

81st
ANNUAL

PRESTON COUNTY

Buckwheat Festival

Sept. 27-Oct. 1

THE DOMINION
Post



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A ton of buckwheat flour goes into serving those 10,000 cakes

BY JENIFFER GRAHAM
DPNews@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — Is there anything better than a plate filled with buckwheat cakes?

Not during the Buckwheat Festival, when just about every restaurant in the county, and the Kingwood Volunteer Fire Department, serve them up with sides of your choice.

KVFD Chief Perry Barlow said last year the fire department dished out more than 10,000 buckwheat cake dinners. He said to accomplish that, one ton of buckwheat flour was needed for the batter.

Barlow said it also required sugar, salt, yeast, water, milk, buttermilk, baking soda and baking powder to make the cakes.

The KVFD serves its cakes during the festival at the community building on Brown Avenue.

According to History of the Preston County Buckwheat Festival, in the early days of the festival, farmers would bring their buckwheat crops to the fair grounds to be milled into flour, which was then used to make buckwheat cakes. Over time, the festival grew to include a variety of family friendly activities, but the focus on buckwheat and the celebration of the local farming community remained at the heart of the festival.

Buckwheat was first planted in Preston County in summer 1859. That was

the year an early June frost wiped out the traditional crops. Buckwheat can be planted as late as July and harvested in October. During the Depression, local farmers grew buckwheat as an insurance crop.

In his book, "A History of Preston County West Virginia," Samuel T. Wiley wrote:

"A morning drive in Preston in summer when the air is rich with the scent of the buckwheat bloom and the ripening fruit in the orchard, is worth a trip of many miles to enjoy. Whether through the shadows of the cool woods or through the open country, where on every side smiling valleys and forest slopes of green mountains spread out like a fair picture to charm with its inviting beauty. There is a delight for every weary traveler who drinks in the morning air, as if it were charged with a tonic vigor."

Once the festival is over and you get a hankering for buckwheat cakes, a recipe called Preston County-raised Buckwheat Cakes can be found at greatamericanpublishers.com/blog/preston-county-raised-buckwheat-cakes/.

You can also buy bags of buckwheat flour at the festival and at many area grocery stores.

THE KVFD SERVES ITS CAKES DURING THE FESTIVAL AT THE COMMUNITY BUILDING.



Nina Sheets (front) and Lori Rodeheaver make buckwheat cakes at the Preston County VFD Community Building.

The Dominion Post file photo

Only war and pandemic have halted annual festival

BY JENIFFER GRAHAM
DPNews@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — Kingwood Volunteer Fire Department President Bill Lindley said the Buckwheat Festival has only been canceled twice since 1938.

Once, World War II was going on and the other time, COVID-19 was keeping people at home.

He said if you look through past program books, you will see things have changed over the years. Lindley said the changes are subtle, like the professionally built floats that can be seen in the parades today.

"In the past people built their own floats. Then there was the train exhibit in the 50s. These were the icing on the cake that we don't have any more. Those things have faded away because we don't have contacts like Happy Everly and the trains. Even getting volunteers is becoming more difficult," he said.

One thing that has remained the same is the lead sponsor — the fire department.

KVFD Chief Perry Barlow said money raised during the festival is used to purchase needed equipment or to update older equipment. He said the festival also

helps support local farmers because buckwheat gives them a second crop each year.

W.G. Williams has written about the KVFD and the Buckwheat Festival. These are a few facts he included:

■ The first Buckwheat Festival was held in 1938. The event took place Oct. 13, 14 and 15 after just six weeks of planning.

■ The KVFD was organized March 15, 1926. A bond election was successful, and \$15,000 in bonds were sold. Of that, \$5,500 was for new fire department equipment and the remainder for city hall. A new American-La France fire engine was purchased with part of the money. It arrived in Kingwood the week of Jan. 6, 1927.

■ On July 11, 1940, the Kingwood Fire Co. bought 60 acres of the William G. Brown tract. The acreage was on Brown Avenue to the north, Tunnelton Street to the west and extending south to the Kingwood-Tunnelton Road. The price was \$6,000, or \$100 per acre. Part of the property is now called Fireman's Field and is where the rides, vendors and concessions are found.

■ Louise Shaw, a senior at Kingwood High School, was chosen Queen Ceres 1.

SEE ANNUAL, F-8



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New music stadium, cornhole, brew fest coming to festival

BY JENIFFER GRAHAM
DPNews@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — This year's Preston County Buckwheat Festival will have a new music stadium, a lineup of great musicians, a cornhole tournament and a Buckwheat Brew Fest, according to general chairman Harry Hayes.

The brew fest will have craft beer from local and regional breweries. Admission is \$25 per person and is limited to 250 people. There is also a 21 and above age requirement. The brew fest will be 6-10 p.m. Friday at the community building mill room.

Hayes said the music stage will feature regional and national touring bands.

The Davisson Brothers Band will highlight the final night of the festival at 8 p.m. Saturday.

"The band has emerged as a regular component on the festival circuit, including a performance at CMC Rocks the Hunter Festival in Australia. The band is hailed as Rolling Stone Country '10 new country artists you need to know,' boasts musical foundations that are classic, obvious and etched in stone," according to the website.

Friday

Moonlight Drive will be onstage at 4:30 p.m.

A four-piece band from Morgantown, Moonlight Drive creates an original rock sound with songs about love, heartbreak, good times and even better times. The band has a self-titled EP of five songs and has opened for popular artists such as Joe Diffie, Aaron Tippin, Luke Combs, Parmalee, LOCASH and Cowboy Troy.

Jess Kellie Adams performs at 6 p.m.

An Ohio native currently living in Nashville, Adams' songs have taken her to many venues, fairs and festivals across the U.S.

"With influences ranging from The Chicks, Loretta Lynn, Johnny Cash, Miranda Lambert, Martina McBride, Reba McEntire, Earl Thomas Conley and Merle Haggard, honest storytelling lies at the heart of everything Adams does. Just as these iconic artists and their songs have influenced her life and make a tremendous impact on her own music, Adams strives to do the same for her fans."

At 8 p.m., Dylan Schneider will take the stage.

According to his label: "Now signed to

BBR Music Group, his most recent five-track EP College Town truly embraces his irresistible Rock-n-Roll edge and unrestrained Pop-Country swagger, with American Songwriter raving that the project exhibited an impressive evolution of his artistry. After posting a snippet of his new break-up anthem 'Ain't Missing You' on social media the sound went viral, garnering more than 56 million views and 52,000 creator videos. Giving into fan demand, the rising country music star's 'Ain't Missing You' is out now."

Saturday

Clay Justice will be onstage at 3 p.m.

Branson Tasker as the lead vocalist and rhythm guitarist, John Martin on bass, Obadiah Johnson as the lead and rhythm guitarist and Floyd Cowger IV on drums round out the band. Together, they have over 30 combined years of musical experience playing country, southern rock and bluegrass.

Homegrown Tucker Knisell takes the stage at 4:30 p.m.

Knisell grew up in western Preston County in Independence. He released his first single, "Wrist Tattoo," in 2022. Since

then, he's had two more singles, "Rhubarb" and "You and Caroline." Both have been ranked as top 10 songs of the week. Knisell has been called "a rising star to watch."

At 6 p.m., the Mikele Buck Band will be onstage.

Buck was also born in the hills of West Virginia. He played drums in rock bands through most of high school and picked up guitar after graduation. His original songs are influenced by the likes of Steve Earle, Garth Brooks and Travis Tritt. A military veteran of the war in Iraq, Mikele recorded his first CD in Nashville and started his Mikele Buck Band near Greenville, N.C. The band has opened for major acts, including Jason Aldean, Joe Nichols, Jon Pardi, Brett Eldredge, Hunter Hayes, Lady Antebellum, Confederate Railroad, Bucky Covington, Craig Campbell and Shenandoah. Buck was a competitor on The Voice in 2018.

The Davisson Brothers Band will perform at 8 p.m. to close the festival.

For those of you who would like to share your talent with the audience, Karaoke Night will be 8:30 p.m. Thursday and open mic will be noon Sunday.

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THE SCHEDULE

TUESDAY

9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. – market steers, market lambs and market goats must arrive and occupy assigned pens

9 a.m.-8:30 p.m. – market swine must arrive and occupy assigned pens

2-8 p.m. – exhibits will be entered in Memorial North

6-7 p.m. – market steer weigh-in, followed by picture taking

7-8 p.m. – lamb and goat weigh-in, followed by picture taking

WEDNESDAY

7 a.m.-1 p.m. – market swine weigh-in and picture taking

10 a.m.-3 p.m. – judging of exhibits in Memorial North (closed to public)

8 a.m.-3 p.m. – all remaining livestock must arrive

8 a.m. – Sheep Showmanship Contest, Market Lamb Show

1 p.m. – Goat Showmanship Contest, Market Goat Show

1-2 p.m. – weighing of feeder calf and prospect market steer

4-8 p.m. – buckwheat cakes and sausage dinners (Community Building)

6 p.m. – carnival opens

6-9 p.m. – Bingo

6:30 p.m. – judging of market steers

THURSDAY

8 a.m. – Swine Showmanship Contest, Market Swine Show

11 a.m.-8 p.m. – buckwheat cakes and sausage dinners (Community Building)

Noon-10 p.m. – Arts and Crafts Buildings open

Noon-10 p.m. – Exhibit Buildings open to public

Noon – carnival opens

4 p.m. – judging of feeder calves and prospect market steers

5:30 p.m. – Purebred Sheep Show, Breeding Goat Show, Dairy Goat Show

6-10 p.m. – Bingo (games will pause during parade)

7:30 p.m. – Firemen’s Parade

8:30-10 p.m. – Karaoke Night (concert stage)

9:30 p.m. – Fireman’s Trophy Presentation (closed to public)

FRIDAY

8 a.m.-7 p.m. – buckwheat cakes and sausage dinners (Community Building)

8 a.m. – Ladies & Shepherds Lead

9 a.m. – Royalty Breakfast (by invitation only)

9:30 a.m. – judging of purebred cross-bred beef and dairy cattle

10 a.m. – carnival opens

10 a.m.-9 p.m. – Arts and Crafts Buildings open

10 a.m.-10 p.m. – Exhibit Buildings open to public

Noon – Coronation of Queen Ceres and King Buckwheat

2 p.m. – School Day Parade

3:30 p.m. – Lamb Dressing Contest (Cow Palace)

4-10 p.m. – Bingo

5-10 p.m. – Concert

6 p.m. – Beef Showmanship Contest, followed by Supreme Champion Showman

6 p.m. – 1 Hour Flash Bash (Civic Center)

6-10 p.m. – Buckwheat Brew Fest (Community Building)

SATURDAY

7:30-9:30 a.m. – Ag Olympics

8 a.m.-8 p.m. – buckwheat cakes and sausage dinners (Community Building)

10 a.m. – carnival rides open

10 a.m.-9 p.m. – Arts & Crafts Buildings open

10 a.m.-10 p.m. – Exhibit Buildings open to the public

Noon – Buckwheat Mile

Noon – Farmer’s Day Parade

2 p.m. – WVU Marching Band Field Show

2 p.m. – Youth Livestock Award Ceremony

4 p.m. – Youth Livestock Sale in Cow Palace

5-10 p.m. – concert

6 p.m. – Big Bucks Bingo (Craig Civic Center)

9-11 p.m. – remaining livestock removed from barns

SEE SCHEDULE, F-10

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Buckwheat Festival's 81st Queen Ceres proud to fulfill legacy

BY KAITLYN EICHELBERGER

Keichelberger@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — In 1988, Shannon Smith Wolfe was crowned Queen Ceres XLVII of the 47th Buckwheat Festival.

Now, 34 years later, her daughter Autumn Wolfe has continued the legacy as Queen Ceres LXXXI in this year's 81st Buckwheat Festival.

Wolfe's family has lived in Preston County for nine generations and has been involved in the Buckwheat Festival since the very beginning. With her crowning as Queen Ceres LXXXI, Wolfe has left her mark on something that is both part of her ancestry and the culture of every Preston County resident.

"It's my heritage. My mom definitely inspired me to run. They have never had mother-daughter queens in all 81 years until me and my mom. So it was really fun to be the first," Wolfe said. "I've also really loved connecting with former court members, because it's like this golden string that ties us all together. Even if you barely know the person, it's like you've known each other your whole life."

For her promotional speech during the competition, Wolfe sewed a monarch butterfly into the train of her dress and clipped a monarch butterfly barrette into her hair — a symbol that she associates with her grandfather who died last August.

"Monarch butterflies were everywhere on me all day, whether it be jewelry or something on my clothing," said Wolfe. "I put a lot of significance behind everything I did."

The Buckwheat Festival has been a routine throughout Wolfe's life, whether it be showing livestock for the past seven years, playing in band performances, enjoying the carnival rides or serving buckwheat cakes during festival time — which takes the (buckwheat) cake as one of her favorite Buckwheat Festival memories.

"It's everything to me. It's like a holiday," said Wolfe. "You come back to school and it's the first break. It's like a reward for making it through the first month and a half. I've always really liked it."

Through her experiences as Queen Ceres LXXXI, Wolfe has had opportunities to form lifelong connections with the rest of the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court, inspire and connect with her community and learn things she will carry with her long after her reign has concluded.

One of the greatest lessons of this experience has been witnessing the Buckwheat Festival's extraordinary impact on not only Preston County natives but also folks throughout the state and beyond.

"I have really liked talking to people in the community and seeing how much the Buckwheat Festival affects people who aren't even in Preston County," said Wolfe. "It's not just a festival that sticks around here. People who have grown up here and moved away come back just for the festival. It's not just us — it's important to everyone."

As a senior at Preston High School, Wolfe is part of the school's marching and jazz bands and the National Honor Society, as well as 4-H and the Preston County Livestock Association. She is first in the state for the HOSA — Future Health Professionals Medical Law & Ethics competitive event.

"IT'S MY HERITAGE. MY MOM DEFINITELY INSPIRED ME TO RUN. THEY HAVE NEVER HAD MOTHER-DAUGHTER QUEENS IN ALL 81 YEARS UNTIL ME AND MY MOM. SO IT WAS REALLY FUN TO BE THE FIRST. I'VE ALSO REALLY LOVED CONNECTING WITH FORMER COURT MEMBERS, BECAUSE IT'S LIKE THIS GOLDEN STRING THAT TIES US ALL TOGETHER. EVEN IF YOU BARELY KNOW THE PERSON, IT'S LIKE YOU'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER YOUR WHOLE LIFE."

Autumn Wolfe
Queen Ceres LXXXI



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Cook/Jan's Studios

Queen Ceres LXXXI Autumn Wolfe

ANNUAL

FROM PAGE F-2

The name Ceres was taken from the ancient Roman Goddess of Vegetation. A young Pleasant District farmer, Scott Miller, was the first king. They later became husband and wife. They were crowned in front of the courthouse door on the east side of the building facing Price Street.

■ Harry Brindle was the general chairman the four years before the war. During the war years, the Buckwheat Festival was halted, the ground was plowed and people of the town planted gardens on a first-come basis.

■ At their January 1948 meeting, members of the KVFD made plans to build a building on their lot along Brown Avenue. Ground was broken for the building that March and was completed in time for the 1948 festival.

■ The firemen purchased 600 new dinner plates, salad plates and cups on Oct. 9, 1952. The rims of the plates were embossed with the letters K.V.F.D., with a buckwheat shock between K.V. and F.D.

■ Members of the KVFD launched a drive on Sept. 13, 1956, to sell bonds to raise \$50,000 to build a swimming pool. Other than the Buckwheat Festival, Williams said this was the firemen's No. 1 project for 1956-57.

Honoring Queen Ceres



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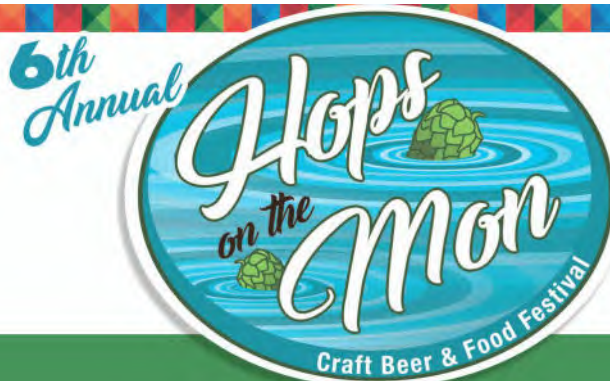
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Buckwheat Festival's 81st King Buckwheat proud to represent Preston County

BY KAITLYN EICHELBERGER
Keichelberger@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — As a child, Carson Stone struggled with public speaking. Through his reign as King Buckwheat LXXXI, Stone has seen firsthand the benefit of putting yourself out there despite hesitation, especially for the sake of serving your community.

"I was always very shy. As I've gotten older, I've gotten less shy. I've been talking more in front of people, doing more public speaking," Stone said. "Then this, I mean, you talk to everybody. It takes you out of your shell if you're stuck in a place where you can't really speak to people."

Stone decided to run for King Buckwheat following encouragement from peers, a long history with the Buckwheat Festival and past leadership roles in extracurriculars. With the rest of the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court by his side, and the community to support him, it's been an exciting ride.

"It's been a great time, we all get along pretty well," said Stone.

A highlight of the experience has been downtime spent with the group during car rides or ice cream stops after parades.

The Buckwheat Festival has always been a feature of Stone's life, after more than a decade of showing livestock, enjoying amusement rides or taking part in the

festival's parades with sports teams. Now, Stone will add to his Buckwheat Festival memories a year spent supporting the community and representing Preston County.

"[The Buckwheat Festival] means a lot. I've done it since I was a baby," said Stone. "The first memory I have is when I was in kindergarten, I showed in an open show, and then I started getting into market showing when I was 9. I've been showing market steers ever since."

Last year, Stone's market steer won the Grand Champion Overall Award.

In these months spent attending parades, fairs and volunteer events, Stone has grown more confident in himself and more ambitious to take the next steps towards his goals — even if they're challenging.


"It's taught me that stepping out of your boundaries really never hurts. It can only help you," he said.

Stone is a senior at Preston High School, where he is a member of the National Honor Society and National Technical Honor Society. Last year, he was treasurer of the Preston County Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter, and he hopes to run for president this year. He is also president of the Lenox Loyal Workers 4-H Club and has been a Junior Board Member of the Preston County Livestock Association for four years.



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Cook/Jan's Studios

King Buckwheat LXXXI Carson Stone



Deuteronomy 28:8
The Lord will send a blessing on your barns
and on everything you put your hand to.
The Lord your God will bless you in the
land he is giving you.

Carson Stone
King Buckwheat LXXXI

We are so proud of you and all your
accomplishments so far in your journey.
Live life to the fullest and never allow failure to
stop you! We are excited to see you grow into the
man that God created you to be! Keep reaching
for the stars and always be kind!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Kaleb & Kenley

SCHEDULE

FROM PAGE F-6

SUNDAY

8 a.m.-3 p.m. – buckwheat cakes and
sausage dinners (Community Building)

10 a.m.-noon – attend a church of your
choice

10 a.m.-4 p.m. – Exhibit buildings open to
the public

10 a.m.-4 p.m. – arts and crafts booths
open (basement of Community Building and
Rhododendron Building)

10 a.m.-1 p.m. – Buckwheat Festival Car
Show registration (Civic Center)

10 a.m.-3 p.m. – Car Show public viewing

10 a.m. – Buckwheat Cornhole Tournament

10 a.m. – Buckwheat Bike Show

Noon – carnival rides open

1 p.m. – Irish Road Bowling (registration,
Pleasantdale Road)

1-4 p.m. – Bingo

4 p.m. – KVFD Commemorative Rifle
Drawings

4:30 p.m. – \$10,000 cash giveaway

5-6 p.m. – exhibits pickup from Memorial
North (with entry tag)

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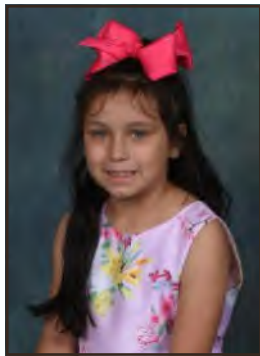


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**Tristate
Tree service**

Market steers, market lambs, market goats and market swine will arrive and occupy assigned pens Tuesday.

CHILDREN’S COURT



Journey Harned



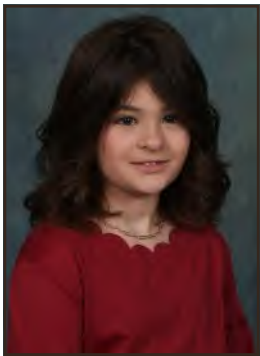
Landry Davis



Aubbree Shaffer



Carleigh Stuchell

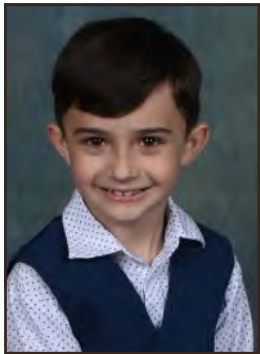


Avery Waybright

Photos courtesy of Carolyn Cook/Jan’s Studios



Walter Helsley



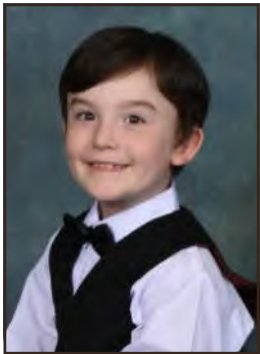
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First Maid of Honor Slinka-Petka and Escort Alex Burns honored to be part of 81st festival

BY KAITLYN EICHELBERGER

Keichelberger@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — The 81st Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court features First Maid of Honor Piper Slinka-Petka and her escort, runner-up to King Buckwheat, Alex Burns.

Slinka-Petka competed for a position on the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court out of a desire to play a role in the Buckwheat Festival's coordination and take part in something so well-known and respected throughout Preston County and West Virginia.

"It's like a rite of passage around here," said Slinka-Petka. "And just like looking at the Buckwheat Festival as an organization, it was something that I wanted to be a part of."

In doing so, the experience has opened her eyes to the great impact of the festival, and just how many people come together to organize and continue improving the event that locals know and love every year.

"Just getting to be a part of the process of the creation and marketing for the Buckwheat Festival has been very eye-opening to see everything that goes into it and how many people around our county are actually involved in making the festival happen," said Slinka-Petka. "It's taught me there's a lot of power in community."

In preparation for the festival and attending community events like parades and fairs, the court has had many opportunities to meet folks involved in the festival, as well as the community members who attend it. This has been one of the greatest highlights of the experience for Slinka-Petka — witnessing firsthand and continuing the legacy of the Buckwheat Festival.

"Just getting to meet people and being able to connect with people that have done this in the past and also people that are going to do this in the future. It's good to be able to talk to people that have the same history with it as I will have now," said Slinka-Petka. "It's showed me how much even our small town can come together to

make big things happen."

Slinka-Petka is a senior at Preston High School, where she is part of the National Honor Society, Preston High's Key Club, a varsity cheerleader and a HOSA — Future Health Professionals state officer.

Burns was inspired by his friends and love for the Buckwheat Festival to run for the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court. The competition was an experience that proved challenging at times but was all the more gratifying as a result.

"Hard work pays off," said Burns. "I had to work hard to get here."

Events the court has attended together include various parades and fairs across the state, during which Burns has enjoyed the time spent with the rest of the court — especially when the group stops for ice cream to regroup and relax after long days.

Burns has been showing livestock at the Buckwheat Festival for nine years, and one of his favorite memories of the Buckwheat Festival is earning the title of Lamb Master Showman in 2019. Just as commitment and dedication paid off then, he has used the same values throughout his reign on the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court.

"That was another example of hard work paying off. I'd worked for it for a while," said Burns. "And just seeing between then and now, just seeing the hard work I've put in paying off."

Just like for many Preston County residents, the Buckwheat Festival has been a hallmark of Burns' childhood, especially through his agricultural connections. This makes it all the more significant to now have such a vital role in the festival's success.

"I've always been around [the festival] growing up. I've had fun doing it," said Burns. "And to be able to be a bigger part of it just kind of means a lot."

As a senior at Preston High School, Burns is part of the school's Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter where he has earned his Greenhand and Chapter Farmer award and acts as an assistant officer. He is also part of the JROTC Knights Battalion, where he has been a squad leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant and had roles on the air rifle and RADIER teams; he is currently the command sergeant major. He is also part of the Preston County Livestock Association.



Piper Slinka-Petka



Alex Burns



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Cook/Jan's Studios

First Maid of Honor Piper Slinka-Petka and her escort, Alex Burns.

"JUST GETTING TO BE A PART OF THE PROCESS OF THE CREATION AND MARKETING FOR THE BUCKWHEAT FESTIVAL HAS BEEN VERY EYE-OPENING TO SEE EVERYTHING THAT GOES INTO IT AND HOW MANY PEOPLE AROUND OUR COUNTY ARE ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN MAKING THE FESTIVAL HAPPEN. IT'S TAUGHT ME THERE'S A LOT OF POWER IN COMMUNITY."

Piper Slinka-Petka
First Maid of Honor

Second Maid of Honor Marli Phillips and Escort Evan Keech reflect on festival memories



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Cook/Jan's Studios

Second Maid of Honor Marli Phillips and Escort Evan Keech

"BEING PART OF THE BUCKWHEAT FESTIVAL COURT HAS TAUGHT ME TO ALWAYS HAVE A SMILE ON MY FACE AND MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PUT A SMILE ON THE FACES OF OTHERS. IT HAS ALSO TAUGHT ME TO NOT BE AFRAID TO TRY SOMETHING NEW AND TO ALWAYS TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENJOY ICE CREAM WITH FRIENDS."

Evan Keech
Escort

BY KAITLYN EICHELBERGER

Keichelberger@DominionPost.com

KINGWOOD — The 81st Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court features Second Maid of Honor Marli Phillips and her escort, Evan Keech.

Phillips ran for the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court after past involvement with the court as a junior princess in 2018 and various family members, including her parents, grandmother and aunt, all taking part in the Buckwheat Court when they were young.

Marli Phillips

"It really hit me when I was a junior princess. I got to be part of the court, and it really sparked more of interest, like I really wanted to try out for that," said Phillips. "I've enjoyed seeing the process from when I was little, looking up like, 'Oh, I want to do that,' to being here now and actually doing it."

In representing Preston County as part of the court, Phillips has seen this same spark resonate through attendees of the various fairs and parades the court has taken part in.

"You really don't see the impact the Buckwheat Festival has on people," said Phillips. "Everybody around the state knows our fair. [At parades], you smile and wave to people, you see all the little kids and they enjoy seeing you, and then hopefully you see them again in September at the fair."

With this look into the festival's behind-the-scenes, it becomes clear just how many different people contribute to the festival and how this results in a festival with something for everyone to look forward to and enjoy. Fair food, livestock shows, amusement rides, hand-crafted art, music and more come together to create a nostalgic and cheerful festival that friends, family and neighbors enjoy together.

"It's a big family reunion, that's the easiest way to explain it," said Phillips. "Everyone is there to enjoy the fair. You're all there for the same reason."

Over years of showing livestock at the festival and attending with friends and family, the Buckwheat Festival has been an event for Phillips to look forward to each year.

"There's always a schedule — there's always something to do. It's something I've always done. It's like my yearly routine," said Phillips. "You get your animals ready all year and then each day is something different that you can be part of."

Phillips is a Preston High School senior, where she is part of the National Honor Society, the National Technical Society and Future Farmers of America (FFA), as well as 4-H.

Keech served as a train bearer for King Buckwheat 10 years ago, leaving him with good memories that inspired him to run for the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court. Family members who previously served on the court also encouraged him to participate. The Buckwheat Festival itself has always represented fun times spent on amusement rides, eating festival food and watching parades with friends and family.

Serving on the court has created even more good memories, especially of times spent with the rest of the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court and the coordinators of the group's duties.

"My favorite part about the events was the opportunity to spend time getting to know the other members of the Buckwheat Festival court, the general chairman, the assistant chairman and their families," said Keech.

During his time serving on the Buckwheat Festival Royalty Court, Keech has had opportunities to learn from his peers and mentors, strengthening values that will remain essential through future education, occupations and everyday life.

"Being part of the Buckwheat Festival court has taught me to always have a smile on my face and make every effort to put a smile on the faces of others," said Keech. "It has also taught me to not be afraid to try something new and to always take the opportunity to enjoy ice cream with friends."

Keech is a Preston High School senior, where he is a member of the National Honor Society and National Technical Honor Society.



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Emily Bucklew



Anna Hess



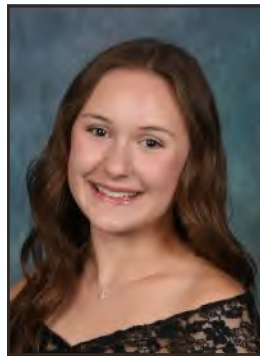
Isabella Hauser



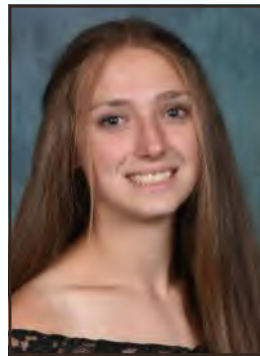
Lexy Shaw



Emily Shillingburg



Sophia Taylor

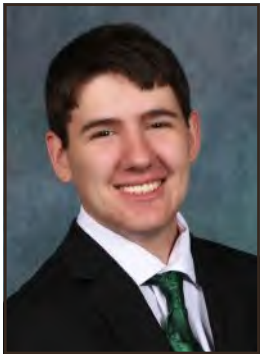


Taryn Veltri

ESCORTS



Mark Ringer



Levi Spiker



Anthony Favro



Nicholas Forman



Greyson Kuhn

**The Coronation of
Queen Ceres LXXXI
Autumn Wolfe and
King Buckwheat LXXXI
Carson Stone will be
at noon Friday,
followed by the
School Day Parade
at 2 p.m.**

JUNIOR PRINCESSES



Cailyn Johnston



Lexi Roy



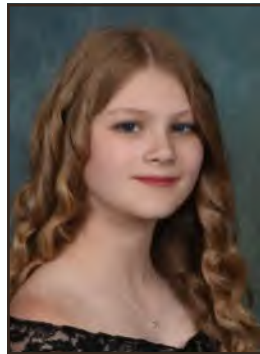
Donna Cavender



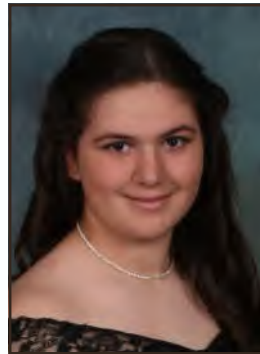
Kalista Huggins



Crosby Shaffer



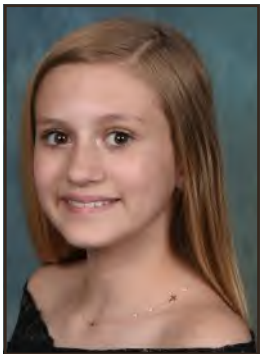
Reese Stratton



Paycen Varner



Lannen Rouzee



Leila Carpenter



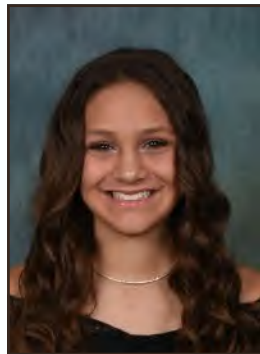
Kamryn Hayes



Delaney Seese



Maryn Shrout



Ava Turner

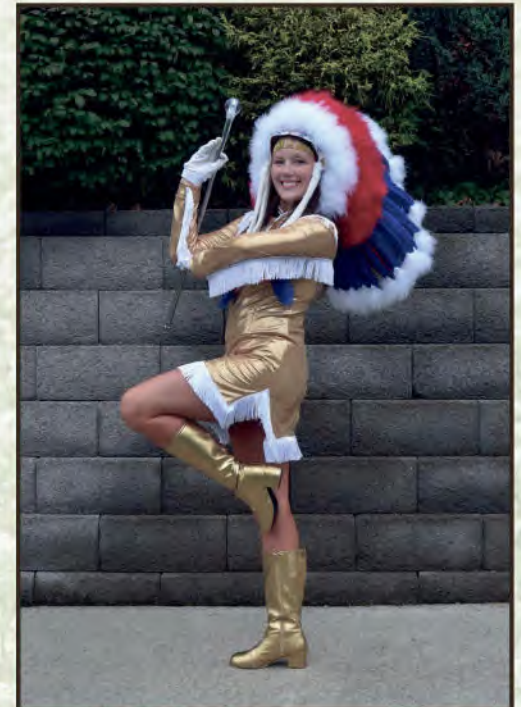
**Photos courtesy of
Carolyn Cook/
Jan's Studios**



Jan's Studio of Photography
414 East Main Street
Kingwood, WV 26537
304-698-8580



MHS Field Commander
Audrey Hasley



MHS Head Majorette
Lexi Proctor



King Buckwheat LXXXI
Carson Jeffrey Stone



Queen Ceres LXXXI
Autumn Elise Wolfe

Official Photographer for the Preston County Buckwheat Festival

2022 BUCKWHEAT FESTIVAL PHOTOS



The Dominion Post file photos

Clockwise, from top left: Queen Ceres LXXX Taylor Holt and King Buckwheat LXXX James Peaslee; Kingwood Middle School band; Preston High ROTC leads a Buckwheat Festival parade; carnival rides provide hours of entertainment at the annual festival; and 2022 Junior Princesses wave during a parade. This year's parades will be 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Firemen's; 2 p.m. Friday, School Day; and noon Saturday, Farmer's Day. Other entertainment includes a WVU Marching Band Field Show at 2 p.m. Saturday and these concerts: Moonlight Drive, 4:30 p.m. Friday; Jess Kellie Adams, 6 p.m. Friday; Dylan Schneider, 8 p.m. Friday; Clay Justice, 3 p.m. Saturday; Tucker Knisell, 4:30 p.m. Saturday; Mikele Buck Band, 6 p.m. Saturday; and Davisson Brothers Band, 8 p.m. Saturday.



PRESTON COUNTY BUCKWHEAT FESTIVAL

September 28 - October 1
Kingwood, WV

My name is Samantha Stone and I am serving as the President of the Preston County Livestock Association. Our organization is youth-driven and works diligently to educate youth in and promote agriculture. PCLA seeks to work in conjunction with local 4-H groups and the Preston County FFA Chapter to ensure that the junior membership of PCLA has an annual youth show and sale for their consigned market livestock projects.

Special Thank You

The Preston County Livestock Association would like to extend a special thank-you to the Kingwood Volunteer Fire Department, the Preston County Extension Office, Farmers Day Chairman, and the countless volunteers and businesses that support our organization. Without monetary contributions, in-kind donations and manpower, the show and sale would not be possible. We thank you and look forward to seeing you all at the 81st Annual Preston County Buckwheat Festival.

The Preston County Livestock Association, in cooperation with the KVFD, the FFA chapter, and the 4-H Clubs, are proud to sponsor the annual Buckwheat Festival Junior Livestock Sale.

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The youth exhibitors would like to invite the public to the Youth Livestock Sale, September 30th at 4 p.m. in the Cow Palace. The sale order for 2023 is Steers, Hogs, Goats & Lambs.

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November 11
VFW Fall Craft & Vendor Show

November 11
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November 26
Thistlethewaite Vineyards
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& Holiday Open House

December 2
Waynesburg Christmas Parade

December 10
Holiday Craft Blast

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