



THE COUNTRY FAIR RUNWAY

FAIR FASHION AND GLITTER

BY TAYLOR GRIGGS

Oregon Country Fair is known for trying to be an all-inclusive spot for people of all kinds. It encompasses the most eclectic parts of society, letting people express themselves however they like, with only their imaginations limiting them.

For many at OCF, fashion is an essential part of this self-expression, and Fair is a yearly event that lets them go crazy with their looks — often with glitter, which has become controversial.

Savona Cook, owner of Savona's Bitchin' Bohemian Boutique, is a provider of hippie clothes for OCF goers. During the months before Fair, the store focuses on clothing for attendees, who find Savona's loose, tie-dyed threads suitable for the hot mid-July event.

"The Fair allows people to be as wild as they feel like," Cook says. She points out the clothes she recommends for Fair-goers, from tie-dyed halter-tops with fringe to velvet bell-bottoms, thinking about how they'll work with the summer weather.

"It's normally very hot at the Fair, and it just depends on what you feel like," she says. "Wear something bright and fun."

Cook has a personal history with OCF. She sold lemonade at the first Fair, when she was just eight years old — her mother was part of the original team that conceived of it in 1969. "It was a pretty big part of our lives back then," she says, mentioning how much Fair means to everyone involved.

Elisha Young, *Eugene Weekly's* classifieds manager, is also a major OCF fashion advocate (full disclosure, you can find a lot of *EW* staffers at Fair every year). Young says she looks forward to Fair all year, where she likes to express herself with clothes and wild makeup.

"I think it's a lot of fun because it's one time a year where I can go absolutely crazy with my makeup," Young says. "There is no right or wrong."

Young also mentions how OCF's wacky styles make people-watching a popular activity.

"One of my favorite things to do at Fair is people-watch. You can turn one way

and see an elf and turn the other way and see a crazy centaur beast," she says. "There's completely naked people, completely covered in body paint, and men wearing nothing but a loincloth."

The main draw of this fashion-centered environment is to create a magical atmosphere in the woods, one where anything goes. "Everything is kind of about this hidden magic," Young says.

An environmental note: Young says she has used a lot of body glitter in the past to add to her magical look, but she knows there is a movement to get the micro-plastic sparkles banned from Fair for ecological reasons. She says it would be hard to completely eliminate them, but she will be paying attention to the damage it could do.

Stephanie Talbott, OCF assistant manager, says that there have been community talks about reducing glitter usage, but there is no official policy against the plastic sparkle.

There also are eco-friendly glitter options — biodegradable Glitterrevolution and EcoStardust are two companies pioneering earth-friendly sparkles. If you are trying to glimmer and shine without leaving a plastic footprint, this might be an option for you.

As well as considering one's eco-footprint with your fashion choices, it's important to note that, while wild, OCF is still a family event.

Cook says that the fashion isn't quite as risqué as it is at events like Burning Man, where bringing kids are a little less welcome.

Young agrees, showing photos of her kid dressed up at OCF and having a great time. "It's counterculture and family-friendly," she says.

As for me, this year will mark my first Fair. I'm excited to express myself through makeup and fashion, but I'm also fair-skinned and easily flustered by heat, and mosquitos are super into me. So I'd recommend lathering with sunscreen, DEET and a water bottle (no glass allowed).

The 2018 Oregon Country Fair is from July 13-15 in Veneta. More information can be found at oregoncountryfair.org.