

**Aug. 15-20
2023**

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**daily schedule
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pages 9-14**

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2023 Southwest Washington Fair lineup to put the 'grand' in Grandstands with two days of rodeo, monster trucks, demo derby



Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Flames soar from engines during the Southwest Washington Fair demolition derby in 2021.

By Isabel Vander Stoep

isabel@chronline.com

While the fair has long hosted the “Lewis County Rodeo,” last year saw its first-ever rodeo that was sanctioned by the Northwest Professional Rodeo Association.

This year, fair organizers are readying for round two, then round three. On Wednesday and Thursday, at 6 p.m. both nights in the Grandstands Arena, cowboys and cowgirls will travel across towns, states and even countries for the Lewis County Rodeo.

The rodeos will be individually-standing competitions with belt buckle prizes so attendees get a full show whether they visit one night or both.

Dances will follow both nights.

The big sponsors for this year’s rodeo are Sorenson Transport, Toledo Tel, Ryerson and Fortescue.

Both days will feature professionals from the area and abroad for bareback riding, tie down and breakaway roping, saddle bronc riding, steer wrestling, team roping, barrel racing, and, of course, bull riding. For the kids, there will be mutton busting both nights.

Special tickets are needed to enter for Grandstands events, including the rodeo, monster truck shows and dem-

olition derby.

Box seats are also available online and through the fair office.

Two days of bucking bulls and broncos isn’t the only crazy show set for the Grandstands this year. Monster trucks are coming back to the Southwest Washington Fair for the first time in either 20 or 21 years, said said Pat Slusher Jr., a fair office employee.

At 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday in the Grandstands Arena, the Monster Truck Nitro Tour will kick up the dust — or mud, depending on the weather. Both the afternoon and evening shows will also feature lawnmower races.

“They do jumps and they roll those things and they crush things,” Slusher said. “It’s big toys for big boys and little boys. And they’re loud. They’re very loud.”

Finally, four days of Grandstands insanity will wrap up with a demolition derby on Sunday, Aug. 20, the final day of the Southwest Washington Fair.

The derby will kick off at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

Last year, when the fair had scheduled derbies for both Tuesday and Sunday nights, there weren’t enough participants signed up for the second night to allow the event to run, according to fair organizers.

Slusher doesn’t expect that problem



Isabel Vander Stoep / isabel@chronline.com

Aniko Nelson, of Goldendale, rounds a barrel at the Southwest Washington Fair rodeo in 2022.

for the 2023 fair, because Centralia’s Summerfest demolition derby saw great turnout, he said, and because there will be just one derby this year.

Sunday’s derby will bring back the

fair’s “Jump Your Junk” competition and the youth race for kids ages 12 to 15.

Learn more at <https://southwest.washingtonfair.org>.

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Owen Sexton / owen@chronline.com

Fairgoers look for the queen honey bee in the floral building last year in a display by the Lewis County Beekeepers Association.

The Southwest Washington Fair theme for 2023 is “Bee Friendly! Bee at the Fair!”



By The Chronicle staff

Because craft books and the internet are stocked full of bee-themed craft patterns, exhibitors are digging this year’s theme, said home arts department assistant superintendent Jessie Erickson.

“It’s a concrete concept,” Erickson said. “And people like it anyway. Bees and honey and everything are super popular right now.”

This year’s theme is “Bee Friendly! Bee at the Fair!”

The Lewis County Beekeepers Association will have a “find the queen” display inside the floral building during this year’s fair, which is set for Aug. 15-20.

The gates open on Tuesday, Aug. 15. The fairgrounds close each night at 10 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, at 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and 7 p.m. on Sunday.

Last year’s theme was “Neon Lights and Country Nights,” and Erickson said it was more difficult for crafters because the concept was mostly abstract.

Attendees can learn about the benefits of pollinators from the bee association.

The association will also host honey tastings all day on Saturday and Sunday.



Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Honey bees buzz around their hive in late July on a farm in Adna.



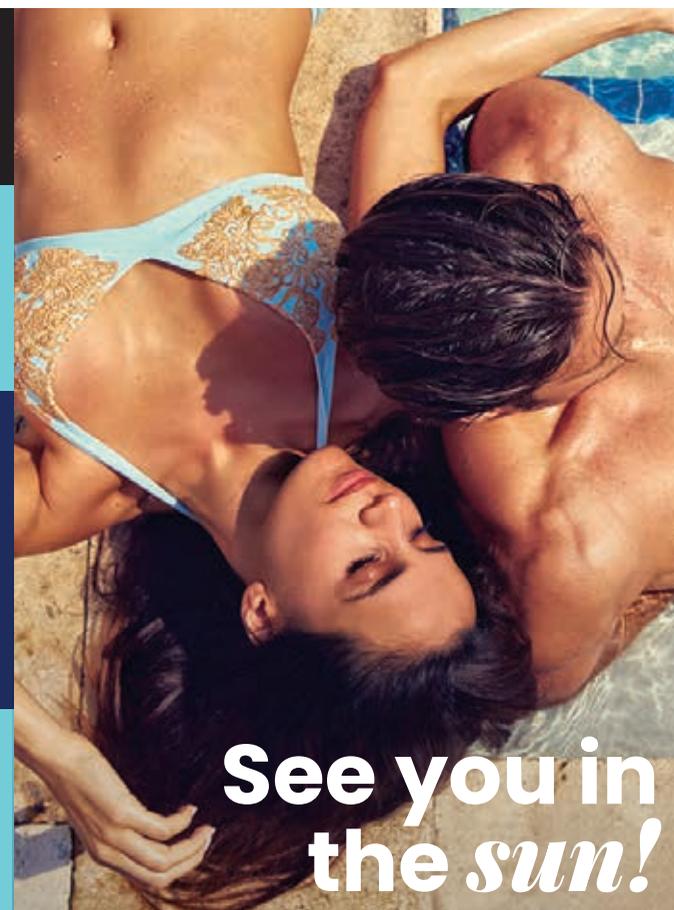
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**See you in
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Music, All-Alaskan Racing Pigs, mutton bustin' and more are free with admission to the Southwest Washington Fair

By Isabel Vander Stoep

isabel@chronline.com

For those who won't make it into the Grandstand this year, the fair will feature "Wool Busters" mutton busting on the north end of the fairgrounds every night at 2, 4 and 6 p.m. Competing and viewing is open to all

Other events outside of the Grandstands are sure to provide fairgoers a hefty amount of excitement, too — and, all are free with admission to the fair. Hell's Belles, a "world-famous, all-female AC/DC tribute band," according to their trademark, will headline this year's Saloon Stage musical performances at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday.

If any band can compete with the noise of Saturday's monster truck shows, that would be Hell's Belles.

"They're wild," said fair employee Pat Slusher Jr. "Off stage, they are the calmest, most pleasant young ladies. On stage, they're wild. And they have a following. And their music has a following, of course."

Back by popular demand, Slusher said, The Kingsmen will also perform on the Saloon Stage at 8 p.m. on Thurs-

day. Known for Washington state's Legislature-approved state rock song, "Louie Louie," Slusher said the band is the most requested act for the Southwest Washington Fair, several years running.

As of Saturday, the fair has already seen 4,339 entries from 476 exhibitors, which surpasses submissions from last year. Entries will continue to roll in throughout the next few weeks.

Besides displays of the best crafts, livestock, art and food in Lewis County, attendees can also see unicycling comedy juggler Mark Wilder four times a day on the Midway at random intervals, the Parrott Ambassadors at 1, 3 and 5 p.m. each day inside the Exposition Hall and, on Thursday through Sunday at noon, 3 and 6 p.m. in the field behind the fair office: All-Alaskan Racing Pigs.

The fair will also feature two Christian musical performers, sponsored by KACS.

One, a band called "Cochren & Company" is led by Michael Cochren, an award winning singer/songwriter born and raised in a small Indiana town, according to the fair office. Co-

chren plays music across the country with a band of friends and his wife Leah. The group has "a reputation for hope-filled lyrics and timeless melodies, blending American pop-rock (and) soul and blues to create a classic sound all their own," stated a bio sent by the fair.

The group has many musical accolades, including a single that topped the 2022 Top 15 Billboard Christian chart called "Thank God For Sunday Morning."

On June 13, 2023 Cochren & Company made its first debut at the Grand Ole Opry. The group's fair performance will take place at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 20 on the Saloon Stage.

The other performer, Jordan Feliz, launched his career as a hard-touring heavy metal singer, then switched gears to become a church worship leader, before signing a Nashville re-

cord deal and building his reputation as a songwriter and soulful R&B-groove-pop artist, according to the fair office. Fronting the West Coast buzz band, "A Current Affair," gave Feliz's powerful vocals major exposure right out of high school.

Feliz's debut project was Beloved, richly influenced with 1970's sensibilities and a modern pop context.

"I was the kid growing up with the headphones on listening to every lick and reading the lyrics," Feliz said in a bio sent by the fair office. "I (re)discovered artists like the Commodores, Bill Withers and Nat King Cole. When I was in the studio making 'Beloved,' I told my producers I didn't want thirty guitars stacked on one track. ... I want to put one guitar sound on a song and find a way to make that one lick sound massive, the way those 70's artists were able to."



Hell's Belles will perform Saturday, Aug. 19 at 8:30 p.m. on the Saloon Stage.

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Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Jordyn Navloynski holds on tight as a sheep busts out of the starting gate in the 2022 fair.

Learn more at <https://southwestwashingtonfair.org>

- **Comedy Juggler Mark Wilder** — four times daily on the main Midway
- **Wool Busters** (mutton bustin' for kids) — 2, 4 and 6 p.m. on the north end of fairgrounds
- **Parrott Ambassadors** — 1, 3 and 5 p.m. inside the Expo Hall
- **Thursday through Sunday: All-Alaskan Racing Pigs** — noon, 3 and 6 p.m. in the fair office field

Please see a 2023 fairgrounds **map on page 8** and day-to-day **schedule on pages 9-14**

Amusement rides are open at the fair each day. Tickets are available for purchase online.



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2023 Southwest Washington Fair schedule

TUESDAY, AUG. 15

Kid's Day

Ages 6-12 get half-price gate admission

- 9 A.M.** Cavy fitting and showing at the Small Animal Building
- 9:30 A.M.** Rabbit fitting and showing contest at the Small Animal Building
- 10 A.M.** 4-H livestock judging at the New Judging Pavilion
Livestock judging contest at the New Judging Pavilion
Open Class sheep show at the Blue Pavilion
Machine embroidery demonstration ongoing until 2 p.m. in the Home Arts Building
- 11:30 A.M.** Opening ceremonies on the Community Stage

- NOON** 4-H and FFA dairy judging at the New Judging Pavilion
- 12:30 P.M.** Jubilee Chapel Dedication at the North End
- 1 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
4-H and FFA Poultry Judging Contest at the Poultry Barn
Photo composition workshop at the Photo Barn
- 2 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
Machine embroidery demonstration until 6 p.m. in the Home Arts Building
- 3 P.M.** Johnny Roquemore, a singer, on the Community Stage
Old School Gun School's "safety talk" on the Community Stage



6 p.m. Little Miss Friendly Ceremony on the Saloon Stage

Jared Wenzelburer / jared@chronline.com

Little Miss Friendly finalists in 2022 are pictured with the previous titleholder, Makayla Maynard.

- 4 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 4:30 P.M.** 4-H judging contest awards at the New Judging Pavilion
- 5 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 6 P.M.** Little Miss Friendly Ceremony on the Saloon Stage

Continued on PAGE 10

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Johnny Roquemore, a singer, on the Community Stage

Machine quilting demonstration until 10 p.m. in the Home Arts Building

- 7 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 8 P.M.** Beatdown Saints, a band, on the Saloon Stage
- Kynan Shane, a singer, on the Community Stage
- 10 P.M.** Fair closes



Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

From left, Gary and Pam Hodgson, Jim and Leah Keller, and Bev and Stan Keller smile for a photo at the fair.

Curtis Burghart, OD & Cooper Zurfluh, OD



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WEDNESDAY, AUG. 16

Senior Day / Elvis Presley Day

Ages 65 and over receive half-price gate admission and there will be Elvis-themed events throughout the day — Aug. 16 is the anniversary of Elvis' death

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY

Public presentations by 4-H members in the 4-H Hall throughout the day

- 9 A.M.** 4-H dairy, pack, meat goat fitting and showing at the Blue Pavilion
- 4-H and FFA market goat show (likely in the Blue Pavilion)
- 4-H and FFA market hogs and breeding/feeder pigs show at the New Judging Pavilion
- 10 A.M.** Machine embroidery demonstration until 2 p.m. at the Home Arts Building
- Dave Woodrum with the morning message on the Community Stage
- Cavy judging at the Small Animal Building
- Rabbit judging contest at the Small Animal Building
- 11 A.M.** Beef knowledge bowl in the 4-H Hall
- Heritage Kung Fu Demonstration on the Community Stage
- NOON** Senior Day Contests on the Community Stage
- 4-H market lamb show at the New Judging Pavilion
- 12:30 A.M.** FFA market lamb show at the New Judging Pavilion
- Old School Gun School's "safety talk" on the Community Stage
- 1 P.M.** Danny Vernon's "Illusion of Elvis" on the Saloon Stage
- Photo editing workshop at the Photo Barn
- Johnny Roquemore, a singer, on the Community Stage
- 2 P.M.** Soapmaking and color-tinting fabric demonstration until 6 p.m. at the Home Arts Building
- Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 4-H sheep fitting and showing at the New Judging Pavilion
- 3 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 4 P.M.** Johnny Roquemore, a singer, on the Community Stage
- 4-H poultry demonstration in the Poultry Building
- Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Saloon Stage
- 5 P.M.** 4-H and FFA replacement heifer show at the New Judging Pavilion
- Cougar Squares Square Dancers, adult dancers, on the Community Stage
- Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Saloon Stage
- 6 P.M.** Lewis County Rodeo in the Grandstands Arena with dance to follow
- Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Saloon Stage
- Machine quilting demonstration until 10 p.m. in the Home Arts Building
- 6:30 P.M.** Dairy Quiz Bowl at the New Judging Pavilion
- 7 P.M.** Sound of Swing Orchestra on the Community Stage
- 8 P.M.** Soul Searching Band & Roger Anderson as Elvis on the Saloon Stage
- 9 P.M.** Dancin' in the Dirt with Switchback band in the Grandstands Arena
- 10 P.M.** Fair closes

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THURSDAY, AUG. 17

- 9 A.M.** 4-H/FFA swine fitting and showing at the New Judging Pavilion
- 10 A.M.** Dave Woodrum with the morning message on the Community Stage
4-H goat judging contest in the Blue Pavilion
4-H garden judging contest in the 4-H Hall
Machine embroidery demonstration until 2 p.m. at the Home Arts Building
- 11 A.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
4-H/FFA swine fitting and showing at the New Judging Pavilion
4-H/FFA market steer show at the New Judging Pavilion
- NOON** KELA/KMNT Diaper Derby on the Community Stage
- 1 P.M.** 4-H sheep department

- games in the Blue Pavilion
Photo lighting workshop at the Photo Barn
Old School Gun School's "safety talk" on the Community Stage
- 1:30 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 2 P.M.** U.S. Army I-Corps Big Brass Sasquatch Band on the Saloon Stage
Rug weaving demonstration until 6 p.m. at the Home Arts Building
- 2:30 P.M.** 4-H goat costume contest in the Blue Pavilion
- 3 P.M.** 4-H/FFA market steer show at the New Judging Pavilion
4-H poultry demonstration in the Poultry Building
- 3:30 P.M.** Rabbit quiz bowl in the Small Animal Building
4-H/FFA junior livestock beef show at the New Judging Pavilion
Heritage Kung Fu demonstration on the Community Stage

- 4 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 5 P.M.** FFA dairy show at the New Judging Pavilion
Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 6 P.M.** Lewis County Rodeo in the Grandstands Arena (dance to follow)
Tangle Foot Cloggers, adult dancers, on the Community Stage
4-H/FFA large market Ring of Champions at the New Judging Pavilion
Machine quilting demonstration until 10 p.m. in the Home Arts Building
- 7 P.M.** 4-H Consumer revue on the Community Stage
- 8 P.M.** The Kingsmen, with Washington's official rock song, "Louie Louie," on the Saloon Stage

- Sean Lewis, The Western Drifter, a singer, on the Community Stage
- 9 P.M.** Dancin' in the Dirt with Steele Horses band in the Grandstands Arenas
- 10 P.M.** Fair closes

FRIDAY, AUG. 18

Military Appreciation Day

\$3 gate admission with valid military ID, \$5 with ID all other days

FFA Herdsmanship Awards will follow the Master Showmanship Show at the New Judging Pavilion

- 9 A.M.** 4-H dairy fitting and showing at the New Judging Pavilion
- 10 A.M.** Dave Woodrum with the morning message on the Community Stage
Machine embroidery, ice dye demonstrations until

Continued on **PAGE 12**



Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Elizabeth South walks with Bacon, a Yorkshire mix, alongside her brother Dalton and a pig named Trouble, at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds in Centralia last year.

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Continued from **PAGE 11**

- 2 p.m. at the Home Arts Building
- 10:30 A.M.** Old School Gun School's "safety talk" on the Community Stage
- 11 A.M.** FFA breeding sheep fitting and showing at the New Judging Pavilion
Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- NOON** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 1 P.M.** 4-H Cat judging contest in the Small Animal Building
Camera settings demonstration in the Photo Barn
Heritage Kung Fu demonstration on the Community Stage
- 2 P.M.** Soap making/rug weaving demonstration until 6 p.m. at the Home Arts Building

- 2:15 P.M.** U.S. Army I-Corps Big Brass Sasquatch Band on the Community Stage
- 3 P.M.** 4-H cavy quiz bowl in the Small Animal Building
4-H poultry demonstration in the Poultry Building
- Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 4 P.M.** Watermelon eating contest on the Community Stage
- 4:30 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 5:30 P.M.** Opening Ceremonies for Market Sale at the Judging Pavilion
Two-Town Tuners, barbershop music, on the Community Stage
- 6 P.M.** Junior Livestock Market Sale at the Judging Pavilion
Machine quilting demonstration until 10 p.m. in the Home Arts Building

- 7 P.M.** Southwest Washington Dance Center, youth dancers, on the Community Stage
Southwest Showdown Face-Off wrestling on the Saloon Stage
- 8:30 P.M.** Ministerio Inglesia De Dios, music, on the Community Stage
- 11 P.M.** Fair closes
- SATURDAY, AUG. 19**
Royalty Day
Honey tastings in the Ag/Floral Building
- 9 A.M.** Open Class beef show in the Dairy and Cattle Barn
- 10 A.M.** Electric Dance, youth dancers, on the Community Stage
Machine embroidery demonstration until 2 p.m. at the Home Arts Building

- Rabbit agility course demonstrations at the Small Animal Building, weather permitting
- 10:30 A.M.** 4-H rabbit costume contest in the Small Animal Building
4-H cavy costume contest in the Small Animal Building
4-H cat fitting and showing in the Small Animal Building
- NOON** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
- 1 P.M.** Monster Truck Nitro Tour in the Grandstands Arena
Landscape photography demo — Photo Barn
- 1:30 P.M.** Saturday afternoon jazz, "Funk Junkies" on the Community Stage
- 2 P.M.** Soap making / rug

Continued on **PAGE 13**

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weaving demonstration until 6 p.m. at the Home Arts Building

- 3 P.M.** Pie eating contest on the Community Stage
- 4-H poultry demonstration at the Poultry Building
- 4 P.M.** Mullet Contest on the Saloon Stage
- 5 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on the Community Stage
Rickety Rockers on the Saloon Stage
- 6 P.M.** Centralia Ballet Academy, youth dancers, on the Community Stage
Machine quilting demonstration until 10 p.m. in the Home Arts Building
- 7 P.M.** Monster Truck Nitro Tour in the Grandstands Arena
Kuykendall Family Music on the Community Stage
- 8:30 P.M.** Hell's Belles in concert on the Saloon Stage
- 9/10 P.M.** Comedy Hypnosis Show on Community Stage
- 11 P.M.** Fair closes

SUNDAY, AUG. 20

Family Day

Half-price gate admission for all ages

Hand quilting demos — Home Arts Building
Honey tastings in the Ag/Floral Building

- 10 A.M.** Winlock Dance Center, youth dancers, on the Community Stage
- 11 A.M.** 4-H cat quiz bowl in the Small Animal Building
- 11:30 A.M.** Dave Woodrum with the morning message on the Community Stage
- 12 P.M.** "Stars of Tomorrow" Talent Show on the Community Stage
- 1 P.M.** Demolition Derby in the Grandstands Arena
- 1:30 P.M.** INFUSED Fitness Dance, adult dancers, on the Community Stage
- 2 P.M.** 4-H large animal Master Showman contest at the New Judging Pavilion

Continued on **PAGE 14**



Emily Fitzgerald / emily@chronline.com

Cowboy hats are the headwear of choice at the Junior Livestock Auction during the 2022 Southwest Washington Fair.



Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Kids participate in the watermelon eating contest at the 2022 Southwest Washington Fair.



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Continued from **PAGE 13**

4-H cat costume contest in the Small Animal Building

Rebellion, a youth band, on the Community Stage

3 P.M. 90.5 KACS presents "Cochran & Company" on the Saloon Stage

Melody West presents Gospel music on the Community Stage

4-H poultry demonstration at the Poultry Building

4 P.M. Beef, swine and dairy herdsman/dairy quiz bowl awards at the Old Judging Pavilion

5 P.M. 90.5 KACS presents Jordan Feliz on the Saloon Stage

Danika Rozahnika & Benny Gilbert music on

the Community Stage

6 P.M. Krista Petersen, a singer, on the Community Stage

7 P.M. Closing ceremonies on the Saloon Stage

10 P.M. Fair closes

See you next year, at the 115TH SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON FAIR, Aug. 13-18, 2024!



Jared Wenzelburger /jared@chronline.com

Claire Hoel, of Centralia, smiles as she climbs a fence to get a better view of "Maddy the Jersey Cow" at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds in August 2022.

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Jared Wenzelburger /jared@chronline.com

From left, 2021 Little Miss Friendly, Makayla Maynard, and 2021 Miss Lewis County, Briana Rasku, smile for a photo together at the 2022 Southwest Washington Fair.

Business in the front, party in the back — Mullet Contest is coming back

By The Chronicle staff

Last year, for the first time, organizers of the Southwest Washington Fair introduced a mullet contest.

By popular demand, it's back and likely to stick around for fairs of the future.

Kicking off on Saturday afternoon at 4 p.m. on the Saloon Stage, age division-separated mullet competitors will reach for the title of best mullet.

Whoever can business-in-the-front and party-in-the-back the hardest, for each age bracket, will earn

prizes. The awards are yet to be determined.

"It was huge last year," said Pat Slusher Jr., a fair office employee. "That's on Saturday. You don't need to sign in to be in it, just show up."

Other contests this year will in-

clude a watermelon eating contest, pie eating contest, the Sunday talent show and daily contests for families on the Community Stage at 5 p.m., including categories for reddest hair, most freckles, best smile and who looks the most like mom or dad.



Photos by Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Participants rock crazy hair and outfits in the Mullet Contest at the 2022 fair in Lewis County.

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Onalaska woman to submit 100 entries in Southwest Washington Fair

OPEN CLASS HOME ARTS:

Misty Cline has spent the last 12 months canning, crocheting, sewing and making jewelry for the upcoming fair

By Isabel Vander Stoep

isabel@chronline.com

Submitting work to the county fair offers neither fame nor fortune.

But Misty Cline, 43, of Onalaska, feels that participating in the Southwest Washington Fair's open class home arts department has value. Not in Cline's pocketbook, but in her confidence, sense of community and ability.

For the 2023 Southwest Washington Fair from Aug. 15 to 20, Cline hopes to increase this value a hundredfold. By Aug. 9, the final day for open class home arts entries, she will have at least 100 creations to submit in the fair, and probably a few more.



Photos by Isabel Vander Stoep / isabel@chronline.com

Misty Cline, of Onalaska, shows off her creations to Jessie Erickson, assistant superintendent for the Southwest Washington Fair's open class home arts department at the fairgrounds in July 2023.

Cline has worked on her entries since Aug. 21, 2022 — the final day of last year's fair.

While expertise in the fine arts is

often obtained through elite schools and apprenticeships, the home arts are refined by working together, whether by helping a mother make raspberry

jam or by learning from someone at the fair who earned "Best in Show" for their pickled carrots.

Cline first submitted creations to open class home arts at the fair three years ago.

"I kept going more out of my comfort zone, trying new things. For me, it wasn't so much, 'Do I get the ribbon?' It was, 'This is something new that I'm trying,'" Cline recalled. "I'm going against the best in the county and I get expertise from the judges. Where my husband can be like, 'Oh, that's cute,' a judge can say, 'This is how to get better at it.'"

Over the last two years, Cline has compiled a binder full of judges notes, clips from the open class exhibitor's handbook and photos for crafting inspiration. Cline has creations in various home arts sub-departments. Exhibitors can submit quilting and wall hangings; clothing; knitting, crocheting and weaving; stitchery; home arts

Continued on PAGE 17

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From left, Jessie Erickson, Misty Cline, and Kathleen Ament, the superintendent for Southwest Washington Fair's open class home arts department, smile for a photo at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds on July 25th with 85 of Cline's creations.

Continued from PAGE 16

(such as handmade decor and home furnishings); baked goods and candy; canning; and table settings.

She is submitting mostly canned goods and crochet items. Cline's canned creations include raspberry honey butter, dried mushrooms, fruit rolls from her own apples, beets, pickled beans and much more. Some of those cans took more than five hours to yield a single batch, she said, and they will be judged solely on presentation and quality of the canning.

For the cozier side of home arts, she has baby sweaters, hats, blankets, stuffed animals, pillows and crocheted creatures. Cline is also submitting beeswax candles, handmade soap, tea kits, earrings and necklaces. Much of her work fits this year's insect theme: "Bee Friendly! Bee at the Fair!"

Lately, when she's around the county for vendor fairs and festivals, Cline said, she will encourage people to enter their home arts. Her husband, too, submits creations in the fair.

"Don't look at it as you're competing against me, compete against yourself. Do the best you can and see what happens," Cline said.

Home arts superintendent Kathleen Ament and assistant superintendent Jessie Erickson are hoping Cline's efforts will inspire others to

enter. Exhibitors don't have to create 100 or more entries either, the volunteers said. Just one is enough. This year, for the first time in at least the 20 years of Ament's volunteering for the fair, exhibitors will receive a ticket to any fair day of their choosing, regardless of how many items they entered.

"We are not judging on content, we are judging on proficiency," Erickson said, later pointing out Cline's Halloween-themed pillow and plans for skull-shaped cups on a Halloween table setting. "I love this because even though I'm not a Halloween person at all, it gives everybody who comes into the barn an idea like, 'Oh, I could do me.' It's not just all grandma doilies and lace, which is what a lot of the expectation is. I mean, we got a lot of great grandma lace, but still. ... We're really encouraging it because it's fun."

With the fair's system of judging, Erickson said, exhibitors really are competing against themselves until the work goes into division categories. Judges grade entries, take notes and award first, second and third place ribbons to everyone. Open class home arts judging is not open to the public.

Ament, 73, said most of the people who submit to the department are close to her age and are often delighted to pass down their skills. And Erickson, 41, said months of COVID-19



Misty Cline lays out more than 85 handmade items that she intends to enter into the Southwest Washington Fair's open class home arts department during an interview on July 25th.

lockdown also spurred a "renaissance" of home arts creators, spawning a "sourdough bread craze" and a larger community online of people posting DIY sewing and crochet projects.

There is also room for the little ones in the home arts building, Erickson said. Clay creations, potholders, friendship bracelets, homemade toys, beaded creations and many other popular kids' crafts have a place in the home arts, she said, whether they were made completely from scratch or from a Michaels craft store kit.

Open class also gives 4H and FFA students the opportunity to submit creations they made in their own time.

"You don't have to do what you see everybody else do," Cline said. "Do you. Find a pattern that represents you and be authentic and have fun with it."

Entry dates and times for the department are Tuesday, Aug. 8, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Home Arts/Community Events Building and Wednesday, Aug. 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., but exhibitors are encouraged to enter ahead of time through the online portal at <https://southwest.fairwire.com>, which allows organizers to plan out exhibition space.

Exhibitors can also submit to several sponsored contests.

Contest winners can receive special prizes, depending on the contest. Likewise, exhibitors of all kinds are in the running for winning "Best of Department," "People's Choice," the award for best 2023 Fair Theme submission, best of division and other categories.

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Changes at the fair this year: Rocks and rock-n-roll

By Isabel Vander Stoep
isabel@chronline.com

Besides the return of poultry and rabbits, both of which were absent from the 2022 Southwest Washington Fair due to animal illnesses spreading in Washington, the fairgrounds will have some changes worth checking out when the fair begins on Tuesday, Aug. 15.

In the entertainment categories, monster trucks and the All-Alaskan Racing Pigs will be back, both after a long hiatus.

On the Midway, there will be three new food vendors this year.

One is Pineapple Dole Whip, another, which serves meat, is called the

Twisted Pig. Also, newly-established Chehalis restaurant The Pasta Bowl will have a food booth.

The hobbies department is moving into the Exposition Hall with bigger displays, according to fair office employee Pat Slusher Jr.

On the other side of the Exposition Hall will be a rock, gem and mineral display, which fair organizers are hoping to develop into a department of its own.

“People are really fascinated by that stuff,” Slusher said. “This year they had promised me they’re going to have one thousand pieces of rock, gems and minerals on display.”

Lastly, for the first time, the fair will have an Elvis Presley themed day. Because Slusher said the recent Elvis biopic has raised a lot of conversations about the rock-n-roll “king,” he suggested an Elvis day on Wednesday, Aug. 16.

Then, Slusher said, he looked it up and realized Aug. 16 was the anniversary of the musical star’s death.

“I said, ‘That’s an omen, we’ve got to have an Elvis day,’” Slusher recalled.

“We’ve got Danny Vernon during the afternoon. And then, in the evening, we have another gentleman named Roger Anderson of the evening show. He is backed up by an eight-piece nightclub-type band that is fantastic. So it’s really a show.”

Photos by Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Lights and rides at night from the 2022 Southwest Washington Fair are seen from above.



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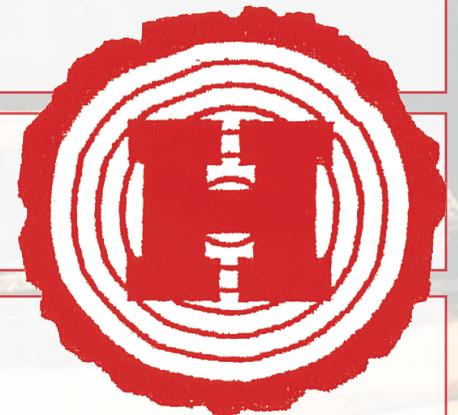
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Southwest Washington Fair: A Celebration Dating Back to 1877

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This brief history of the fair was first published in 2006.*

It all began in 1877, when Washington was still a territory. An association was organized for the purpose of promoting “the advancement of agriculture and to aid in developing the resources of Lewis County, which are mainly agricultural, and needing the stimulus of friendly competition to advance them beyond the first rudiments of agriculture which are generally found in a new country.”

On Nov. 21, 1882, the Lewis County Agricultural Association was incorporated and its fair was held in Chehalis on Oct. 6-9, 1891. Successive fairs, under the direction of the Lewis County Agricultural Association, were held until the early summer of 1907.

An item found in the files of the Lewis County Historical Museum reports the first fair was held in 1891 “somewhere in the vicinity of South Market Street in Chehalis about where

Fullers Market Basket store (was formerly) located.”

We learn from a 1987 item in The Daily Chronicle that certain harness and other horse racing enthusiasts were not satisfied with the fair as it was. They made many trips in the early 1900s to the state Legislature in Olympia, to persuade that body to provide funding for their dream of a racing venue and new fair facility here.

Their dream became a reality when, in 1908, the Legislature agreed to provide some funding for the fair while stipulating it be held between Chehalis and Centralia. The new fair was to serve a six-county area consisting of Lewis, Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Cowlitz and Pacific counties.

According to “Centralia: The First Century,” we learn that an option for 30 acres of land was secured for the new fair site from a Mrs. Somerville, for \$200 per acre. The amount was raised in equal shares by the two towns in less than 30 days; the option was taken up



Women pose with a large golden key during the Southwest Washington Fair in 1952.

and the deed secured.

Numerous buildings, including a grandstand and a half-mile racetrack, were completed in time for the first fair at the new site in late September of 1909, but all didn't go so smoothly.

“The weatherman did not cooperate with the first fair as it was deluged with five days of continuous down-pour. The rainy debut, however, did

Continued on **PAGE 20**

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A woman poses with a map of Lewis County during the Southwest Washington Fair in 1952. This image is a scanned negative from The Chronicle's archives, found by Elizabeth Hill in 2021.

Continued from **PAGE 19**

not dampen the fair's progress and it soon became known as an outstanding showplace and as the home of the finest harness horse track in the region," we read in the Aug. 13, 1982, The Daily Chronicle.

"Through the support of racing stables up and down the West Coast, trotters and pacers were able to compete at the fair's oval," the article went on. "Competition in the livestock departments stimulated interest in breeding fine cattle. Consequently, Lewis County and surrounding areas began flourishing as a source of excellent dairy and beef cattle for breeding purposes."

With its up-and-down financial issues, the fair was suspended in the late 1920s. In 1935, it returned, and continued to operate until the start of World War II. Little is known about this period or the specific reasons for the fair's closures.

The fair resumed operation after the war under the management of a Carl Hampe. He was followed by the noted

Arthur W. Ehret, who worked closely with the new fair board to renew the former prestige of the fair.

"Perhaps one of the outstanding accomplishments during Ehret's time was construction of a dike on the south portion of the grounds adjacent to Salzer Creek," we read in The Daily Chronicle, July 25, 1987.

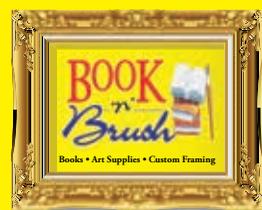
"The dike prevented the annual inundation of all the fair buildings, which were not built high enough to prevent flooding."

However, even with the dike, flooding was not prevented some years.

"The 1972 break in the dike resulted in flood damage to the fairgrounds of nearly \$500,000. Many of the damaged facilities were replaced and other buildings gradually modernized. The dike broke again in November 1986, however, with heavy water damage being sustained by the fair office. The office has been relocated to a building near the fairgrounds' south entrance."

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Twin Star Credit Union's "Stars of Tomorrow" talent show

By The Chronicle staff

Whether you're a Broadway talent scout or an everyday Lewis County resident looking for some high quality entertainment, the Southwest Washington Fair's talent show is the place to be at noon on Sunday, Aug. 20 on the Community Stage.

All acts are vetted to ensure they are suitable for family audiences. There is no fee to participate, but winners of the event may take home some money, sponsored by TwinStar Credit Union.

Cash prizes totaling \$500 are split between three separate age brackets for performers: "kids" ages 6 to 12, "teens" ages 13 to 19 and "adults" age 20 and over.

Applications can be submitted online at southwestwashingtonfair.org/events/contests or in the fair office at 1930 S. Gold St., Centralia.

"It's a competition, but it's a very friendly competition," said talent or-

ganizer Pat Slusher Jr., in a previous interview with The Chronicle. "It's just nice for people to have the opportunity to go out there and do it. The audience loves it ... Anything that's a talent is welcome."

Slusher has a hand in organizing nearly every fair event, but the talent show is his favorite. Exhibits come and go, he said, but the talent show has been around for as long as he can remember.

The wide range of local talent never fails to amaze, Slusher said, and he called himself especially fond of the event because he is "an old showbiz ham."

Past performances have included a keyboard player who Slusher said played "like a wizard," gospel singers, magic shows, dances, cloggers and tap dancers.

Performances are typically pretty mainstream, Slusher said, noting children often enjoy singing or dancing to their favorite popular songs. But



Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Mark Wilder smiles for the camera while juggling at the 2022 Southwest Washington Fair.

anyone with any talent is welcome, so long as it is fair appropriate.

"I never tell anyone to go into show business, but I thought some of them could turn pro," Slusher said of past

performers.

For more information, call the fair office at 360-740-1495 or visit southwestwashingtonfair.org/events/contests.

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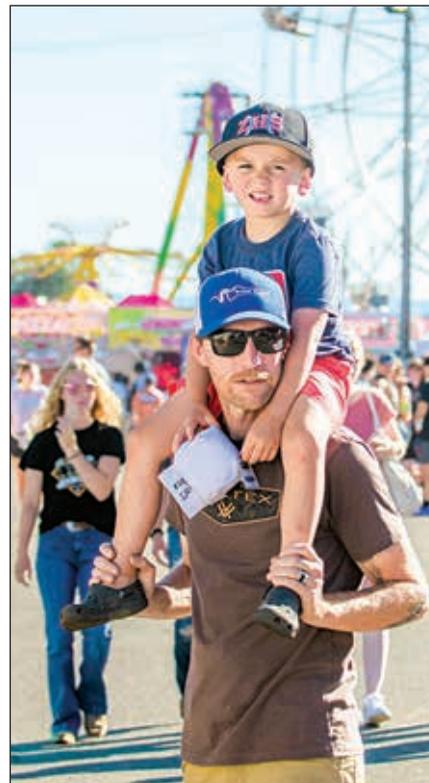
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Discount admission days are scheduled throughout the fair. See the calendar for more details.

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Photos by Jared Wenzelburger / jared@chronline.com

Above, left: James Enlow holds Drew, 5, on his shoulders at the fairgrounds in Centralia last year.

Above, right: Geronimo Gomez, 3, smiles while winning a carnival game at the fair in 2022.

Below: Dalton South, 12, of Pe Ell, smiles for a photo with Bacon, a Yorkshire-mix, at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds before the start of the fair in August of 2022.



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