



Shawano County FAIR

**Celebrating
143 years**

**August 28-
September 2, 2024**



SHAWANO LEADER

WITTENBERG
ENTERPRISE

Friday, August 23, 2024



The midway is full of carnival games, as well as booths for food and drink, and rides for young and old. Stuffed plushies remain one of the most popular prizes for those testing their skills at the games. KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA

Fair will kick off Aug. 28 at Veterans Park

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

Opening ceremonies for the 2024 Shawano County Fair will be at 6 p.m. Aug. 28 in Veterans Park.

Beer and wide judging will be held at 6 p.m. Aug. 29 in the Crawford Center.

Bingo will take place from 5-9 p.m. Aug. 29; from 12:30-9 p.m. Aug. 30, Aug. 31 and Sept. 1; and from 12:30-5 p.m. Sept. 2. Bingo is played in the Bingo building. The cost is

50 cents a card.

The kiddie tractor pull will be held at noon Aug. 31 by the Main Stage. Registration will begin at 11 a.m.

Beginning at 5 p.m. Aug. 30 will be the decorated cake auction in the Huntington 4-H Building.

The livestock auction will be held at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 30 in the coliseum. At the 2023 fair, 106 different buyers purchased 103 swine, 52 beef, 20 lambs and eight goats for

\$762,625.50. Dan Nolan Livestock was the top buyer, spending more than \$50,000. Rounding out the top five were Robinson Inc., Charlie's County Market, Nutrition Services and Klein Auto. Buyers spending the sixth most through the ninth were Paul McClone Livestock, Waldvogel Trucking, Thiex Construction and Peters Concrete Co. At No. 10, and still spending more than \$17,000 was North Central Homes.

The Dairy Futurity Show will take place at 7 p.m. Aug. 31 in the coliseum.

The small animal auction is slated for 10 a.m. Sept. 2 in the coliseum.

A contemporary church service will be held at 9:30 a.m. Sept. 1, and a polka Mass will be held at 11 a.m. Both will be at President's Park.

A cornhole tournament will be held Aug. 31 and a dart tournament will be Sept. 1, both in the Craw-

ford Center. Registration for both events begins at 11 a.m., with play beginning at noon. Each event will be limited to 32 teams, and each winner will be based on a double elimination tournament, best two out of three. Teams can pre-register at shawanofair@gmail.com, and rules and entry details can be found at shawanocountyfair.net.

A baking contest will take place at 1:30 p.m. Sept. 1 on the Midway Stage. The contest has

two divisions for entrants — adults 18 and older and children 8-17. Entries must be drop cookies, and they must be made from scratch. Cash prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place winners in each division.

An old-fashioned challenge will be held at 1:30 p.m. Sept. 2 on the Midway Stage. The first 12 entrants in each category (amateur and professional) will compete. The entry fee is \$10.

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Most things at the fair remain in the same location year after year, but there are a few changes, and there are always those who haven't attended in recent years or who might be enjoying their first-ever visit.

KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA

Fair memories of the '70s and '80s recalled

Most of my memories of walking the midway at the Shawano County Fair date back to the 1970s and early 1980s — my middle school, high school and college years — before I entered the workforce and moved away from the area.

As a young child and then teenager, the highlight of the fair was the rides. The Scrambler, Tilt-a-Whirl and something called the Flying Bobs were among my favorites. I was never really into the rides that took you to incredible heights and dropped you to the ground in mere seconds.

The Ferris Wheel was OK; the Zipper was not.

Early on, we didn't have wristband days, where you pay a flat fee and can ride anything and everything as many times as you want before the fair closes for the night. For us, Labor Day was the big day.

There used to be coupons that you could find everywhere in town. At first, the coupons let you buy something like eight tickets for a buck. As the years wore on, the number of tickets decreased and the cost increased until one year when they disappeared.

Even as kids, we could stick around the fairgrounds until dark. Times were different then. But, there came a time to go home. My older brothers, of which there are many, would find their way home much later, often with stuffed toys or other items they had won at the carnival games. Remember the crocheted beer can knit bucket party hats featur-



Kevin Passon
Editor-in-chief

ing Budweiser, Pabst, Old Style or Schlitz?

We grew up in the city, so getting up close to cows, sheep and other farm animals was a big deal for us. Like now, the barns are the first things you come across when entering the fair. That was always the first stop. Because they were also the last things you saw when leaving, the barns also were the last stop. Nothing had changed in those eight hours in between, but a second trip through the barns seemed only right.

Somewhere in those eight hours, we'd meander over to the tractors and other farm equipment and climb up in the seats.

School began the last week of August then, before the start of the fair's Labor Day weekend run. Many of my classmates who were in 4-H or had animals entered in the fair would get excused from school to be at the fairgrounds. It was pretty unproductive those first few days of class, sometimes with a dozen or so students absent.

As I was getting ready to graduate from high school in 1982, the legal drinking age in Wisconsin was still 18. It increased to 19 the following year and then to 21 in 1986.

Because they serve beer at the fair, my friends and I enjoyed a drink or two,

usually from the VFW stand.

If you walked around the midway, halfway through from the VFW stand stood Norm's, which served its fries in a paper cone. I don't even recall if they served anything but fries, but I know the line was always long — and always worth the wait.

One night, we bought a beer and finished drinking it as we got to Norm's. We bought fries and finished eating them as we got to the VFW stand. It was a vicious circle that night.

Watching the stock car races and demolition derby also made for some great memories.

During the summer, when my oldest brother would drive up from Fond du Lac for the weekend, going to the races was a regular occurrence. That continued during the fair.

My favorite driver was Roger Paul, "The Flying Farmer," from New London. For two decades, he was one of the most popular drivers at the Shawano Speedway. If I recall, he drove No. 95, a black Chevy with a red top.

Other drivers from the time included M.J. McBride, John Schultz and J.J. Smith. Paul's son, Chad, had his own racing career in the 1980s.

While all of these memories are great, there are plenty of opportunities to make even more.

That's what I'll be doing when the fair comes to town next week.

Kevin Passon is the editor-in-chief of NEW Media. Readers can contact him at kpaddon@newmedia-wi.com

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Music fills the air at Shawano County Fair

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

Four stages will offer plenty of music and entertainment opportunities for those attending the 2024 Shawano County Fair.

Main Stage entertainment will kick off with Drive West at 8 p.m. Aug. 29. Drive West is a five-piece variety band covering rock, country, funk, and rhythm and blues hits from the obscure to the obvious.

That 90s Band will perform at 8 p.m. Aug. 30. The band plays everything from Vanilla Ice and Green Day to Garth Brooks and Nirvana. The band will help fairgoers travel back in time to the days of hammer pants, Zimas, slap bracelets, tube tops, Air Jordans and flannels.

Cherry Pie will be on the Main Stage at 8:30 p.m. Aug. 31. With more than 24 years of experience, Cherry Pie plays some of the biggest hair band hits and ballads of the 1980s in addition to a few anthems from other eras.

The final act on the Main Stage is Ask Your Mother, which will play at 8 p.m. Sept. 1. This high-energy band looks and sounds as natural doing a hair band rocker tune as they do performing an old country classic.

Playing on the Midway Stage will be Homegrown



Drive West, a five-piece variety band that covers songs from the rock, rhythm and blues, funk and country genres, will kick off the Main Stage entertainment Aug. 29 at the Shawano County Fair. For those who can't make it, there will be plenty of other musical entertainment through the six days of the fair.

CONTRIBUTED

(mixed music acoustic duo) at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 29, Olivia Maro (country music singer and songwriter) at 5 p.m. Aug. 30, Country Rewind (classic country) at 5 p.m. Aug. 31 and Beer Goggles (four-piece band that plays all of today's favorites mixed with the classics) at 4 p.m. Sept. 1.

President's Park will be the site for polka performers throughout the fair.

Up first will be The Music Connection at 6 p.m. Aug. 29. On Aug. 30, The Mix will play at 1 p.m. and Chad Przybylski will play at 7 p.m. Performing Aug. 31 will be Mark Jirikovec at 1 p.m. and Polish Sounds at 7 p.m.

Jerry Voelker will perform at 1 p.m. Sept. 1, with Polka Access playing at 7 p.m. that day. Finally, Zander's Music Ray Makers will play at 1 p.m. Sept. 2.

Matthew Scherer's Magical Entertainment will be featured on the Shawano County Farm Bureau Stage.

All performances are free with gate admission.



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Lydia Rasmussen is the 2024 Fairest of the Fair for the Shawano County Fair. She is the daughter of Jeannine and Erik Rasmussen. CONTRIBUTED

Rasmussen serving as Fairest of the Fair

Lydia Rasmussen is the 2024 Fairest of the Fair for the Shawano County Fair. She is the daughter of Jeannine and Erik Rasmussen. In the fall, Rasmussen will be a senior at University of Wisconsin-River Falls, where she is studying dairy science with a science emphasis. At college, she is active in the UW-River Falls Dairy Club and coaches local youth softball and basketball teams. Any business or organization planning an event can reach out to Rasmussen to join the celebration. She can be contacted through the Shawano County Fair-east of the Fair Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100095424319325>.



The midway was full for most of the duration of the 2023 Shawano County Fair, with plenty of food and other fun to be had. LEE PULASKI | NEW MEDIA

There were reports of a number of multi-vehicle crashes for the duration of the 2023 Shawano County Fair, but fortunately they all took place at the bumper car ride on the midway. LEE PULASKI | NEW MEDIA



Shawano County Fair August 29 - September 2

Good luck to all of this year's Shawano County Fair Exhibitors, and a Big Thank You to all who work so hard to produce one of the best county fairs in the state of Wisconsin!

BEST OF SHAWANO LEADER 2023

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BEST OF SHAWANO LEADER 2023



There is a constant line of young livestock owners and their goats parading through the Coliseum at the Shawano County Fair.

LEE PULASKI | NEW MEDIA



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Rainbow Valley Rides will operate the midway rides at the 2024 Shawano County Fair. Rides will be running from 6-10 p.m. Aug. 28, from 5-10 p.m. Aug. 29 and Aug. 30, from noon to 11 p.m. Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, and from noon to 5 p.m. Sept. 2.

KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA

Unlimited fun comes with wristband rides

BY NEW MEDIA STAFF

Rainbow Valley Rides will operate the midway rides at the 2024 Shawano County Fair.

Rides will be running from 6-10 p.m. Aug. 28, from 5-10 p.m. Aug. 29 and Aug. 30, from noon to 11 p.m. Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, and from noon to 5 p.m. Sept. 2.

Buy a wristband for \$25 and get unlimited rides

from 5-10 p.m. Aug. 29 and Aug. 30, and from noon to 5 p.m. Sept. 1 and Sept. 2.

Regular ticket prices are \$1 for one ticket, \$20 for 22 tickets or \$35 for 40 tickets.

Freakout and Vertigo each require five tickets to ride.

Needing four tickets are Remix2, Zipper, Pharaoh's Fury, Sizzler, Bumper Cars, Ferris Wheel, Cliff Hanger, Tilt-a-Whirl, Rock Star,

Zero Gravity, Carousel and Wacky Shack.

Children's rides requiring three tickets are Orient Express, Rockin Tug Giant Slide, Spiderman, Bumble Bees, Lolli Swing, Puppy Roll, Rio Grand Train, Farm Tractors and Tea Cups.

The company sets all pricing and scheduling for rides. All rides and ticket amounts are subject to change.

Gate admission, parking fees announced

BY NEW MEDIA STAFF

Daily gate admission to the Shawano County Fair is \$5 per person for adults and children 12 and older. Children 11 and younger get in for free.

Daily admission starts at 9 a.m. Aug. 29 through Sept. 2.

The daily parking fee is \$5, with a free shuttle ride from the east parking area.

On the opening night of the fair, Aug. 28, gate admission begins at 5 p.m. at a cost of \$3 per person and free parking.

Senior citizens 62 and

older pay \$2 for admission and \$5 for parking from noon to 5 p.m. Aug. 30.

Season tickets are \$25 per person. This includes daily gate admission and parking during the duration of the fair. It does not include grandstand admission or rides.

There is also a life membership available for \$300. This entitles the holder, spouse and children up to 16 years of age to free admission to the Shawano County Fair. Applications are available at the Fair Office.

Some grandstand events have an additional fee.

The tractor pull at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 28 has an added cost of \$5 per person.

Action roars its head at the Shawano Speedway at 6 p.m. Aug. 31. Admission for the stock car races is \$12 for those 17 and older, \$5 for those 11-16 and free for children younger than 11 with a paid adult.

Those same prices are in effect for the demolition derby that will begin at 1 p.m. Sept. 1 and for the trailer races that start at 1 p.m. Sept. 2.

Fireworks at dusk Aug. 29 are free for everyone to enjoy.

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MAIN STAGE ENTERTAINMENT

Drive West Thursday | 8PM That 90's Band Friday | 8PM Cherry Pie Saturday | 8:30PM Ask Your Mother Sunday | 8PM

GRANDSTAND EVENTS

County Truck & Tractor Pull Wednesday | 6:30PM Fireworks Over the Fair Thursday | 8:30PM Stock Car Races Saturday | 6:00PM Demolition Derby Sunday | 1:00PM Trailer Races with Spectator Eliminators Monday | 1:00PM

MIDWAY STAGE

Homegrown Thursday | 7:30PM
Olivia Maro Friday | 5:00PM
Country Rewind Saturday | 5:00PM
Beer Goggles Sunday | 4:00PM

SHAWANO COUNTY FARM BUREAU STAGE

Matthew Scherer Magicial Entertainment

PRESIDENT'S PARK

The Music Connection Thursday | 6:00PM
The Mix Friday | 1:00PM
Chad Przybylski Friday | 7:00PM
Mark Jirikovec Saturday | 1:00PM
Polish Sounds Saturday | 7:00PM
Jerry Voelker Sunday | 1:00PM
Polka Access Sunday | 7:00PM
Zander's Music Ray Makers Monday | 1:00PM

AROUND THE FAIR

Opening Ceremonies Wednesday | 6:00PM
Beer & Wine Judging Thursday | 6:00PM
Kiddie Tractor Pull Saturday | 12:00PM
Small Animal Auction Monday | 10:00AM
Dairy Futurity Show Saturday | 7:00PM
Livestock Auction Friday | 6:30PM
Decorated Cake Auction Friday | 5:00PM

MIDWAY RIDES

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BINGO

Thursday | 5:00-9:00PM
Friday - Sunday | 12:30-9:00PM
Monday | 12:30-5:00PM

ADMISSION

Gate Admission
Wednesday | \$3.00 per person
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