

Tradition of fun at Edgerton Tobacco Heritage Days

By Jack McLaughlin
Special to the Lakes Edition

Summer is here. The season of sun and fun means something different to almost everyone: days of boating, ample fishing, relaxing camping or just soaking up the warm weather.

For Edgerton residents, these next few months mean one thing for sure: another iteration of the city's beloved Tobacco Heritage Days celebration, which is slated to take place on July 20-22 at a number of venues across the city.

Edgerton no longer boasts the distinction of being one of the country's most prolific regions of tobacco production, we can still celebrate like that's the case, as 2018 marks the 47th annual Tobacco Heritage Days festival.

So even though And while we're al-

ways up for maintaining annual traditions, it doesn't hurt to throw in a new one every now and again. This year's festival will do just that, by adding Edgerton Clay Day and Pottery Festival activities to its schedule of activities. First held in 2016, the city's Pottery Festival began as a way to honor Edgerton's past as a prolific producer of ceramics, and was previously held in the city's Clay Pit Heritage Park at the end of spring. The event, which will take place in Central Park in 2018, will feature local ceramics vendors in addition to interactive clay-spinning tutorials.

Additionally, 2018 will see the 45th annual Arts in the Park Fair (which features a variety of arts and crafts and is normally held in Central Park during Tobacco Days) move to Albion Park and combine with the Stroll Thru the Park Fair, which is normally held the second week in August. Even though its venue is changing, the city's Arts in the Park Fair will still benefit the Edgerton community as it has for decades, in raising money for Edgerton Arts Association scholarships.

Edgerton's Tobacco Heritage Days will feature many of the events guests through the years have come to know and love as well, including its namesake tobacco plant judging contest, downtown car show, Sunday



Lilly Gordon, age five, pedaling hard to try and win a heat at the big wheel races during last year's Tobacco Heritage Days. This year's Tobacco Heritage Days will be held July 20-22. (Photo by Jeffrey Hamm)

parade, lip syncing contest, Rascal Run 5K, and slew of baseball and softball tournaments.

And what would a Tobacco Days celebration be without a full weekend's worth of live music? Although exact times had yet to be released for the 2018 celebration as of this writing in early May, the festival will kick off Friday evening, July 20, with a performance from local rockabilly group *Gas Can Alley*. Saturday afternoon will see the *Mad Tadders* take the stage, with a headlining act for Saturday evening still to be determined. On Sunday afternoon, *Sounds of Edgerton* will close out the three days of festi-

ties. With something for people of all interests, age groups and family sizes, Edgerton's 47th annual Tobacco Heritage Days festival promises to not only boast entertainment for days this summer, it also continues a prideful local tradition.

"I can speak for the whole committee when I say that being a part of something that brings the entire community together is pretty amazing," said Tobacco Days Committee member Jamie Bublitz. "This festival also gives people who have moved away a reason to come back home and reconnect with old friends and family."



Bruce Morris (left) and his wife, Vicki Morris, one of the event organizers, are pictured at the 2016 Clay Day festival placing many of the spun clay pieces out to dry. Clay Day will be held with Tobacco Days in 2018. (File photo)

Clay Day and Art Fair is July 21

Submitted by Greg Sack

The Arts Council of Edgerton (ACE) will host the Edgerton Clay Day and Art Fair on Saturday, July 21. The fair is held in the beautiful shady grove in Central Park, concurrently with Tobacco Heritage Days.

ACE continually encourages local artists by renewing our community's long-standing heritage of artistic involvement, as exemplified by Pauline Jacobus and the Pauline Pottery Company.

In keeping with this heritage, there will be pottery-making activities led by prac-

tioners of this very physically-intense art form. Several live demonstrations and hands-on events are scheduled throughout the day, introducing visitors to pottery as well as other art disciplines.

Celebrating its history of community involvement of more than 20 years, ACE is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to promoting the arts in the Edgerton area and supporting many projects and events. These include art scholarships, the Concerts in the Park series, Summer Art Experience, the String Loan Program, local artists' exhibitions and more.



EDGERTON TOBACCO HERITAGE DAYS

JULY 20 - 22

Downtown Edgerton & at Race Track Park

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Pie Eating Contest • Knockerball
Big Wheel Race • Food • Parade & More!**

EDGERTON POTTERY & ART FESTIVAL

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