

Plans are underway for the 28th Annual Gingerbread Festival at the Waelderhaus.

All schools and groups in Sheboygan County are invited to participate. **Interest forms are due November 11, 2024.** Entry Information forms are due by November 26, 2024.

From November 29 to December 30, your gingerbread creations will be on view and visitors will vote for their favorite in each category. The Gingerbread Festival will be open to the public, free of charge Sunday through Friday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Weekends also feature merry musical performances!

Waelderhaus Gingerbread Festival Entry Guidelines:

1. All Sheboygan County schools, community groups, classes, clubs, families and organizations are invited to submit gingerbread creations for the Gingerbread Festival contest!
2. **Gingerbread submissions must be delivered to the Waelderhaus on Tuesday, November 26, between noon and 5pm.** If you're not able to deliver your creation on the date, please let us know so that we may arrange a different time/date for you.
3. Fill out the entry information submission form prior to drop off. This form will be used to create labels for each entry.
 - The following information should be included when delivering the creation to the Waelderhaus:
 1. Name of the school or organization
 2. Age category
 3. Teacher or advisor's name
 4. Name of the class/group involved in the gingerbread construction.
 5. Title of creation.
4. Judging will be divided into seven categories: Pre-school, elementary K-2, elementary 3-5, middle school 6-8, high school 9-12, community/service groups and open.
 - For the Open category, ANYONE may enter. If you or your group is not part of a tax-exempt organization, be prepared to select one to donate winnings to. Indicate what charity or non-profit you plan to donate to in the information form. This will be shared in the label.
 - For school categories, students must construct their house independently. Adults can provide basic information and assistance – e.g., baking and cutting.
5. All gingerbread creations must be mounted on a sturdy platform no larger than 2 feet by 2 feet. There is no height limitation for the structures. Cookie sheets, trays or plywood boards work well.
6. **Gingerbread houses must be constructed of entirely edible materials** except for glue or toothpicks that may be used to adhere materials, in addition to frosting. Homemade gingerbread, purchased gingerbread, graham crackers or any variety of cookies or crackers, either homemade or purchased may be used as the basic building material. Candies, confections, gum drops, chocolate chips, candy canes, licorice, hard candies, coconut, etc., may also be used. Use edible materials that will not melt or deteriorate easily.

7. Gingerbread creations may be as grand as castles or as small as a cottage, but they must depict a lodging or structure. The entire sculpture cannot exceed 2 feet by 2 feet. The house could also include a surrounding yard, fences, trees, people or animals, or other items, if desired. Some examples of gingerbread structures that were submitted in past years were schools, churches, cottages, castles, barns, stores, log cabins, gazebos, clock towers, boats, deer stands, and even outhouses!

Other helpful information:

- Each visitor to the Waelderhaus will be asked to cast a vote for their favorite gingerbread creation in each of the seven categories. The votes will determine the winners. Winners will be announced in January 2025. Winners will be notified by email, followed by a press release to all who enter.
- Cash prizes will be awarded for first (\$500), second (\$250) and third (\$100) place in each category. Cash prizes can only be given to organizations that are classified as tax-exempt public charities (Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) or public institutions such as schools or governmental entities. Participants whose entries win a cash prize must name a tax-exempt organization whom they would like to have benefit from their award. W9 forms are required to send out the award money.
- Schools or individuals may pick up the gingerbread creations on January 2nd or 3rd, 2025 between noon – 5pm. If you do not wish to pick up your creation or need to arrange a different date/time for pick-up, please let me know via the entry information submission form.

We hope you are as excited about the 2024 Gingerbread Festival as we are!
Please reach out with questions.

Jen Balge

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