



Management by...

Howard County Agricultural Society

P.O. Box 83, Cresco, IA 52136

Fair Office: 563-547-3400

Secretary: 563-547-4996

E-mail: info@mhcfair.com

Web site: www.mhcfair.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MHCFair

2026 FAIRGOER CONTESTS

The following pages detail the 2026 Fairgoer Contests open to people of all ages, unless noted in the contest guidelines.

There is no cost to enter each contest. Enter as many contests as you wish.

All contests, except for the Baby Contest, are held in the Featherlite Center on the Fairgrounds. The Featherlite Center also houses the Fair's open class exhibits, such as Arts & Crafts & Flower Departments.

All these contests are sponsored by area individuals and businesses. We thank them for their involvement and encourage others to express their appreciation to all the contest sponsors.

The contests are listed in the order of their entry day, Wednesday to Saturday.

After judging the food contests, a 'tasting party' is held, where fairgoers can sample the entries for that contest.

Other than the food contests, if you want your contest entry it must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday of the Fair unless other arrangements have been made.

For specific contest questions please contact the Fair Office at 563-547-3400 (Fair week).

All are encouraged to take part in these contests. Enjoy and have fun!

MIGHTY HOWARD COUNTY FAIR

CRESCO IOWA



Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Scheidel Plaza Stage

Contest Rules

Basic Contest Regulations

- Two age classes: 16 years & under; 17 years and above – solo or groups welcome
- Family friendly entertainment only
- No animal acts or dangerous acts
- Acts could include any of the following types of entertainment:
 - Singing
 - Dancing
 - Magic
 - Animal Calling
 - Skits
 - Musical
 - String Instruments (banjo, guitar, etc.)
 - Keyboard (piano, organ)
- CD player and micro phone provided. Act to provide any other equipment needed for performance
- 3-minute time limit per act
- Judging Criteria shall be:
 - Entertainment value
 - Confidence of performers
 - Audience reaction

Prizes include:

- First place, \$250; 2nd place \$100; 3rd place \$50.
- All persons shall receive participation ribbon.

Entry information:

- Entry form available at www.mhcfair.com.
- No entry fees.

Questions, please contact Kelly Bartling at 319-404-8008; E-mail kellybartling@gmail.com

Dean Lickteig, 563-547-0444

MIGHTY HOWARD COUNTY FAIR

CRESCO IOWA



Entry Form – Print clearly

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Current Age: _____

Main Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Age Group (circle one); Sprout Senior

Circle one: Solo Act Group Act (no more than 5 persons)

Briefly describe your act & list other persons if a group: _____

Hold Harmless Agreement:

I agree to indemnify, hold harmless and defend the Mighty Howard County Fair, its individual members and Directors against any and all claims arising out of or resulting from my participation in the Mighty Howard County Fair's Got Talent Contest. In addition, I hereby certify that I have read and agree to follow the rules of the contest and to respect the judges' rulings.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Mail Entry Form to: Mighty Howard County Fair, P.O. Box 83, Cresco, IA 52136
Or drop off at Fair Office during Fair week.*



The Mighty Howard County Fair's Scavenger Hunt is a fantastic way to turn a day of walking into an interactive adventure, encouraging participants to explore agricultural exhibits, visit the livestock barns, enjoy carnival games, and taste local fair food. Perfect for families and friends, it's a fun, engaging way to experience the best of the Fair—join the hunt and make memories today!

- Entry forms can be picked up at the Featherlite Center on Wednesday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to Noon.
- One entry per person.
- Entries become property of the Mighty Howard County Fair.
- Entries submitted that are not appropriate will disqualify the entrant from the competition.
- In the case of multiple correctly completed entries, all winners will be placed in drawing for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.
- Entries need to be completed in full as instructed to qualify for prizes.
- Entries must be turned in by Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Please use entry drop box in the Featherlite Center to submit completed entries.
- Winners will be announced on Saturday by 7:00 p.m.
- The scavenger hunt is open to all ages.
- Disclaimer: By submitting your entry, you grant the Fair a royalty-free right to use your photos for promotional purposes.



Stop in for an entry sheet Happy Hunting!!!

'Thank you' to Chad & Vicki Reinhart and Dale & Julie Dietzenbach for sponsoring the Mighty Howard County Fair's Scavenger Hunt!!

Cresco Times Plain Dealer proudly presents ...

America The Beautiful

Photo Contest to Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Judging at 5:00 p.m.

No Entry Fees – Limit of **ONE** entry per person – Open to all ages!

Photograph must be in **COLOR**

The purpose of the contest is to promote an interest in creative, quality amateur photography; to recognize the expertise of area photographers; and to provide another cultural attraction for the Howard County Fair. Creative photography is important and something that needs to be displayed.

AWARD & CATEGORY

\$100.00 in Cresco Chamber Dollars to overall “BEST OF SHOW” selected out of all submitted entries.

Category: “America the Beautiful”

STANDARDS OF JUDGING

Quality of Composition; Quality of Printed Product; Creativity; Quality of Presentation

GENERAL RULES INCLUDE...

- ❖ Photos must be in **color**
- ❖ Photo must feature what you love about the United States of America
- ❖ Limit **ONE** entry per person for this special photography contest
- ❖ Contest is open to all amateur photographers of all ages
- ❖ Photo must be original and no smaller than 4” by 6” and no larger than 8” x 10”
- ❖ Photo must be mounted on card stock and/or matted; no framed photos. You do not need to mount the photo on foam core.
- ❖ Neatness and quality of presentation counts
- ❖ Each entry must have name, address, and phone number. OPTIONAL: 25-100 word “backgrounder” on the image and short bio on photographer.
- ❖ Judges (selected by the Cresco TPD staff) reserve the right not to make any awards in this category and have the right to accept or reject any entry
- ❖ Winning entries may be published in the Times Plain Dealer and Monitor Recorder.

Disclaimer: The Cresco Times Plain Dealer, the Mighty Howard County Fair and sponsors take no responsibility for any damage or theft of the photographs that are entered. Entrants submit photos at their own risk. Entrants grant the Cresco Times Plain Dealer the right to publish submitted photographs, “backgrounders,” and biographical information in the newspaper and in other printed material advertising and publicizing the contest.

The Cresco Times Plain Dealer proudly presents ...

“MY WORLD” PHOTO CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Judging at 5:00 p.m.

No Entry Fees – Limit of 2 entries per person – Open to all ages!

ALL ENTRIES WILL BE ON DISPLAY THROUGHOUT THE FAIR IN THE FEATHERLITE CENTER

All entries must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday. Entries not picked up will be disposed of.

The purpose of the contest is to promote an interest in creative, quality amateur photography; to recognize the expertise of area photographers; and to provide another cultural attraction for the Howard County Fair.

Creative photography is important and something that needs to be displayed!

AWARDS & CATEGORIES

\$50 in Cresco Chamber Dollars to overall “BEST of SHOW” (selected out of the submitted entries)

\$25 Cresco Chamber Dollars and 2 Cresco Theatre Movie Passes to winner in each category.

2nd, 3rd & Honorable Mention Ribbons and “People’s Choice Award” are sponsored by the Howard County Fair.

1. **People: Family, Children, Special People**
2. **Scenic, Nature & Places: Still Life, Flowers, Insects, Wildlife, USA, International**
3. **Life in Iowa: At the Fair, Farm Life, Animals**
4. **Youth - 18 years & Under: Anything Goes**
5. **Black & White: Anything Goes**

STANDARDS OF JUDGING

Quality of Composition; Quality of Printed Product; Creativity; Quality of Presentation

GENERAL RULES INCLUDE ...

1. **Photos may be black and white or color**
2. **Limit two entries per person**
3. **Contest is open to all amateur photographers**
4. **Photos must be original and no smaller than 4” x 6” and no larger than 8” x 10”.**
5. **Photos must be mounted on foam core or matted; no framed photos**
6. **Neatness and quality of presentation counts**
7. **Each entry must have 25-100 word “backgrounder” on the image, along with name, address, phone # of and short bio on photographer.**
8. **Judges (selected by the Cresco TPD staff) reserve the right not to make any awards in any category and have the right to accept or reject any entry.**
9. **Please e-mail copy of photo to tpdeditor@crescotimes.com for possible reprint.**
10. **Winning entries may be published in the Times Plain Dealer and Monitor Recorder.**

Disclaimer: The Cresco Times Plain Dealer, Evans Publishing, Howard County Fair and sponsors take no responsibility for any damage or theft of the photographs that are entered. Entrants submit photos at their own risk. Entrants grant the Times Plain Dealer and Monitor Recorder the right to publish submitted photographs, “backgrounders,” and biographical information in the newspaper and in other printed material advertising and publicizing the contest.

BECKY DUNN proudly presents...

STAR QUILT BLOCK CHALLENGE

Featherlite Center

1. One block per exhibitor. Open to all Iowa residents.
2. 2026 theme is 'Red, White & Blue, Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary'.
3. Kits are available by April 14, 2026. Exhibitor to contact Becky Dunn at 563-203-7263 to arrange pickup of the block kit.
4. Finished blocks, unfinished blocks and unused kits are to be turned into Becky Dunn by June 15, 2026
5. Exhibitors must use only, and all fabrics included in the kit. Do not add fabrics.
6. Appliqueing is allowed. Quilting is not allowed. Machine or hand embroidery is not allowed
7. Paper piercing is allowed but the exhibitor must remove the paper backing before entering the block.
8. Exhibitors may use an established pattern of a star or create an original block with a star incorporated.
9. Block size must be 12 ½" x 12 ½", that will finish to 12" x 12".
10. Blocks entered become the property of the Mighty Howard County Fair.
11. Blocks will be made into a quilt. The 2026 quilt will be donated to Quilts of Valor.
12. \$25 prize will be awarded for Viewer's Choice.



*This contest courtesy of **BECKY DUNN, Cresco***



WALTON'S TREE SERVICE, Cresco proudly presents ...

ROCK CREATIONS CONTEST

Featherlite Center



Use Your Imagination – Make Your Favorite Rock Creation
Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Open to All Ages - No Entry Fees – Please note age on entry.

ENTRIES WILL BE ON DISPLAY THROUGHOUT THE FAIR

Judging will take place on Thursday

Prizes – 1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

Entries must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday unless other arrangements have been made.



ERICKSON PROCHASKA REAL ESTATE, Cresco, proudly presents...

GUESS THE ITEMS CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Fairgoers guess the number of assorted Fair Buttons in a large jar.

Winners chosen on the three closest guesses of the number of Fair Buttons in the Jar.

Winners Announced Saturday Evening

Prizes: 1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10



A & J CONSTRUCTION, Cresco, proudly presents ...

LEGO CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

No Entry Fees – One entry per exhibitor

Use Your Imagination – Make Your Favorite Lego Creation

NO KITS ALLOWED! Kits will be disqualified!

Entries must be different than those entered and judged as a 4-H project.

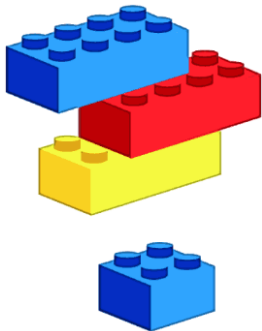
Entries on Display throughout the Fair

Judging will take place on Thursday

2 Age Groups: 7 years and younger; 8 years and older

Prizes for each age group: 1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

All entries must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday unless other arrangements have been made.



HOWARD COUNTY MUTUAL INSURANCE proudly presents ...

MY FAVORITE APPETIZER CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - No Entry Fee



Judging at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) Friday

Limit of 1 Entry per Individual

Homemade appetizers only. Recipe included with each entry.

Judge's decision will be final.

Prizes: 1st -- \$25 cash, 2nd – \$15 cash, 3rd – \$10 cash

Fairgoers invited to a tasting party after judging

MiEnergy COOPERATIVE, Cresco, proudly presents...

LIGHT BULB DECORATING CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Open to Kids ages 12 and under

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

No Entry Fees - Judging will take place on Thursday

Each child entering will receive a new LED light bulb.

Entries on Display throughout the Fair

Prizes: 1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

All entries must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday

unless other arrangements have been made.



MUDSLINGER'S CONSTRUCTION, Cresco proudly presents ...

REPURPOSED/RECYCLED PROJECT CONTEST

Open To All Ages

Featherlite Center

Entries to consist of items made from recycled products.
Items used could be plastic bottles, clothing, tin cans, clay pots and more...

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

No Entry Fees – Please note age of youth on entry.

ENTRIES WILL BE ON DISPLAY THROUGHOUT THE FAIR

Judging will take place on Thursday

Prizes – 1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

All entries must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday unless other arrangements have been made.



This contest courtesy of MUDSLINGER'S CONSTRUCTION, Cresco

CRESKO BUILDING SERVICE & HARVEY'S USED AUTOS, CRESKO proudly presents ...

CREATE A GNOME CONTEST

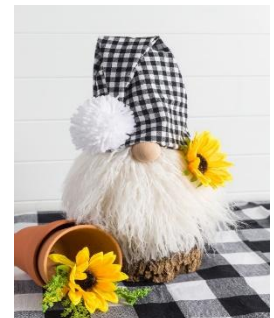
Two Age Groups: 12 years old and under; 13 years and older

Featherlite Center

Imagination is key – All seasons, holidays and special events can be featured

Entries accepted Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

No Entry Fees – Please note age of youth on entry.



ENTRIES WILL BE ON DISPLAY THROUGHOUT THE FAIR

Judging will take place on Thursday

Prizes for each age group...

1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

All entries must be picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, unless other arrangements have been made.

This contest courtesy of

Cresco Building Service & Harvey's Used Autos, Cresco



MiEnergy COOPERATIVE, Cresco, proudly presents ...

HOMEMADE SALSA MAKER CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

No Entry Fee -- Open to All Persons

Judging at 1:00 p.m.



One pint per Entry

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Entries judged on appearance, taste, texture.

Recipes appreciated with each entry.

Chips will be furnished.

Judge's decision will be final.

Prizes: 1st -- \$25 cash, 2nd -- \$15 cash, 3rd -- \$10 cash

Fairgoers invited to a tasting party after judging

MiEnergy COOPERATIVE, Cresco, proudly presents...

STRAWBERRY DESSERT CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Wednesday from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

No Entry Fee -- Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Open to all persons 12 years of age and older

Judging at 2:00 p.m.

Homemade desserts only, must be in
a disposable container.

Entries judged on appearance, taste, texture.

Recipes appreciated with each entry.

Judge's decision will be final.

Prizes: 1st -- \$25 cash, 2nd -- \$15 cash, 3rd -- \$10 cash



Fairgoers invited to a tasting party after judging

CRESCO MOTOR COMPANY proudly presents...

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



Judging at 1:00 p.m. - No Entry Fees

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Any type chocolate chip cookie allowed.

4 cookies on paper plate per entry

Entries judged on appearance, taste, texture



Prizes: 1st -- \$25 cash and Collector Cookie Plate 2nd -- \$15 cash; 3rd -- \$10 cash

Fairgoers invited to tasting party after judging.

MANLEY & LINDA BIGALK & GOLDEN RIDGE HONEY, Granger, proudly presents their ...



TASTE OF HONEY CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Thursday, from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. -- No Entry Fees

Judging at 2:00 p.m. – 12 oz. Honey Bear given to each entry.

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Entry must include honey, no sugar.

Recipe required as a part of the entry.

Open to any item made with honey.

Prizes: 1st place \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10



LYNCH LIVESTOCK, Cresco, proudly presents ...

TASTE OF BACON CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Judging at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) -- No Entry Fee

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Any home-made food item that contains bacon.

Recipe to be included with each entry.



Judge's decision will be final.

Prizes: 1st -- \$25 cash

2nd -- \$15 cash

3rd -- \$10 cash



HOLSTROM'S GIFT & JEWELRY, Cresco, proudly presents its ...

HOMEMADE WINE CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted on Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Judging at 5:45 p.m. -- No Entry Fees -- Open to amateurs only

Home-made Wine Entry Guidelines

- Exhibitor must be 21 years of age or older to enter.
- One bottle per entry.
- No limit to the number of entries per exhibitor, but each entry must be a different type of wine.
- Exhibitor can submit entries in both categories.
- The exhibitor must give a description of each wine by the main ingredient (i.e. rhubarb, grape, etc.).
- Wine shall be in standard wine bottles, 23 to 30 ounces, with labels removed and be properly sealed.
- Bottles shall contain at least 20 ounces of wine.



Two Categories ...

Wine Made from Scratch

Wine Made from Kits

Judging Criteria...

Aroma, (2) Appearance, (3) Taste, and (4) Overall Impression.

-- Prizes for Each Category --

1st place, 4 Wine Goblets, custom engraved

2nd place & 3rd place, 2 Wine Goblets, custom engraved



JOE & ROCHELLE BRAUN of Cresco proudly present their ...

MY FAVORITE HOMEMADE BARS CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - *No Entry Fees*

Judging at Noon, Friday

Each entry to consist of 4 bars per plate

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Any kind of bar acceptable. Recipe appreciated with each entry

Prizes: 1st place \$25.00, 2nd place \$15.00, 3rd place \$10.00

Fairgoers invited to tasting party after judging



DR. PAUL & JAYNE JENSEN, Cresco, proudly presents ...

BLUEBERRY DESSERT CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted on Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - *No Entry Fees*



Judging at 1:00 p.m.

Each entry to consist of 4 pieces of dessert per plate.
(Disposable plates only)

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Recipes appreciated with each entry.

Prizes: 1st place, \$25, 2nd place \$15, 3rd place \$10

Fairgoers invited to tasting party after judging.

JEFF BOEKE AND SONS proudly presents their annual ...

BEST KOLACHE MAKER CONTEST

Featherlite Center

Entries accepted Friday from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. -- No Entry Fees

Judging at 2:00 p.m.

Four Kolaches of same filling per entry

Limit of 2 Entries per Individual

Any fillings may be used

Entries Judged on Appearance, Taste, and Texture

\$50 and a special plaque awarded to the ' BEST KOLACHE BAKER'

Runner-up to receive \$25



Fairgoers invited to tasting party after judging

QUAM'S AUTO SERVICE & SALVAGE, Lime Springs, and

REINHART MACHINE & REPAIR – CHAD, VICKI & FAMILY of Cresco proudly presents ...



Celebrate America's 250th Birthday



Cookie Make and Take Featherlite Center

Friday

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



CUSB Bank, The Cresco Shopper, Holstrom's Gift & Jewelry

and Dawson Rasmusson Photography of Cresco proudly present their ...

35th Annual BABY CONTEST

Saturday – 10:00 a.m. – Scheidel Plaza Stage

Open to all Babies up to 12 months of Age

Awards will be given to each baby who is judged to have the best in each of the following categories:

Chubbiest Cheeks

Least Hair

Most Hair

Youngest Child

Oldest Child

Twins - Most Alike

Twins - Least Alike

Sweetest Smile

Prettiest Eyes

Also named will be the Mighty Howard County Fair's

"Prince" (overall cutest boy) and "Princess" (overall cutest girl)

- Registration will be from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the Scheidel Plaza Stage.
- Early Bird Drawing – register by 9:00 a.m. for chance to win \$50 Cresco Chamber Bucks
- Judging starts at 10:00 a.m. on the Scheidel Plaza stage.
- Baby is to be registered in ONLY one of the judging categories.
- Overall Cutest will be chosen from all contestants.
- This contest is open to all babies in our Fair trade area.
- Each contestant will receive a special ribbon.
- Age of contestants is up to 12 months of age.
- A member of the immediate family must accompany each contestant.
- Entry is free of charge to contestants and spectators
- Current photo of baby is required. Photo will not be returned.

Dawson Rasmusson Photography of Cresco will give a free mini-session to the overall cutest girl and overall cutest boy.

Overall Cutest trophies sponsored by Holstrom's Gift & Jewelry, Cresco

Other prizes courtesy of CUSB Bank, The Cresco Shopper and participating area merchants.

**This contest courtesy of CUSB Bank, The Cresco Shopper,
Holstrom's Gift & Jewelry and Dawson Rasmusson Photography**