

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**  
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**North Dakota Chokecherry Festival Scheduled for August 10-11**

The Williston Convention & Visitors Bureau along with the North Dakota Chokecherry Festival Committee is excited to bring this family friendly event back to Harmon Park for its 12<sup>th</sup> annual year. The festival celebrates the chokecherry as the North Dakota state fruit and honors the accomplishments of youth.

Prior to 2007, North Dakota had not named a state fruit. Williston students in Nancy Selby's sixth grade class reached out to state lawmakers as part of a persuasive letter writing assignment, which in turn led to legislation designating the chokecherry as the State Fruit of North Dakota. Senator Stanley Lyson and Senator Nick Hacker sponsored Senate Bill 2145, and Governor John Hoeven signed the bill into law on March 29, 2007. Williston held the first North Dakota Chokecherry Festival August 18, 2007. The celebration has continued to evolve and grow each year.

Longtime festival supporter Nemont will kick things off at 4pm with the 1000 Burger Feed (free burgers for as long as they last!) and another annual sponsor, American State Bank, will be offering free ice cream sundaes with chokecherry syrup while supplies last. This year, Miss Williston Renae Evenson and special guest Christina Winslow will kick off the live music at 5:30, with North Dakota sisters Tigirlily at 6:30p. Attendees are encouraged to browse vendor stalls and enjoy the music, then return to the park with blankets for an outdoor animated family movie at 10pm, "Sing."

The festival continues on Saturday with a free pancake breakfast served by local Lions members and Community Builders, 7:30-10a.m. Runners of all ages are encouraged to take part in the Chokecherry 5k and 1 mile fun run. Registration will begin at 8a.m. with the race starting at 8:30a.m. More live music fills the stage on Saturday, featuring local favorite Brian Salvesson, Frog Holler, Chloe Marie and local favorite Lexi Wyman.

Kids will love participating in the popular Chokecherry Stroll on Saturday. All children are encouraged to dress up however they like, decorate their bikes and wagons, and meet at the tennis courts to stroll around the park. Kids who participate in the stroll will receive a raffle ticket for fun prizes! The Kids Chokecherry Pit with children's activities will open at 10 a.m. It features face-painting, balloon twisting, a chokecherry pit-spitting contest and other free family activities.

The Ultimate Air Dogs, a nationally-acclaimed dock dog jumping organization ([www.ultimateairdogs.com](http://www.ultimateairdogs.com)), will return to the ND Chokecherry Festival on both Friday and Saturday with demonstrations by their own dogs and competitions for the public throughout the day. The North Dakota Chokecherry Festival is a regional qualifying event for the Ultimate Air Dogs National Championships in the fall. All ages love watching the Ultimate Air Dogs. The public is encouraged to bring their water-loving, people friendly furry family members to participate at the festival. All sizes, breeds and ages are welcome, as long as they can swim!

Bear Hollow Wood Carvers will be offering live chainsaw carving demonstrations all day on Saturday. Their finished artwork will be available through a silent auction in the park, with proceeds going to support the festival.

The North Dakota Chokecherry Festival also features a car show at the south end of Harmon Park and a special stamp cancelation on Saturday in honor of the North Dakota Chokecherry Festival.

The North Dakota Chokecherry Festival is supported the Williston Convention & Visitors Bureau as well as many business and individual sponsors. Events like the ND Chokecherry Festival could not happen without public support and sponsorship. If you are interested in being a festival supporter, contact the CVB. For more information, view the North Dakota Chokecherry Festival Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/chokecherryfestival](http://www.facebook.com/chokecherryfestival)) or contact the Williston Convention & Visitors Bureau at 701-774-9041.

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