This year's Iron County Fair Association raffle quilt is quite delightful, called "Winter Berry." The double bed size quilt, made by Jill MacPherson (left), would look nice as either a spread or a throw. Dorothy Javoroski (right), member of the Fair Association, noted the quilt is among a number of items included in the raffle. Tickets are $5 each, or five for $20, and can be purchased from Fair Association members as well as at the fairgrounds during fair weekend, Aug. 16-19. The drawing will be held Sunday afternoon.

IRON RIVER—New events, and some schedule changes are in store for you at the 121st annual Iron County Fair this weekend.

Fair secretary-manager George Brunswick, who has been involved with the Fair Association since the mid-1960s, is enthusiastic about some of the new events, and restructuring of the more traditional venues and anticipates a successful weekend of family fun.

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The two new events include a concert in the grandstand on Thursday evening, and the extreme motorcycle show, Sick Air, on Friday. These events replace the tractor pull and truck pull, respectively, both of which will be held on Sunday, and replace the Logging Expo.

Some "spiffing up" of the fairgrounds will also add to the enjoyment of the weekend, Brunswick said.

"We've been trying to improve the fairgrounds," he said. With the cooperation of the Sheriff Department work van, crews have been painting, building tables and cleaning up the grounds.

"The place really looks sharp.

"For the past three years, county fairs have lost all funding from the state," he said, which included funding for upkeep.

"We've had donations," he added. One generous donor has been Holiday Stationstore, as well as other businesses.

Vendors are a source of revenue for the fair, and Brunswick said there will be plenty this year.

"I've received many calls from vendors," he said, "lots from out of the county, even lower Michigan." He anticipates a great commercial wing, as well as indoor and outdoor vendors.

"Schmidt Amusement is back, as always," he said. "They have an outstanding midway, and we appreciate their participation."

A complete schedule of events is available in this week's Shopper's Guide. Here are some of the featured events and entertainment.

There is entertainment in the bandstand next to the rotunda all three days, and Schmidt Amusement has carnival specials throughout the weekend. The arts and crafts booths are also set up all three days.

--Wednesday, Aug. 15 is entry day from noon to 7 p.m.

--Thursday is Senior Day.

“It’s a big day,” said Brunswick. “There is free lunch, and a variety of screenings, courtesy of NorthStar.”

The annual kids’ coin scramble is held in the rotunda at 6 p.m. The Miss Iron County contest winner is announced at 7 p.m. Also, a presentation of the “Friend of the Fair” award is made. This year’s selection is groundsman Roy Gagnea.

A new event on Thursday is a concert in the grandstand, hosted by Interpose Productions. Owner Seth Waters will entertain, along with Jessie McPherson and a great lineup of regional and local talent, including Southland out of Escanaba, Ryan Rose of Green Bay and Randy Lapp. Admission is $5, with children under 12 free. The concession stands will be open offering beverages and food.

--Friday is the judge’s day for all open class and 4-H entries. Market livestock competition gets under way at 1 p.m., and the auction begins at 6 p.m.

The big event on Friday evening consists of two separate performances by Sick Air, featuring an exciting display of “zero gravity” motorcycle stunts that will leave you breathless. Admission to the grandstand is $5.

--Saturday is a great day to take the family to the fair. Besides the livestock exhibits, carnival rides and vendors, the featured event for the afternoon is the Pedal Pull in the rotunda, followed by “Down on the Farm,” with activities, presentations and samples. Ventriloquist team Skip and Dave also make an annual trip to the fair to entertain all ages.

Saturday night is the demo derby, a true fair tradition. Every year, the smash-ups get better, and the competition stiffer. Admission is $7; gates open at 5, the action starts at 6 and goes until the last whiff of steaming anti-freeze floats out of the grandstand.

--Sunday’s events kick off with a “Loggers/Farmers” breakfast at 7 a.m. Taking the place of the Logging Expo are two popular contests—the tractor pull, beginning at 11 a.m., followed by the truck pull. Both take place in the grandstand. The annual Fair Association raffle is held at 3 p.m.

“We have over 40 prizes this year,” said Brunswick, including the fair quilt, titled “Winter Berry,” designed, pieced and sewn by Jill MacPherson. Cords of firewood, gift certificates and more are some of the other prizes. Tickets are $5 each, or five for $20. A chicken and corn feed returns to the fair, sold at the grandstand concession stand.

At 5 p.m., livestock and exhibits are released, the stalls are swept out, the carnival rides shut down and packed for the next county fair on the circuit.

“It’s tremendous,” Brunswick said. “It’s going to be a great fair this year.”