

Something for Everyone at Bazaar After Dark on May 11

David Nordby, The Brillion News



Bazaar After Dark in Brillion, May 11. Photo credit: David Nordby, Brillion News

Chili, brisket tacos, cheese curds, and prime rib sub sandwiches were all food recommendations from attendees at Bazaar After Dark last Saturday night in Brillion. Music, body painters, beer stands, firebreathers, snakes and area businesses were the non-food attractions as thousands of people filled Main Street and Water Street downtown for the nighttime street market.

The event was hosted by Pulse Young Professionals Network, a program of the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce. This year they've partnered with Habitat for Humanity to work in conjunction with the Rock the Block events in the area.

The DeRosiers, a couple from Valders, brought their young son after hearing about the event from a co-worker. They said they came for the food but were more intrigued by the aspect of an event where they could drink and eat and find entertainment for their son at the same time. "It's nice and early and just gets us outside ... It pulls you out of your house and gets you around people," they concurred.

Tom Dombeck of Manitowoc attended with his wife and son. They too attended for food and the kids' entertainment.

"Just walking around and first we found food and then stuff for my son to do," Dombeck said.

The event was partially spread through word of mouth, Facebook and other news outlets who helped create intrigue to the surrounding areas.

Charnelle and Josh Preston came from Algoma to help celebrate their 20th anniversary after the event was previewed on "Local 5 Live."

"It just looked really cute and it's the perfect time of year," Charnelle said. "It puts (Brillion) on the map because (Josh) was talking to somebody about it and they thought Brillion was in the middle of the state ... so, I think it's good for marketing for sure."

Michael Reed, who is originally from the Austin, Texas area and now lives in Appleton, came because he previously attended a Bazaar event in Menasha.

"The last one was on a longer strip, so it felt longer but this felt like the same amount, a large turnout,"

Reed said. "I love the street fair aspect like the food, the performances, the music - of course. Just staying active."

Plenty of Brillion residents were walking Main Street too. It gave a chance to show off area businesses, including Ariens Company who held an open house at its nearby museum.

"It's nice to get people in this small town and let them see what's here too," Brillion resident Scott Giese said.

"I wish it would have been included a little bit more with the local bars and restaurants," Giese added.

The food trucks that were there were popular attractions all night; at times Water Street featured long lines at each truck. Cupcake Celebration had 2,000 baked goods at the start of the night and were down to their last few items with more than one hour left in the night.

Another vendor said it wasn't as rushed as serving in Appleton but considered it "definitely a successful night." Other trucks sold out of food items. One noted that given the size differential between Brillion and other Bazaar locations it was busier than they anticipated.

The closest comparison to an event on Main Street is the annual electric parade.

"I think as far as traffic it's a little bit less, but the crowd is definitely different. I like the family orientated environment," Brillion Police Department's Ben Bastian said. "It's a very relaxed, fun event."

Police members were spaced out along the path of the two streets where the event took place.

"I think just our whole purpose in law enforcement is to make sure everybody can be here safely and looking for anything that may turn to situations that could be unsafe, and hopefully preventing them," Bastian said.

Walking along the streets was good for people watching too. There were children to grandparents, with every age in between, and a lot of dogs. There were students in prom clothing who stepped out of Carstens Mill where Chilton High School was holding its annual event.

"It just gets people to come out here. There was someone from Neenah I ran into, someone from Appleton. It just brings people to the area really," Dombeck said.