

JULY 21-25 2026

2026 FAIR REPORT



STEPHENSON COUNTY FAIR



2026 THEME



EWE= "YOU"
EWE= FEMALE SHEEP

HOME EC EWE THEMED CLASSES

**SHEEP THEMED ARRANGEMENT USING FRESH
OR PERMANENT FLOWERS**

SHEEP THEMED DECORATED CUPCAKES

SHEEP THEMED PHOTO

SHEEP THEMED TABLE SETTING

SHEEP THEMED WREATH

SHEEP THEMED DECORATED COOKIES

SHEEP THEMED PAINTING

ACTIVITIES FOR EWE!

WOOL SOAP FELTING

Tuesday 4pm-5pm
Heritage Hall

WOOL DYEING

Wednesday 4pm-5pm
Heritage Hall

WOOL PROCESSING

Friday 10am-12pm
Heritage Hall

SHEEP SHEARING DEMO

Wednesday 12pm-12:15pm
Sheep Barn

SHEEP SHOWS

Thursday & Friday 9am-12pm
Sheep Show Ring

SHEEP PAINTING CLASS

Thursday 2pm, 4pm, 6pm
Green Zone

FAIR ATTENDANCE

EVENT TOTAL

~37,000

TUESDAY

7,428

THURSDAY

8,258

SATURDAY

8,355

WEDNESDAY

7,840

FRIDAY

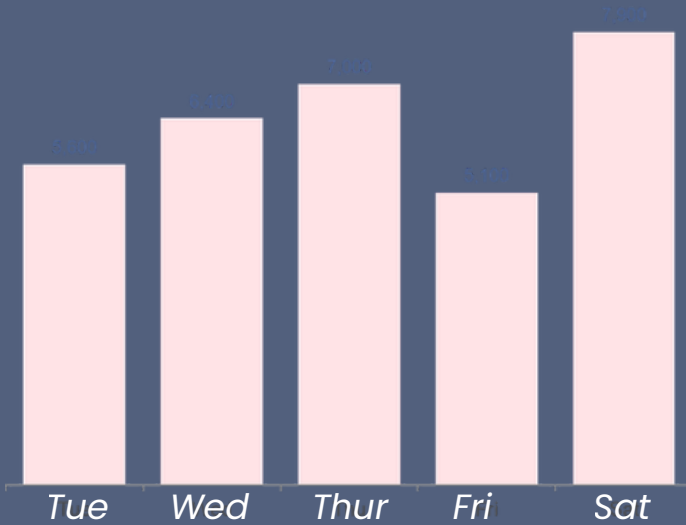
5,150

Weather.

*Sunny Skies
everyday with highs
between 75 and 85
and lows in the 50's*



DAILY VISITS: TUESDAY-SATURDAY



Strong midweek momentum

- *Visits climbed every day from Tuesday through Thursday, showing word-of-mouth and marketing built real momentum through the week.*

A WINNING WEEK

- **Growing regional pull**

- Visitor journeys reached toward Rockford, Madison, and Chicago's suburbs, signaling room to grow sponsorship and tourism value.

- **Deep local loyalty**

- Guests stayed an average of nearly 3 hours per visit, and many returned across multiple days — a sign of strong on-site experience.

- **Deep local loyalty**

- 39% of all visits came from Freeport alone, with 90% from within 30 miles — a strong, dependable home base.

FAIR STATISTICS



**AVERAGE TIME
SPENT AT THE FAIR:
175MIN (3 HOURS)**



**MANY GUESTS
RETURNED 2+
DAYS**

***ATTENDANCE IS
GROWING!***

+8% FROM 2025

RECORD BREAKING FAIR ENTRIES

5,600+ ENTRIES

POINTS OF PRIDE

- Most entries in **10** years
- **#4** in the State of Illinois for most county fair entries
- Over **\$57,000** in prize money was awarded back to livestock and non-livestock exhibitors.



FREE GRANDSTAND EVENTS

TUESDAY- FFA & NTPA TRACTOR PULLS

WEDNESDAY- BIG HAT RODEO (FULL GRANDSTANDS!)

THURSDAY- YOUTH & FAMILY NIGHT- TOUGH TRUCK

FRIDAY- RICH RATH PROJECT REO- MUSIC OF REO SPEEDWAGON

SATURDAY- DEMO DERBY

VENDOR NUMBERS

109 Vendors

28% of vendors were new this year!

CAMPING

40+ LIVESTOCK & COMMERCIAL CAMPERS



New THIS YEAR

KID'S CONCERT SERIES

Comm. Ent. Tent

Wed 1pm, Thur 4pm, Sat 4pm

Bring kids of all ages for a musical experience with a series of 3 concerts that will engage everyone!

More details about the bands online!



WILDWOOD COUNTRY

Comm. Ent. Tent

Wed, 8pm, after Rodeo

Wildwood Country is an All-American Country Band that incorporates elements of Old & New Country Music, Country rock, and Line Dance music.



GOATS & BEATS

Friday, 7pm

Meat Goat Show Ring

*An experience like no other!
Come and move to the beat with the goats and disco ball!*



LOLA BLU & THE BOYS

Comm. Ent. Tent

Sat, 8-10pm

Lola Blu brings gritty country-rock, a powerhouse band, and radio-featured hits to the stage.



MAGICIAN & BALLOONS

Commercial Building

Daily 4pm-7pm

Balloons & amazing close up and street magic performed with humor and high energy.



75+ ACTIVITIES



CORN SHELLING



BOUQUET MAKING



POTTERY



COOKIE DECORATING

COMPETITIONS

FIRST PLACE RECIPIENTS:

AGES 4 & UNDER:

PAXTON

AGES 5-8:

ANDREW

AGES 9-12:

MADDOX

**LIVE LEGO
BUILDING CONTEST**

TALENT SHOW

JUNIOR DIVISION 14 AND UNDER

FIRST PLACE: ELEANOR KUYKENDALL

A 13-year-old singer-songwriter performing "Good Things Come Around.", showcasing her unique voice, heartfelt lyrics, and strong stage presence.

SECOND PLACE: HOPE BRINKMEIER

An act of spoken poetry consisting of 3 to 4 poems.

THIRD PLACE: EMERSON FRAKES

Youth Elvis Tribute Artist

SENIOR DIVISION 15-21

FIRST PLACE: TIMOTHY DELAY

Vocal solo with backing track; "The Longest Time" (Billy Joel)

FIRST PLACE OF EACH AGE GROUP GOES
TO STATE!

UNIQUE FOOD COMPETITION

MANY OF OUR FOOD VENDORS COMPETED FOR A FREE BOOTH SPACE IN 2027 BY BRINGING A UNIQUE FOOD ITEM!

IT WAS SUCH A FUN EXPERIENCE FOR ALL THE FAIR VISITORS TO TASTE THE AMAZING OFFERINGS OF OUR FAIR FOOD VENDORS!



**2026 WINNER: ZHEL
PASTRIES & FILIPINO FOOD**

MEMORIAL BENCHES & TREES



***16 MEMORIAL BENCHES AND MORE THAN 25
MEMORIAL OR DONATED TREES HAVE BEEN
PLACED ON THE FAIRGROUNDS.***

***THANK YOU TO THE ORGANZATIONS AND
INDIVIDUALS THAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE.***

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

460 + VOLUNTEERS

***VOLUNTEERING MAKES
THINGS HAPPEN.***

PARKING LOT GOLF CART SHUTTLE



HUNDREDS OF
PEOPLE TOOK
ADVANTAGE
OF OUR
SHUTTLE
AROUND THE
GROUNDS FOR
THOSE WITH
LIMITED
MOBILITY



WE ARE LOOKING FOR SPONSORS
& DRIVERS FOR 2027!

THANK YOU!
CARTS GALORE AND MORE
MONROE, WI
FOR THE GOLF CART IN 2026

2026 FAIRGOER SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Top 5 ways fairgoers learned about the fair

1. Social Media- 70%
2. Friend/Family Member- 31%
3. Website- 28%
4. Fair Guides- 22%
5. Word of Mouth- 17%



Top 10 main reasons for attending

1. Hog House/Beef Corral- 50%
2. Family Tradition- 44%
3. Livestock & Animal Experience- 44%
4. Tractor Pulls- 40%
5. Rodeo- 39%
6. Fair Food- 26%
7. Demo Derby- 24%
8. Local Food Trucks- 21%
9. Home Ec Exhibits- 21%
10. Tough Truck- 17%

**Fairgoers told us about their experience.
How did your experience at the fair compare to
your expectations?**

2023

71% Met or Exceeded Expectations

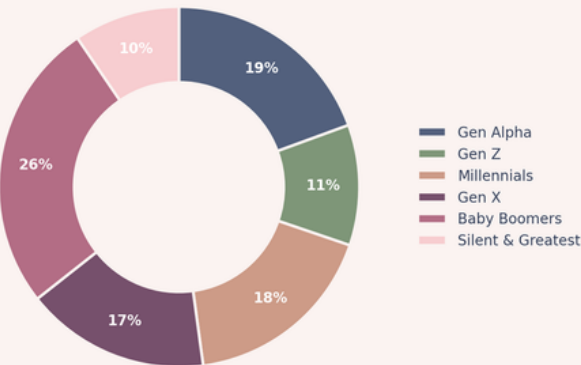
2026

87% Met or Exceeded Expectations

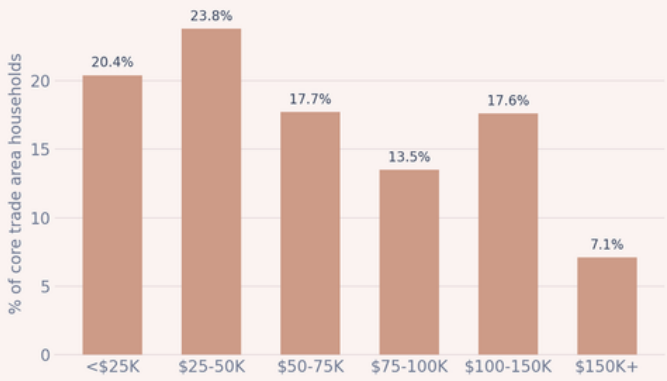
**We are excited to build on
this trend!**

2026 SATISTICS

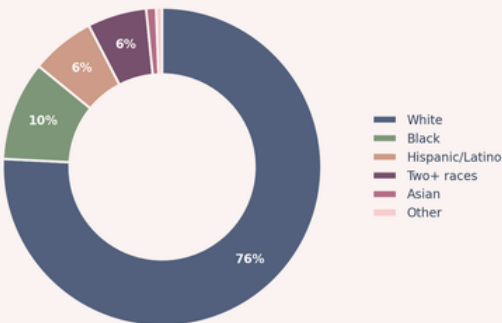
Generation (Core Trade Area)



Household Income (Core Trade Area)



Ethnicity (Core Trade Area)



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ANALYTICS

584,848 PAID IMPRESSIONS

STEPHENSON COUNTY FAIR WEBSITE

BETWEEN APRIL – JULY 2026

24k Active users

173k Events (clicking around on website)

69k Views

FACEBOOK

BETWEEN APRIL – JULY 2026

2.4M Views

25,000 Interactions

59.6k Visits

INSTAGRAM

BETWEEN APRIL – JULY 2026

464.4k Views

20.4k Reach

TIKTOK

BETWEEN APRIL – JULY 2026

115k Video Views

1.8k Profile Views

3.4k Likes

HIGHLIGHTS

- **14,173** TOTAL FOLLOWERS ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS
- APPROX. **2.3M** ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS
- OVERALL SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT INCREASED **105%** FROM 2025
- SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT STARTED EARLIER IN 2026, GAINING POPULARITY AROUND THE FAIR (**+500%** JUNE 2025–JUNE 2026)



MARKETING CAMPAIGN

\$15K BUDGET



20,000 DAILY FAIR
GUIDES
DISTRIBUTED



250 POSTERS (4
DESIGNS)
DISTRIBUTED

OTHER

- IN-HOUSE CREATION OF TV COMMERCIAL: PLAYED AT LINDO AND 62 TIMES ON LOCAL TV
- 500 TABLE TENTS DISTRIBUTED
- OVER 320 RADIO COMMERCIALS PLAYED OVER 4 OUTLETS
- NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, YARD SIGNS, BANNERS, PRESS RELEASE, ETC

RESULTS

- **\$14,139,654** TOTAL SPEND
- APPROX. **1.1M** PAID MEDIA IMPRESSIONS (EXCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA)
- APPROX. **CPI 0.01**

OVERALL: 3.4M IMPRESSIONS ON MEDIA, ORGANIC & PAID (APRIL-JULY)

FAIR EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

WHAT DOES IT REALLY COST TO RUN A FAIR?

PAYROLL



GROUNDS UPDATES & MAINTENANCE



INSURANCE



UTILITIES



EQUIPMENT RENTALS



SECURITY



ENTERTAINMENT



MARKETING



CLEANING



PERMITS



SOFTWARE SYSTEMS



EMERGENCY SERVICES



AND THAT IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

THIS YEAR WE SPENT OVER

\$665,300

TO PUT ON THE FAIR

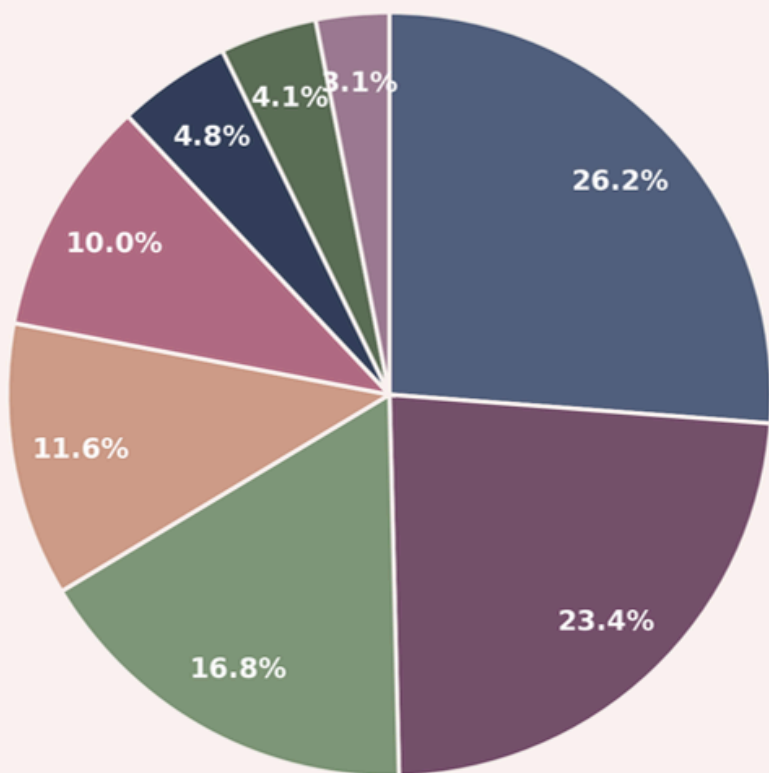
*NOT INCLUDING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS AND YEAR-ROUND WORK IS INVESTED
EACH AND EVERY YEAR BEFORE OPENING DAY .

FAIR INCOME

HOW DO WE MAKE MONEY?

Stephenson County Fair Association Income by Category



- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Rental income | Commercial exhibits |
| Gate admissions | Other income |
| Sponsorship income | Entertainment income |
| Premium fair exhibits | Carnival income |

OUR SPONSORS FOR 2026

We're grateful for the community's incredible support this year — both financial and in-kind. Sponsors were featured on event signage, our digital billboard, our website, and Facebook. Every contribution helps us keep growing this event!



White Ribbon: Thirvent (Zachary Barman), Representative Tony McCombie, Susie Dvorak, Gemorifics, Evert Sales

2027

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

BE A PART OF THE 5
BEST DAYS OF SUMMER!

- Bleacher/Event Banner- \$300
- Trackside Banner- \$1,200
- Fence-Line Banner- \$900
- July Digital Billboard Ad-\$200
- 12 Month Digital Billboard Ad- \$800
- Name Displayed on Website- \$200
- Social Media Post- \$250
- Social Media Campaign- \$750
- Memorial Bench- \$650
- Memorial Tree- \$500
- Activation Booth- \$1,000
- Selfie Station Naming- \$1,000-\$2,000
- Stand and Eat Tent- \$2,500-\$3,500
- Water Station- \$1,200
- Shuttle- \$1,200
- Info Booth- \$3,000
- Livestock Trophies- \$45
- Home-Ec Trophies \$30
- Tractor Pull Trophies- \$250
- Tough Truck Trophies- \$100
- Demo Derby Trophies- \$125
- Fair Book Ads
 - ¼ page- \$75
 - ½ page- \$100
 - Full Page- \$200
- Tractor Pull Class Sponsor- \$1,000
- Veteran Tent- \$250
- Pony Rides- \$500

GATES

Work the gates and the fair will give money to your charity/organization!

- 17 Shifts- \$340
- 14 Shifts- \$280

**\$4,500 raised in
2026, benefiting 7
organizations**

SPONSOR LEVELS/PACKAGES

- White Ribbon
- Red Ribbon
- Blue Ribbon
- Bronze
- Silver
- Gold
- Title



THANK YOU

Thank you for making the 2026 Stephenson County Fair one to remember!

From all of us at the Stephenson County Fair, thank you for your support, your time, your dedication, and the memories we made together. Whether you attended, exhibited, volunteered, sponsored, or cheered from the sidelines, you helped make this year's fair a success. We already miss seeing everyone at the fairgrounds, and we can't wait to welcome you back in 2027!

Mark your calendars for 2027!

JULY 27-31, 2027

STEPHENSON COUNTY FAIR