

NOTICE!! Two Rapids River Days Events Cancel Due to Unavailability of Pageant Candidates and Band Students During Stay-At-Home Orders

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, two Sauk Rapids civic event committees have made the decision to postpone two of the 2020 Rapids River Days Festival events: The Ambassador Pageant June 25 and the Rapids River Days Parade June 26.

Currently, the Tanner's Team Foundation 5K/1K Walk/Run, the Strongman and Strongwoman Championships and the Food Fest slated for June 27 are still on until further notice.

"With a heavy heart, we have decided to cancel the 2020 Candidate Program and postpone our 2020 Ambassador Pageant June 25, since the Governor's stay-at-home order has halted candidates from participating in this year's programming," said Lindsay Jarve, board member, on behalf of the Sauk Rapids Community Ambassador Organization committee. "Our community's health and safety is our No. 1 priority at this time."

Ambassador candidates were invited to attend an informational meeting April 8 at the Sauk Rapids Government Center, which was cancelled due to the mandate. Additionally, the candidates would have been involved in 10 weeks of educational sessions leading up to the pageant, but the uncertainty has caused those sessions to be cancelled as well.

"Fortunately, our current 2019-20 ambassadors Anna Lucas, Kaeleigh Rainer and Morgan Thompson have generously agreed to continue their reign one more year, representing Sauk Rapids into 2021," Jarve said. "They already have done an incredible job representing Sauk Rapids and now more than ever, they are behind our community to remain healthy and strong."

"Thank you to our local businesses who provide donations and sponsorships and to the Sauk Rapids Lions for their continued support for our program – we are truly thankful," Jarve said. "Our hearts go out to the 2020 seniors, the Sauk Rapids first responders, the city officials, the Sauk Rapids-Rice school district and the Sauk Rapids community. We stand behind you during this time and know together we can make it through."

The Ambassador Pageant will be postponed until June 2021 when Lucas, Rainer and Thompson will crown three new ambassadors for the 2021-22 reign.

Likewise, the Rapids River Days Parade committee has determined the 85-plus unit parade cannot be held this year and will return the entry fees of those who had already signed up. Further communications about the cancellation will be made on the festival Facebook page.

"It's so unfortunate to have to cancel our parade this year," said Cathy Sauer, marching band coordinator. "We had 15 marching bands lined up to come. With students out of school and an uncertain return date, the bands may have no way of practicing the band music and marching routines together. We've been watching many other parades around the state cancel for that same reason."

"With thousands of people attending the parade, we always want it to be a wonderful and entertaining experience," said Marla Elness, parade director and festival coordinator. "Because of the uncertainty and possible further state mandates, we realize our audience may not be able to participate, along with our community organizations, individuals and the many businesses who have units in our parade. We look forward to bringing back the Rapids River Days Parade next year with all the same family fun it's known for."

Until further notice, Rapids River Days still has three events scheduled for Saturday, June 27, 2020: Tanner's Team Foundation 5K/1K Walk/Run, Strongman and Strongwoman Championships and the Rapids River Food Fest. Please visit the festival website at www.SaukRapidsRiverDays.com for more information and updates about these summer events.