



How Meadow Muffins came to Norwich

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By Lions Demosthenes Sofronas and Stephen Flanders

The idea wafted up from Massachusetts in 1993, according to one Norwich resident. Why not have cows make money for charity? The “rules of the pie” sprang from that inspired idea and have been going strong, ever since, as the Norwich Lions Club Meadow Muffins contest.

The Meadow Muffins contest is a game of chance whereby participants buy \$20 “deeds” to each of 500 “plots” within an enclosure, where on a designated day one or more cows are invited to leave a natural deposit. The plot onto which the first plop falls wins the owner of that square \$1,000—the second plop brings a \$500 prize. With expenses for prizes, lining the field and renting the cows, the club realizes about \$8,300, which it devotes entirely to organizations that benefit disadvantaged people in our community and beyond.

[Modern Farmer](#) reports that rural communities all over the US have variants of “Cow Pie Bingo”, “Cow Pie Derby”, “Cow Chip Bingo”, “Cow Plop Drop”, “Bessie Bingo”, “Fertilizer Lottery”, and dozens of variations. But none of them has a “Meadow Muffin” contest exactly like that in Norwich!

The [Huron Daily Plainsman](#) reports that the Huron Elks Lodge holds an annual “Cow Pie Drop contest”. We think that it’s a mistake to assume that long horns produce a better product!



An impressive bull-sh*tter! (Photo: Huron Daily Plainsman)

There also are communities that have a game-of-skill variant, *cow-chip tossing*, as reported by [Modern Farmer](#). In the World Championships of Cow Chip Tossing, participants hurl discuses of organic origin as far as 140 feet. Reportedly, novices tend to choose frisbee-like missiles from a cart of official ammo. Whereas, pros choose more cannon-ball-like missiles. Never have so many stooped so low to throw so far!



At the World Championships of Cow Chip Tossing (Photo: Modern Farmer)

The early Meadow Muffin contests were conducted by selling numbered “deeds”, whimsical in design to make participation fun and memorable.

At the time of the contest, the numbers from sold deeds were stapled to an 8 x 8-foot plywood display board, constructed by Lion Earl Thompson, according to a randomized plan. The contest took place at the same time as the Norwich Fair, which was held at what are now the playing fields on Route 5, south of town.



Attaching purchased squares to the display board and announcing the results



This Is To Certify That

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 is the proud owner of plot # _____ of the Norwich Lions Meadow Muffin Contest to be held at the Norwich Fair on Sunday, July 10, 2011.
all proceeds in some and benefit the fair, farmers throughout the community, the fair, and the mowmen!

Cowboy: _____

Price of Deed \$20.00
 Winner to receive \$2,000.00 Dollars



Purchaser's Copy

Rules of the Pie

- 1 This do not have to be present to win.
- 2 When the cow drops its first pie ... a winner is selected.
- 3 If said cow does not cooperate, the winning square will be drawn from the Meadow Muffin Certificates. Certificate numbers will be matched with Deed Numbers.
- 4 If disputed results require a repeat, judges will be immediately "appointed" to measure the pie to determine winning deed.
- 5 There (3) judges will be appointed on the day of the event.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Plot # _____ Cowboy: _____
 Price \$20.00
 Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____

One good deed deserves another—sales at the fair!

The fair moved to the town green where Lions Harjit Rakhra, Demo Sofronas, Donna Wheeler and Phil Wheeler became roving sales people at the fair, along with many others.

In recent years, the randomized number scheme has been transferred to a plastic-coated poster, which comes out for the event. Even the cows have become “hipper”, with three heifers on the field at once to dazzle the audience and speed up the action!



Checking out the plot randomization, while the heifers figure out their next moves.

In 2021, Meadow Muffin sales go on line with a colorful new deed. We look forward to having our neighbors join in the fun of the contest—one with high rewards and good odds—to benefit our community.



Sample of the 2021 deed

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