

News Column  
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## HOW TO ENJOY THE COUNTY FAIR

Looking back on all the county fairs I have attended over the years – as an Extension Agent, parent, 4-Her, or spectator – I think the best stuff has happened after 10:00 p.m., after the work was done and it was already past time to go home.

At the end of the day I'm usually bone-tired, badly in need of a shower, and yearning to be home in bed, hoping for six hours of sleep before the start of the next day. Then, I will decide to make one more pass through the barns, or one more trip down the main drag of the fairgrounds.

That's when the good stuff happens.

The good stuff is the people. Inevitably I will run into someone I haven't seen for awhile, or someone I have seen over and over all week, but haven't really talked to yet. They will usually be sitting on a bench or in a lawn chair, and either with words or actions will invite me to join them.

Those who know me well, as well as those who know me casually, will be surprised to learn that I enjoy those late night talks. You see, I'm not the most social person in the world – that's my wife – and I'm not very comfortable when I'm out of my element. But, at a county fair, I'm good! Even if you don't invite me, I might sit down with you to help solve the world's problems.

While I enjoy the late evening, after the sun is down and the air has cooled, the top of the

day is pretty nice too. If you like mornings, try showing at 6:00 a.m. and just sit and watch the kids and their families do chores and lead cattle back to the barn from the tie-outs.

Another activity you won't find on the printed schedule is watching 4-Hers wash their animals. You can spend an hour sitting backwards on the bleachers watching the action in the cattle wash rack, and you won't realize it has been a whole hour. It's kind of like watching a good crew pour cement – you'd think it would be pretty boring, but it's not!

If you're not into cattle, just go a little farther north on the Riley County Fairgrounds and you will find the swine wash rack and the sheep and goat wash racks. Pigs come and go from the swine wash racks all day. Get close enough and you might get wet,...and you can thank me for that tip on a really hot day.

Another fun water activity on a hot day is to show up about an hour or so before the evening livestock show when the county agent or a volunteer is wetting down the show ring. We do that with a fire hose. We try not to get spectators wet, but we may also try really hard to come just as close as possible without actually soaking you.

There are a few activities that are actually on the schedule that you might have missed. Have you made it to the 4-H Bake Sale from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday (July 24 this year)? Come buy a chocolate cake for breakfast the next day, at a very reasonable price.

If you haven't made it to the shepherd's lead on Thursday evening right before the sheep show, then you're missing out. Be there by 7:00 p.m. because this event won't take long, but it is well worth your time.

You'll also want to catch the bucket calf show at 6:45 on Saturday evening, right before the beef show. Then stay for the whole beef show, or go find a funnel cake and come back. But, remember, the best stuff happens after 10:00 p.m. Be sure to stay late and visit with your friends,

old or new.

If you haven't seen the fair schedule yet, you can find it online at [www.rileycountyfair.com](http://www.rileycountyfair.com). Fair dates are July 25-29, 2019. The 4-H horse show is the Saturday before the fair, on July 20.

I hope to see you at the Riley County Fair.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to [gmclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmclure@ksu.edu).

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