

LU CENTENNIAL ISSUE

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Centennial Fest set for Sunday

Keagan Smith
UP managing editor

Are you ready for a party, Beaumont?

Lamar University will celebrate its 100th anniversary with Centennial Fest, a community-wide event taking place from 4-8 p.m. in the Quad on Lamar's campus, Sept. 17.

"We have a ton of success with the things that we do, but we don't often have an opportunity to celebrate the successes," Golden Wright, Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication, who was on the festival planning committee, said. "This is an opportunity for faculty, staff, students, and the community to come together and celebrate this great university."

There's a little bit of something for everybody at Centennial Fest — and admission is free.

Live music will be provided by Still Cruisin', who play throwback jams. Adults can



UP photos by Keagan Smith

Dustin Barnes, top left, helps Christopher Brewer put the finishing touches to the 100th anniversary sculpture in the Quad, Sept. 8. For more photos, see page 5

relax and enjoy a drink at the beer garden. There will be yard party games, such as giant Jenga and Connect Four.

There will also be a variety of activities for families, and children in particular. The family area will include a bounce house, face painting,

and a dunking booth, as well as sno-cones and cotton candy.

Free hamburgers, hot dogs, soft drinks and water will be provided while supplies last. Two food trucks will also provide more options.

At 5 p.m., Lamar University President Jaime Taylor will de-

liver a birthday proclamation to officially ring in the institution's 100th year.

Additionally, Lamar student-athletes will make an appearance and interact with fans at the Sheila Humphrey Recreational Sports Center.

"I think it's hard to determine where the lines of Lamar end and where Southeast Texas began, or vice versa," Wright said. "I think both of them are involved and rely on each other for success, and they have for the last 100 years."

"Making sure that Beaumont and the Southeast Texas area are part of this celebration is really important. That's the reason why Lamar is successful. And I think one of the reasons why Southeast Texas has become so successful is because of Lamar's presence."

Those interested in volunteering may show up at 8 a.m. to help set up. For more information, visit www.lamar.edu/events.



Lamar University's 100th celebration, Sunday, will have many fun activities for all ages.

Centennial Fest will take place 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the university Quad and on Plummer Field.

The event will feature a beer garden, fireworks, and other fun activities the whole family can enjoy, LU's website states.

Local band, "Still Cruisin'" will perform, along with the LU's marching band, The Showcase of Southeast Texas.

President Jaime Taylor will also speak at the event.

Simmons reflects on legacy

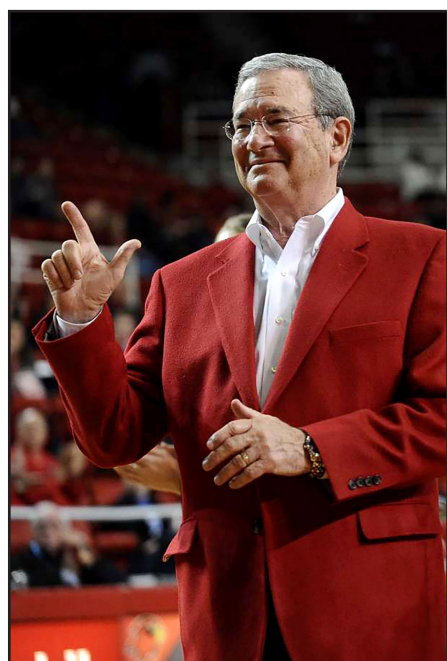
Maddie Sims
UP editor

As Lamar celebrates 100 years, elements of the campus have changed. Many of the athletic programs and buildings currently on campus originated during the tenure of James "Jimmy" Simmons, LU's 14th president.

A Beaumont native, Simmons joined Lamar University in 1970, first as band director, then music department chair, Dean of Fine Arts and Communication, and Vice President for Advancement, before being president from 1993-2013.

Simmons and Lamar go way back, as his mother attended the campus in 1936, and won the state tennis doubles championship. He said he was involved with the university for most of his life, taking lessons from the music professors. He was the assistant band director at Memphis State University when he was asked to come to Lamar in 1970.

"Coming back as a faculty member was really an honor," he said. "They had such a massive standing reputation, (especially) in



James "Jimmy" Simmons

the music field."

Simmons said being president was challenging, but also rewarding. However, he said he didn't do it alone.

"I might say I was president, but my wife (Susan) was also really the president," he said. "I just followed her directions the whole time."

When Simmons's presidency began, LU's enrollment was 7,200. When he retired, it was 16,000, he said. In 1993 there were few students who lived on campus, he said.

"We built all of the new dormitories, the dining hall, the Sheila Humphrey (Recreational Sports Center), and basically (brought in) more than double the enrollment," he said. "We also brought back football, women's soccer, women's baseball, and softball."

Simmons taught several music courses such as music theory and graduate conducting. Throughout his time at Lamar, Simmons continued to perform live, playing the clarinet and the saxophone, having music degrees in both. He's headlined with artists such as Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles and The Temptations, and he created programs for five bachelors, seven masters, and three doctoral degrees. When he became assistant band director the marching band had about 150 people, he said, with numbers increasing throughout the years, he said. The current Showcase of

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Red Day campaign set for Sept. 14-15

Press Release

Lamar University will host the 3rd annual Red Day virtual giving campaign on Sept. 14 and 15. The university is "Rolling Out the Red Carpet for 100 Years" in celebration of this special centennial fundraising event.

Red Day aims to inspire LU Cardinals, alumni and the community to come together to raise essential funds to support current and future students.

"Red Day is a time to showcase the power of philanthropy at LU, and the incredible difference our community makes when we rally behind our students," Lauren Wilson, development coordinator with Lamar University Advancement, said. "With this being the university's centennial anniversary, we're rolling out the

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