



# Fair's 'Sound Director' behind all those announcements

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For most fairgoers the sights and sounds of the Dodge County Fair are enjoyed without much thought of how they came to be. Take the sounds, for example. Loudspeakers blare out the activities of the day; go to the grandstand auto races and you hear the announcers, attend the Hall of Fame presentation and the speakers are easy to hear.

But it all doesn't just happen and the fact you can hear all these activities is largely the result of the Blair Lovig, the fair's sound director.

This is the third year that Lovig has officially been in charge of the sound, he said. Before that he served as DJ on the free stages as well as helping out with a variety of other "odd jobs" including parking attendant.

Audio-visual activities have been a part of Lovig's life since he was a child and he also worked in the Audio-Visual Department at Kasson-Mantorville High School during his school days. Since then he has started his own business where he DJs and plays music at various locations around southern Minnesota.

It has also led to his being the "go to" guy for sound at the Dodge County Fair.

Although there are activities at the fairgrounds

that keep him busy much of the year, the pace picks up as the fair nears.

People may not realize that there are 30 or 40 bullhorn speakers scattered throughout the fairgrounds that make those activity announcements possible and each one of those had to be hung on poles or in rafters and strung together and need to be maintained.

"I've spent hours in the rafters doing bullhorns," Lovig said.

Much of the equipment, however, is not permanent and must be set up and taken down each year.

Now, he said, he is going over his equipment and getting ready to set up the PA systems for the free stages and the judging arena. Everything needs to be in place, and working correctly, when the fair opens its gates to the public.

This involves physically setting up the equipment and then making sure all the microphones work and the batteries are good and a variety of other details.

And for the free stages, which are outside, that means making sure that any weather conditions can be handled.

For last year's fair, Lovig made some pre-recorded messages that could be played on a rotating basis over and over again during the fair. He has more plans for this year.

"I want to go live," he said. "Try to do live stuff."

And of course there will be the demolition derby, stockcar races and other grandstand activities to be announced. Last year, Lovig said, he helped with the announcing duties at the demo derby. The bull riding organizers bring in their own announcers, he said, but he is still responsible for seeing the equipment works.

During the run of the fair, Lovig said, he actually stays on the grounds the entire time living out of a trailer on the grounds. His "office" is upstairs in the grandstand.

Every morning during the fair the day begins early as he drives around the grounds on his golf cart to make sure everything is working and looking like it should.

Although he has little free time during the fair, "the Fair Board does a great job making sure I eat and stay hydrated," he said.

As soon as the fair is over the PA systems at the free stages are taken down but some things remain in place until after the Big Iron Classic. When that is over, he said, everything is pulled out to be cleaned and stored for the winter.

Then Lovig will get back to concentrating on his other activities such as being the DJ at entertainment venues in the area, announcing hockey games and being the DJ for Mantorville's Marigold Days.



Blair Lovig points to one of the speakers at the grandstand at the Dodge County Fair. Thirty or 40 speakers like this are spread throughout the grounds, he said.



Dodge County Fair Sound Superintendent Blair Lovig looks over some of the sound equipment that fills the room on top of the fair grandstand that serves as his office.