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Many summer events cancelled while some hope to have offerings

By HILLARY GAVAN Senior staff writer
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The Downtown Beloit Farmers Market will open Saturday in downtown Beloit with new restrictions due to concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic. Fewer vendors will be present and only 200 customers will be allowed in the area at one time.

BDN file photo

Many area events as well as pool usage this summer are cancelled, although a few events such as Beloit International Film Festival (BIFF) Outdoors and the downtown Beloit Farmers Market are still hoping to have some offerings.

BIFF Executive Director Greg Gerard said BIFF Outdoors is still awaiting information from the city as to whether it can go ahead and make plans. It could offer later-in-the-summer offerings.

Two weeks ago the village of Rockton and Beloit Public Library contacted BIFF about the possibility of showing outdoor movies, but no decisions have been made yet as Gerard is researching safety requirements, possible FM sound transmission and adequate movie screen size for such events. BIFF is also in talks with the Town of Beloit about two potential events.

“I think we will mount a drive-in movie somewhere this summer,” Gerard said. “We hope to have more information in the coming weeks.”

Gerard also is looking into how to do an online festival for BIFF 2021 in case there is a need to shut down the regular film festival held in which normally is held February. However, the goal is to carry on in person with some spacing in venues.

The downtown Beloit Farmers Market is set to begin June 6 with some safety precautions in place.

There will be only 27 vendors in the market and only 200 guests will be allowed in the market at one time. The market will be open from 9 a.m.—noon each Saturday and there will be one entrance at the corner of State and Broad streets.

Customers cannot touch items before they purchase them. All vendors will wear face masks and visitors are recommended to wear masks as well.

The Rock County 4-H Fair, which was planned for July 28 through Aug. 2, has been cancelled, according to information on the fair's website. Plans are being made for the 2021 fair.

The Roscoe Lions Club has not made a decision yet regarding its fall festival.

On Thursday, the City of Beloit announced the 2020 Pops on the Rock Beloit Janesville Symphony concert and fireworks show on July 4 will be cancelled. The city also has cancelled summer programming such as the Beloit Dirty Dash mud run and obstacle course scheduled for Aug. 22 as well as the touch a truck event, youth golf programs, July 4 bike parade and Big Hill Adventure Camp.

Friends Of RiverFront announced seasonal event series including Music at Harry's Place, Dancing at Harry's Place and Movie on the Big Lawn will not be held in 2020. The "Blooming Bunch" are still working on beautifying the park.

This year's Shopiere Days which was set for June 26—28 will be cancelled, according to its Facebook page.

The City of Beloit announced on Thursday the Krueger Pool would be closed through June due to COVID-19. The city has not yet made a determination about the entirety of the 2020 pool season or the aquatics programming. Should Krueger Pool reopen later this summer, physical distancing would still need to occur in the pool, outdoor gathering areas, locker rooms and all shared spaces and surfaces, as well as frequent cleaning and disinfecting of these areas.

Across the state line in Rockton, the village board has closed the Walt Williamson Pool at Village Green Park for the season due to COVID-19.

Village President Dale Adams said the uncertainty played into the board's decision to close for the summer.

"We just don't know when the social distancing is going to ease up," Adams said. "There are just too many obstacles."

Old Settlers Days, the popular summer festival in mid-June is also canceled on account of the virus, Adams said.

Hillary Gavan