2020 Fayette Co. Fair to be held with precautions

Building capacity reductions, social distancing to be in place

By Martin Graham
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Editor’s note: The information in this article was gathered during an interview on Tuesday, June 30 at the Mahan Building. Some details may have changed and updated information can be found online at www.recordherald.com or http://fayettecofairoh.com./

The Fayette County Senior Fair Board shared information concerning the upcoming Fayette County Fair — including various guidelines about COVID-19-related social distancing.

“We are going to take the recommendations given to us from day to day from the state of Ohio and the local health department,” Doug Marine, senior fair board vice president, said. “We are recommending distancing and will set up our grandstand to meet the standard of cutting 50 percent of the capacity. We will have sections blocked off and we will make the necessary announcements. We will have continuous encouragement — signage — for people to social distance. Masks are always recommended, but are not required. The situation changes from day to day and in a week it could be different, but for right now that is where we are at. This moment is a moving target, I don’t want to make anything sound like this is it and it’s etched in stone. We will adapt to the current guidelines because we are unsure of what could come down. The governor could say tomorrow that masks are required when you are out in public.”

Senior Fair Board President Bob Schwartz said the board looked at the Pickaway County Fair — which occurred June 20-27 — for an idea of how to move forward, including the standard of only 50 percent capacity in buildings. That fair also included sanitation stations, announcements to continue social distancing and more.

“I think they were doing 50 percent capacity in buildings,” Schwartz said. “They watched the amount of people going into the enclosed buildings. There was no cap on their attendance outside, they just announced social distancing and continued to recommend wearing masks. I am not privileged to the figures, but who I was talking to thought it was pretty close to what they have in the past in terms of attendance.”

Marine also took time to talk about the food vendors — saying that all have been invited back — and mentioned the local health department will inspect and license as they have for years.

“Our food vendors will all be expected to follow the guidance of the local health department,” Marine said. “We want to have a good relationship with the health department so we are working with them on a constant basis and listening to their advice. They have been involved for the last four months. We are also listening to the state of Ohio, the Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Fair Managers Association. So, we have a wealth of information from all of those agencies as we prepare.”

Leigh Cannon — Fayette
County Public Health Deputy Health Commissioner — also commented recently about how they are planning to approach the fair.

“The food vendors are required to follow the restaurant and bar public health order,” Cannon said. “We understand there will be some constraints for various reasons — and things will be mostly the same with the food license — but we are going to make sure they follow those health orders. These change on the daily though and we will continue to make sure they are following the most up to date orders. Technically they will be required to wear a mask, they are considered employees and all employees right now are supposed to wear a mask, but we do have to take into consideration the heat and the weather, and have common sense if the danger outweighs the benefit and we will go from there. That is something that isn’t addressed in the order, but we are going to check on the heat and such. I think our role is going to be different this year at the fair — we are going to have more of an enforcement role and I don’t like to use that word. This is going to be a really challenging event to try and keep people safe and we take our jobs very seriously here, so we will be enforcing the order to the best of our ability. But with that said we have the full cooperation in working with the Fayette County Senior Fair Board and local responders, so it is not like we are going to be out trying to be the big bad guy, but we are going to be looking for ways that we can encourage social distancing, make sure there is hand sanitizer and all of those safety procedures are there.”

Finally, one change Marine and Schwartz wanted to highlight is admission. Last year, the price of admission was $10 and included a ride ticket as well as entry to the fair and its various events. This year, the senior fair board decided to lower the price of admission to $6, but it will no longer come with a ride ticket. Additionally, no weekly passes or wristbands will be sold this year, and the lunch ticket is still available at $10 for patrons who wish to come grab food from the fair but not stay all day. As long as the patron leaves within an hour of purchasing the ticket they will receive the full refund. All daily sales will be through the gate.

“The gate admission has been lowered and includes admission to the grounds,” Marine said. “This year rides are extra. For a ride band for the day, it’s an additional $12 dollars for those who want to ride, or they can now also just buy ride tickets to ride a specific ride on the grounds. This gives fair-goers more flexibility to have the chance to enjoy the rides even if they only want to ride one of them. In the past we have always done it so you pay for all the rides if you want to ride or not. This is something the board has expressed an interest in continuing as we go forward. What we did before was kind of an outdated system. Most county fairs nearby are what we call a ticket fair like this, rather than a pay one price.

Currently, the 2020 Fayette County Fair is expected to be held from July 19-25 and will include the usual junior fair shows and sales with changes. Among the changes is a move from multiple sale days to one single sale day on Saturday, July 25 at 9 a.m. No animals will enter the ring and champions will take photos at a backdrop off to the side of the sale ring. Exhibitors will have one time through the sale ring. Currently, the order of the sale is dairy steer, beef steer, dairy feeder, meat goat, dairy goat, chickens, turkeys, rabbits, lambs and hogs.

Fair hours are Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and rides will operate daily from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Stay with the Record-Herald for more coverage of the Fayette County Fair. Check out more information from this interview in a future edition paper.

Reach Martin Graham at (740) 313-0351 or on Twitter @MartiTheNewsGuy.

Record-Herald file photos

Several contestants joined the Cows and Costumes contest alongside Snow White in 2019.

Madison Johnson shows alpaca judge Robin Ridenour the teeth of her project during the Showman of Showmen competition last year.
Harness racing will be one of the featured attractions at the 2020 Fayette County Fair.

Racing is set for Wednesday, July 22, beginning at 4:30 p.m. and Saturday, July 25, starting at noon.

The Record-Herald spoke to Dr. Bob Schwartz, president of the Fayette County Senior Fair Board, about the entertainment at the grandstand.

“We have altered the program, slightly, not a lot,” Schwartz said. “We're going to have our 2 and 3-year-old stake races and the Fayette County Classic.

“We are cancelling the so-called overnights this year,” Schwartz said. “We're just trying to cut down on the crowd.

“We'll have a full complement of the 2 and 3-year-old stake horses,” Schwartz said. “We will have the Fayette County Classic on Saturday (July 25). I would anticipate between 10 and 12 races on Wednesday evening and about the same (number of races) on Saturday afternoon.

“We are going to have spectators and there will be parimutuel wagering,” Schwartz said. “We will not have the Community Night at the Races on Wednesday evening. We’re not going to have that this year.

“We're trying to stay within the guidelines,” Schwartz said. “We want people to come out and enjoy the races. We want to respect the social distancing. Masks are encouraged, but not required.”

For all of the grandstand attractions, Schwartz said officials of the fair want to keep the capacity at no more than 50 percent.

“Families can sit together,” Schwartz said. “We would like to have a six-foot spacing between the families. We have plenty of room. There will be a grandstand attraction every night.

“Everything is a go, unless there are different guidelines set forth by the governor,” Schwartz said. “At this point in time (Schwartz spoke with the paper on July 6), we’re planning on having a normal fair with the new procedures that are in effect. I think that it’s going to work very well.

“We certainly invite everyone to come out and enjoy the fair,” Schwartz said. “We know these are different times, but, I think we owe it to the youth in our Junior Fair to try to put some form of normalcy on. We’re going to try to be as safe and careful as we possibly can be.

“There are going to be a lot of hand-sanitation stations,” Schwartz said. “We have a contractor that is going to disinfect and clean the restrooms on a regular basis. We encourage everyone to come out and enjoy the fair. As I said, masks are recommended, but not required. We're just trying to follow the protocols that have been recommended.

“Our charge, as far as the Ag Society, is to try and hold as near to normal a county fair as we can,” Schwartz said.

In addition to being the Senior Fair Board President, Schwartz is also speed superintendent, that is, the person in charge of harness racing at the fair.

Other daily attractions will include:

**Sunday, July 19 -** Celebration Ceremony at McDonald's Grandstand at 2:30 p.m.

**Monday, July 20 -** Ribbon Cutting at the Gate at 7 a.m.

Rodeo at 7 p.m.

**Tuesday, July 21 -** NTPA Truck and Tractor Pull at 7 p.m.

See RACING | 11
Two candidates compete for fair queen

By Martin Graham
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The 2020 Fayette County Queen’s Tea was held on June 27 with the commodity queens and two fair queen candidates.

The annual celebration at the Mahan Building on the Fayette County Fairgrounds that is usually used to narrow down the field of applicants for fair queen was held in the early afternoon with members of the Senior Fairboard. Although originally believed to be three candidates, the field has shrunk and the court will consist of Aubrey Schwartz and Victoria Waits. Both young ladies took time to talk about how excited they are to be a part of the process.

“It is definitely sad in one sense as I will miss 4-H when I go off to college, but it means so much to have my last year — even with COVID-19 — it means a lot because of what I am aging out of and what the whole experience means to me,” Waits said. “4-H and FFA have been my life and the lessons they have taught me and things I have learned have just meant so much more. There are going to be skills I have learned that I will never forget. So without this fair, I would not have been the person I am today. If I become the fair queen I would be very honored to represent our Fayette County Fair.”

“This is definitely different, I am so excited to be doing this because growing up at the fair you always want to see the fair queen, so I am really excited despite everything going on. This is something that is somewhat normal for once, although it is not the exact circumstance we want, at least it will be as normal as possible,” Schwartz said. “(For the younger kids) definitely don’t be afraid to take an opportunity. It will be great and it is what you make it — not what others tell you to make of it.”

The third potential candidate, Laikyn Hughes, was recently accepted as the 2020 Fayette County Pork Queen and therefore will not be on the Fair Queen Court. Hughes — daughter of Jeff and Candy (Tiger) Hughes — is a 2020 Miami Trace High School graduate. As a member of the Barn Busters 4-H Club, she currently holds the office of president and has held numerous other offices such as vice president, secretary, treasurer, news reporter, health officer and safety officer. She is currently serving on the Junior Fair Board and the Food and Consumer Science Board where she is serving her second term — this year as secretary.

“We had most of the commodity queens there and we had four wonderful judges and they spent a lot of time with the two candidates,” Fayette County Fair Queen Coordinator Lisa Schwartz said. “They present took a photo with the candidates during the event. Pictured (L to R): 2020 Fayette County Pork Queen Laikyn Hughes, 2020 Fayette County Horse Queen Madison Johnson, 2020 Fayette County Small Animals Queen Libby Aleshire, Fair Queen candidates Victoria Waits and Aubrey Schwartz, 2020 Fayette County Goat Ambassador Abigail Mick, 2020 Fayette County Dairy Princess Taylor Moore and 2020 Fayette County Alpaca Princess Brandelyn Jenkins.

Lisa Schwartz said, “They could spend a lot of time with both young ladies and got to know them very well. Both
2020 Fayette County Commodity Queens

Goat Ambassador Abigail Mick

Alpaca Princess Bandelyn Jenkins

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Lamb & Wool Queen Emily Mosier. Not pictured is Horse Queen Madison Johnson.

Dog Ambassador Eva Smalley

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Beef Queen Natalie Lindsey

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2020 Fayette County Commodity Queens cont.
2020 Fayette County Junior Fair Adjusted Schedule

SUNDAY, JULY 19
7 a.m. - Livestock move-in begins
8 to 11 a.m. - All poultry birds must be moved into barn. All meat chickens and turkeys will be leg banned and weighed. All rabbits must be moved into barn and identified. Meat pen rabbits will be weighed.
2:30 p.m. - Junior Fair Opening Ceremonies at Grandstand (no admission charge).
Hogs may arrive after 5 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 20
7 a.m. - All livestock in place
7:30 a.m. - Market Hog weigh-in at Hog Pavilion
8 a.m. - Market Beef/Feeder weigh-in at Cattle Barn
8:30 a.m. - Junior Fair Rabbit Showmanship at Small Animal Barn. Junior Fair Dog Showmanship, Obedience & Rally at Dog Show Area
10 a.m. - Market Goat weigh-in followed by Market Lamb weigh-in at Sheep Barn
1 p.m. - Junior Fair Swine Breeding Show at Hog Pavilion (released after show)
4 p.m. - Poultry Showmanship at Small Animal Barn.

TUESDAY, JULY 21
8 a.m. - Junior Fair Horse Show at Horse Arena
8:30 a.m. - Junior Fair Rabbit Meat Pen Show followed by Breeding Rabbit Show at Small Animal Barn
9 a.m. - Junior Fair Market Beef & Showmanship at Sales Arena
10:30 a.m. - Junior Fair Swine Showmanship at Hog Pavilion
12 p.m. - Junior Fair Feeder Show, Breeding Beef & Showmanship at Sales Arena
3 p.m. - Junior Fair Dairy Goat Show & Showmanship followed by Junior Fair Boer Goat Show & Showmanship at Sales Arena.
5 p.m. - Finals Swine Showmanship at Hog Pavilion.
Horses, beef cattle, rabbits and goats designated to go home or are breeding are released following the completion of their shows.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22
8 a.m. - Junior Fair Market Hog Show at Hog Pavilion.
Junior Fair Market Poultry Show followed by Breeding Poultry Show at Small Animal Barn.
9 a.m. - (Tentatively) Goat truck scheduled (sale & truck animals to be loaded out)
11 a.m. - Junior Fair Dairy Feeder Show & Showmanship followed by Market Dairy Beef Show & Showmanship at Sales Arena.
5 p.m. - (Tentatively) Steer truck (sale & truck animals to be loaded out)
9 p.m. - All market hogs remaining in stalls slated to go home must stay, until load out of truck is complete.
Market hogs, poultry, and dairy feeders/steers designated go home are released following the completion of their shows.

THURSDAY, JULY 23
8 a.m. - Alpaca move-in and show (released after show)
10 a.m. - Junior Fair Breeding Sheep Show followed by Market Lamb Showmanship and Market Lamb Show at Sales Arena.
12 p.m. - All hog stalls must be cleaned out
5 p.m. - Junior Fair Olympics at Hog Pavilion

FRIDAY, JULY 24
9 a.m. - (Tentatively) Sheep truck (sale and truck animals to be loaded out)
10 a.m. - Junior Fair Dairy Show at Sales Arena
5:30 p.m. - Showman of Showmen at Hog Pavilion/Sales Arena

Dairy breeding are released following the completion of their show.

SATURDAY, JULY 25
9 a.m. - Junior Fair Sale - Exhibitors will have one time through the sale ring and all animals that go through the sale are terminal except feeders and hogs. Order of the sale: dairy steer, beef steer, dairy feeder, meat goat, dairy goat, chickens, turkeys, rabbits, lambs and hogs.

Daily attractions at the 2020 Fayette County Fair

Sunday, July 19
Celebration Ceremony at McDonald’s Grandstand at 2:30 p.m.

Monday, July 20
Ribbon Cutting at the Gate at 7 a.m.
Rodeo at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, July 21
NTPA Truck and Tractor Pull at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, July 22
Harness Racing at McDonald’s Grandstand at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 23
“Nashville Crush” performing at 7 p.m.

Friday, July 24
Stock Truck Pull at McDonald’s Grandstand at 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 25
Jr. Fair Livestock Sale at 9 a.m. (Bidder numbers available at 7 a.m. at Sales Office, Sales Arena)
Fayette County Classic Harness Racing at McDonald’s Grandstand at noon
Smash It Demolition Derby at McDonald’s Grandstand at 7 p.m.
**Racing**

From page 4

**Wednesday, July 22** - Harness Racing at McDonald's Grandstand at 4:30 p.m.

**Thursday, July 23** - “Nashville Crush” performing at 7 p.m.

**Friday, July 24** - Stock Truck Pull at McDonald’s Grandstand at 6 p.m.

**Saturday, July 25** - Jr. Fair Livestock Sale at 9 a.m. (Bidder numbers available at 7 a.m. at Sales Office, Sales Arena)

Fayette County Classic Harness Racing at McDonald’s Grandstand at noon

Smash It Demolition Derby at McDonald’s Grandstand at 7 p.m.

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**Tea**

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ladies interviewed well from what I have been told, and I have no idea who the winner is. The judge put the name of the winner in an envelope and we will find out during the opening ceremony, which I encourage everyone to come to.”

The 2020 Fayette County Fair Queen will be crowned at the opening ceremony of the 141st Fayette County Fair on Sunday, July 19 at 2:30 p.m. at the Grandstand with no charge for admission.

This year’s event theme for the opening ceremonies is “The Rip Roaring 20’s at the Fayette County Fair.”

The information in this article was provided by queen coordinator Lisa Schwartz. Stay with the Record-Herald for more coverage of the search for the 2020 Fayette County Fair Queen and coverage of the Fayette County Fair from July 19 through 25.

Reach Martin Graham at (740) 313-0351 or on Twitter @MartiTheNewsGuy.

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We at Summers Funeral Home want to wish all fair participants good luck at the 136th Fayette County Fair. May all of your hard work pay off for you. Remember, it is not about winning but about the hard work you have put in to get where you are.

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Daily Attractions

Sunday
Celebration Ceremony at McDonald’s Grandstand (4-H Seniors and Queen Crowning) 2:30 p.m.

Monday
Ribbon Cutting at the Gate 7:00 a.m.
Rodeo at McDonald’s Grandstand 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday
NTPA Truck and Tractor Pull at McDonald’s Grandstand 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday
Harness Racing 4:30 p.m.

Thursday
Nashville Crush at McDonald’s Grandstand 7:00 p.m.

Friday
Stock Truck Pull at McDonald’s Grandstand 6:00 p.m.

Saturday
Jr. Fair Livestock Sale 9:00 a.m.
(Bidders numbers available at 7:00 a.m. at Sales Office, Sales Arena)
Fayette County Classic Harness Racing at McDonald’s Grandstand 12:00 noon
Smash It Demolition Derby at McDonald’s Grandstand 7:00 p.m.

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Daily Attractions

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday