



FAIR APPRAISAL

County fair site has good information but could use a redesign

When I think of county fairs, I picture the one from the animated version of the classic children's story "Charlotte's Web." There among the cotton candy stands, carnival rides and marching bands, the benevolent spider helps Wilbur the pig win a blue ribbon. As a result, he is spared from ending up as bacon, sausage, ham and chops. Instead, he gets to live a life of leisure in his beloved pen.

The inaugural Lackawanna County Heritage Fair is scheduled to run from Wednesday, May 29, to Sunday, June 2, on Montage Mountain. It promises



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InSites

to be as magical as the one conjured up by E.B. White. The website, Lackawannacountyheritagefairs.com, provides information for visitors, vendors and sponsors.

For people planning to go to the fair, there's some useful information and features. The dates, hours and location are high up on the home page. You also can purchase tickets on the site. As I write

this you can buy them online for \$8, a \$2 savings from the \$10 price at the gate. The tickets are all-access, which means you gain entry, can go on the rides and even enjoy the water park.

There's also an entertainment schedule on the site. That's about the extent of features for fair goers. There's no list or map of vendors. The site has a crude aerial photo of the site with very general information, but it lacks locations of restrooms, handicap accommodations, first aid tents, etc. There is a Contact Us link that promises to answer any questions you may have. Hopefully the site is a work in

progress and additional features will be added.

The site is geared more toward potential vendors, volunteers and sponsors than visitors. The Get Involved link has information for entertainers, volunteers and vendors who want to participate. The Founder Circle and Sponsorship links have information for people or organizations that want to support the fair financially. There are multiple levels of sponsorship available that come with varying amounts of perks. These include tickets, VIP access and branding opportunities around the fair and in the marketing materials.

I hope the fair is a resounding success for years to come. It sounds like it's going to be a wonderful, family-oriented event. I also hope the fair itself is designed better than its website. The site is a mish mash of different typefaces, odd color combinations, missing content, typos and other amateurish design efforts. For many, the site will be the first impression of our first county fair. It should be designed to project an image of professionalism.

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