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Emmett Kelly, Jr.

Naples Grape Festival To Feature Famed Clown

Children and grown-ups alike will have an opportunity to watch a famous circus clown perform during the Naples Grape Festival parade, at 2 p. m. on Saturday, Sept. 28, Emmet Kelly, Jr. will be a featured attraction in the two hour spectacular, according to Betty McMillan, parade chairman. Theme for the 1968 parade is "The Grapest Show on Earth."

Kelley, often called the "clown prince of pantomime", will ride on a float specially designed for him by Loleta Edgerton, a Naples resident.

Emmett's father, perhaps the best-known circus clown of all time, encouraged his son to don the famous baggy blue pants, wrinkled green shirt and giant shoes in 1960. Since then, Emmett Kelly, Jr. has appeared across the country in the circus ring, on stage and at special events. Like his father, Emmett

enjoys making people laugh, although he himself never smiles while in costume. "It takes a lot to practice to keep from smiling," Kelly admits, "but though I don't smile outside, I'm often laughing harder inside than my audience." Kelly's visit to Naples is being sponsored by Eastman Kodak Company of Rochester.

Other parade highlights will be the Festival King and Queen to be named during Grape Festival week, dozens of floats, over 25 high-school and area bands, Bacchus, God of Wine, antique cars, drill teams, executives of the area wineries and of course, lots of pretty girls.

The eighth annual Grape Festival is expected to draw more than 40,000 visitors to the Finger Lakes Village of Naples which normally boasts a population of 1,200. According to

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William Domm, Jr. chairman of the 3-day event, other week-end attractions will include a torchlight parade, the annual Festival Ball, a large carnival, a flea market, an outdoor arts and crafts exhibition, street dancing with music by the Jay Hawks. Also performances by the Finger Lakes Chorus of Geneva. The chorus is affiliated with the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA). Three barbershop quartets will appear with the chorus. A gala fireworks display is also on the agenda.

Attractions on Friday, Sept. 27, opening day of the event, will be highlighted by a fireman's torchlight parade at 8 p.m. Participating firemen will carry lights and torches and the fire equipment will be lighted to produce an unusual display of color. About twenty-five area firemen's units are expected to attend, according to Ace Hammond, chairman of the event.

Following the Torchlight Firemen's parade on Friday evening, Welland Green's orchestra will provide music for dancing from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the annual Festival Ball to be held in the Naples Central School gymnasium. The 1968 Naples Grape Festival weekend closes with a Foliage Sunday celebration on Sunday, Sept. 29. Thousands of tourists annually come to view the Fall foliage and visit the many roadside stands selling vine-fresh grapes and grape juice. The Festival officially closes at 10 p.m. on Sunday.