

Daily Chronicle

Summer activities planned throughout the county this summer

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DeKALB – The calendar is jam-packed with local traditions and community celebrations scheduled through September, which is good news for anyone hoping to avoid crowded airport security lines this summer.

With tourism season in full swing, families looking to cut loose and unwind this season should consider a “staycation,” filled with visits to each of the county’s local attractions, DeKalb County Visitors and Convention Bureau Director Debbie Armstrong said.

“Tourism week is usually the first or second week in May. This year, it was May 1 through the 7th. It indicates the start when families are thinking about getting out of school and planning their vacations,” Armstrong said. “Basically, that’s the kickoff to the very busy season that we experience all the way from there up until December.”

From Corn Fest – one of the area’s top draws – to a budding Sycamore tradition – the Ribs, Rhythm and Brews Fest – DeKalb County has events planned for all interests and walks of life, Armstrong said.

“I think that we also are very aware that we’ve got changing demographics, and we’re trying to appeal to both visitors and community members,” Armstrong said. “Obviously, from my perspective, it’s about bringing visitors into the area.”

Here are a few of the many events to look forward to this summer:

Genoa Days

Dates: June 8-11

The 81st annual [Genoa Days](#) festival has a lineup of celebrations scheduled. The Genoa Days King and Queen contest will kick off at 8 p.m. June 8 on the festival’s main stage, with performances by Beaux, Beth Fowler School of Dance, and Wade Buzzard Band to follow throughout the weekend.

Turning Back Time Car Show

Date: July 31

Car fanatics looking forward to attending the Fizz Ehrler Memorial Turning Back Time Car Show should clear their calendars for Sunday, July 31. The show’s founder, Chuck Criswell, 66,

died March 4, leaving behind his local family business, Chuck's Auto Center, which opened in 1990 and closed its service doors in March.

Criswell began Sycamore's [Turning Back Time Car Show](#), now the Fizz Ehrler Memorial Turning Back Time Car Show, on a rainy day in July 2000. The weekend showcases vintage and classic cars and motorcycles, and it has come to draw a significant number of out-of-state visitors.

"Of course, 'Turning Back Time' is another one of the big draws," Armstrong said. "Everybody loves cars. That's for sure."

The show is judged by participant voting. The day's top 100 vehicles and other awards are decided based on a vote tally, with a some special awards determined by the show's committee, and Sycamore Mayor Ken Mundy.

Corn Fest

Dates: Aug. 26-28

DeKalb's [most widely attended festival](#) will take place Friday, Aug. 26, through Sunday, Aug. 28, in downtown DeKalb. The headlining band, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, is set to perform Aug. 28, after sets by The Neverly Brothers and Back Country Roads.

"With Corn Fest, one of the highlights there is the music and the ability to hear music along with all the different booths that are there, and the community events that are featured," Armstrong said.

Along with the traditional Chuck Siebrasse corn boil, the festival will host an auto show of its own Saturday, Aug. 27, at the former DeKalb police department, 200 S. Fourth St., DeKalb.

Visitors older than 12 will be required to pay a \$5 entry fee to enter the beer garden and sound-stage area. No one younger than 21 will be served alcohol, and children younger than 12 must be accompanied by a parent. A \$55 weekend "mega-pass" also is available for unlimited access to carnival rides.

The three-day celebration also will include a craft show, food vendors and carnival rides. General admittance to the festival will be free. Corn Fest prides itself in being one of the last free festivals in Illinois, with plenty to do without paying a penny.

Ribs, Rhythm and Blues Fest

Date: Aug. 20

Sycamore's newest street festival, [Ribs, Rhythm and Brews Fest](#), is scheduled to pack Sycamore's downtown from 5 to 11 p.m. Aug. 20 on Somonauk Street and City Lot 1.

Ribs vendors will set up shop and compete for the title of Ribs Fest champion, won last year by Tom and Jerry's featuring Catering by Diann after a vote by a panel of judges.

Last year's inaugural festival drew about 2,000 people over the course of the evening, and a number of vendors ran out of ribs and beer by the day's end.

The night also will include musical numbers, headlining band Back Country Roads with opening act Johnny & The Boomers.

Sandwich Fair

Dates: Sept. 7 to 11

Each year, 90,000 to 240,000 people gather at [the Sandwich Fair](#), which will take place at the Sandwich Fairgrounds.

The Sandwich Fair offers live entertainment, arts and crafts, food vendors and carnival rides, among other attractions.

Although planning for this year's fair – the 129th annual – still is taking place, advance five-day season passes are available by mail or in person starting Sept. 6. Five-day passes for adults cost \$22, or \$8 for children. Daily general admission also is available for \$5 at the gate. Children younger than 5 may enter for free.

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