Gimme 5: Menomonie to host first-ever SummerDaze

Editor's note: Gimme 5 is a five-question interview on a topic of local interest. Joanie Dulin, executive director of Menomonie Main Street, is interviewed regarding the SummerDaze festival downtown Friday through Sunday.

By John Swedien
Leader-Telegram staff

What is SummerDaze?

It's a three-day weekend festival May 18 to 20 in downtown Menomonie which will have a little bit of something for everyone of all ages.

I understand this is the first SummerDaze. Will there be more?

We hope for SummerDaze to be an annual event. Much of our advertising has been word-of-mouth, and we have often heard, "Menomonie has needed something like this for a long time!" We are so excited to have so much support from the community and look forward to having everyone come out and enjoy the festivities.

How did this festival come about?

Main Street of Menomonie (the nonprofit organization I work for) actually discussed a year ago the need for an event like this in Menomonie — we've seen how successful events like Durand Fun Fest and Boyceville Cucumber Fest are for those communities, and we wanted to have that same community feel here in our town. Main Street of Menomonie has organized the WinterDaze parade in downtown Menomonie every December for almost 10 years, so we used the name to link both events to our organization.

What kind of activities will there be?

The list is huge! There will be a medallion hunt with clues starting on Sunday, and you can listen for clues on B95 (WQRB-FM) with Mike McKay & Donuts every morning. On Friday evening we will have a (asterisk indicates pre-registration required) Chalkfest at UW-Stout's Clock Tower Plaza. We
will also have live music and activities behind the Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center including a bean bag competition*, hot dog eating contest*, food and drink.

On Saturday we will have an arts and crafts fair throughout the downtown, a lumberjack show and competition at Wilson Park, and classic car show at Burger King. Sunday afternoon we will have a historical downtown walking tour, Disney-themed children's parade*, and Bow Wow Couture will have a doggy fashion show at Wilson Park.

Saturday and Sunday afternoons we will have a fun assortment of Kid Again Inflatable, the Euro-Bungee Jumper and children's games at the Bremer Bank parking lot. We have great prizes including some cash prizes for the bean bag competition, hot-dog-eating contest and medallion hunt. The grand prize for the Disney-themed children's parade is a pair of two-day passes to Walt Disney World.

**I understand this is a free event. Is it funded with donations, or how is it supported?**

We have had some excellent sponsors for our event! Fairmount Minerals is our partnering sponsor for the event. We have also received grants from the Community Foundation of Dunn County, Xcel Energy and Visit Eau Claire along with many other excellent sponsors all listed on our website. Participants will need to purchase a wristband for the Kid Again Inflatable and children's games but the price is minimal — $8 per person or $30 for a four-pack, and it will be good for both days!