

Planning new festival a team effort

Volunteers sweating the details on Sun Drop Dayz

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Around a long conference table in downtown Shawano, volunteers gather over bottles of cold Sun Drop Soda to work on a big idea with seemingly a hundred details that require attention.

From the group's efforts, a new community tradition could be born.

The big idea is Sun Drop Dayz, a two-day outdoor festival named for Shawano's signature soft drink and conceived as a summer kickoff event to rival anything found in the surrounding area.

The inaugural Sun Drop Dayz is scheduled for June 2-3, and organizers are keenly aware that they have just two months left to arrange every last detail surrounding the entertainment, food, security and other components involved in creating a major new event from scratch.

"We've come a long way," organizer Wendy Crawford said. "But we still have a lot to go."

The festival, which organizers hope to make



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Wendy Crawford, second from right, meets with fellow organizers of the Sun Drop Dayz festival, which is scheduled for its inaugural event June 2-3 in downtown Shawano.



an annual event, is being planned to include two days of live music, food and beer vendors,

children's games, a petting zoo, arts and crafts, and many other activities. Based along Elizabeth Street near Main Street, the festival will spill over into surrounding downtown areas.

The idea of the festival was to establish a way of ushering in the summer season as a bookend along-

side the longstanding end-of-summer blowout that is the Shawano County Fair.

Sun Drop Dayz was conceived last year by Leadership Shawano County, a group organized annually by the Shawano County Chamber of Commerce to brainstorm about civic improvements. Implementing the festival

idea has grown into such a large endeavor over the past several months that members of last year's leadership group have returned to help this year's group pull it off.

Jeff Ballwahn, a volunteer who is chairman of the organizing effort, said

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