

Free music, Rosie the Riveter, and classic cars; The 20th Potomac Jazz Festival

Posted by [JeroldMassie](#) On 07/15/2019

Leonardtown, MD — After twenty years of bringing titillating tunes to St. Mary's County, the Potomac Jazz and Seafood festival opened for the first time with a free concert/kickoff party in Leonardtown Square.

Music from The Chesapeake Swing Band floated on a cool summer breeze across the square to the ears of residents seated in folding chairs. Walking around were attendees, dressed in attire from the early 1900s, socializing, enjoying food, playing croquet, and ogling over classic cars on a picturesque summer eve.

Cars from the Jazz Age were also featured with their owners standing close by to educate on the intricacies of the, now ancient, automobiles.

Hollywood resident Tom Tuominen was brought to St. Mary's County by the Navy where he fell in love with the area. He returned in 1998 and has been here since. The owner of four Model T's in total, Tom takes great pride in his love for classic cars, showing them off at various car shows throughout the area. His favorite to show is a 1925 dump truck but Friday night he made do with a 1926 Model T Coupe and a 1922 Ford Model T Touring Car that he and his wife drive. "They're a whole lot of fun to work, fun to drive, and easy to maintain, the only problem is that the top speed is only 35-40 mph."

The event began to wind down with a costume contest where those who came dressed in era-appropriate garb had a chance at winning for the 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s. Gift cards were given to winners and a \$500 grand prize was awarded to the best of them all.

Embodying the strength of Rosie, the Riveter, Heather, and Grace won for 40's era costume and took home the overall, \$500 grand prize. The mother-daughter duo flexed their arm for pictures with attendees and garnered much attention for their take on the WWII era female factory worker whose image motivated women to join the industrial workforce during the war. Now a symbol for feminism, Heather stated that she'd "loved Rosie for a while" and that she is an "image of empowerment for women" that she wants her daughter to look up to.

Making the rounds at the kickoff event was the festival's first ever Jazz Ambassador, Wynne Briscoe. As an ambassador, Briscoe explained her role was to promote the jazz festival to "residents and those in this region." She explained that over the past twenty years of the event, "a very small portion" of the near 800 tickets sold are from the area.

The Jazz Ambassador fits perfectly into the "Inside Out Campaign" by Visit St. Mary's which seeks to make St. Mary's residents the "biggest champions of the county and of Leonardtown," according to Director Jason Aul. St. Clement's Island Museum has worked closely with Visit St. Mary's, resulting in two additional days, the free events on Friday and Sunday in Leonardtown.

In addition to the fun and festivities, the event was able to collect \$267 for the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department.

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