

## Little Ridgeway will play host to big crowd this weekend with return of popular summer festival.

LISA RIND/Bullet News

RIDGEWAY – A feast of pancakes, a street party, the largest game of musical chairs you have ever seen – it must be time for the Ridgeway Summer Festival .

The festival is an annual event held in the downtown core of picturesque Ridgeway that features good food, good music, and fun times.

The event runs two days, July 6-7, and has been an annual event since 1990.

This year's festival will offer visitors the chance to take in Ridgeway's latest improvements: The Ridgeway Village Square, next to the Friendship Trail, was completed near the end of May.



Ridgeway Summer Festival.

Some of the highlights of the square include a pavilion designed with a railway station theme to pay homage to the old railway station that existed on the site, a splash pad, giant chessboard, chalkboards and benches.

A focal point for the town, the square will have decorative paving, a gateway feature and landscape design.

Tom Kuchyt, the director of infrastructure for the Town of Fort Erie, says this is the last piece of the puzzle in the revitalization of downtown Ridgeway.

"This is an area for people to enjoy downtown. It will be a focus area that people can gather or even a place to stop after shopping at the market."

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During the weekend, the new square makes a good meeting place for friends and families to rejoin one another after attending various events. It will also play host to a church service on Sunday at 8 a.m. and the Ned Green show Sunday at 2:30 p.m. (bring a chair).

The Fire Guy is a popular attraction at Ridgeway Summer Festival, happening this weekend in downtown Ridgeway. (Bullet News file photo)

You won't leave this festival hungry. Both Saturday and Sunday, join the Ridgeway Lions Club for a pancake breakfast, 8 a.m. to noon, in the entertainment tent at the corner of Ridge Road and Cutler Street.

Opening ceremonies, presented by the Ridgeway BIA, begin at 9 a.m. July 6. The two days are packed with things to see and do:

On Saturday, there's a giant garage sale running 9 a.m. to noon in front of the Prudential offices at 318 Ridge Rd. See the birds of prey display put on by the Bert Miller Nature Club, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the front lawn of RBC at the corner of Ridge and Dominion roads. Visit the psychic fair and wellness expo, presented by the Ridgeway Lioness and Lions, also running 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Sanctuary for the Arts at 309 Ridge Rd.

That seems like a lot for one day – but there's more, from constant entertainment and great music, to children's activities; an Artfest event; the kiddie train rides and one of the largest musical chairs games you'll ever see. For youth ages four through 12, the game takes place at 1 p.m. Saturday and Sunday in the kids' tent area, on Ridge Road north of Dominion. Following that, kids can stick around to play Simon Says – and both games offer prizes to the winners.

Don't forget about the vendors: This year's festival offers more than 60 vendors to visit, from sweet treats to crafts and jewellery and even local services.

As Saturday wanes, plan to attend the street dance, happening from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the main stage on Cutler Street. A big event all on its own, the Crystal Beach Kinsmen Club present live bands, food and a beer tent, so visitors can party 'til Sunday arrives.

Sunday morning brings a non-denominational church service presented by the

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Community of Churches, outdoors at 8 a.m. at the new village square pavilion, next to the Friendship Trail.

The events continue with more demonstrations, entertainment and fun all day, until the final bands – Oracle (1:30 p.m.) and Steve Burnside & The Marquis (3:30 p.m.) on the main stage – finish performing at approximately 5 p.m.

The historical shops of Ridgeway normally have huge sales during the festivities – and don't forget about the weekly farmer's market, running Saturdays from 7 a.m. to noon, also located in the downtown area at the municipal parking lot at the Friendship Trail. This is a registered pure farmer's market specializing in local farm-fresh produce . The vendors here are all local to Niagara, so if you are a follower of the 100-mile diet, it's a great place to shop.

For more information on Ridgeway Summer Festival events, visit the website [www.ridgewayont.ca](http://www.ridgewayont.ca).