



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Josh Bean | 251-327-0901 | josh@dcwins.com

Wetumpka Wildlife Arts Festival offers fun-filled day of activities

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (Oct. 24, 2023) – The second annual [Wetumpka Wildlife Arts Festival](#) (WEWA) features a fun-filled day designed to celebrate wildlife art and the Great Outdoors.

Presented by the [Kelly Fitzpatrick Center for the Arts](#), known to locals as “The Kelly,” the festivities begin Saturday, Nov. 11 at 9:30 a.m. and run through 4 p.m. on the banks of the Coosa River in downtown Wetumpka.

“The Wetumpka Wildlife Arts Festival has quickly become one of the state’s top events dedicated to outdoor recreation and conservation,” said Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association (ALBBAA) Founder Thomas Harris, whose family partnered with The Kelly and the City of Wetumpka to create WEWA. “This year’s schedule of events is nothing short of spectacular, and we hope people will take part in this event designed to showcase Wetumpka and offer a day of family fun.”

This year’s program features cooking demonstrations by James Beard Foundation Award-winning chef Chris Hastings, animal exhibitions by the Alabama Wildlife Federation, “build your own wood duck box” provided by Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association, sporting dogs demonstrations by Wildrose Kennels, and [DockDogs®](#), a high-flying canine competition.

DockDogs, a new attraction at this year’s festival, begins Friday and concludes Saturday. It features three competitions:

- **Big Air** – the first sport of DockDogs and the most popular, this is the long jump of canine aquatics.
- **Extreme Vertical** – introduced in 2005, it is considered the high jump of canine aquatics.

- **Speed Retrieve** – launched in 2008, this is a timed sport involving the combination of run, jump, swim and retrieve.

A talented group of well-known artists and artisans will join WEWA to show off and sell their work. In addition, The Kelly Fitzpatrick Center for the Arts showcases the talent of both local and regional artists. This year a juried fine art competition was held and the winning entries are on display.

“We are so pleased to welcome nationally known wildlife artists from around the Southeast and are especially excited to have Dirk Walker, Sue Key, Jeanie Edwards and Bucky Bowles present during the festival,” said Jennifer Eifert, executive director of The Kelly.

Food vendors, musical entertainment children’s activities and even Zoo animals painting will round out the festivities.

Here's a look at the schedule:

9:30 a.m., Saturday: Opening ceremonies at Elmore County Courthouse

Competition Gone Wild DockDogs

Location: Orlin Street Parking Lot

Friday’s schedule

- 4 p.m., Big Air Wave No. 1
- 5 p.m., Extreme Vertical Competition

Saturday’s schedule

- 10 a.m., Big Air Wave No. 2
- 11:30 a.m., Big Air Wave No. 3
- 1:30 p.m., Speed Retrieve Competition
- 3 p.m., Big Air Finals (pro, semi-pro and amateur divisions)

Demonstrations Gone Wild

Location: On the Banks of the Coosa River

Saturday’s schedule

- 10-10:45 a.m., Wildrose Kennels Sporting Dog Demonstrations
- 10:45 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Alabama Wildlife Federation Animal Exhibition
- 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association’s “Build Your Own Wood Duck Box”
- 12:15 p.m.-1 p.m., Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Casting Workshop
- 1-1:45 p.m., Wildrose Kennels Sporting Dog Demonstrations
- 1:45 p.m.-2:30 p.m., Alabama Wildlife Federation Animal Exhibition
- 2:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m., Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association’s “Build Your Own Wood Duck Box”

- 3:15 p.m.-4 p.m., Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Casting Workshop

Chefs Gone Wild

Location: Green space behind The Kelly

Saturday's schedule

- 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m., Chef Chris Hastings Cooking Demonstration with cocktail ideas by Redmont Distilling Co. mixologist
- 12:15 p.m.-12:45 p.m., Chef Alex Hoefler Cooking Demonstration
- 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m., Chef Chris Hastings Cooking Demonstration with cocktail ideas by Redmont Distilling Co. mixologist
- 3 p.m.-3:30 p.m., Chef Alex Hoefler Cooking Demonstration

All-day Activities

Location: On the Banks of the Coosa River

Saturday's schedule

- 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Vendors Gone Wild on W. Commerce Street
- 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Food Trucks Cone Wild, in Merchants Alley
- 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Art Gone Wild, fine art exhibit at The Kelly
- 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Kids Gone Wild: Children's activities and games

"We are so honored and pleased to partner with The Kelly and be a small part of the Wetumpka Wildlife Arts Festival," ALBBAA Director Pam Swanner said. "Last year's inaugural event was amazing, and we expect this year to be bigger, better and more enjoyable for everyone who comes to downtown Wetumpka for this year's festival."

The Wetumpka Wildlife Arts Festival is supported by the following sponsors: Smoot Harris Family, Alabama Power, Alabama Tourism Department, Alabama Wildlife Federation, Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association, City of Wetumpka, LIV Development, The Kelly Fitzpatrick Memorial Gallery, Poarch Creek Band of Indians, Whitetail Institute, State Rep. Troy Stubbs, State Sen. Will Barfoot, Wilson and Associates, Capital Real Estate Services, Elevation Strategies, Hugh Rowe and Susie Thomas, Jack and Ensley Darnall, Bruce and Emilie Reid, Quail Forever, Russell Lands, Stifel, Wells Fargo, Bennett's Archery, Central Alabama Electric Cooperative, Phoenix Physical Therapy, and Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood.

For more information visit: <https://thekelly.org/wewa/nov-2023/>

###

***The Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association** is committed to promoting and enhancing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities in the Black Belt in a manner that provides economic and ecological benefits to the region and its citizens. For information, go to www.alabamablackbeltadventures.org.*