

Riverbend Wellness Festival Rescheduled for March 2 Due to Winter Weather

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - The Riverbend Wellness Festival has been rescheduled for March 2, 2024, due to weather concerns.

Organized by Beth Ahlin and Stella Webb, the Wellness Festival will promote spiritual, physical and mental/emotional wellness with keynote speakers, vendors and workshops. The festival, originally scheduled for Jan. 13, will now take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 2, 2024, at Milton Schoolhouse in Alton.

“For Beth and I both, we really do support that wellness for our community,” Webb said. “We see clients on a daily basis, but to expand that out even further. The reason we’re doing this event is because of the community.”

Webb owns [Soul Sanctuary](#), which is based in Milton Schoolhouse. She has collaborated with Ahlin, who owns [CE Ahlin Counseling](#), to plan the festival with local speakers and over 30 vendors. A few practitioners will offer breakout sessions, including a mental health workshop and spiritual health workshop. Webb will be hosting meditations, and attendees can also check out yoga, ecstatic dance and art therapy sessions.

The speakers and workshops are completely free, but attendees can choose to enter raffles with items donated from local businesses. The vendors also paid a fee to rent their spot at the festival, and proceeds from this and the raffles will go to [Amare, NFP](#), an organization based in Wood River that provides [help to people struggling with substance use disorders](#). Webb and Ahlin decided to support Amare because they know people who benefit from the organization's services.

"We know there are people in the community — we have clients — who need a place like Amare to go for support, to help them find their way back to where they want to be for their wellness so that they can live their life to their fullest potential," Webb said. "We have these beautiful souls who are out here who really care about the people in our community. I really do believe that supporting a place like Amare supports our community."

Webb and Ahlin believe wellness should not just be an individual endeavor, but a community-wide initiative. To this end, the Wellness Festival will also have several Kid Zones and other family-friendly activities. They want to promote wellness within entire families, not just individuals.

"Come on in and learn how to achieve overall wellness with the family," Webb said. "I think it's so important to be able to introduce wellness to our families when our kids are young, waiting until they're in a bad situation or not in a good state of mind and then starting to think about meditation or mental health or even physical health. Allowing the kids to grow with that, to, from a young age, take it with them so this is practice, it's stuff that they have established for their lifetime, it's a beautiful thing."

While Webb and Ahlin are excited for the festival, they agreed it was best to postpone it until the winter weather is no longer a concern. For more information about the Riverbend Wellness Festival, visit the [official Facebook event page](#) and check it often for updates on keynote speakers, workshops and vendors.

"I wouldn't be able to live with myself if even one person fell because they were trying to come to the event. I would just rather everyone stay home safe and sound, nice and warm, and then we can just do this on March 2nd," Webb added. "Creating relationships that are healthy, that are full of love and respect, that's how you create a beautiful life."

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