

HEY NEIGHBOR

By Frank J. Buchman

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Maple Leaf Festival Attracts Folks From All Around To Baldwin City

An explosion is set for Baldwin City.

However, it'll be in a good sense of the word as the Douglas County community's population swells, seemingly almost like there's been a detonation.

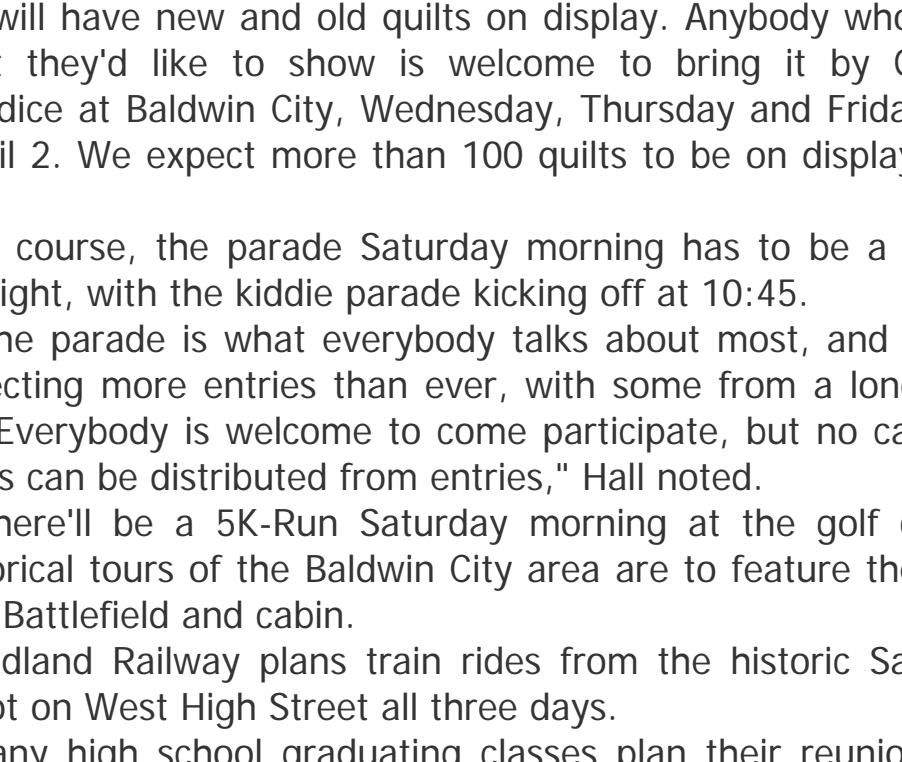
"We anticipate attendance of nearly 40,000 people for this year's Maple Leaf Festival," clarified Kelley Hall, promotions chairperson.

While Baldwin City has about 4,000 residents, the 57th annual celebration this weekend, Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 17-18, could draw ten times that many folks to participate in the wide variety of activities scheduled.

"Of course, it depends on the weather," admitted Hall, an enthusiastic worker for the event, and literally hundreds of others in the community and beyond.

"Starting in 1958, the Maple Leaf Festival began as a community event inspired by Dr. Ivan Boyd, a biology professor at Baker University," Moore said.

"Dr. Boyd noted that the third weekend of October was the optimum time to view the changing colors of the Maple tree leaves in the area, and the perfect time to celebrate the successful harvest. That's when the Maple Leaf Festival began, and the celebration has continued, and been growing ever since," according to Hall.



Fun-for-all is promised at the 57th annual Maple Leaf Festival this weekend, October 17-18, at Baldwin City, with the parade featuring marching bands and a wide array of entries from many miles around is Saturday morning at 10:45.

Advertised and promoted on The BIG 94.5 Country, 580 WIBW, www.WIBWNewsNow.com, and the Kansas Agriculture Network, the Maple Leaf Festival now has something for everybody going on in the jam-filled schedule, kicking off Friday with a full carnival.

Carnival attractions continue on Saturday and Sunday, yet there are so many more features that it's almost impossible to favor one over another.

Arts and crafts booths are open both days downtown, and at the grade school, with free country music being played on a regular schedule.

"More than 300 exhibits including about two dozen food vendors providing a variety of delights are already planning to participate," Hall informed.

Always a major attraction is the Quilt Show at the Baldwin Intermediate Center, west of town on Highway 56.

"We will have new and old quilts on display. Anybody who has a quilt they'd like to show is welcome to bring it by Quilters Paradise at Baldwin City, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 'til 2. We expect more than 100 quilts to be on display," Hall said.

Of course, the parade Saturday morning has to be a festival highlight, with the kiddie parade kicking off at 10:45.

"The parade is what everybody talks about most, and we are expecting more entries than ever, with some from a long ways off. Everybody is welcome to come participate, but no candy or treats can be distributed from entries," Hall noted.

There'll be a 5K-Run Saturday morning at the golf course. Historical tours of the Baldwin City area are to feature the Black Jack Battlefield and cabin.

Midland Railway plans train rides from the historic Santa Fe Depot on West High Street all three days.

"Many high school graduating classes plan their reunions this weekend, so it's traditionally a homecoming event as well," Hall pointed out.

Sunday will feature gospel music in the Music Tent. A Volkswalk, a unique take on non-competitive fitness walking, has been scheduled from 10 o'clock to 4:30.

However, Hall emphasized. "This is a strictly a volunteer, non-profit activity. The committee meets throughout the year getting organized, and then it all comes together with everybody helping."

"A successful festival allows us to fund scholarships, support local charities and community organizations," commented Hall, in welcoming everyone to attend.

Additional details are available at www.mapleleafestival.com.

Padre Says:

**"When it rains on your parade, look up rather than down.
Without the rain, there would be no rainbow."**

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