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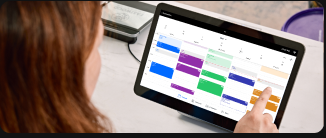
# World's largest rubber duck coming to Princeton

Chloe Smith  
Mar 7, 2024



The world's largest rubber duck is coming to Princeton for the annual Rum River Festival in June. The over six-story tall rubber duck will visit for the duration of the festival.

Photo provided

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The world's largest rubber duck, affectionately known as Mama Duck, is taking a trip to Princeton this summer for the annual Rum River Festival.

The Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism announced the duck's upcoming visit in a Facebook post on Feb. 20 and has quickly gained traction throughout the state.

"All we've done is create an event on Facebook to say that it's coming, and it's just blown up. I've had people from other towns call me saying that they heard it's coming to Princeton," Chamber Director Kim Young said.

Mama Duck stands at an impressive six stories tall and is expected to be housed in downtown Princeton to make it the star of the festival.

"We kind of want to put everything in the general vicinity. We're going to bring in some entertainment, and just to have activities going on throughout the weekend," Young said. "There's so many things in the works that we're trying to get finalized."

According to Young, people from all over the world follow Mama Duck wherever she goes.

"It's unbelievable how people follow this duck," Young said. "(The duck's owner) said that we will be surprised at the large crowds, and people come from all over the world to see it. It's unbelievable. He said it will bring significant

economic impact to our city, and we are very excited about that.”

Young said she hopes that bringing Mama Duck to Princeton will help bring people to the community.

“To bring people to our community, to show people what a great community we have. I just think it’s a great way to show what a great place Princeton is. It’s a really exciting thing,” Young said.

The owner of Mama Duck lives in Duluth, but despite Minnesota being her home state, she has never visited any other city in the state.

“The only other place in Minnesota that (the owner) told me it’s been up is in Duluth,” Young said. “He said he saw our form and that it seems like it would be a really good fit. We have rubber ducks literally in our logo at the chamber, and for the Rum River Festival, we do the Lucky Duck Race. There’s always something to do with rubber ducks at our festival.”

This year, the Rum River Festival will be held from June 6-9 with Mama Duck open to the public from June 7-9.

The festival this year will focus heavily on rubber ducks to celebrate Mama Duck’s visit with Duck Duck Big Duck as the theme.

“We hope to get all the businesses involved and do a ‘Paint the Town Yellow’ around the Rum River Festival, just do everything duck related that whole week,” Young said. “We’re having a meeting with our Lucky Duck Committee to talk about different things we can do to promote the duck race. Maybe hiding some ducks around town or things like that to make it big as well.”

Young said the Chamber has a lot of ideas for duck themed activities for the festival, but they are still in the early planning stages and don’t have any final confirmations on their plans.

The Chamber is also running a design contest for the logo for this year's festival. Final submissions are due on Friday, March 8, on the chamber's website under the Rum River Festival.

Young is also working on coordinating all of the necessary items to help get the duck to Princeton in the first place.

"I never imagined what it would take to get it here. We have to provide hotel space for the crew that run the duck for the weekend. The AmericInn was super gracious and donated a room for them to stay in," Young said. "They require things like eight 1,000-pound jersey barriers. They're basically large concrete blocks to hold it down, and we have to provide a forklift and an operator to get it off the trailer. It's going to be really interesting."

The chamber is also looking for volunteers to help set up and take down Mama Duck, needing four able-bodied volunteers for each. They are also looking for sponsors to help cover the costs of the duck coming to Princeton.

"It's going to be fun, and now I'm just praying for good weather," Young said.

To learn more about the world's largest rubber duck, visit the information page on the Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism website at <https://www.princetonmnchamber.org/bigduck>.

*Reach Chloe Smith at [chloe.smith@apgecm.com](mailto:chloe.smith@apgecm.com)*

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Editor