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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Get Ready for a Reimagined Cookin' on Kampeska

More Music. More Food. More Summer Fun.

Watertown, SD — Summer just got bigger and better on the shores of Lake Kampeska! The beloved Cookin' on Kampeska is back July 16–18, 2026, at Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park, and this year we're turning up the fun — with a fresh format that ditches the BBQ competitions and brings a bigger, more vibrant, music-first festival experience to the community.

This year Cookin' on Kampeska will feature a wide variety of new activities, including:

- Bingo by the lake
- Cooking and BBQ demonstrations and events
- Arts, crafts, and retail vendors
- Pedal tractor pull (kids and adults)
- Touch-a-truck experiences, including boats, UTVs, and more
- A stronger focus on live music throughout the entire weekend

Cookin' on Kampeska is the ultimate summer party on the lake — combining music, community, laughter, family time, and unforgettable memories.

Thursday Night Live at the Lake | July 16

We're starting strong with Thursday Night Live, a lakeside concert experience you won't want to miss. Grab your lawn chairs, bring your friends, and enjoy live music from **IV Play** — a high-energy rock and party band known for getting crowds on their feet, singing and dancing all night long. Based in the Midwest with a reputation for delivering fun, crowd-pleasing performances, IV Play has been rocking stages across Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and beyond since 1999. As always, Thursday Night Live is free. Gates and vendors open at 4pm.

Friday — Music Starts Early! | July 17

Gates open at 1:00 PM — so arrive ready for a full afternoon of musical entertainment. Local and regional bands will warm up the stage throughout the afternoon. At 8:00pm, set your sights on the headliner: **3 Hour Download**. Playing nostalgic hits from the '90s and 2000s, these seasoned performers deliver everything from Blink-182 and Red Hot Chili Peppers to Matchbox 20 and Goo Goo Dolls — all the sing-along, dance-along favorites that make Friday night feel like one big celebration.

Saturday — All-Day Family Fun | July 18

Saturday is built for fun from dawn till dusk with something for everyone: foam parties, kids' activities, bean bags, food trucks, vendors, bingo and more! Gates and vendors open at 10am. Saturday will feature even more live music from local and area bands throughout the day. When the sun starts setting, SD Rock & Roll Hall of Fame band, **Ivory**, takes over the stage! Regarded as one of the Midwest's true classic rock institutions, Ivory has been delivering powerhouse shows since the 1970s. With a lineup of veteran musicians

known for rich vocals, tight harmonies, and a set list packed with rock hits and fan favorites, they've been rocking crowds for decades and continue to bring that big-stage sound to events and festivals alike - see them on stage at 8pm!

Make It a Weekend

Immerse yourself in the festivities: reserve a **weekend campsite**. Campsites are available for **\$225** (Wednesday through Sunday) and include **four admission wristbands**, making it the perfect option for families or groups looking to enjoy the full festival atmosphere from start to finish. Limited campsites are available, contact the Watertown Chamber for reservations.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

Local businesses and organizations are invited to be part of the excitement through a wide range of sponsorship opportunities, with levels ranging from **\$250 to \$5,000**. These sponsorship options offer valuable visibility, on-site presence, and unique perks like VIP access, camping, and even the opportunity to speak before a headlining performance.

With strong attendance, expanded programming, and a refreshed focus, Cookin' on Kampeska offers sponsors a powerful way to connect with the community in a high-energy, highly visible setting.

Join the Celebration

While the format has evolved, the heart of the event remains—bringing people together for a fun, family-friendly weekend at the lake. Weekend admission is just \$10, and children age 8 and younger are FREE — a new, simplified price that makes it easier than ever to join the fun.

Whether you're coming for the music, the activities, or a full weekend at the lake, Cookin' on Kampeska is shaping up to be one of the region's must-attended events of the summer.

For more information including camping or sponsorship opportunities, visit cookinonkampeska.com or contact the Watertown Area Chamber of Commerce.

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