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Red hot return Chilimania is back – and spicier than ever

By Cheri Johnson
Special to The Reporter

Chilimania is back! Like many festivals in 2020, Chilimania had to hit the pause button, but the well-loved Edgerton event will be back with a vengeance Sept. 10-11! We all know that chili tastes that much better after marinading for a bit – and that's just how Chilimania 2021 is going to be for festival goers. There will be great music, great chili and great fun in abundance.

Of course, the health and welfare of attendees is of utmost importance. Chilimania plans to follow Rock County and City of Edgerton guidelines pertaining to COVID-19. Please check www.chilimania.com closer to the event for up-to-date information on any COVID-specific changes that have been enacted.

"It was tough to take a year off, but we had to do what was right for the community and for the public at large," said Chilimania co-founder Dr. Tom Reitz. "We just celebrated 30 years of chili in 2019, and

we're back again in 2021 to keep Edgerton's largest annual party going strong."

Held annually during the weekend following Labor Day in downtown Edgerton, Chilimania mixes chili, music and a sense of community. The recipe attracts some 5,000 people to the two-day event and benefits Edgerton through scholarships for college-bound high school seniors and donations to an array of community-based organizations and projects.

"It's amazing how Chilimania just gets bigger and better every year," added Reitz. "After taking a forced rest, the tried-and-true mix of chili, classic rock and an outdoor street party will be just what the doctor ordered."

Favorite tunes, familiar personas

In addition to being the longtime host to the Wisconsin state-championship Chili Appreciation Society International's (CASI) cook-off, Chilimania has long prided itself on its live music lineup. The festival features regionally

and nationally known tribute acts, providing a big-time show at family-friendly prices.

Playing Chilimania for the third time and headlining in 2021 is Back in Black, the #1 AC/DC tribute band in America. The next best thing to AC/DC, Back in Black takes to the 105.9 The Hog stage at 10 p.m. Formed in late 2000, Back in Black features tribute performances of both Bon Scott and Brian Johnson.

"The people have spoken, and they want Back in Black back for a third year," Reitz joked. "We love the energy this band gives on stage. It's just like having AC/DC playing in

See **CHILIMANIA**, 3



Above: A chili chef stirs up some fun at a past Chilimania. Below: With attire and decor, Chilimania's chefs add considerable flavor to their booths.

File photos



Billy Ray Cyrus headlines Edgerton's Country Edge

Submitted by Chilimania

After a year hiatus, Country Edge is back with a vengeance. A vengeance named Billy Ray Cyrus that is!

Now in its fifth year, Country Edge will feature Cyrus as the headliner on Friday, Sept. 10, at 9:45 p.m.

Held annually during the weekend following Labor Day in downtown Edgerton, Coun-

try Edge is presented by Chilimania, the well-known festival that has graced Edgerton's downtown for more than 30 years.

"We're beyond thrilled to have Billy Ray Cyrus joining us in Edgerton for Country Edge," said Chilimania co-founder Dr. Tom Reitz. "We've been fortunate to have big name acts here at our small-town festival, but I think this

act beats them all. I know that Edgerton will roll out the red carpet for this superstar."

Three-decade career

Throughout his nearly three-decade career of Billboard chart success that put him in the same company as Carlos Santana and Louis Armstrong, Billy Ray Cyrus has achieved global success as a singer, songwriter, actor, producer and philanthropist. Most recently, he celebrated the highest RIAA 14x Diamond-certified song in recorded music history with Lil Nas X on the worldwide smash, "Old Town Road (Remix ft. Billy Ray Cyrus)."

When asked about his genre-bending approach to music, Cyrus recently shared, "My philosophy to making music is no limitations. No rules, no limits, no preconceived notions. Don't try to think inside the box or outside the box, just think like there is no box."

The critically and commercially acclaimed superstar has established himself as a household name across multiple areas of the entertainment landscape, including music, television, theater and more. When one scopes out Cyrus' trophy case, the awards are represented across all genres: GRAMMY Awards, Billboard Music Awards, BET Hip Hop Awards, MTV VMA Moonmen, Country Music Association Awards, American Music Awards and Canadian Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences Juno Awards, among many other accolades.

The Flatwoods, Ky., native

exploded onto the music scene when his first album, *Some Gave All*, debuted on the all-genre Billboard album chart at No. 1 and stayed there for a record-breaking 17 weeks in 1992. The lead single, "Achy Breaky Heart," became a phenomenon and went multi-platinum. After "Achy Breaky Heart," Cyrus followed up with back-to-back hits "It Could've Been Me," "She's Not Crying Anymore," "Wher'm I Gonna Live When I Get Home?" and the anthemic "Some Gave All." Cyrus knocked himself out of the top Billboard position with his second No. 1 album, *It Won't Be The Last*, featuring smash hits "In the Heart of a Woman," "Words By Heart" and "Somebody New." His success continued with dozens more singles that redefined country music. He also enjoyed a successful career as an actor in the series *Doc* and *Still The King*, as well as the hit Disney Channel series *Hannah Montana* with his daughter, Miley.

Bella Cain takes stage

Opening for Billy Ray Cyrus at 7 p.m. will be Bella Cain. Known as the hottest top 40 country group, Bella Cain will grace the stage prior to Cyrus. With amazing musicianship, unmatched high energy onstage, production that includes one of the premier sound and light shows in the business, teamed up with the Bella Girls, musical variety not seen before on the regional Country Music scene and a sound all their own, Bella Cain is winning the hearts of many all over the Midwest.



Established in 2010, Bella Cain has become one of the largest and most "in demand" Top 40 Country Groups in the region. Equipped with their own tour bus, trucks, production and staff, they are performing over 120 shows a year and playing in multiple states. Performing at every major musical event, arena, venue, club, country bar, honky tonk, casino, outdoor music festival, corporate event and concert across the Midwest, Bella Cain has been rocking the stages of Country Thunder, Country USA, SummerFest, FM106 and US-99 sponsored events, Navy Pier, the Wisconsin State Fair, Allstate Arena and the Bradley Center, as well as headlining many fairs and private festivals in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan just to name a few.

Entering into their 11th year, Bella Cain has had the honor and privilege of sharing the stage with such national headliners as: Brad Paisley, Miranda Lambert, Luke Bryan, Colt Ford, The Nelsons, Phil Vassar, BIG & RICH, Jason Aldean,

See **COUNTRY EDGE**, 3

Private road to be named Stricker Way

By Sam Martino
Special to The Reporter

A private road leading to a condominium development that abuts the south end of the Towne Country Club will be named Stricker Way.

"We are happy to name it that," said Marilyn Petry, head of Northward Development.

"The accomplishments of Steve Stricker should be celebrated in the area of the golf course, and 'Stricker Way' is a small nod to what the great community of Edgerton helped create," said a statement from the development firm.

Stricker Way will loop around Wileman Dr. in the planned One Tree Development of single homes and duplexes.

"Northward Development is happy to incorporate local elements into our development in order to highlight and preserve the town's achievements," said the firm.

Mike Hesselman, Towne Country Club manager, said he talked with Stricker about the naming of the roadway after him.

"He is honored to have something named after him. Very cool. He deserves it," said Hesselman.

The Towne Country Club is where Stricker learned to play golf at an early age, including playing on the Edgerton High School golf team, where he became state champion in 1984.

Stricker, 54, has attracted global attention from the golf world as the captain of the U.S. Ryder Cup team that will face Europe's best golf team Sept. 24-26 at Whistling Straits near Kohler, Wis.

Stricker's longtime community support among Edgerton organizations and his charitable work have earned him accolades locally and nationally.

Hesselman called Stricker the "face of Edgerton."

Stricker also has become a brand name for the American Family Insurance Foundation

See **STRICKER**, 2



Billy Ray Cyrus

Photo from www.chilimania.com/www.adkinspublicity.com

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Fall Sports Preview

Gas Watch

| | |
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| Nat. Average..... | \$3.185 |
| WI Average..... | \$3.010 |
| WI lowest - Oshkosh..... | \$2.710 |
| Janesville..... | \$2.890 |
| Milton..... | \$2.990 |
| Newville..... | \$2.990 |
| Edgerton..... | \$3.090 |
| Evansville..... | \$2.890 |
| Fort Atkinson..... | \$2.980 |
| Stoughton..... | \$3.040 |
| Cambridge..... | \$2.990 |
| Madison..... | \$2.790 |
| Milwaukee..... | \$2.790 |

Latest prices reported for one gallon of unleaded gasoline according to local observations and GasBuddy.com as of 5:00 p.m., Monday, September 6, 2021. Prices listed are the lowest in each city, which may be one or more stations.



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