



Press Release

Toms River Business Improvement District
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For Immediate Release
June 17, 2014

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12th Annual NJ Ice Cream Festival-- Presented by XFINITY, will have new start/end times in 2014

TOMS RIVER, NJ - The Toms River Business Development Corporation, the administrator of the Toms River Business Improvement District and the producer of the annual New Jersey Ice Cream Festival, announce that this year's event on Saturday, July 19 will take place from 3 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

According to Executive Director Jody Alessandrine, several factors influenced the change from what had been an 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. event. "Last year, the temperature on the street was 102 degrees. Many with small children, as well as elderly folks or those with breathing problems understandably stayed home in air-conditioning. Further, when the event started, the only thing competing with the Ice Cream fest was a good beach day. Now, there are several other daytime events both on and offshore that people can choose from. Those that faithfully come to Downtown Toms River for our event still can and likely will, meanwhile those that want to go to the beach or do something else during the day, can do so and then visit us later on," he explained.

For the second straight year, XFINITY has agreed to be the festival's title sponsor. "Nothing says summer like ice cream and the Jersey Shore," said Comcast Government Affairs Director Robert Clifton. "Supporting this festival is part of our ongoing commitment to the shore communities in New Jersey. We are thrilled to work with our neighbors in Toms River to make it possible." And Downtown could not be more pleased to have XFINITY back. "Our friends at XFINITY have been valued partners for a few years now in the production of our special events series in Downtown Toms River," said Alessandrine. "Their contribution, on many levels, helps us not just maintain, but enhance the quality of the events, which brings people to our Downtown. Affixing their name to the New Jersey Ice Cream Festival again this year to this state-wide competition alone will attract even more who are curious to find out what the festival is all about," he concluded.

Last year, a dozen ice cream purveyors competed for the coveted title of the entire State of New Jersey's Best Ice Cream! Gifford's Famous Ice Cream of Skowhegan, ME was the People's Choice winner. Gifford's had won two prestigious awards already in 2013. The Boston Globe named Gifford's Maine's Best Ice Cream, and CT Bites named Gifford's in its roundup of Best Store Bought Ice Creams.

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Gifford's entry, Campfire S'mores, bested the other quality ice cream purveyors, including other national brands, as well as several New Jersey contestants for the coveted distinction. Coming in second place in the People's Choice Awards was a local favorite, Two Sisters Ice Cream of Beachwood with the refreshing Lemon Crème. Zita's of New Providence, NJ captured third place with their Marvelous Mud.

Most ice cream contestants compete in two challenges-- The People's Choice, in which each competitor enters one flavor of their choice and is judged by the thousands of attendees who purchase tasting kits. The Special Judges category involves the competitor entering their recipe of vanilla ice cream, which is judged by a panel of local ice cream lovers, including some local officials and celebrities. Among the special judges last July were Toms River Twp. Mayor Thomas Kelaher and actor Nick Puccio.

Two Sisters was actually the only contestant to win two awards, as they were voted the #1 (vanilla ice cream) entry in the NJ State Ice Cream Festival's Special Judges competition. The Cookman Creamery of Asbury Park finished just behind Two Sisters, and Hoffman's of Pt. Pleasant Beach placed third.

In the end, the People's Choice victor gets to claim New Jersey's Best until the next year's event. According to Alessandrine, the number of ice cream contestants and street vendors is very encouraging with a month left until the 12th Annual New Jersey Ice Cream Festival.

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For more information on the 12th Annual New Jersey Ice Cream Festival, and the 2014 Downtown Toms River Special Events Series, please visit www.downtownomsriver.com.

For general information about Downtown Toms River, including investing in Downtown or opening a business, or about the Downtown Gift Card Program, visit www.downtownomsriver.com, or call 732-341-8738.