

## CHATTANOOGA'S DRAWBRIDGE

*The Earth be spanned, connected by network. The lands be welded together.*

Walt Whitman about American bridges

In a dramatic display of a drawbridge in action, the Market Street Bridge's opened spans closed Friday night, Aug. 3. At the first of the grand reopening events, sponsors and attendees enjoyed a reception on the southern approach of the bridge. The spans of the bridge then closed to allow guests to traverse the newly restored architectural treasure as they entered an elegant dining experience by Swiss Am on the northern approach.

Special thanks to Mistress of Ceremonies Cindy Sexton, WRCB-TV anchor, Mayor Ron Littlefield, Chattanooga City Councilwomen Linda Bennett and Sally Robinson. Featured music was performed by Dan Landrum and Danny Sample.

The grand reopening featured two artists. Brent Sanders created an acrylic and ink painting called "Market Street Bridge Ascending." He spent two months photographing the bridge from distinctive angles to capture the right vantage point.

"Although I've painted the bridge many times, I've never painted it with the spans open," said Brent. "I wanted to use the raised spans as a symbolic gesture of the bridge reopening."

Adorning the tables were glass orbs from Tommy Spake's "Wisp" series. Each paperweight-sized piece is different, with a lighted base that showcases an original color wisp combination.

"The 'Wisp' design represents a moment in time, a memory," said Tommy. "The bridge is a grand symbol of Chattanooga's history and future. The 'Wisp' is meant to capture and celebrate this moment in Chattanooga's future."

The "Wisp" orbs were presented as gifts to attendees to remember the grand reopening of the bridge.

From live bands to lively demonstrations like fly fishing, belly dancing and bagpipes, the Bridge celebrations continued Saturday, Aug. 4. In addition to the merchants, eateries, music and activities on the bridge, the riverfront and North Shore were hopping with a sidewalk sale, storytelling, more music and Dragon Boat races and festival. The celebration also included a vintage scooter show at Renaissance Park.

Festivities on the bridge concluded with a fashion show and reveal of the "Ain't so Extreme Makeover." Attendees were wildly entertained by the Canine Makeover Reveal, when local shelter dog Tiramisu was introduced adopted.

The bridge day rolled into night with Riverfront Nights at Ross' Landing near the Chattanooga Pier.

Market Street Bridge opened to traffic Sunday, Aug 5 at 8 a.m., when a CARTA electric shuttle bus was the first vehicle to traverse the historic Market Street Bridge from the South Shore to the North Shore.

The bridge is owned by the State of Tennessee and was restored by Mountain States Contractors, Durham, NC.

Consulting firms included:

Parsons Transportation Group – responsible for redesigning the bridge and ensuring it's structurally sound, as well as project manager and inspector.

KSWARE – provided a concrete technician.

Volkert – provided an inspector and office technician