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Cinco De Mayo Set For Saturday

"This is a fun family event that the whole community can enjoy," said Lupe Ontiveros, the chair of Liberal's 10th Annual Cinco de Mayo Celebration committee, which is sponsored by the Liberal Area Chamber of Commerce. "We have always viewed it as being more than a Hispanic event. It's a great way to bring everyone together and just have fun. So please plan to join us on Saturday, May 4."

The event will kick off with a downtown Liberal parade at 7 p.m. and a full schedule of activities and booths at the activity center from 8 to 11 p.m. "We've got great entertainment and we also have some special activities and games to keep the kids involved," Ontiveros said.

With a Kansas Sampler hitting on the same weekend, the decision was made to schedule the parade and the festival on Saturday night so that participants could enjoy both events. "Last year, we had events on both Saturday and Sunday and it really was too much with the Kansas Sampler. This year, we decided to focus on Saturday," Ontiveros said.

The Cinco De Mayo Parade will start at 7 p.m. Saturday, May 4, from with the lineup across the street from Light Park at 6:30 p.m. The parade will proceed down Kansas Avenue to the Depot. Parade entries are free and businesses, schools, churches, unique vehicles, non-profits and civic organizations are invited to enter their floats or vehicles. Groups may still join the parade without prior registration but must show up by 6:30 p.m. to be included.

There will be cash prizes for the parade winners. First place will win $200, second will take home $100 and third will receive $50. Winners will be announced at the Seward County Activity Center. Parade forms are available at the Chamber office, 4 Rock Island Road, or call the office at 624-3855.

At the activity center, the winner of the Cinco de Mayo Queen contest will be announced. Four young women are vying for Cinco de Mayo Queen, including Diana Gomez, Misty Grijalva, Celestina Padilla and Vanessa Nunez.

The queen candidates are selling donation tickets at $2 apiece and possible prizes include an I-Pad, game console, and Dr. Dre Beats. The one who raises the most scholarship money wins. The raffle tickets will be drawn during the Cinco de Mayo activities.

In addition to the Cinco de Mayo Queen, this year there will be a Cinco de Mayo Princess. The pageant is open to young women between the ages of 0 to 14 with different age categories available. Cash prizes will be awarded. Registration for the event will be held from 3 to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 4, at the Seward County Activity Building. The Pageant will start at 4:30 p.m. after registration closes. For more information, contact Kristine Brady at 620-626-0837 or 785-770-2139 for more information.

The festivities will begin at 8 p.m. at the Seward County Activity Center. Booth space is still available. While the cost is $25 for businesses, $125 for food trucks, it is free to non-profits. "This is a great opportunity for a non-profit to have a fund raiser and reach a large crowd," said Ontiveros. Booth forms are available at the Chamber office, 4 Rock Island Road, or call the office at 624-3855.

This year, National Carriers will be giving away free child booster seats at their booth and the Seward County United Way will be sponsoring a food drive. "For every can or box of non-perishable food donated, the donor will get a ticket for some prizes we have donated. We will

hold the drawing before the festival ends. The food will be added to the Post Office Food Drive that will be held the next Saturday," said Kay Burtzloff, director of the Seward County United Way.

This year there will be a "Best Dressed Dog Contest" which will be open to any dog under 25 pounds. "Last year we had the Best Dressed Chihuahua Contest but we heard that there were a lot of dog owners out there who felt left out. We decided to open it up to any well-dressed small dog," Ontiveros said. The judging will be at 8 p.m. on the lawn of the activity center. There will be plaques and prizes for the winners.

For those who have the stomach for it, there is the Jalapeno Eating Contest, with first place $100, second place $75 and third place $50.

The entertainment at the event will include performances by 10-year-old singer Andrea Luna, a folk dance troupe, a DJ and a Gangnam-style Dance contest.

"There will be something going on all the time," said Ontiveros said, "and plenty to do at all the booths and special kid activities." The fun is not scheduled to end until 11 p.m.

"One of the things that make this event so successful is that the proceeds are given back to help the community, like scholarships to Seward County Community College and Area Technical School and donations to non-profit organizations like the Seward County United Way," Ontiveros said.

The Cinco de Mayo Committee has already selected its 2013 Scholarship recipients, in addition to the scholarships that will be given to the queen candidates. Eleven Liberal High School Students and five SCCC nursing students will receive $300 scholarships this year.

For more information about all the Cinco de Mayo events, contact the Chamber of Commerce, 624-3855 or visit the event's web site at www.liberalcincodemayo.com.

Cinco de Mayo Press release