



The Rollin' Nostalgia Car Club is scheduled to hold its 'Cruise Night' event as part of this year's Arma VJ Homecoming in downtown Arma on East Washington Street Friday evening starting at 5 p.m. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN

Arma VJ Homecoming returns

By Aaron Pyle
apyle@morningsun.net

ARMA, Kan. — The annual Arma VJ Homecoming returns to Crawford County starting Thursday night, featuring a variety of activities for children, teenagers, and adults.

It all started 78 years ago. The homecoming, celebrating the end of World War II and the return of servicemen and women to their hometowns is one of the oldest running celebrations of its kind in the country. The original VJ Day was August 14, 1945.

Returning Arma veterans founded the Lon M. Helm Post 182 of the American Legion in January 1946, and on August 14, 1947, they started the practice of commemorating VJ Day every year with a three-day weekend full of family entertainment.

Events at the first homecoming celebration included the parade, bathing beauty contest, kids' races, tug-o-war matches,

and a free dance. Marking nearly eight decades of fun and entertainment, the city of Arma has held the event every year, except in 2020 due to COVID-19, to pay tribute to veterans of all conflicts.

"I believe, if not other than the state of Rhode Island, Arma, is the only one who continuously celebrates the end of World War II," said homecoming committee member JoEllen Black. "... It just means a lot to the people who came from Arma or the Northeast School District. You can see the multi-generational aspects where I know men who have said, 'I used to be in the kids' fishing derby and now I get to take my sons to it.' It's just those memories, it's a homecoming on a lot of different levels."

Opening the events at this year's Arma VJ Homecoming on Thursday is the "Pickleball Doubles Tournament," held at the pickleball courts on the west side of Northeast

High School. The competition features men's, women's, and mixed doubles, starting at 5 p.m. with warmups beginning at 4 p.m.

Friday's events begin at 9 a.m. at the Woodland Hills Golf Course in Fort Scott for the "Arma VJ Homecoming Golf Tournament," which is a four-man scramble and costs \$300 for a team. Additional events on Friday include the continuation of the pickleball doubles tournament (Northeast High School, 9 a.m.), food and drinks (American Legion Post 182, 5 to 10 p.m.), cruise night car show (downtown Arma, 5 to 8 p.m.), motorcycle show (downtown Arma, 5 to 8 p.m.), 50-50 bingo (American Legion Post 182, 6 to 8 p.m.), and an all-ages street dance (downtown Arma, 7 to 10 p.m.).

Saturday and Sunday's schedule also features a number of activities for residents of all ages including the annual VJ



Teams in the bed race competed against time during last year's competition with each running an individual heat down Washington Street in Arma during the V-J Homecoming celebration, which returns at 11 a.m. on Saturday. DUSTIN STRONG / THE MORNING SUN

Homecoming Parade (10 a.m., Saturday), Southeast Kansas Bed Race (11 a.m., Saturday), mud volleyball (noon, Saturday), women's rolling pin throwing contest (2 p.m., Saturday), women's nail driving con-

test (2:30 p.m., Saturday), softball tournament (10 a.m., Sunday), bocce tournament (noon, Sunday), and junior bathing beauty contest (2 p.m., Sunday).

For more information on scheduling or registration, visit facebook.com/ArmaVJHomecoming or armahomecoming.com.



The kids' bike parade kicked off last year's homecoming with homemade steam shovels and decorated bicycles. Participants are asked to line up at 9 a.m. across from Northeast Elementary at Washington and West St. DUSTIN STRONG / THE MORNING SUN



The mud volleyball tournament near the Arma City Pool proved to be a messy and entertaining affair last year as it returns on Saturday starting at noon. DUSTIN STRONG / THE MORNING SUN

501 E. WASHINGTON ST. | (620) 347-4862 | gn-bank.com

403 US-69, Arma, KS | http://www.albersmarine.com

LIVE BAIT AND TACKLE AVAILABLE DAILY!

BOATING PRODUCTS, WATER SPORTS EQUIPMENT, AND A FULL LINE OF LIVE BAIT AND TACKLE!

418 E WASHINGTON ST, ARMA, KS | (620) 347-8521

BEST JERKY IN THE 4 STATE AREA!

- JERKY
- FRESH SAUSAGE
- SMOKED SAUSAGE
- SALAMI
- CRACKER SALAMI
- HILLBILLY BACON
- GROUND CHUCK
- STEAKS

DELICIOUS

ARMA HOMECOMING

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8

5 p.m. – PICKLEBALL DOUBLES TOURNAMENT for men, women and mixed doubles, Northeast High School court. Warm up at 4 p.m. \$30 per team, \$45 per team with two festival T-shirts. To register call 620-875-3750 by Noon August 7.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9

9 a.m. – ARMA VJ HOMECOMING GOLF TOURNAMENT, \$300 fee for 4-man team, includes lunch, Woodland Hills Golf Course, 2414 Horton St., Fort Scott. To register, call 620-704-3189 or rrcramer@usd246.org.

9 a.m. – PICKLEBALL DOUBLES TOURNAMENT for seniors (age 50+) and children (6-11 and 12-18), inside NEHS gymnasium courts. To register call 620-875-3750 by Noon August 7.

5 to 10 p.m. – FOOD & DRINKS: American Legion Post 182 beer stand, food vendors, city park hamburger stand by NEHS senior class and parents

5 to 8 p.m. – CRUISE NIGHT CAR SHOW, downtown Arma. Chairmen Ira Reiken and Jack Alvested. Rollin' Nostalgia car show sponsored by Pairrott Head Liquors, Pittsburg.

5 to 8 p.m. – MOTORCYCLE SHOW, downtown Arma. Sponsored and chaired by Fort Scott Community College School of Harley Davidson

6 to 8 p.m. – 50-50 BINGO, Arma American Legion. 25-cents a card for change to win 50% of Bingo pots, refreshments available for purchase. Chairwomen Michelle Holder and Steffie Peternell

7 to 10 p.m. – ALL-AGES STREET DANCE with DJ Curtis Benelli at grandstand. Sponsored by Chicken Annies, Girard; Payne's Inc., Frontenac; Bella Vita Salon & Storage, Arma; SJS Equipment, LLC, Arma

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

7:30 a.m. – Registration for Run for Our Veteran 5K in front of Veterans Memorial, Arma City Park, \$30 entry fee includes T-shirt to first 50 entrants.

8 a.m. – RUN FOR OUR VETERANS 5K - Race starts at 5th and Washington streets; ends at 3rd and Washington streets with Arma Fire Department water splash.

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. – ARTS & CRAFT VENDORS, south side of Arma City Park

9:30 a.m. – CHILDREN'S PARADE Decorated bicycles, pets and other novelties. Line up by 9 a.m. across from Northeast Elementary (Washington and West streets).

10 a.m. – 78th ANNUAL VJ HOMECOMING PARADE Entries must be at Northeast Elementary by 9 a.m.

11 a.m. – 3rd ANNUAL SOUTHEAST KANSAS BED RACE DERBY Teams of 5 race two blocks in downtown Arma in timed event. Winners receive 1st \$250, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$100.

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. – INFLATABLES carnival with attendants. Purchase \$10 wristband for session in front of Veterans Memorial. Carnival subsidized by Rep. Ken Collins; Melesia 'Lissa' Rhodes, KS House D-2; Air Pro Heating & Cooling of Arma.

11 a.m. to 10 p.m. – FOOD & DRINKS: American Legion Post

11:30 a.m. – KID'S GAME - New location! Inside park near shelter house. Age groups: 3-5, 6-8, 9-12.

701 E WASHINGTON ST. ARMA, KS 66712 | (620) 347-4125

HAVE A GREAT TIME AT ARMA HOMECOMING!

Dedicated to the ones you love

BEDENE Funeral Home

(620) 347-4200
517 E Washington St, Arma, KS

In your time of need, you can trust Bedene Funeral Home

RyanInsurance EoxInsurance

420 E Washington St, Arma, KS | (620) 347-8679 *People you can trust.*

Providing insurance products in Kansas & Missouri since 1923!

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY