

# CELEBRATE THE RED, WHITE & BLUE IN 2022



★ AUGUST 16 - 21 ★

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## ★ The Great Outdoors Center Has a Successful First Year ★

The Great Outdoors Center delighted fairgoers of all ages in its first year. Following updates to both the interior and exterior of the building by our hardworking summer grounds crew under the tutelage of Scott Seykora, the Great Outdoors Center did not disappoint! From Paul Bunyan to the Raptor Center, from Barry Benjamin and Happy Trails Pet Store to Minnesota Pheasants-Steele County and everywhere in between, the Great Outdoors Center educated and entertained fairgoers. Special thanks to the Owatonna Foundation for their support of the Great Outdoors Center updates.



Steele County Free Fair Barker



## ★ Annual Meeting Held ★

The Annual Meeting of the Steele County Agricultural Society was held on Thursday, November 4, 2021, at the Steele County Community Center.

Steele County Free Fair Manager Scott Kozelka presented his annual report as did treasurer Tim Arlt. Coming out of the pandemic and a successful 2021 fair find the society to be in solid financial shape. The following incumbents were elected to serve a 3-year term: Dan Deml, Mike Hamilton, Sandy Jirele, Doug Meier and Roger Noble. At the November Steele County Free Fair Board Meeting, following the annual meeting, Dan Deml was re-elected as President, Wayne Steele as Vice-President, and Tim Arlt as Treasurer of the Board. Tracy Ignaszewski was appointed the Extension Service Member on the Board.

## ★ We Brought Back the Fun in 2021 ★

There are no words to say other than **“THANK YOU”** to everyone who helped **“Bring Back the Fun in 2021”** here at the Steele County Free Fair. After receiving the final word that we could have the fair, everyone jumped in to get the show rolling. Our staff, SCFF Board of Directors, grounds crew, superintendents and volunteers ALL were and are amazing. People ask how the fair was; my answer, **“We had a GREAT fair but if we could have had our Friday night grandstand Craig Morgan concert, we would have had a PERFECT fair. I am very happy with a GREAT fair.”**

We lost two great pillars of the Steele County Free Fair in Dick Reinhardt and Jim Grass as we prepared for the fair this summer. Dick’s over 55 years here at the fair can’t be replaced. I will miss his smile and his laugh along with ALL his fair knowledge. We also lost Jim Grass on the 14th of July, one day before Dick’s passing. Jim not only was a past fair board member, but he was also a great supporter and volunteer of 4-H and FFA programs. I know both Dick and Jim are smiling and telling everyone in heaven about the Steele County Free Fair.

Thank you to ALL the great organizations that helped us this past year, with your help we were able to make the fair experience amazing for all our guests. Thank you to the cities of Steele County: Owatonna, Blooming Prairie, Medford, and Ellendale. Thank you to the County of Steele: Commissioners, Staff and Highway Department in helping us to complete all the fair projects in time for the fair. Thank you to the City of Owatonna Park &

Recreation and Street Department for all your help.

I would also like to THANK the amazing spouses and families of our staff, grounds crew, and board of directors. Without their help and support over the past years, we couldn’t have moved as easily from not having a fair in 2020 to this year having a fair. These members of our Steele County Free Fair family don’t wear a special shirt or name tag, yet they are always supporting us in everything we all do to make our fair successful year after year. We couldn’t do it without them! I am thankful that we are one big Steele County Free Fair family.

*“I am thankful that we are one big Steele County Free Fair family.”*

I am sure I am missing someone but, again, from the bottom of my heart THANK YOU to everyone.

Please enjoy all the articles in this Barker. As winter and the holiday season are upon us, I know they will all warm you up and get you ready to **“Celebrate the Red, White and Blue in 2022”**. Happy Holidays and I will see you at the fair, August 16-21, 2022.

*Scott Kozelka – SCFF Manager*



## ★ Lifesaving Award ★

Lifesaving Award presented to Steele County Sheriff’s Deputy Shaun Robbins

Sheriff Lon Thiele presented Deputy Shaun Robbins with the Lifesaving Award at the September 9, 2021 meeting of the Steele County Free Fair Board of Directors. Deputy Robbins performed the Heimlich maneuver on a fair guest on August 21, 2021 while on duty at the fair and saved the guest’s life. Thank you, Deputy Robbins, for your quick action!

Special thanks to the Sheriff’s Department for keeping our fair safe.

# ★ News, Notes and Fun Facts from the 2021 Fair ★

**ROCKS AND MINERALS DEPARTMENT**  
had 20 exhibitors and 212 entries



## STEELE COUNTY FREE FAIR EVALUATIONS WINNERS

### Rides

- Best Lit Ride:* Pharaoh's Fury
- Cleanest Ride:* State Fair Fun Slide
- Best Kids Ride:* SamBa Balloons
- Best Major Ride:* Alpine Bobs

### Food

- Most Unique Product:* Lobster Taco – Depot Food Caboose
- Best Lit Stand:* Pickle Palace
- Best Bargain:* Maui Wowi Hawaiian
- Most Colorful Product:* Cookie Dough Sundae – Minneapple Pie
- Best Appearance Stand:* Texas Bayou Billy Tea
- Best New Product:* Shrimp Po-Boy - Come & Get It
- Best Service:* Jersey Jo's Cheese Steak

### Games

- Best Lit:* Midway Gridiron Game
- Best Prizes:* Toy Box Game
- Best Kids Game:* Pick A Little Ducky Game



## KIDS PEDAL PULL RESULTS

Age 4 8 contestants  
1st – Weston from Blooming Prairie  
2nd – Wesley from Kasson  
3rd – Gus from Rochester

Age 5 13 contestants  
1st – Akel from Kasson  
2nd – Jacob from Owatonna  
3rd – Ethan from Ellendale

Age 6 19 contestants  
1st – Benjamin from Faribault  
2nd – Garrett from Faribault  
3rd – Noah from Owatonna

Age 7 17 contestants  
1st – Rayfe from Zumbro Falls  
2nd – Isaac from Ellendale  
3rd – Easten from Eyota

Age 8 16 contestants  
1st – Henry from Owatonna  
2nd – Noah from Owatonna  
3rd – Allie from Owatonna

Age 9 11 contestants  
1st – Weston from Ellendale  
2nd – Bradley from Kenyon  
3rd – Layli from Eyota

Age 10 14 contestants  
1st – Maya from Savage  
2nd – Tristan from Kenyon  
3rd – Miley from Owatonna

Age 11 10 contestants  
1st – Ian from Eyota  
2nd – Jacob from Medford  
3rd – Jenna from Millville

## HOME BREW RESULTS

- Grand Champion: Robert Schmidt – Berliner with Fruit
- Second Place: Walt White - Munich Helles
- Third Place: Don Hettinga – APA
- Label Contest: Abel Tekeste

## TOP 5 RIDES ON THE GOLDSTAR MIDWAY

1. Century Wheel
2. Flying Bobs
3. State Fair Slide
4. Cuckoo House
5. Sizzler

## CHURCH SERVICE COLLECTIONS

A total of \$1437.00 was collected during the church services held in the Village of Yesteryear and in Fair Square Park on Sunday of the Fair. This donation will be divided evenly to support Community Pathways and the Owatonna Ministerial Association.

## MUTTON BUSTIN' CONTESTANTS

Ten youth showed off their Mutton Bustin' skills during the Bulls N Barrels grandstand show on Saturday evening of the fair.

- Age 4: Korie
- Age 5: Grant and William
- Age 6: Ainsley, Alarick and Nash
- Age 7: Beau
- Age 8: Breckyn, Noah and Ryker



# ★ News, Notes and Fun Facts from the 2021 Fair ★

## STEELE COUNTY FREE FAIR & OWATONNA PEOPLE'S PRESS AMATEUR TALENT SHOW WINNERS

The following performers placed first in their division at the talent show held on Sunday afternoon of the fair:

*Preteen:* "The Dazzlers"- Isley Smith and Clara Boyd from Owatonna - dance and gymnastics

*Teen:* Lainie Rahn from Medford – dance.

*Lainie qualified for the Teen Division Finals at the Minnesota State Fair!*

*Open:* Nate Chesney from Owatonna – guitar and vocal



## OPEN CLASS PHOTOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT RESULTS



*Gladys Wavrin Award for Best Photo:*  
Jennifer Anderson, Faribault  
Photo: Kids on a Tube



*People's Choice Award:*  
Scott Cody, Owatonna  
Photo: Milky Way at Vanyon Reef

## CULINARY ARTS OPEN CLASS AWARDS

*Supreme Ruler* was Jennifer Anderson from Faribault. This award is presented to the individual who has the highest points for all ribbons and awards received.

*Junior Supreme Ruler* was Anna Cox. This award is given to the Junior who has the highest points for all ribbons and awards received in the Junior Divisions.

*Culinary Creation for Adults Champion Award* was Mary Schenk.

*Culinary Creation for Juniors Champion Award* was Khloe Wencl.

*Sensational Salsa* winner was Tara Choudek.

## ★ Steele County Free Fair and KDHL Southern Minnesota AG Ambassador of the Year ★

## BIKE WINNERS

8 bikes were given away as part of the Profinium Inc. Saturday Ride Special during the fair. This year's winners were:

- Able from Albert Lea, MN
- Mark from Madison Lake, MN
- Zarion from Mankato, MN
- Andrew from Oronoco, MN
- Kristen from Oronoco, MN
- Kailee from Owatonna, MN
- Dawn from Rochester, MN
- Lori from Rochester, MN



*From left to right: Jerry Demmer, Nancy Hovel and Ryan Buck*

Nancy Hovel from Cannon Falls was recognized as the Steele County Free Fair (SCFF) and KDHL Southern Minnesota Ag Ambassador of the year Saturday evening during the Open Class Holstein Show at the SCFF. Jerry Demmer, Clarks Grove and Ryan Buck, Goodhue were recognized as finalists. Many years ago the SCFF and KDHL began sponsoring this program as a way to promote agriculture. Three finalists are recognized every year at the SCFF, all three of whom are truly winners.

## Steele County Free Fair Barker



## ★ Sharon Klein Retires ★

19 years ago Sharon Klein came into the Steele County Free Fair Office, as she would say, “Knowing nothing about the fair and how it operates behind the scenes.” 19 years later she has left her mark on the Steele County Free Fair and we are forever grateful. Her many friends and fair acquaintances will truly miss her.

Sharon shared that she will miss the many good times, laughs and, during the tough times like the deaths of fair managers, Elmer Reseland and Jim Gleason, the love and support of the fair family.

“My time at the fair are years in my life I will never forget. I want to thank everyone for the cards, gifts, and warm thoughts on my retirement. It is an adjustment, but life is good. Go out and enjoy it.”

*“Life is good. Go out and enjoy it.”*

Sharon Klein, you will be missed and will always be loved and supported by your fair family. Thank you for all you have done. See you at the fair!

## ★ United Way of Steele County and Community Pathways ★ Recognized

Annette Duncan, President of the United Way of Steele County, and Nancy Ness, Co-Executive Director of Community Pathways, were recognized at the October 7, 2021 meeting of the Steele County Free Fair Board of Directors. United Way and Community Pathways not only helped with the Jason Pritchett concert honoring our hometown heroes Wednesday evening of the fair, they also volunteered in the grandstand throughout the fair. Steele County Free Fair Manager, Scott Kozelka, and President, Dan Deml, presented each organization a check for \$2500.00 with thanks and appreciation from the board.

## ★ Memorials and Donations ★

### DONATIONS RECEIVED

- B & D Greek
- BMJ Delights – Susan Christie
- Bruce & Rhonda Bennett
- Joseph & Donna Speltz
- Old Town Bagels – Mark and Stacy Wilson
- Steele County Kids Safety Camp
- Steele County Master Gardeners
- Sharon West

### MEMORIALS RECEIVED

#### *In Memory of Jim Grass*

- Bruce & B.J. Busho
- Dan & Vickie Deml
- Sandy Jirele
- Sharon Klein

#### *In Memory of Stephanie Radel*

- Owatonna High School Classmates – donation of tree and plaque

#### *In Memory of Richard “Dick” Reinhardt*

- Bruce & Rhonda Bennett
- Bruce & B.J. Busho
- Dan & Vickie Deml
- Grant & Denise Duffy
- James & Carole Ebeling
- Mike Hamilton
- Sandy Jirele
- Sharon Klein
- Dan & Jody Wolters
- Marlyn & Virginia Zacharias

#### *In Memory of Jim Lage-Father of Denise Duffy*

- Dan & Vickie Deml
- Sharon Klein

#### *In memory of Averyl Heiserman-Mother of Grace Steele*

- Bruce & BJ Busho
- Dan & Vickie Deml
- Sandy Jirele



**Steele County Free Fair**  
 PO Box 650  
 Owatonna, MN 55060



★ [scff.org](http://scff.org) ★



## ★ Spotlight on Sponsors ★

We are so thankful for our amazing sponsors! Without each of them, we would not have a fair! When we share that the Steele County Free Fair is just that, a free fair, people from other counties and states wonder how we do it. The answer is easy. We are fortunate to have wonderful support from our many sponsors. If you were a sponsor in 2021, thank you! We look forward to partnering with you again in 2022. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor in 2022, please contact us at 507-451-5305 or [steelecountyfreefair@scff.org](mailto:steelecountyfreefair@scff.org). Please remember to support our sponsors as you are out and about in our Steele County communities.

## ★ Steele County Free Fair Named United Way Community Campaign Leader ★

The Steele County Free Fair Board of Directors and Staff welcome the opportunity to partner with the United Way of Steele County as this year's Community Campaign Leader. Scott Kozelka, Steele County Free Fair Manager, is looking forward to working side by side with the United Way in support of another successful campaign. Watch for Steele County Free Fair Board Members and Staff at United Way and community events this year!

★ **SCFF OFFICE INFORMATION** ★

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If you would like to receive your Barker Newsletter by e-mail, please contact us and we will be happy to add you to the list.