

Alton Expo Welcomes Families for Fun Weekend on Riverfront

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - The Alton Expo opened Thursday and will run throughout the weekend at the Alton Amphitheater.

Starting at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 7, community members can enjoy carnival rides, fair food and live entertainment until 5 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 10. The festivities were off to a steady start as families arrived at the Amphitheater on Thursday.

“The idea is to be a catalyst to introduce people to our city, and what better way to introduce people to our city than our beautiful riverfront?” Dan Herkert, chair of the Alton Amphitheater Commission, said. “We encourage them to get out and visit our local bars, restaurants, shops, stores, spend money in our city, generate some economic activity.”

The Alton Expo kicked off at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 7 and runs until 10 p.m. The band [Just in Time](#) performs at 7 p.m. You can also stop by from 5–11 p.m. on Friday and check out [Powerplay with Gene Jackson](#) at 5 p.m., followed by [Dirty Muggs](#) at 8 p.m. Saturday’s band, [Platinum Rock Legends](#), will go on at 7 p.m. and the Expo will run from 1–11 p.m. The weekend will end with a performance by [Porch Cafe](#) at 1 p.m. on Sunday, and the Expo will close at 5 p.m. that afternoon.

Following recent altercations at Alton High School, the Expo will have a [large police presence](#) throughout the weekend. Additionally, visitors under age 17 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

“It should have been handled like this,” said Lakeisha, a grandmother who attended the Expo with her grandchild. “It needed to be restricted, because parents just drop their kids off, and what do they do? Fight? So I’m glad it’s a restriction.”

She added that her family would probably return to the Expo over the weekend, but they made sure to stop by on Thursday because Thursday and Sunday are both “family nights,” meaning every ride costs one ticket.

For other families, the police presence and restrictions weren’t as concerning, though they were aware of it.

“That’s why we came early,” Linda Williams explained.

Williams brought her great-granddaughter to the Expo. As the girl pulled her grandmother toward a ride modeled after the movie “101 Dalmatians,” Williams added that they were looking forward to “just having fun.”

In addition to the carnival rides and games, which are provided by [Luehrs' Ideal Rides](#), attendees can also enjoy classic fair food and local food and craft vendors. A beer tent is open to visitors over age 21, and bands will perform throughout the weekend at the Amphitheater.

Ciara Hinton was one of the vendors with Glow Up Glam, her jewelry and cosmetics business. She made sure to sign up for the Expo after a successful experience last summer.

“I actually was here last year. I'm trying to do it every year,” she added. “I'm definitely trying to grow and get into more events.”

The Alton Expo will continue through the weekend. For more information about the Expo and this weekend's schedule, read [this article](#) or watch our [interview with Dan Herkert](#) on [Our Daily Show!](#) at [RiverBender.com](#).

Drone photos courtesy of 618 Drone Service.