschper. “The Festival Directors work year-round to throw a party worthy to be called ‘The National Party of Texas’, so it was hard for us to call things off. We are so happy that we can hold the Festival this year, and we want everyone to come join us all weekend.”

This year’s Festival will look pretty much like it has in prior years, with live music throughout the weekend, two nights of rodeo action, and all the usual other activities: cook-offs, reunions, arts & crafts vendors, Sunday parade, kiddie parade and tricycle races, fun run, a carnival, and golf, basketball, and softball tournaments.

Headlining Friday’s entertainment is “Little Texas”, who were part of the Young Country movement of the early 1990’s. They have sold over 7 million albums, and received 3 Grammy nominations plus honors from both the Academy of Country Music (Vocal Group Of The Year) and the Country Music Association (Album Of The Year). Most country music fans are familiar with their hits, which include “God Blessed Texas”, “Kick a Little”, “What Might Have Been”, “Amy’s Back in Austin”, “My Love”, “Kick a Little”, and “First Time for Everything”.

Closing out Friday night is Kolby Cooper, who has been taking the Texas country music scene by storm. Growing up near Palestine, Texas, this East Texas 22-year-old has been writing his own music for years. He just announced his first major label signing, with Broken Bow Music Group/Wheelhouse Records, in partnership with Combustion Music. His songs have had millions of downloads on Spotify and he’s been touring all over the country to packed venues.

Saturday’s headliner is an edgy Texas-country group called “Shane Smith & the Saints”. This group has been selling out shows all across Texas, and spreading their unique brand of music all over the country. Their spirited, four-part harmony has hints of folk, rock, country and Americana and will definitely get your toes tapping.

And the Festival wouldn’t be complete without perennial Festival favorite, “Texas Unlimited Band”(TUB). “They are such a big part of what we do every year that we have named them ‘The Official Band of the National Party of Texas’”, according to Festival Treasurer Nicole Michalke. “I am amazed at how they can engage a crowd, mixing up songs, moving from Bon Jovi to George Strait, to current pop, country, and Texas-country hits, and then zooming back to a song from the 80s. And they are continually learning new songs to stay current.” Make sure you check out their two sets on Saturday night, and then again on Sunday evening.

The Festival welcomes “The Telstars” back to the National Party of Texas stage on Sunday afternoon. “We couldn’t be more excited about having the Telstars back,” says Michalke. “They haven’t been here since 2015 and we are more than ready to see our local guys on our stage again. And Sunday afternoon is the perfect time for their performance—lots of oldies, polkas, songs that everyone knows. I just love to watch the Sunday afternoon crowd as there is such variety, including families, old friends, just a feel-good time.”

Friday’s opening act is Pauline Reese. This Queen of Texas music has been nominated for a Grammy, released six full albums, and recorded two duets with Willie Nelson. Twice-named Entertainer of the Year in Texas, she has earned several other accolades, and has opened for national acts like Merle Haggard, John Cougar Mellencamp, and Tanya Tucker.

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Rodeo fans can look forward to two nights of full CPRA/UPRA rodeo action, with 8 events (bareback riding, bull riding, saddle bronc riding, breakaway, steer wrestling, barrel racing, team roping, and tie down), at the arena in Wolters Park. The rodeo starts at 7:30 pm each night.

Gate admission for all activities is \$20 for Friday night, and also \$20 on Saturday evening after 5 pm. Admission on Sunday is free, and there is no charge to enter the park before 5 pm on Saturday. There are no presale tickets this year. Also, there is no admission charge for children 12 and under at any time.

The Festival cook-offs will be back as well. Cooks can show off their skills in the chili, BBQ, beans, and bloody Mary contests. The Festival includes both CASI and IBCA-sanctioned chili and BBQ competitions, for cooks wishing to earn points in those areas, and also local contests open to everyone.

Sunday's parade through downtown Schulenburg to Wolters Park is a "can't-miss" event. The parade usually has 60-70 entries, including beautiful floats from area towns, comical entries, class reunion floats, patriotic and musical entries, fire trucks, and the ever-popular Shriners attractions.

Young Festival attendees can enter the ever-popular kiddie parade and the tricycle races, and can visit the carnival for rides and other activities.

An integral part of the Festival from its very beginning are the Class Reunions, which will all be held under the Pavilion this year. Classes whose reunions were canceled last year are invited to have a "makeup" reunion this year if they wish.

Thursday night, August 5<sup>th</sup>, is considered the "pre-party" night with Rodeo slack, carnival rides, and free live music from the area band "Southbound 955". Admission is free on Thursday for the music and Rodeo. Food and drinks will be available as well.

Detailed information, including entry forms, is available on the Festival website: [www.schulenburgfestival.org](http://www.schulenburgfestival.org). The Festival also has active Facebook and Instagram pages to keep everyone up to date.

The Directors of the Schulenburg Festival are hoping people will come out and enjoy themselves all weekend. "From what we're seeing in the national and state news about record travel patterns, and what we've seen at our local church picnics, it looks like people are ready to get out and about, to see their family and friends, to make up for lost time when everything was shut down", according to Michalke.

"Not having the Festival last year definitely hurt us in terms of contributing to our community, so we are wanting to make some money for Schulenburg by throwing a great party. We invite everyone to come out for a great time," adds Zweschper.

In the immortal words of 2004 Festival headliner Robert Earl Keen, "The road goes on forever, and the party never ends". The National Party of Texas may have had a break in 2020, but the party hasn't ended in Schulenburg. Come on over!