



# FAIR PLAY

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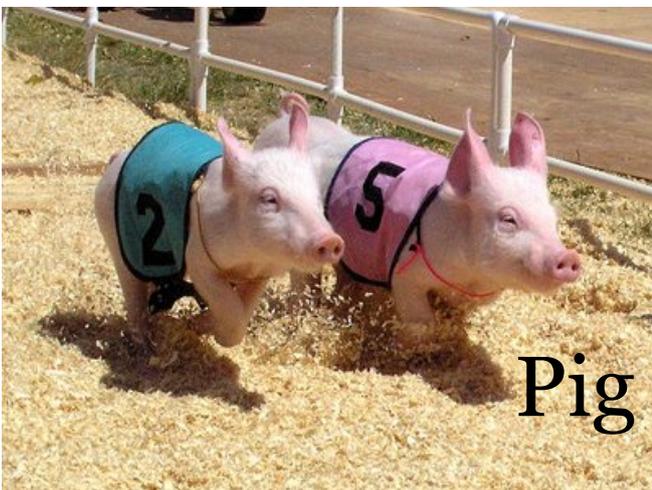


The Clay County Agricultural Fair was first presented in 1987, and each year, delivers something for everyone. On 65 acres, The Fair offers thrilling rides, agricultural and livestock exhibits, and a blizzard of taste-tempting treats for hungry fairgoers. *Photo: Clay Fair*

## It's All Here

My 'fair camera' is a Canon with a 60x zoom. As public their displays are, most reenactors are shy about posing, so I surveil them from a distance. Except for this guy. He eyeballed me from across the Village, and made no secret of his feelings. Right after this shot, he changed out of his outfit, and left the site in haste. Sorry, pal!

## Mr. Mustard



## Pig Race

You may have to wait a while yet for the day 'when pigs fly', but in the meantime, they sure can run. Check out these guys channeling their inner Greyhounds! *Photo: Clay Fair*





## Flying Kids

One kid, two kids, three kids...FLYING KIDS!



## Hedge Fun

It's chilling to try and figure out where this guy ends and the foliage begins...especially when you hear his spooky, Seinfeld-esque 'HELL-OOOooo', which scares the little ones out of their sneaks. 'The Plant Guy' stands in an oversized pot, literally, and clearly enjoys his job.

## Bike Lane

There's no end to whimsy at the Clay Fair. Around every corner is some whimsical construct, joyful nostalgia, sight-gag or memory you didn't know you had. Subtle reminders all of a simpler, gentler time.



*The Legendary 'Clay Pig'*





Photo: Clay Fair

The Clay County Agricultural Fair is actually one giant alcohol-free zone. However, no guilty craving is denied with the vast selection of Funnel Cakes, Turkey Legs, Hot Dogs and Deep-Fried Ice Cream not to mention endless brilliant and tasty ethnic mashups. *Photo: Clay Fair*

## Fair Food

**The Fair is in full swing now through Sunday, April 10**, open most of the day and evening with an action-packed schedule: [Clay Fair /Events](#)

Each day sees over 14,000 guests, according to Tasha Hyder. This is her 7th year as General Manager of the Fair, an organization that runs lean: there are just 3 1/2 paid staff, herself included. But it's the more than 1,000 volunteers who keep things running.



Tasha and her crew keep a sharp eye out for the safety and convenience of the Fair guests. Parking is convenient, free, with regular shuttles to the front gates of the Fair.

Last year, total attendance was over 148,000. "We expect to set a record this year," Hyder says.

The safety of the Fair's guests are top-of-mind for her. There are staffed First Aid facilities, a new shaded picnic area, and a 'Cooling Room' and Misting Tunnel for anyone looking to 'chill'.

One of my personal favorites is the 'Early Florida Village', a welcomingly-shaded gravel road at the northern end of the fairgrounds, lined on both sides by such notable charming buildings as the Corn Crib, Honey House, the Moonshine Exhibit, the Penney Farms Jail House, and the Country Church.

Re-enactors in period clothing offer live demonstrations of legacy cooking, sugar making, lumber milling, broom-making and the arts to name a few.

There's music in the air day and night, and the Fair hosts top-name entertainment in the spacious Cattleman's Arena, with expanded VIP seating being offered this year. [Clay Fair/Entertainment](#)

For all its size and scope, there's still a 'small town' feel and charm to the Fair. Will that survive the opening of the First Coast Expressway, less than one gear-change from the Fairground's entrance?

Probably not. When you consider that you'll be able to drive from Boston to the exit on 16 without stopping for a red light, can fresh lobster rolls be too far off as the next food vendor's specialty?

The contests, shows and sales among these groups showcase the talents of so many dedicated and capable young area men and women. You can just sense the future leaders among them. And all critters may apply! There are rabbit, poultry, goat, dog and even egg events. And for the **party** animals, a 'Youth Tailgaiting/Grilling Contest'!

## 4H/FFA/FCCLA



Photo: Clay Fair



Me. Again.

