

Running, romance on target this weekend

Marathon, novelists, dart tourney among events on tap

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It's going to be a busy weekend in Tiletown.

About 8,000 runners are expected at the starting line for Cellcom Green Bay Marathon events on Sunday. The area also will play host to dart throwers, female barbershop singers and romance novelists.

“It will be an awesome weekend,” said Brad Toll, president and chief executive officer of the Greater Green Bay Visitors and Convention Bureau. “There will be lots of people eating in area restaurants, shopping and staying in local hotels.”

He expects about 13,000 visitors in the Lambeau Field district alone, where the marathon begins and ends Sunday. Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Inc. hosts a dart tournament at the Shopko Hall complex all weekend. And the Green Bay Blizzard football team will play a home game Friday at the Resch Center.

Among other events bringing folks to the metro area this weekend are the Sweet Adelines Region 22 convention and competition in downtown Green Bay — a group of female barbershoppers.

The Wisconsin State Association of Letter Carriers, too, will meet at the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center in Ashwaubenon, as will the Wisconsin Romance Writers of America. And if you're a history buff, Hazelwood Historic House Museum is hosting a Civil War re-enactment.

Despite the hustle and bustle, Toll said hotel rooms still are available.

“We keep track of what's open,” he said. “People who are interested in hotel rooms should give us a call.”

Even without the other events, marathon weekend always is good for the community, he said.

“This is an event that has just blossomed,” Toll said. Next year, when the dart tourney moves to Wisconsin Dells, he anticipates the race will pick up speed.

“Eight thousand is just astounding, but I expect it will grow more,” he said. “We're hearing from people coming in that it's a very respected marathon in the way it's set up. Green Bay definitely is in that circle of marathons that people want to run.”

“We're excited at the future potential. If it continues to grow like this, imagine what can happen in the future.”

And an expanding marathon means growth for the local economy, as well.

“We have lots of people coming in and spending money,” Toll said. “And when they go home, we have all the revenue they left behind. It’s just a great weekend.”