Old Fashioned Farmers Days this weekend

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Staff Report

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VAN WERT — For the 37th time, the Old Fashioned Farmers Days celebration will be held. This year's festival will be held at the Van Wert County Fairgrounds Thursday through Sunday and will feature a host of events and shows sure to delight.

Since 1976, the celebration has been held, although the first few years it was based in the Rockford area. It has been held at the fairgrounds since 1987.

This year's featured tractors are the Oliver-Hart Parr and the B.F. Avery, but all other brands of tractors are welcome.

Aside from tractor displays, those attending can see garden tractors, machinery, gas engines, threshing demonstrations, metalworking displays and blacksmith Don Bowlby during the show. And don't forget the flea market and craft sales, carnival games, animal land, barrel train rides and food vendors.

The Opening Ceremonies at 9 a.m. on Thursday kick off the festival. Special events include Antique Auto Racing Association exhibition car races beginning at 10 a.m., a car show with 50s and 60s music from 4-8 p.m. and a concert featuring the Cottonwood Jam String Band at 7:30 p.m. The band plays all kinds of music, including traditional Americana music, Appalachian, bluegrass, folk and country. Also on Thursday, come see the "Black and white dogs with a

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purpose" — the McEwen border collies — demonstrate herding sheep, ducks and geese at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

On Friday, the AARA races resume at 10 a.m. The OSU Extension Office will be providing a demonstration featuring Carol Trice making farmers market recipes using local foods at 2 p.m. and a milking demonstration will take place at 4 p.m. A horse informational session will be held at 5:15 p.m. Information will be given about different breeds of horses and what it takes to maintain horses, such as the amount of feed, farrier work and vet bills. There will be at least six different types of horses in the arena to compare and choose the best animal to fit your needs. Then at 6 p.m., it's the Draft Mule and Horse Fun Night.

Don't miss the Tractor Games beginning at 5 p.m. and the Kids Pedal Tractor Pull at 6 p.m. The day will wrap up with music from the 50s and 60s group Blind Date in the Junior Fair Building.

On Saturday, the featured events include the Antique Tractor Pull beginning at 9 a.m., the Pedal Tractor Pull at 9:30 a.m. and the MidStates Mule and Donkey Show at 9 a.m. A Barney Fife look-a-like will appear at noon and the lunch of soup, beans, corn bread and grilled hot dogs will begin serving at 11:30 a.m.

Nancy Whitaker and friends will gather at 12:30 p.m. for a concert tribute to Harmonica John Wistner in the Junior Fair Building. The Banjo, Fiddle and Harmonica Contests will be held at 2 p.m., followed by the Youth Talent Show. At 7 p.m., Elvis Impersonator Brent A. Cooper will perform his show "Memories of the King."

On Sunday, the church service featuring the Jess King Country Gospel Band will be held in the Junior Fair Building at 10 a.m. A turkey and ham dinner follows from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Admission for the event is \$3 per person per day. Kids 12 and under get in free. A three-day pass can be purchased for \$7. Thursday is Senior Citizen Day. Seniors will be admitted for half-price. Sunday admission is free for everyone. Camping and golf cart rental are available. For more information about the event, visit oldfashionedfarmersdays.com or call (419) 203-2700.