

WISCONSIN STATE FAIR

AUGUST 3-13, 2023 Presented By 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sharlene Swedlund, 2023 Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs
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SHARLENE SWEDLUND FROM GREEN COUNTY FAIR CROWNED 2023 WISCONSIN FAIREST OF THE FAIRS

WEST ALLIS, Wis. – January 11, 2023 – [Wisconsin State Fair](#) officials are proud to introduce the 2023 Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs, who was selected this evening at the annual [Wisconsin Association of Fairs](#) Convention in the Wisconsin Dells. A group of 36 talented contestants vied for this highly sought-after position, and Sharlene Swedlund, 22, representing the Green County Fair, took home the title.

The Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs program was created 57 years ago to select an ambassador for the Wisconsin Association of Fairs, which represents 75 county, district, and state Fairs in Wisconsin.

Each year, the Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs travels throughout the state promoting the educational, agricultural, social, cultural, and commercial opportunities available at Wisconsin's incredible Fairs. The winner must possess outstanding communication skills as well as organization, professionalism, and above all, a passion for the Fair industry.

In addition, she will serve as an official ambassador of the 2023 Wisconsin State Fair, presented by UScellular, which takes place August 3 – 13 in West Allis. This role is comprised of greeting Fairgoers and special guests, performing as the master of ceremonies for events, participating in various contests, and representing the State Fair during special media appearances.

Swedlund will serve a one-year term, and her responsibilities include appearances at Fairs and events throughout the state, working with media, and promoting the importance of Wisconsin Fairs.

The granddaughter of Rocky and Clare Swedlund of Juda, Wis., Swedlund currently studies Manufacturing Engineering Technology at Blackhawk Technical College. She is currently employed at Kuhn North America as a Technical Publications Specialist working in engineering documentation. Swedlund is a past Juda Dairy Queen, an active FFA Alumni and has a passion for agriculture and the Green County Fair.

"We are pleased to have Sharlene representing the Wisconsin State Fair and the Fair industry," said Shari Black, CEO of Wisconsin State Fair Park. "Sharlene's background and experience will lend perfectly to this role. Fairs are vital in bringing agriculture to the forefront in communities and as Fairest, she will advocate for all of the wonderful traditions Wisconsin Fairs have to offer."

Brooke Shatley, 22, representing the Barron County Fair, was named first runner-up. She is the daughter of Jason and Melissa Shatley of Prairie Farm, Wis. is earning her degree in Family and Consumer Science from the University of Wisconsin Stout. Her ambition is to teach kids how to live a successful life with the knowledge of how to cook healthy meals on a budget, be financially stable, and how to take care of themselves.

Zoe Ertel, 19, representing the Sheboygan County Fair, was named second runner-up. She is the daughter of Mike Ertel and Haley Gilles Plymouth, Wis. and is attending Lakeshore Technical College, working towards a degree in Ag Business Science and Technology. Ertel currently serves at the Plymouth FFA Chapter president and Wisconsin Junior Holstein Association president.

Meghan Numrich, 20, representing the Winnebago County Fair, was named third runner-up. She is the daughter of Herbert and Jennifer Numrich of Neenah, Wis. and is pursuing a degree in Geology from University of Wisconsin Oshkosh where she also works as a community advisor.

Sam Wirtz, 19, representing the Northern Wisconsin State Fair, was named fourth runner-up and awarded the Tim Heffernon Congeniality Award. From Chippewa Falls, Wis., she is studying English at Central College in Iowa. As an avid reader, her career goal is to become a publisher.

Swedlund was selected from a pool of extraordinarily talented young women and takes over for the 2022 Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs, Jackie Rosenbush from the Washburn County Fair. The Fairest of the Fairs is selected by a panel of three judges representing the agriculture, media, and hospitality industries. This year's judges were Stephen Asplund, Kaitlyn Riley, and Stacie Christel.

A second-time judge, Asplund built a career in news broadcasting for 42 years, retiring from WLUC-TV6 in Marquette, Michigan in 2022. During his four decades in TV news, he held all the positions in the newsroom culminating with his role as news director. After retiring in March, Steve and his wife moved to Delta, Wisconsin in Bayfield County.

A former Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs, Riley's love for the Fair industry began on her family's registered Jersey farm near Gays Mills. Riley showed dairy cattle, poultry, crops, and more at the Crawford County Fair. Riley studied strategic communications and broadcast journalism at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Presently, Riley is the director of communications and outreach for the Wisconsin Beef Council.

Originally from Manitowoc, Christel is a more than 25-year veteran of the hospitality industry. Since 2010, she has held the position of director of sales and marketing at Aloft Green Bay. Christel is active in many community organizations such as the Ashwaubenon Business Association Board of Directors and the Green Bay Area Lodging Association Board of Directors.

Individuals interested in competing in future Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs contests should contact their county or district Fair board for more information or visit [WiFairs.com](https://www.wifairs.com).

About the Wisconsin State Fair

The 2023 Wisconsin State Fair, presented by UScellular, takes place Aug. 3 – 13. The State Fair offers a unique experience to all who attend and is an exceptional value. Enjoy dozens of FREE entertainment stages, exciting rides and games in SpinCity, thousands of animals, endless family activities, events, contests, shopping vendors, and culinary delights. For more information, visit [WiStateFair.com](https://www.wistatefair.com) or follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wisconsinstatefair) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/wisconsinstatefair).

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