



2024 PAINT THE TOWN



THE MORNING SUN

2024 Football Schedule

Date	Time	At	Opponent	Location
Aug 31	7:05 P.M.	Home	Ferris State	Pittsburg, Kan. (Carnie Smith Stadium)
Sep 7	7:00 P.M.	Away	Mo Southern	Joplin, Mo. (Fred G. Hughes Stadium)
Sep 14	7:00 P.M.	Home	Emporia State	Pittsburg, Kan. (Carnie Smith Stadium)
Sep 21	1:00 P.M.	Away	Washburn	Topeka, Kan. (Yager Stadium)
Sep 28	TBD	Home	OPEN DATE	TBD



SEE SCHEDULE, 7C

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Dear Pittsburg,

I was visiting with a local small business owner this summer who told me she was ready for students to return. They really make an impact on her business and many other locally owned businesses. They feel it when students leave, both economically and from an employment standpoint.

A community member shared that he was looking forward to the school year starting up again because it meant a return to a full calendar of events here on campus. He was looking forward to

concerts, art exhibits, athletics, plays, speakers, and more.

When the school year began last week, right out of the gate we saw our Gorilla football players giving high fives to elementary students on their first day at George Nettels Elementary School. And on Saturday, we saw our cheerleaders, dance team, marching band, and athletes work with Ron's Supermarket and local business sponsors to create a fun event for youth with autograph signings, yard games, music, face painting, and more.

Since I've been in

Pittsburg, I've seen that type of two-way campus-community spirit continue throughout the school year. It's special, and definitely not something that exists in every university town.

It's no wonder that each year we see such an outpouring from businesses and community members to "Paint the Town Red!"

We hope to see you downtown on Friday for the Paint the Town Red Community Pep Rally, and on Saturday at Carnie Smith Stadium for fun and competition!

We also hope to see you on campus for

other events — you are welcome here! Check out what's happening at events. pittstate.edu

And last but not least, I'd like to thank the team at the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce and the team at our Alumni & Constituent Relations for their work to coordinate Paint the Town Red each year. They're awesome representatives of Pittsburg and Pitt State, and the work they do is important not just for the university, but for our entire region.

*With warm thanks,
Dan*



Dan Shipp

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Blake Benson serves as the emcee at the Paint The Town Red block party in 2023. CONTRIBUTED/PSU

A very special season

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year...”

While for many (including me), the holidays are indeed a favorite time of year, a close second is this week as area businesses and organizations blanket the town in red and gold in welcoming back Pittsburg State University students to



Blake Benson, president, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce

our community.

The 19th annual “Paint the Town Red” celebration is shaping up to be our biggest yet, build-

ing up to Saturday night’s top 10 showdown between the Gorillas and Ferris State at Carnie Smith Stadium. The week will be full of creative displays across town using the “City of Champions” theme, a Friday night downtown block party held in conjunction with the Little Balkans Days Festival and the Love, Kansas event, this year’s official “Paint the Town Red” t-shirt and so much more.

While the week cer-

tainly is a lot of fun, it has a much deeper meaning and that is the recognition that what we have in this community is special. College towns like ours have an energy that’s not present in most other cities. The constant influx of students from around the world creates an excitement and provides educational, cultural and athletic offerings that are not often found in an area of our size. What makes our college

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Football Schedule Continued

Date	Time	At	Opponent	Location
Oct 5	2:00 P.M.	Home	Missouri	Western Pittsburg, Kan. (Carnie Smith Stadium)
Oct 12	2:00 P.M.	Away	Nebraska-Kearney	Kearney, Neb. (Ron & Carol Cope Stadium)
Oct 19	2:00 P.M.	Home	Fort Hays State	Pittsburg, Kan. (Carnie Smith Stadium)
Oct 26	2:00 P.M.	Away	Central Oklahoma	Edmond, Okla. (Chad Richison Stadium)
Nov 2	2:00 P.M.	Home	Central Missouri	Pittsburg, Kan. (Carnie Smith Stadium)
Nov 9	TBD	Home	BYE WEEK	TBD
Nov 16	1:30 P.M.	Away	Northwest Missouri	Maryville, Mo. (Bearcat Stadium)



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Colors of community competition

Businesses dress the town in red and gold

By Antjea Wolff
awolff@morningsun.net

PITTSBURG, Kan. — Businesses and organizations are gearing up for the annual Paint the Town Red Business Decorating Contest. For 19 years, the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce has been hosting the contest to encourage engagement between the

community and Pittsburg State University. Each year, businesses decorate their offices or buildings in red and gold to show their support for the university. “Paint the Town Red is one of the best times of the year,” Chamber Special Events and Membership Director Daisy Flood said in an email. “The decorating



contest brings a lot of excitement and pride to our community. It is fun getting to see

Pittsburg area businesses utilize their creativity, but it is also an impactful way to

engage the community and university, boost local business, and celebrate the Go-

rillas!” Flood said this year 26 businesses and orga-
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BENSON

CONTINUED FROM 5C

town unique, though, is the relationship between the community and Pittsburg State University. It's a partnership based on mutual respect between the two. It's not hard to imagine how much different Pittsburg would look without the university, but Pittsburg State officials also recognize that as potential stu-

dents choose which university to attend, the community surrounding the campus often plays a significant role. Put simply, we need each other in order to succeed. This week's festivities are a visual reminder that we don't take this relationship for granted and are committed to seeing it continue well into the future.

So get out this week and enjoy the

activities, cast your vote for your favorite display at PittsburgAreaChamber.com, and, of course, cheer on the Gorillas in their season opener Saturday night. It's a great time of year to "Paint the Town Red," and celebrate this special place we call home.

*Blake Benson
President, Pittsburg
Area Chamber of
Commerce*



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COMMUNITY

CONTINUED FROM 9C

nizations are participating. The contest will take place on the morning of Thursday, August 29, and winners will be announced Friday, August 30, on the KSN noon news. U.S. Bank branch manager James Teats said although he is new to U.S. Bank, he has participated in the decorating contest while employed with other banks in Pittsburg. “I’ve always done it, and it would feel weird if I didn’t do it,”



he said. As a PSU graduate, Teats said he does everything he can to support the university. “I just think it’s a great community event that really doesn’t cost us

a lot to do and shows that U.S. Bank is proud to be a part of this community,” he said. Last year, the division one winner of the contest was Backyard Discovery, division two winner was Kan-

sas Teachers Community Credit Union, and division three winner was The Blue Spoon. Crawford County Health Department was voted as the community favorite.

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RED**

First game emphasizes black

Staff reports

news@morningsun.net

The town may be painted red for Pittsburg State University's home opener vs. Ferris State on Saturday, but the Gorillas are hoping to see a sea of black in the stadium. As part of the PSU Athletics Department's opening game Black Out the Jungle promotion, the university is encouraging fans to wear black.

That starts on the field with a new black jersey for the team. The jerseys feature block letters and numbers in red, which are outlined in gold.

Helmets for the new look are white. Gone is the familiar "Pitt" script, replaced by a black silhouette of the university's "silverback" Gorilla.



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Did someone say red? The Pride of the Plains Marching Band leads the way for the 2023 Paint the Town Red celebration in downtown Pittsburg. CONTRIBUTED/PSU



It's all smiles as a fantastic baton twirler leads the way for the Pride of the Plains Marching band's entrance at the Paint the Town Red celebration in 2023. CONTRIBUTED/PSU

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Kidsfest fun, games

Staff reports

News@morningsun.net

Some area youngsters learn the finer points of twirling at Kidsfest 2024 in the Ron's IGA parking lot on Saturday, Aug. 24. The annual event kicked off a full week of Paint the Town Red activities leading up to the first home football game on Saturday, Aug. 31. The kids played games hosted by Pittsburg State's new soccer team members and climbed, bounced and slid on inflatables. The event featured the Pride of the Plains Marching Band, the PSU Spirit Squad and the PSU Dance Team. It concluded with the football team signing autographs on the 2024 schedule poster.



RON WOMBLE/THE MORNING SUN

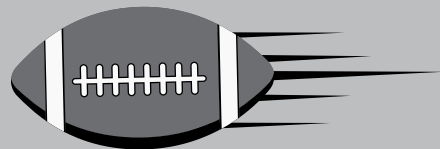
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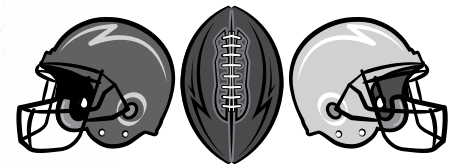
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Thousands fill Broadway for the Paint the Town Red Block Party in 2023. The event showcases the community's support for the university as well as Gorilla football. CONTRIBUTED/PSU

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“I love living in a university town because it brings so many opportunities to us that we wouldn’t otherwise have. We attend concerts and other events at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts regularly, and it’s amazing the kind of performances we’ve gotten to see just a few miles from home!”

— Karen Bowen

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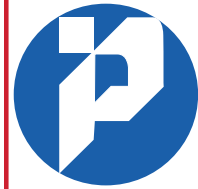
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Gorillafest returns

Staff reports

News@morningsun.net

Now in its 26th year, Gorillafest, a communitywide tailgate party before each PSU home football game, returns with a full lineup of activities.

Now under the direction of PSU Alumni and Constituent Relations, the event features a wide range of activities and food options for fans of all ages. It begins three hours before kickoff and takes place in

and around Gorilla Village on the east side of Carnie Smith Stadium.

For the matchup with Ferris State, GorillaFest features live music by the J3 Band, bounce houses, balloon twisting, and Splitface tattoos. Food vendors include 2 Buds BBQ, Tacos El Gordo and Mojo's Shaved Ice. Pitt State merchandise will also be for sale.

Highlights of the
SEE **GORILLA**, 27C



The Gorilla Walk is a highlight of the GorillaFest activities. The football teams walks from the Weede PE Building to the stadium, passing through a tunnel of fans and alumni and past the iconic Champions Plaza Gorilla, where they touch his hand for good luck. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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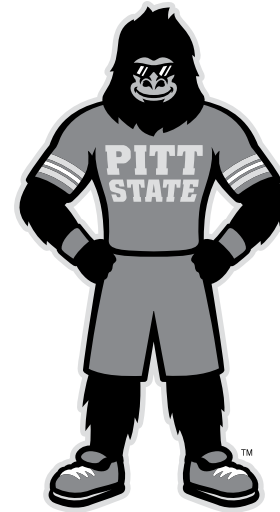
From an early age, Gorilla fans gravitate to Pitt State's iconic mascot. From a drawing by an art student in 1922, Gus has evolved into one of the most beloved college mascots in the U.S. today. CONTRIBUTED/PSU

Staff reports

News@morningsun.net

Along with all of the red you'll see around Pittsburg this week, will be lots and lots of depictions of our favorite mascot, Gus. These days he's looking pretty buff, despite the fact that he is a centenarian.

The first documented illustration of a gorilla as the school's mascot was in 1922, when the Gorillas pep club enlisted an art student to draw



an image for them. It was published in the Kanza yearbook in 1923 and in 1925, the

student body unanimously adopted the gorilla as the mascot for all. Of the Kansas State Teachers College athletic teams.

The exact date when the mascot acquired the name, "Gus," is unknown and probably lost in the river of time. However it came about, it is safe to say Gus is one of the best known and beloved university mascots in NCAA Division II.



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Gus: Pittsburg State's very own superstar



Gus Gorilla plays many roles at Pitt State, but his primary one is ambassador and bringer of school spirit and good will. Gus is always silent, but he communicates well. At events like Paint the Town Red, he is the unofficial mayor and spends his time meeting and greeting youngsters, visitors and alumni of all ages. Like any superstar, Gus is in constant demand for selfies and family photos. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS/PSU



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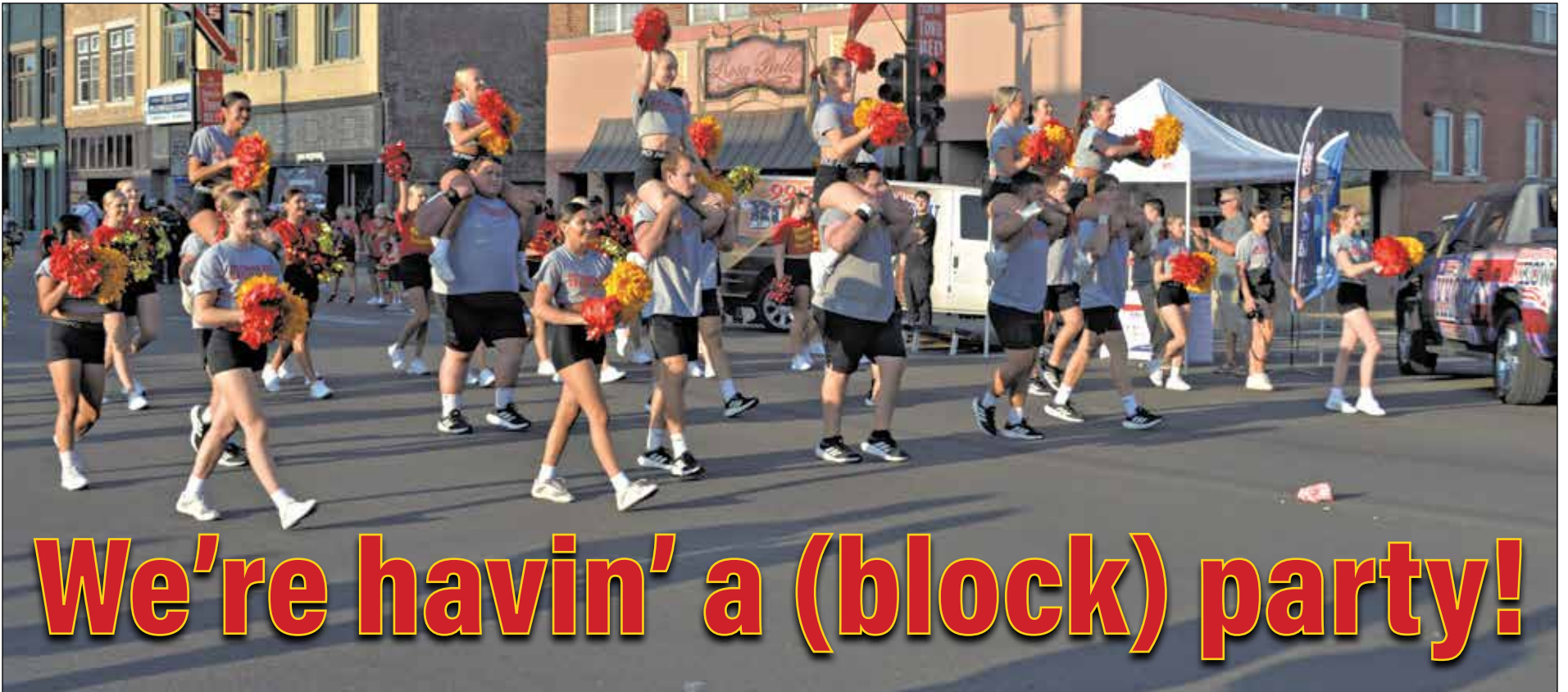


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We're havin' a (block) party!

Pittsburg loves nothing better than having a party downtown and the annual Paint the Town Red celebration is one of the best, because it incorporates a parade. CONTRIBUTED/PSU



Longtime residents and some brand new to the area share in the community's support for the Gorillas at Paint the Town Red Block Party in 2023. CONTRIBUTED/PSU

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“We are excited to have the students back in town and to kick off the fall semester with Paint The Town Red. Our team at LimeLight includes many Pitt State alumni and student interns so this event is special to us as it pulls our team and community together to cheer on the Gorillas.”

*Brandee Johnson,
owner of LimeLight Marketing*



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GORILLA

CONTINUED FROM 20C

afternoon include the pre-game pep rally approximated 75 minutes before kickoff, which features the Pride of the Plains Marching Band, the PSU Spirit Squad and PSU Dance Team. An unforgettable part of the afternoon is the Gorilla Walk, when the football team walks from the Weede PE Building to the stadium, led by the band. Fans of all ages line the walk, which is lined by fans and alumni, all there to show their support for the team.

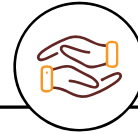
As always, there is no admission fee for GorillaFest. For more information, visit the PSU Alumni and Constituent Relations website.



The upper levels of Carnie Smith Stadium provide a bird's-eye view as the Gorilla Football team makes the Gorilla Walk from the Weede PE Building to the stadium. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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