

## Valparaiso Suspends Popcorn Fest for 2020

The City of Valparaiso has announced their decision to suspend the 2020 Popcorn Festival due to the COVID 19 pandemic, announced Valparaiso Mayor Matt Murphy. “As a lifelong resident, I’ve looked forward to Popcorn Festival every September for 41 years,” he said. “However, after careful consideration, we realized that it wasn’t possible to do justice to an incredible festival that attracts upwards of 60,000 guests and to also maintain safety for our community and visitors. Popcorn Fest will be back. You can count on that,” he said.

Valparaiso canceled reluctantly and only after exhausting all options for hosting with social distancing. “We thought creatively for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and hosted a full day of safe events, including a parade, a run, a market, a concert and a fireworks show – all with social distancing measures in place. While it was a tremendous success, we realized that we were unable to exercise the same controls over an event like Popcorn Festival which extends over entire city blocks,” said Murphy.

While the Popcorn Festival will not go on for 2020, the Popcorn Panic will still happen on Sept. 12, 2020, hosted by Valpo Parks. The race will be modified to allow for social distancing. For information about the race, including how to register, visit [ValpoParks.org](http://ValpoParks.org)

Valparaiso Events, host of the Popcorn Festival and dozens of other signature Valparaiso events, looks forward to resuming Popcorn Festival in safer days. “We continue to offer other options for our community, including our twice-weekly Valparaiso Market on Tuesdays and Saturdays, summer movies which we offered in a drive-in setting and our upcoming Summer Concert series, which we kicked off on July 4,” said Tina St. Aubin, Executive Director for Valparaiso Events. Eight more concerts are planned for this season, with tickets required (for free!) to limit crowds and maintain social distancing. Valparaiso Events is also leading a city-wide Lift Up Valpo campaign, encouraging the community to shop and dine locally in support of Valparaiso business.

For more information about upcoming events in Valparaiso, visit [ValparaisoEvents.com](http://ValparaisoEvents.com)