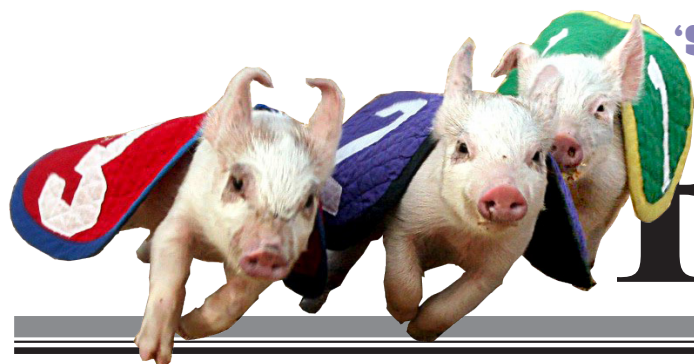




Rock County Star Herald

FAIR PREVIEW

July 22, 2021 Page 1B



Benson farm gets Century Farm status

Two-year-old Gus Benson, pictured with his dad, Eric Benson, may be the fifth generation farmer on the family's 138-year-old Rock County Century Farm.

... See page 3B



4-H intern learns, works at fair

Anna Rose is this year's summer intern with the Rock County Extension 4-H Program. She brings experience as a Jackson County 4-H member to the job.

... See page 6B



Seasoned racer returns to Enduros

The 2021 Rock County Fair Enduro will mark the 11th time that longtime local racer Jasmine Kalass has competed in the popular hometown event.

... See page 8B



Beef Ambassador participates in Q&A

Samantha Moser, Hills, is the 2021 Rock-Nobles Cattlemen's Association Beef Ambassador. The Star Herald reached out to her and asked a series of questions about her role with beef.

See page 7B



Tractor pull features red-vs-green rivalry

The Great Plains Tractor Pullers will bring 60 pullers to the Saturday night event at the Rock County Fairgrounds grandstand. Club president Mike Nieuwboer said he expects to see some friendly rivalry between John Deere and International brands.

... See page 9B

2021 Rock County Farm Family of the Year



Mavis Fodness photo/0722 Fair Tab 2021 Knobloch Farm Family

The Dallas and Amy Knobloch family is the 2021 Rock County Farm Family of the Year, recognized by Extension for dedication to ag. Pictured are Tory, Amy, Claire, Dallas and the family dog, Lucy. The Knoblochs live north of Hills where they maintain a cow-calf herd and finish 3,500 to 4,000 head of cattle annually.

Knoblochs come together around cattle

By Mavis Fodness

Whether it's working with neighbors or showing at local fairs, the Dallas and Amy Knobloch family is passionate about agriculture.

Their dedication was noticed by Extension Committee members, who select a farm family each year to be ag ambassadors at the local county fair.

This year the committee chose the Knoblochs — Dallas and Amy, and their children, Tory and Claire — to represent Rock County as Farm Family of the Year.

"Their passion for the agriculture industry is evident and something to be admired," said Extension Committee member Anna Haas.

"They volunteer for numerous agricultural organizations and do it with eminent humbleness."

This spirit of humility comes from experiences learned on and off the farm.

Before Dallas returned to the family farm north of Hills in 2002, he earned an agronomy degree from the University of Minnesota — Twin Cities after graduating from Hills-Beaver Creek High School.

The big city lifestyle wasn't for him. "Life is always busy — something is always going on — in a big city," he said. "I think here is a happy medium. I feel Rock County is a great place to live and raise a family."

The quieter life, however, can be isolating, he noted, and potentially lead to negative attitudes developing toward farming as a career.

"I see people struggling to stay positive in agriculture," Knobloch, 45, said. "Gaining customer service experience prior

to farming has really helped in building relationships and a different perspective to live life on the farm."

Dallas first worked in the agronomy department at the Rock Rapids elevator, rising to manager before joining his father, Larry Knobloch, in the third-generation family farm operation.

Twenty years later Dallas and Amy have built a beef finishing and cow-calf operation that annually supplies between 3,500 to 4,000 head of cattle to consumers.

"I'm thankful for the passion to agriculture and the work ethic taught by my parents," Dallas said.

The same work ethic continues to be passed on in the Knobloch family, with each playing integral roles in the farm's

Knoblochs Farm Family/see page 11

Ag Society brings enthusiasm, caution to Rock County's return to local fair in 2021

By Mavis Fodness

Preventive measures are being put into place to curb the coronavirus spread among the thousands who typically attend the annual Rock County Fair.

The local ag society, which organizes the event, received funding from the Rock County Commissioners recently along with a grant through the Laverne Area Community Foundation.

Touch-free faucets and hand dryers are being installed in the restroom facilities.

Cases of hand sanitizer, towels and cleaning supplies are also being stockpiled for use during the four-day event.

Handwashing stations will be located in each building on the fairgrounds, and easier-to-sanitize plastic picnic tables are replacing the current seating options made from wood.

"We are really trying hard to have a safe fair," said Ag Society President Adam Kinsinger.

Last month commissioners approved a \$41,074 request from the Ag Society. Commissioner Gary Overgaard, who serves on the society board, abstained from the vote.

The requested supplies and equipment have been ordered. Work has begun installing the new preventive measures.

"Our goal is to have it fully implemented — pending any shipping delays," added Lee Sells, Ag Society vice president.



Mavis Fodness photo/0722 Fair Tab 2021 Ag Society Board

The Rock County Ag Society organizes the annual county fair at the end of July. Officers for the 2021 event include Keri Hansen, secretary; Robert Remme, treasurer; Lee Sells, vice president; and Adam Kinsinger, president. They're pictured at the fairgrounds south entrance.

Commissioners paid the request from the most recent federal coronavirus response program. Rock County received the first of two \$908,000 allocations in June. The county has until 2024 to spend

the funds.

The fair board has also allotted \$2,500 to pay a cleaning crew during the fair.

Portable handwashing stations were purchased with the \$2,300 LACF grant.

Ag society adds day to 2021 Rock County Fair

... Pet a goat, walk through livestock barns, watch pigs race for oreos, listen to music on the patio, get something from the eat stand, have a dish of ice cream. Ride some carnival rides ...

By Adam Kinsinger, Rock County Ag Society president

The 2021 Rock County Fair is about to kick off, and let me tell you we are excited.

Last year's cancelation was a tough call to make, but all that did was fuel our passion to make this year's fair one of the best fairs yet.

Some of you may have noticed some work going on at the grounds.

The board has worked on improving some of the structures, including the old ticket booth by the north entrance. We are turning the boarded-up building into an open, covered area to sit in. The building wasn't usable and has sat boarded up for years. We wanted to use that space while saving a piece of history.

Keeping up with the buildings and maintaining the grounds is something the fair board works very hard on every year.

Along with the big projects, the touch-up painting and tree trimming seem to never end.

But the feeling of taking a step back and looking over the grounds while the fair is in full swing — and seeing the people filling the grounds — makes it all worth it. We want to make sure we have a good foundation so the fair can go on for many years.

Minnesota as a whole takes pride in its county fairs.

However, organizing a county fair is no small task. The hours spent researching, contacting, finding funds and lining up vendors and attractions for the fair is a yearlong task.

There are some county fairs that are struggling. Some are getting smaller because of the increase in costs and lack of funding.

Rock County is a county that takes pride in its fair. The response from community members and businesses in our county is second to none.

After last year I think everyone feels we need this bit of normalcy.



Keeping up with the buildings and maintaining the grounds is something the fair board works very hard on every year. ... But the feeling of taking a step back and looking over the grounds while the fair is in full swing — and seeing the people filling the grounds — makes it all worth it.

— Adam Kinsinger,
Fair Board president

Rock County Ag Society President Adam Kinsinger, pictured in 2020 at the fairgrounds, said he and the board are excited to bring an additional day and several new options for family entertainment and activities to the 2021 Rock County Fair.

Another reason our fair is successful is because of the volunteers of the fair board.

These men and women are rock stars! They all bring something to the table and have the same goal in mind. For me personally, I am thankful for the friendships I have made while being on the board.

This year's fair is going to be great!

There will be something for everyone. The grandstand events are always a hit, with bringing back the tractor pull on Thursday evening.

The bean bag tournament, a free

community supper and free band take place Friday evening. Saturday has the fan favorite enduro race to finish off the week.

4-H will be there in full swing! I can't wait to see all the projects and animals.

The pride of our community members shows in the open class exhibits.

Plus, you never know who you might see walking around the grounds — a lion looking for his courage with a walking scarecrow, a pirate named Jack Sparrow.

Go pet a goat and see a pig with her

babies. Or watch pigs race for treats!

Come and sit on the patio and listen to some music while enjoying some food from the eat stand or maybe a dish of ice cream. Ride some carnival rides.

There is so much to do this year we've added another day to the fair!

In past years the official start of the fair was Thursday.

This year we are starting Wednesday to give everyone a chance to come and enjoy.

I am excited for this year's fair because fair time is my favorite time of the year. It's going to be great to see everybody come together again.

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Springwater Township couple start new generation on family Century Farm

Coming home

Benson farm has been in the family 138 years, now has ‘Century Farm’ status

By Lori Sorenson

Two-year-old Gus Benson doesn’t yet understand the history of the farm where he lives and plays, but if the legacy continues, he’ll be the fifth generation of Bensons to farm the homestead in western Rock County.

His dad, Eric Benson, and his grandpa, Tim Benson, will be recognized during the Rock County Fair next week for operating an official Minnesota Century Farm.

The quarter section — 160 acres — in Springwater Township has been farmed by members of the Benson family for 138 continuous years, dating back to 1883.

“I just want to show appreciation for the generations before me,” said Eric, who turned in the Century Farm paperwork in 2021.

“I’m especially grateful for my dad and my grandpa for the opportunities I have.”

When asked how it feels to be continuing the Benson legacy as a fourth-generation farmer on the homestead, Eric said, “It feels like quite a bit of responsibility to keep it going.”



Eric Benson, the fourth generation farmer on the Benson Century Farm, keeps a tight hold of Gus’s hand after chasing the toddler across the yard. He said he hopes to pass the farming tradition to the next generation.

“I just want to show appreciation for the generations before me.

I’m especially grateful for my dad and my grandpa for the opportunities I have. ... It feels like quite a bit of responsibility to keep it going.”

— Eric Benson, 2021 Benson Century Farm

Homestead officially certified on April 5, 1883
Nels Benson is listed as the original family owner. He traveled from Norway

in 1873 at 27 years old and filed a claim to Section 30 of Springwater Township. The homestead certification was dated April 5 1883.

In the spring of 1877, Nels and his new bride, Esthru (Johnson), began making the homestead their home. As told in the Rose History of Rock and

Pipestone counties, the work involved “transforming it from a barren, trackless prairie into a land of fruitful acreage.”

The couple built a house in those early years (around 1900) and started a family.

They had eight children, including Bert and Ethel, who took over the farm operation in 1936.

Neither married, and both lived on the home place.

Bert Benson is listed as the owner from 1936 to 1970, and his sister, Ethel Benson, from 1970 to 1974.

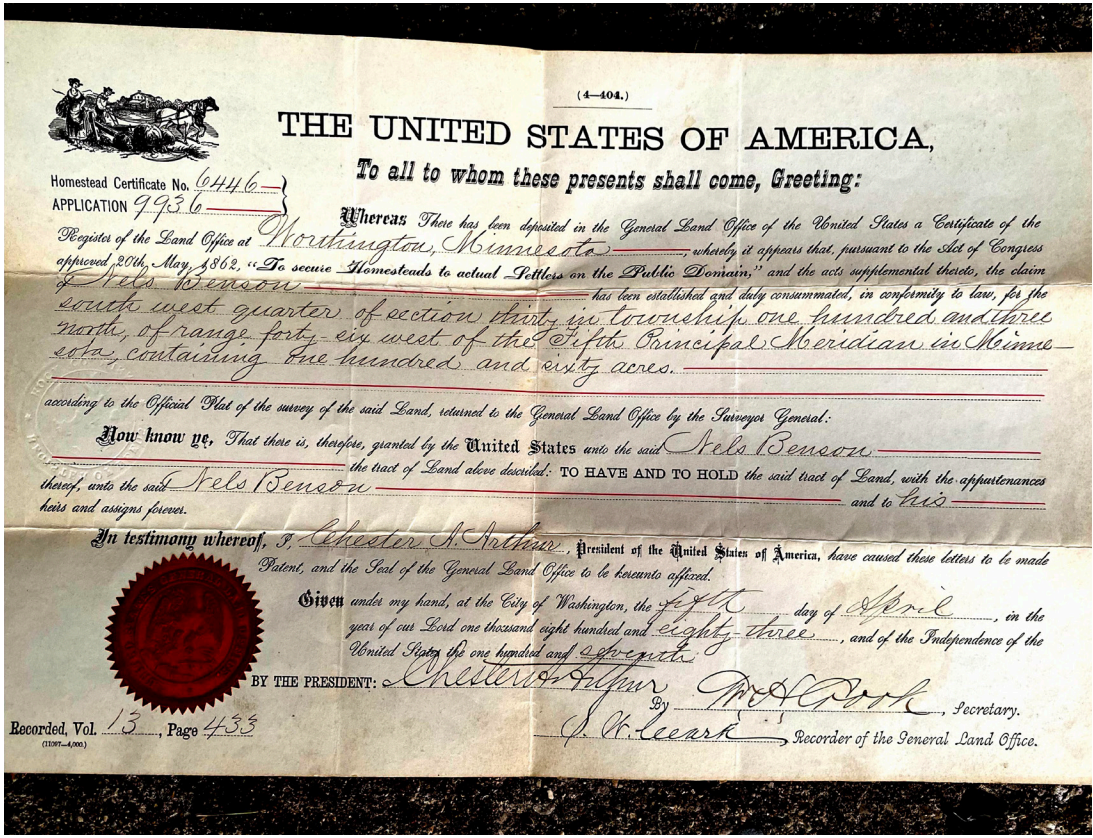
During that time, the farm produced hogs, cows, chickens, corn, alfalfa and small grains, and it was also under the brother-sister partnership that the house was remodeled in 1955. The project included a new basement and a “substantial addition.”

Ethel sold the farm in 1974 to Nels and Gladys Benson, who had lived just a mile down the road.

Nels was the son of Ethel’s brother, Arthur, and the Benson farm was listed in Gladys’ name from 1974 to 2020.

Nels and Gladys remained on their own farm, and their son Tim moved to the Benson homestead in 1976 after earning

Century Farm/see page 4B



Adria Benson holds 4-week-old Nels, who was born June 21 with his twin sister, Josie. At left is the homestead certification dated April 5, 1883. Nels Benson traveled from Norway in 1873 at 27 years old and filed a claim to Section 30 of Springwater Township. The Benson farm has been continuously farmed by family members for 138 years.

Benson Century Farm photos and story by Lori Sorenson



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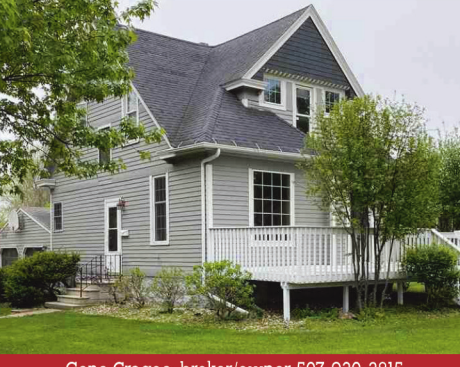


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Benson farm in Springwater Township recognized as Century Farm/continued from page 3B

his ag degree at Canby Technical College.

Tim and JoEllen continued raising livestock and crops — corn, soybeans, alfalfa and small grains, and they had three children, Kelly (now in Mankato), Katie (in Harrisburg) and **Eric**, who graduated from Hills-Beaver Creek High School.

Eric earned his ag degree at South Dakota State University, Brookings, and joined the farming operation, which included custom cattle feeding.

In 2010 the Bensons pivoted to grain farming only and replaced the original homestead barn with a 60-by-120 machine shed.

Planning for the future

Eric and his wife, Adria, were married in 2017 and moved to the home place in 2018 when Tim and JoEllen moved from the farm to an acreage on Highway 23 several miles away.

They now have 4-week-old twins, Nels and Josie, who joined their brother, Gus, 2, on June 21.

Eric said it’s hard not to think of their future and possibly passing on the Benson farming tradition.

“That’s the ultimate goal, but farming is volatile, especially lately,” he said. “But we’re established, and I would like to think we can keep farming.”

Tim said moving from the homestead doesn’t mean he’s retiring — he farms with



Two-year-old Gus Benson doesn’t yet understand the history of the farm where he lives and plays, but if the legacy continues, he’ll be the fifth generation of Bensons to farm the homestead in western Rock County. He recently became big brother to a set of twins, Josie and Nels, born on June 21. (Lori Sorenson photos)



Tim Benson holds 4-week-old Josie, who was born on June 21 with her twin borther, Nels. Eric Benson filled out the paperwork this year for the Benson family farm to become recognized as a Rock County Century Farm. The family members date back to 1883, not long after Nels Benson immigrated from Norway at age 27.

Eric and is half owner of the Benson century farm.

But he said the move has offered some perspective.

“For 42 years we lived on the farm place,” he said. “When you live where you work, you’re never done. Now, after moving, I’m glad we did it. And I’m glad for Eric.”

He acknowledged that operating a century farm hasn’t always been on his mind, but he said it matters.

“I hope I have a grandchild who can farm it someday,” he said. “And that was my dad’s thought — that his grandson could, too. ... If he bought a

piece of ground, he’d wonder about it.”

Tim said he’s been working with the family farm long enough to understand that some sacrifices and investments are made in faith — that they’ll one day benefit the next generation.

“You’re probably not going to

Proof of 100 years of Family Ownership:		
Name	Years of Ownership	Relationship to Original Owner
Original Family Owner: Nels Benson	1883-1936	Great Great Grandpa
Next Owner: Bert Benson	1936 – 1970	Great Great Uncle
Next Owner: Ethel Benson	1970 – 1974	Great Great Aunt
Next Owner: Gladys Benson	1974 – 2020	Grandma
Next Owner: Eric Benson & Tim Benson	2020 – Present	Father/Son Tim is my Dad



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The original Benson home was built around 1900 (two photos at left) and remodeled in 1955 (above) to include an addition and a new basement. Below is the current Benson home in western Rock County where Eric and Adria Benson are now raising their three small children.

see the long-term return for yourself, but your reward is your pride and satisfaction in passing it along,” he said.

Recognized at the fair

The Bensons will be recognized at 6 p.m. Friday, July 30, under the tent on the fairgrounds during the 2021 Rock County Fair in Luverne.

Eric said he’s looking forward to having his ancestors honored for their work on the Benson farm, and he’s proud to be continuing the tradition.

“I’m lucky to be in this situation,” he said. “To be living here on the original homestead after 138 years and farming it. It doesn’t get any better than that.”

The Minnesota State Fair and Minnesota Farm Bureau are recognizing 124 Minnesota farms as 2021 Century Farms. Each of the honored farms has been in continuous family ownership for at least 100 years and

“You’re probably not going to see the long-term return for yourself, but your reward is your pride and satisfaction in passing it along.”

— Tim Benson,
2021 Benson
Century Farm

consists of at least 50 acres. Information on all Century Farms will be available at the Minnesota Farm Bureau exhibit during the 2021 Minnesota State Fair. A database of all Minnesota Century Farms is also available at fbmn.org.



Eric Benson has a word with 2-year-old Gus, who staged a “sit down” in opposition to going indoors for supper. Above are Tim and JoEllen Benson (left), Eric and Adria Benson, 4-week-old twins Nels and Josie, 2-year-old Gus and the family dog, Tammy. They’ll be recognized next week at the Rock County Fair for their Benson Century Farm. (Lori Sorenson photos)

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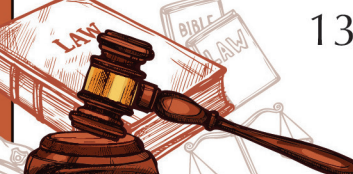


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Summer intern shares lessons learned through 4-H

Rock County
4-H intern
Anna Rose
assists with
program and
duties at fair

By Mavis Fodness
Anna Rose learned three life lessons as a 4-H'er in Jackson County — goal setting, determination and perseverance.

Now as this summer's 4-H program summer intern in Rock County, Rose wants local youth to embrace opportunities the organization presented her when she was a member.

"I want to empower 4-H'ers to capitalize on opportunities that are going to set them up for success after their 4-H career has ended," she said.

Rose said she found success in photography projects and set a goal to win grand champion at the county fair.

"It took years to achieve this goal, but I did finally win the category in 2017," she said.

Her journey began before she was an official 4-H member.

As a Jackson County Central kindergartner, she was introduced to 4-H by high school students who visited her classroom as part of the 4-H program recruitment.

"I honestly don't remember what they said, but I do remember receiving a small 4-H pin and I'm sure



Mavis Fodness photo/0722 Fair Tab 2021 4-H Intern

Anna Rose is this year's 4-H summer intern with the Rock County Extension 4-H Program. Rose, who was a Jackson County 4-H member, will assist with this year's Rock County Fair.

information to share with my parents," she said.

"I went home and told my mom I wanted to be in 4-H, and the rest is history."

She spent 14 years in 4-H, the longest possible term in the program.

The daughter of Mark and Kerri Rose was a member of the Enterprise Earners beginning as a first-grader. Her parents still farm north of Alpha.

Through the years in 4-H, Rose served in several different officer positions and was on the county's 4-H Federation Board.

Throughout her 4-H career she participated in general projects including foods and nutrition, quilting, crafts and fine arts, home environment, self-determined and citizenship.

Photography, however, captured her interest the most.

"In Jackson County and Minnesota in general, photography is a huge and very competitive category," Rose said.

She spent each 4-H year taking pictures of animals and nature. The best part of the project was choosing four photos (Jackson County's quota) that best represented the year's work.

"I would order my photos from my least favorite to favorite and identify the skills I learned in the past year as I prepared to talk with the judge," Rose said.

Her hard work and perseverance were also rewarded with a purple ribbon at the Minnesota State Fair.

"I am forever grateful for my time in 4-H. More and more each day, I realize that I am who I am because of 4-H — I don't think I have the words to accurately describe what the 4-H program has meant and done for me."

It was the highest ribbon placing possible for general projects, awarded by her 4-H peers using a conference judging format.

"My experience judging at the State Fair was incredible," she said.

Rose is a senior at Augustana University in Sioux Falls. She is working on a double major in communication studies/business and marketing with a minor in entrepreneurship.

As a 4-H intern, Rose assists the local program director with summer programming including the upcoming Rock County Fair.

"I am forever grateful for my time in 4-H," she said.

"More and more each day, I realize that I am who I am because of 4-H — I don't think I have the words to accurately describe what the 4-H program has meant and done for me."



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Q&A with the beef expert



Mavis Fodness photo/0722 Fair Tab Q & A Beef Ambassador
Samantha Moser gives a grin to the crowd during the Jubilee Days Parade in Hardwick on June 26. Moser threw beef sticks to spectators.

Meet Samantha Moser, Rock-Nobles Cattlemen Beef Ambassador

Samantha Moser, Hills, is the 2021 Rock-Nobles Cattlemen's Association Beef Ambassador. The Star Herald reached out to her and asked the cattlemen representative a series of questions about herself and the role she plays for the local organization.

Please introduce yourself.

My name is Samantha Moser and I am the daughter of Stuart and Karin Moser. I am the oldest of four children in our family. My younger siblings are Cody, Jack and Hailey.

We live on a family farm between Hills and Beaver Creek and I will attend Hills-Beaver Creek High School in the fall as a senior. I am involved in volleyball, basketball, trap shooting, math league, knowledge bowl, student council, FFA and 4-H.

I work at Sunshine Foods in Brandon and also help cater. In my free time, I like to spend time with family and friends, bake and sew.

Describe your and/or your family's involvement in the beef industry.

My family and I are heavily involved in animal agriculture. My dad and grandpa have a feeder-to-finish feedlot. I love to help work cattle! Typically,

I wanted to be the local beef ambassador because I am very passionate about animal agriculture and I felt as though this was an excellent opportunity to share my love and excitement with the public beyond my involvement in FFA and 4-H. I like meeting local producers and hearing their stories and learning from their experiences.

I help process and vaccinate the new cattle when they arrive.

My brothers and I also have a couple steers that we raise to show at the county fair. This work includes feeding, walking, washing and other duties to prepare them for the fair.

Along with feeding cattle, my family also raises pigs. I love to help out in the nursery! I am usually a part of the vaccination team. I also help with chores on the weekends and loading the feeder pigs into the finisher.

Why did you want to become a beef ambassador?

I wanted to be the local beef ambassador because I am very passionate about animal agriculture and I felt as though this was an excellent opportunity to share my love and excitement with

the public beyond my involvement in FFA and 4-H. I like meeting local producers and hearing their stories and learning from their experiences.

What are some of the duties you have completed as ambassador?

As the ambassador I have participated in three local parades in Luverne, Hills and Hardwick.

I also helped at the Rock Nobles Cattlemen's Beef Tour. This month I will be at the Rock County Fair assisting with the Cattlemen's Beef Feed and the Beef Show.

What other activities are you involved in?

As I mentioned, I am involved in both FFA and 4-H. I am the president of the

Blue Ribbon 4-H Club and vice president of the Hills-Beaver Creek FFA Chapter. Both organizations promote animal agriculture through hands-on experiences and educational opportunities.

Through 4-H I show market beef at the county fair and in FFA I am a member of the general livestock team.

What is the one thing the public should know about the beef industry?

I think that it is very important for those who are not involved on a day-to-day basis to understand the dedication, care and hard work that goes into beef production.

I also believe that consumers should understand the pride producers take to ensure that all of their animals have proper nutrition and daily care to make sure that each and every animal is kept healthy and thriving, to ultimately provide a safe, nutritious, delicious and affordable protein source to feed the world.

What are your future plans?

My plans are to continue to be an active member of the local 4-H club and FFA chapter. As of now my future plans upon graduation are to attend SDSU to pursue a career in nursing and continue helping on the family farm.

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Seasoned racer returns to track for 2021 Enduro event

Jasmine Kalass and her brother, uncles team up to make racing a family affair

By Brennen Rupp

Earnhardt, Petty and Waltrip are all names that are synonymous with racing. In Rock County, Arends and Kalass are racing royalty.

Jasmine Kalass will be one of the many racers that will compete in the Rock County Fair Enduro on Saturday, July 31.

“It’s always fun racing in my hometown,” Kalass said. “It typically gets most of my family to come watch me race.”

The 2021 Rock County Fair Enduro will mark the 11th that Kalass has competed in the hometown event.

It’s an event that she grew up watching from the grandstands. It’s now come full circle for Kalass, as she will aim to take home the checkered flag for the first time in 2021.

“My goal is to finish the race without any issues,” Kalass said. “If all goes well,



Jasmine Kalass poses for a picture with her pit crew following a race. They are (from left) Spenser Kalass, Terry Kalass, Jasmine Kalass, Don Kalass, Terry Hamann. (Submitted photo)

hopefully I can win the race.”

For Jasmine and her family, racing is a team effort that she said has brought them closer together.

Her father, Terry Kalass, used to race. Her brother, Spenser Kalass, is

currently racing, and her uncle, Don Kalass, also used to compete.

“My dad used to race the enduros and my brother races as well,” Kalass said. “My brother races stock cars. We used to go to Rock Rapids and watch Anthony Mann

when I was a kid.”

Every racer loves the thrill of the competition and the adrenaline rush they get while in the car. For Kalass it’s also the time spent with her family.

“It’s just so much fun,” Kalass said. “I also love spending time with my dad,

uncle and brother. It’s also always enjoyable to spend time with the fans that come to see me compete.”

Kalass has enjoyed successful seasons on the Enduro circuit the past two summers, coming in second place in the point standings in 2020 and 2019.

“I’ve had many Top Five finishes and Top 10 finishes,” Kalass said.

“I’ve also gotten second place in points for the LSR Enduro series the past two years.”

The Enduro event starts at 7 p.m. Saturday, July 31, in the grandstand.

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Great Plains Tractor Pullers bring red-vs-green rivalry to grandstand

By Lori Sorenson

Tractor pulling is known as “the world’s heaviest motorsport,” with the goal being to determine the strongest machine based on how far it can pull a heavy load down a track.

Mike Nieuwboer, Kenneth, is president of the Great Plains Tractor Pullers and is bringing the sport to the Rock County Fair next week.

As the featured Thursday night grandstand event of the fair, pulling will start at 6:30 p.m. with an expected 60 or more entrants on deck to compete.

Spectators will enjoy the roar of engines, smoke billowing from exhaust pipes and front tires lifting off the dirt track, but Nieuwboer said drivers enjoy testing their skills under the hood.

“I build it and work on it, and I get to run it,” he said, “These are really souped-up machines.”

Nieuwboer has been competing in tractor pulls for over 14 years and said there’s nothing quite like pushing a modified vintage tractor engine to capacity, but he also enjoys the good-natured competition among drivers.

Especially when it comes to red versus green.

“It’s going to be a lot of red stuff,” he said about next week’s pull. “I don’t pull the green ones.”

But he said he’s hoping to see some John Deere tractors at the track, and he’s betting his red tractor against some of his friends’ green ones.

Nieuwboer will be pulling with a 40-year-old International 1206, but he and Brian Bergman, also from Kenneth, have been working on an International 1066. It’s the same model that Bergman’s grandpa, the late Irvin Bergman, farmed with.

Nieuwboer said he’s also hoping to see legendary local pullers like Junior DeJager, brother to John Deere tractor



Spectators in the Rock County Fair grandstands Thursday night will enjoy the roar of engines, smoke billowing from exhaust pipes and front tires lifting off the dirt track, but Mike Nieuwboer, Kenneth, said drivers enjoy testing their skills under the hood.

“I build it and work on it, and I get to run it,” he said, “These are really souped-up machines.”

Nieuwboer has been competing in tractor pulls for over 14 years and said there’s nothing quite like pushing a modified vintage tractor engine to capacity, but he also enjoys the good-natured competition among drivers.

collector and restorer Bill DeJager, Steen.

And he’s challenging Eugene “Pucky” Sandager, Hills, to bring his restored John Deere 6030 to the tractor pull at the fair.

“We’re calling it a ‘west side vs east side’ competition,” Nieuwboer said. “And it will be red vs green.”



He said most of the pullers committed to Thursday’s event have worked on their engines for a long time and are experienced competitors on the track.

However, he encourages first-timers to give it a try, even if it’s just to see how their machinery stacks up.

“Anyone can do it,” he said. “Anybody’s welcome to show up and pull.”

The way a tractor pull works, tractors are hooked up to a sled like a flatbed truck trailer with wheels at the back and a sled at the front.

A moveable mass of up to 65,000 pounds starts at the back of the sled over the wheels. As the sled is pulled, the weight moves forward and closer to the vehicle making the entire piece more difficult to pull.

Drivers use their own tactics to gain the most ground. Some drag the weight slowly and steadily, while others rev up and blast their front wheels off the ground in an attempt to overpower the weighted sled.

The average feet a tractor has dragged a “sledge” is 300 feet, depending on engine modifications.

The Great Plains Tractor Pullers include pullers from the tri-state area, and members pulling at the fair will need to be certified in order to accumulate points for the season.

Tickets for the grandstand event at the fair cost \$10 for adults and \$3 for kids 8 and younger.

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Keepers of the Sacred Tradition of Pipemakers to demonstrate, educate

By Lori Sorenson

Among the entertainment and demonstrations at next week's Rock County Fair will be the Keepers of the Sacred Tradition of Pipemakers from Pipestone.

The group was formed in 1996 by local Native Americans and tribal leaders to protect their culture and educate the public about the nearby pipestone quarries.

According to Keepers treasurer and secretary Rona Johnston, the group's presence in Luverne will be no different.

"We're trying to create a better understanding among people of different cultures," she said. "There are 586 different tribes and villages in the United States, and each of them have their own language and culture."

She also said that unique Native American culture has steadily faded through the generations, and she said appearances like the one at the Rock County Fair offer an opportunity to share traditional Lakota stories, celebration, dance and music.

The Keepers of the Sacred Tradition of Pipemakers will be at the fair from 4 to 8 p.m. daily Wednesday, Thursday, Friday



The Keepers of the Sacred Tradition of Pipemakers will be at the Rock County Fair from 4 to 8 p.m. daily Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Pictured are (from left) Bud Johnston, Rona Johnston and Cama Johnston.

Rona Johnston said daily demonstrations will include storytelling, dream catcher making, pipestone carving and the opportunity for attendees to create art with pipestone.

The dance (Cama at left) and storytelling demonstration will be from 7 to 8 p.m. Friday night only.

and Saturday.

Johnston said daily demonstration will include storytelling, dream catcher making, pipestone carving and the opportunity for attendees to create art with pipestone.

The dance and storytelling demonstration will be from 7 to 8 p.m. Friday night only.

According to the Keepers website, the organization works with local Native American organizations to provide goods and resources to local Indian reservations, as well as with schools and prisons to help people understand tribal culture.

The goals of the group are:

- to archive the histories, stories, styles and uses of pipes by Native Americans.
- to bring together spiritual leaders, teachers, storytellers and artists to share their knowledge to the public.
- to conduct native art workshops, storytelling classes and education lectures.
- to promote unity and to bring together the four colors of man.
- to sponsor cultural awareness exchanges in the U.S. and abroad to promote and teach Native culture to other people.

More information can be found at pipekeepers.org.

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'John Deere, That's Who' and other Maurer books featured at fair



Author Tracy Nelson Maurer will be at the Rock County Fair July 29.

Tracy Nelson Maurer, who has written more than 130 nonfiction and fiction books for children and young adults, will be at the Rock County Fair next week to read and entertain from some of her most popular books.

Maurer's books have been named Junior Library Guild selections and "Best STEM Books" by the National Science Teaching Association.

Maurer will be at the Rock County Fair Thursday, July 29, to read and share stories-behind-the-story with fun, interactive sessions for all ages, especially kids 6-12.

Her appearance is part of the Rock County Fair's Library Day

on Thursday. At 11:30 she'll feature "John Deere, That's Who!" At 1 p.m. the book is "Samuel Morse, That's Who!"

At 4 p.m. "Lady Bird Johnson, That's Who!" will be the featured book.

Maurer holds a master's degree from Hamline University in writing for children and young adults. She lives with her family near Minneapolis, and they enjoy visiting her husband's family in Larchwood, Iowa.

Minnesota author Doug Ohman will also be at the fair. His readings will be Friday with "County Fair, A Minnesota Tradition" at 1 p.m., "Memories of the Brave — Medal of Honor" at 3 p.m. and "Heart of the Farms Barns of Minnesota" at 5 p.m. See the Rock County Ag Society website, rockcountyfair.org for details.

Knoblochs are Rock County 2021 Farm Family of the Year/continued from page 1B

success along with other key players.

"It takes a team to make an operation successful," Dallas said.

Family fills different roles on the farm

Dallas focuses on cattle buying and selling, commodity production and purchases, the feeding and management of five feedlot locations.

Off the farm, he is a member of the Minnesota Cattlemen Association, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation and is a trustee with the Frank Boom Trust.

Amy does the farm accounting, record keeping, errands and helps the process the cattle in and out of the feedlots.

"She's super good at tracking expenses and revenues — making spreadsheets," he said.

Amy also works a couple days a week as an accountant with a local dairy, and she volunteers at school and church.

The children began helping on the farm as they grew older.

Tory, a 2021 H-BC High School graduate, handles the cow-calf operation. The herd averages 110 cows, and he handles February calving and the intensive grazing system that maximizes 320 acres of grass pasture.

Tory also feeds the feedlot cattle, helps with the chute help and assists with the corn and alfalfa grown specifically for the feedlot.

He was involved in the H-BC FFA chapter, football and trap teams.

Claire, an incoming H-BC eighth-grader, bottle feeds six to eight twin calves and takes care of young stock that need TLC before joining the cattle in the feedlot. She also processes cattle and is the family's designated "gate opener."

Her school activities are junior high volleyball, basketball and track.

The entire family comes together for showing cattle — washing the stock daily and preparing for the local fair and other open cattle shows.

The family belongs to the Blue Ribbon 4-H Club. Dallas is also a 4-H livestock superintendent at the county fair.

"We've had to spend a lot of time with our kids because of the cattle," he said.

"It is so much fun watching them. 4-H has been so

much fun — showing teaches them so much in life."

Each child rises out of bed before school to feed and care for their animals. They have committed to the daily grooming and preparation necessary to be successful in the show ring.

Team approach to beef production

Experience outside of the family farm has led Dallas to adopt a team approach to beef production, which integrates as much of the process under his supervision as possible.

The approach starts with the cattle purchasing.

Over past three to four years Dallas has developed a working relationship with the western South Dakota cattle breeders and purchases the majority of feedlot stock privately.

He's worked with those producers to encourage a stress-free introduction of calves to the feedlot. Dallas has shared feed rations so when the South Dakota stock is moved to Minnesota, they willingly eat the familiar feed after the move.

Dallas has also encouraged introducing the pastured calves to feed bunks and automatic waterers used in the feedlot before they make the six-hour trip to Hills.

"Happy cattle are the result of good management," Dallas said.

With a goal to achieve finishing weight in seven months or less, good nutrition is a must.

Dallas works with several neighbors to purchase the 60,000 to 70,000 bushels of quality corn necessary for the feedlot.

When possible, he harvests the grain directly from the field and brings the commodities to the family farm in Martin Township.

From the farm, feed rations are prepared for the custom feedlots Dallas has organized through contracts with neighbors and the use of their feedlots.

Dallas uses many local industry experts in the family farm operation, to solve problems and to keep up with the constant changes.

"I truly enjoy working with these knowledgeable experts and their passion to see each farm succeed.

"You need to be learning all the time," he said.

"The more I learn, the less that I know. You can't be set in your ways. You sometimes have to roll with things."

Dallas direct markets his cattle to area meat processors to maintain a consistent cash flow to the family farm.

The family regularly removes manure to keep the feedlot cattle comfortable and helps with fly control.

The manure is stored off site and the nutrient-rich material is later applied to the farm fields as fertilizer.

Each little step in the beef production process ensures that a quality product is delivered to the public.

For the Knoblochs, farming is all in a day's work for the family.

"It's what we do," Amy said.



JULY 28 – 31, 2021

Rock County Fairgrounds

Schedule of Events

DAILY EVENTS AROUND THE GROUNDS:
Wednesday – Saturday unless listed differently

- 5R ALPACAS CLEARWATER, MN
- AG ADVENTURE BARN - MIRACLE OF BIRTH SOW and CHICKENS
- WHEEL OF AGRICULTURE AG AREA
- AG DEMOS FOR KIDS / Mobile Ranch Petting Zoo
 - HONEY BEES - TIM OLSON
 - BLACKSMITH LARRY WILSON
 - TINSMITH CHRIS HAGEMANN
- WOODEN BOWL TURNER ROGER ABRHAMSON
- EARLY AMERICAN POTTERY REGGIE DELARM
- MAGICIAN NICK SHARPE FREE
- FREE- CARICATURE ARTIST
- WED 6-8 PM, THURS 11 AM-1 PM, 4-7 PM, FRI 3-8 PM
- LINGBECK DESIGNS ST. JAMES
- COLORING MURAL AG BARN
- MN JACK SPARROW PIRATE IMPERSONATOR
- STEEL DRUM PAN ARTIST CHRIS BELICH
 - THURS 4-7 PM & FRI 3-6 PM
- JIM BRANDENBURG TIPI
- KEEPER OF THE SACRED TRADITION 3-8 PM DAILY PIPE CARVING, STORY TELLING, NATIVE AMERICAN DANCE
- VETERANS MEMORIAL AREA (GREY COMMERCIAL BUILDING)
 - WWII, WWII, CIVIL WAR & VIETNAM DISPLAYS
- ATMS/ARCADE (COMMERCIAL BUILDING)
- FISH TANKS - SHINERS THURS & FRI
- YO YO GUY - DAZZLING DAVE
 - THURS 11 AM - 2 PM & 3:30 - 7:30 PM, FRI 3-8 PM, SAT NOON - 4 PM
- THE RAD ZOO
 - THURS 1 - 4 PM & 5 - 8 PM, FRI 1 - 7 PM, SAT NOON - 6 PM
- PIG RACE & SWIMMING PIGS
- WED 7 PM, THURS - SAT 5 SHOWS @ 11, 1, 3, 5 & 7 FARM SAFETY TRAILER
- FANTASY FACE PAINTERS THURS & FRI 3:30-7:30 PM, SAT NOON - 4:00 PM
- BALLOONS BY KEVIN
 - THURS 11 AM - 2:00 PM & 3:30 - 7:30 PM, FRI 4:00 - 8:00 PM, SAT NOON - 4:00 PM
- HISTORY OF TEDDY ROOSEVELT ADAM LINDQUIST

4-H FOODSTAND:
 Wednesday : 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.
 Thursday – Saturday: 7 am. – 9 p.m.

MIDWEST RIDES ON THE MIDWAY:
 Carnival Hours: Wed: 5:00 – 10:00 p.m.
 Thurs: 5:00 - 10:00 Friday: 3:00 – 10:00 p.m.
 and Saturday: Noon – 10:00 p.m.

Wristband Night – Thursday from 6 to 10 p.m. (\$20 to ride)
Wristband Day – Saturday from Noon to 4:00 p.m. (\$20 to ride)

Shuttle Service – 3:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Daily

Nursing Station on the Grounds
 ATMS Throughout the Fairgrounds
 Sanford Emergency Crew on the grounds daily

FOOD VENDORS ON GROUNDS:
 SNOCONES / COTTON CANDY
 KETTLE CORN – KETTLEKING
 4-H POP STAND (PIZZA RANCH)
 ROCK COUNTY PORK PRODUCERS RIB TICKLER BOOTH
 ROCK COUNTY ICE CREAM BOOTH
 4-H FOODSTAND
 BEER GARDENS Wednesday – Saturday 3 PM – CLOSE
 CARNIVAL FOOD WAGONS (DURING CARNIVAL)

COMMUNITY MEALS:
 Thursday: 5:30 p.m.
 ROCK/NOBLES CATTLEMEN BEEF FEED
 Friday: 5:30 p.m. Free
 COMMUNITY MEAL AT GRANDSTAND (Freewill offering)
 Brats/Hot Dogs, Chips, Cookie, Water
 Saturday: 5:00 p.m.
 ROCK COUNTY PORK PRODUCERS PORK FEED

GRANDSTAND EVENTS:
 Thursday: 6:30 p.m.
 GREAT PLAINS TRACTOR PULLERS TRACTOR PULL
 Adults \$10 Kids 8 and under \$3

Friday: FREE – NOON to 4 p.m.
 SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY
 HIGH VOLTAGES/SAFETY DEMOS (Every 30 minutes) @ Grandstand (Giveaways)

CORN HOLE TOURNERY
 FREE COMMUNITY MEAL @ 5:30 P.M. (Brats/Hot Dogs, Chips, Cookie and Water)

FREE - RANDY BUKER (HYPNOSIS SHOW 5:30 and 7:00 p.m. - Show arena) Members of the community will be part of the show.

FREE CONCERT FROM 8 PM. TO MIDNIGHT Undercover Band from Sioux Falls

Saturday:
 7:00 P.M. ENDURO RACE
 Adults: \$10 Kids 8 and under \$3

BOOK READERS:
 Tracy Maurer – Thursday, July 29
 11:30 – John Deere, That's Who!
 1:00- Samuel Morse, That's Who!
 4:00 – Lady Bird Johnson – That's Who!

DOUG OHMAN – FRIDAY, JULY 30
 1:00 p.m. – County Fair – A MN Tradition
 3:00 p.m. – Memories of the Brave – Medal of Honor
 5:00 p.m. – Heart of the Farms Barns of MN

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR THE DAYS:
 Thursday – Daycare Day
 Friday – SR Citizens Day/Sioux Valley Energy Day
 Saturday – Kids Day
 Farm Family and Century Farm Presentation – Friday @ 6 p.m. Tent

SR Citizens Day – Friday @ 2 p.m.
 Jim Woster, A.C.E Presentation,
 Sioux Valley Energy Demos
 • Giveaways • Rolls and water

MN Soil Health Coalition Forum – Thursday 10 a.m. to Noon
 Demos/Speakers • Rainfall Simulator
 Rolls and coffee provided

LIVE BROADCAST FROM THE FAIR
 PHIL SCHRECK AND DAKOTA NEWS
 Thursday - 5:00 p.m. • Meet and Greet afterwards
 Thursday: 11 - 11:45 and Noon - 12:45
 ZOOMMOBILE ON THE GROUNDS
 WATERMELON FEED
 Thursday - 5:30 by Tent by Show arena

WIZARD OF OZ SHOW BY THE OZ BROTHERS
 Thursday under the tent by Foodstand
 Thursday, July 29th 10:00 am - 10:45 am
 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm

Saturday: Starting at Noon - evening
 WOODY'S AXE THROWING MOBILE UNIT

PAUL BUNYAN - Saturday under tent by Foodstand
 Saturday, July 31 - 11:00 am - 11:45 am
 2:30 pm - 3:15 pm

FREE - RANDY BUKER – HYPNOSIS SHOW
 Friday 5:30 & 7 p.m.
 Members of the community will be part of the show.

4-H INFORMATION/SHOWS:
 Monday, July 26: General Exhibit Judging from 2 to 6 p.m.
 Open Class Non perishable/perishable registration 5 to 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28:
 Livestock Entries and exhibits brought in 9 am to Noon
 Open Class non perishable/perishable exhibit registration 3 to 7 p.m.
 Poultry Show - 3 p.m. Rabbit Show - 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 29:
 Herdsmanship Begins - 8 a.m.
 Swine Show - 8 a.m. Dairy Show - 11 a.m.
 Lamb Lead/Sheep Show - 1:30 p.m. Goat Show - 3:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 30:
 Beef Show - 8 a.m. Horse Showmanship - 11 am.
 Horse Pleasure Show - Noon
 Fashion Revue – Tent by Foodstand - 4 p.m.
 Pet Show - 5 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 31:
 Livestock Ribbon Auction - 9 a.m.
 Horse Training - 10:30 a.m.
 Games Show - Noon
 Premier Showmanship - 4 p.m.
 Parade of Champions - 6 p.m.
 Livestock Released - 8:30 p.m.
 Projects and Open Class Exhibits Released- 9 p.m.



Luverne Area Community Foundation



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These little piggies will go racing

Swiftly Swine Racing Pigs will make their debut at the Rock County Fair

By Jason Berghorst
“Their whole racing careers are less than a full season.”
That’s how Zach Johnson, owner of Swiftly Swine Productions, describes the stars of his company’s touring shows.

Swiftly Swine Racing Pigs will make their debut at this year’s Rock County Fair July 28-31 in Luverne.
“This is our first time in Luverne, and we’re really looking forward to it,” Johnson said. “It’s a great show that people will enjoy.”
Johnson said his shows began 24 years ago in Missouri, and there are now three different shows that travel the country eleven months a year performing at fairs and festivals.
The young pigs, with names such as Kevin Bacon, Justin Beboar and Elvis Pigsley, race around a 150-foot oval track.

“The little porkers pound the turf at a blazing 15 mph — all for an Oreo cookie,” according to the company website.

Johnson said each pig’s racing career lasts about three months (while they’re young and agile).
“Then they eat themselves out of a job,” he said. “We have some potbelly pigs that stay small enough to race for a few years, but the market pigs are donated to local FFA and 4-H groups when they are done racing.”

Each show lasts about 15-20 minutes, “depending how bad they want the cookie and how fast they run,” Johnson said.

Show times at the Rock County Fair are 7 p.m. Wednesday and 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the south end of the midway.

According to Johnson, Swiftly, the swimming pig, is the star of the half-time show.

“He plunges into the tank in an effort to break the current world record,” according to the website.
“Swiftly has made some TikTok vid-



Zach Johnson, owner of Swiftly Swine Productions, will bring his racing (and swimming) pigs to this year’s Rock County Fair July 28-31 in Luverne. “This is our first time in Luverne, and we’re really looking forward to it,” Johnson said. “It’s a great show that people will enjoy.”

Show times at the Rock County Fair are 7 p.m. Wednesday and 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the south end of the midway

“The little porkers pound the turf at a blazing 15 mph — all for an Oreo cookie.”



eos with 10 million views,” Johnson said.
Johnson’s wife is originally from Minnesota, and the show travels to fairs across the state, as well as locations as far as San Diego, Chicago and New York state.
According to Bob Remme, treasurer of the Rock County Ag Society, the pig races are just one of a number of new entertainment options added to this year’s fair.

“We’re always trying to bring in something unique, something different,” he said.
Remme, who has booked many of the new entertainment options, said the goal is to provide free options for young and old to enjoy.
A “Wheels of Agriculture” traveling game show and Wizard of Oz and Paul

Bunyan shows are just some examples.
“We try to offer family-oriented entertainment that people will enjoy while they’re at the fair,” Remme said. “We think the racing pigs show should definitely be a lot of fun for people to watch.”
Johnson agrees.
“It’s just a squealing good time,” he said of his show.

Welcome Back!

Last year we were masked up for the (un)fair.
This year, we’ve had our shots and...

WE ARE READY



to ENJOY the 2021 Rock County Fair!



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