

Shmanners 521: State Fair

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["Shmanners Theme" by brentalfloss plays]

Travis: Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: And you're listening to Shmanners!

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove!

Teresa: Hello, dear!

Travis: Happy summer! Dog days?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: We're in July—yes!

Teresa: Yes. We're in July. Dog days are here.

Travis: I can't wait 'till they're over.

Teresa: [laughs] So you can sing your favorite song?

Travis: Yeah. I like dogs.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: [sings] The dog days are over! It's not my favorite song.

Teresa: Okay. [chuckles]

Travis: It's just fun to sing.

Teresa: You just mention it a lot.

Travis: Well, no, the do—okay, the dog days of summer—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Existed before the Florence and the Machine song—

Teresa: Yes, you're right. It did.

Travis: So it's not that I mentioned the song. The song mentions it.

Teresa: We are currently in the middle of a heat bubble, where there are, I think there's low-pressure systems that have trapped a high-pressure system— or something.

Travis: Is it David Corenswet's fault again?

Teresa: No, it's not. It's not the Corenswet. It's actual meteorological phenomenon.

Travis: Meteors are coming.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Heating up the atmosphere.

Teresa: I also heard something about an El Niño happening? I don't know.

Travis: I can never hear that without thinking of the SNL thing where Chris Farley was El Niño, and he said, "Which is Spanish for The Niño."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And I think about that a lot.

Teresa: I'm sure that you do.

Travis: I do. But it... when I say I think about things a lot, what I really mean is that they're always kind of bubbling near the surface of my thoughts, and it does not take much to pull it.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Right? Whereas someone I've met 20 times, their name? Somewhere deep, deep, deep in the ocean—

Teresa: In the recesses—

Travis: Yeah, of my mind.

Teresa: Of your mind.

Travis: But stuff like Spanish for The Niño, that's right underneath the surface.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That's ra—it's kind of peeking out—

Teresa: You know what that is?

Travis: What?

Teresa: ADHD.

Travis: Everything is AD—I can no longer determine where I began—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And the ADHD ends.

Teresa: It is you. You are it. Anyway—

Travis: I'm ADHD. We are all ADHD.

Teresa: [laughs] What I would like to talk about today—

Travis: Mm-hm?

Teresa: Is not ADHD, but it is fun. Let's talk about state fairs.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yeah. Do you have any experience?

Travis: Yes, I've been to state fairs!

Teresa: Which one? Which ones?

Travis: Well, county fa—I mean, like—

Teresa: *Oh?*

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Oh?

Travis: I didn't realize we were gonna—like, okay.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Like Cabell County Fair, growing up. And have I been to state f—I don't know that—here's the thing. I don't know that in my life I ever could have articulated like... I don't know how to phrase this, except like, I don't think I ever differentiated it in any meaningful way. Like that I could have told you if it was one or the other that I've been to.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: You know what I mean? Where it's like, I went to... a fair.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: And it was on some higher level than a city fair. You know what I mean?

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: It was not a neighborhood fair. It was not a city fair. It wasn't a borough fair. It might have been a county fair? A state fair. No World's Fairs! I know that. So somewhere between.

Teresa: Somewhere between. Not me. I haven't ever been to a state fair. In fact, I haven't even been to the county fair. I'm a little ashamed, because I knew in high school several people who had exhibited things at the county fair, as part of the 4-H club.

Travis: Can I tell you?

Teresa: But only the local fair.

Travis: I am surprised and disappointed, but not in you, but in myself.

Teresa: Oh.

Travis: We've been together 16 years.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: That's the real number. No joking here. 16 years. And I've never made you go to a fair with me? There's a—

Teresa: No, I—

Travis: The Hamilton County Fair happens like two blocks away!

Teresa: I've made you come to a street fair.

Travis: Sure!

Teresa: The Popcorn Festival in Beaver Creek.

Travis: But I've never made you go to a county fair!

Teresa: No.

Travis: We've never seen livestock be judged! What about the biggest produce?!

Teresa: I know.

Travis: What about things on sticks to be consumed?!

Teresa: I mean—

Travis: What about rides that are definitely unsafe to be upon?

Teresa: We've definitely done that.

Travis: We've eaten stuff on sticks.

Teresa: And stuff on sticks.

Travis: Yeah, we've eaten stuff on sticks. We've been on rides that are unsafe to be on. But not in a county or state fair scenario?

Teresa: Right. Sorry.

Travis: My god! Well, you think you know someone!

Teresa: We shall have to rectify this situation.

Travis: [yells out] I know!

Teresa: Post haste.

Travis: I bet that there's a state fair—my voice was getting so high.

Teresa: Yes, it's true. [chuckles]

Travis: I bet there's a state fair happening somewhere—like, cancel this recording, let's get on our bikes and ride. You know what I mean?

Teresa: So, in case you are not familiar, dear listener. The state fair is an annual recreational and competitive event, usually held in late summer or early fall. Each state fair has its own personality and flavor, depending upon the state it's being held in.

Travis: In West Virginia, we had a lot of ATV and like dirt bike things. I remember one year—

Teresa: Like derbies and stuff?

Travis: Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Awesome!

Teresa: In Texas, they are known for their chili cook-off. Which, you guys have the Chili Fest—

Travis: Correct.

Teresa: In Huntington. I think that it takes place at the wrong time of year for eating chili, but that's—

Travis: Well—

Teresa: That's just me.

Travis: I don't know when they do it now, but when I was growing up, it was fall.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Which is the right time.

Teresa: The right time.

Travis: And then I think when it moved from... 4th Avenue? 5th Avenue? To Pullman Plaza, I think it became more of a summer thing. But—

Teresa: I don't know how anybody eats that kind of stuff in the heat. I guess you get used to it.

Travis: You commit to it. You know, the festival takes you over. I have a great tank top from Kin Ship Goods about the Charleston Stern Wheel Regatta that happened when I was lit—you know, regatta is like a boat festival, you know.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I think it's a boat race? I don't know.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: And every—and it says you—

Teresa: Event. A boat event. [chuckles]

Travis: A boat-based event and it says—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: You gotta regatta. And every time I wear it, our kids are like, "What is that?" And I'm like, "Oh, it's a thing I went to as a kid." And they're like, "You've had that shirt since you were a kid?" And I'm like, "No!"

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "It's nostalgic!"

Teresa: Alaska State Fair is the one known for their record-breaking produce. So that's where the giant watermelons and whatnot—

Travis: You can grow giant watermelons in Alaska?!

Teresa: I think you can, because the sun. You know?

Travis: It's so close?

Teresa: No, it—you've got lots of daylight during the summer.

Travis: Oh, right, right, right. I guess if you do it during that period.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: Why would you want to overwinter?

Travis: To grow the smallest produce.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Look at my tiny watermelon.

Teresa: You wouldn't want to do that. Okay, so you're pretty much guaranteed at a state fair to find carnival rides, animals, and something fried on a stick. But like in the United States—

Travis: That's because it's easy to make. The thing about being fried on a stick—

Teresa: Oh, yeah.

Travis: That you gotta point out, right? Is it's not like an oven. It's usually like dip in thing and deep fry, right? So we're not like mixing ingredients where you're having to make big batches of things at a time, right, and then sell them. They can be made to order, right? You walk up, give me that thing, dip it in the batter, fry it, hand it right to them, right? So that way it's easily repeatable, it's on a stick, so it's carryable around, right? It's usually a single person thing, right? It's not like, yeah, here's a big chocolate cake,

right? It's like one thing, easily repeatable. You can do it in quick succession. It makes sense as to why this is fair food.

Teresa: I agree. Okay. In the United States, state fairs started as agricultural emporiums and animal competitions.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Because the United States for a very long time was largely just farmland, right? And large farms between, right? So there was not the population density that we have today in, you know, New York City or whatever.

Travis: [yells out] New York City!

Teresa: That was quite similar. But then when you start going out towards the middle of the country, the population density, even today, drastically drops off.

Travis: Was there like a kind of industry component? Like if you're a f—like if you're raising cattle, right?

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: A chance to show that you have the best cattle—

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: Right? Is going to be good for business.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: You know, if you're a farmer growing produce and you show you have the best produce, it's good for business, right?

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And that actually comes from England, where agricultural competitions—

Travis: Yeah?

Teresa: Were very much important to the village lifestyle, right? Like you said, if I want to show off that I'm the best pig farmer, I gotta show you those prize-winning pigs—

Travis: Now, if I want to show I'm the best farmer pig, which is a pig that farms, Animal Farm is the best way to do that. I've never read it.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I think the pigs end up being the heroes of it?

Teresa: No.

Travis: No?!

Teresa: I don't think so.

Travis: Ah, man, but they're so smart!

Teresa: Anyway! So, Nick Puro, who is the unofficial resident historian of the New York State Fair, told NPR that the English often threw livestock shows where farmers could show off their stock and answer questions about farming for the public.

Travis: Like in Babe!

Teresa: Like in Babe.

Travis: When they have the dogs herding, but then a pig does it—

Teresa: The sheep herding competition—

Travis: Because the pig is so smart. Because the pig is the hero of the story, like in Animal Farm.

Teresa: No...

Travis: I haven't read it.

Teresa: So the colonies continued to develop and create their own counties and local governments. And so these fairs began to emerge because it's what they knew, right? The English colonists coming over. People eventually developed an appetite for bigger and better. And that's how we start getting—

Travis: That's how America is the way it is—

Teresa: That is—that is how America is. So we started like just upscaling. Upscale this, we're gonna do it... not only are we going to bring our village together, we're going to bring neighboring villages together. We're going to bring counties together. We're going to bring the state together. People are going to travel from all across the state to show off their prowess with farming, and you know, other sort of handicrafts and foodstuffs and things like that, right?

Travis: Non-American listeners, this is another good time to remind you how gigantic some of our states are. Bigger than a lot of countries are our states. And I'm not just talking about the big ones like Alaska and Texas! I mean like even some of the ones where you'd be like, oh, yeah, that's Arkansas or whatever. It's huge!

Teresa: It's big.

Travis: Right? So this is an unwieldy endeavor to be like, everybody come in. But also for a long time, air travel wasn't a thing. Not a lot of other stuff going on. State fair? Very exciting.

Teresa: One of the most exciting things at the state fair in 1841 was a plowing contest.

Travis: Ooh!

Teresa: Pretty fun.

Travis: *Yeah.*

Teresa: Watching people plow.

Travis: Listen, when you don't got anything else to do, okay.

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: I mean, listen, the story of John Henry, he's a steel-driving man, and he was driving spikes into stuff. And I still think that sounds exciting. I would watch that right now. Versus a machine? I want to see that right now, actually, I would watch that right now if it was happening.

Teresa: Right now.

Travis: That'd be so cool, are you kidding me?

Teresa: The opening weekend of the New York state fair was almost a washout, but people braved the mud and came anyway. It's estimated that between 10 and 15,000 people came out to enjoy the first ever New York state fair. And it continues to draw thousands of people each year.

Travis: Not you.

Teresa: Not me. No, I've never been.

Travis: Do you not want to go?

Teresa: It sounds pretty hot. I don't like being hot.

Travis: Well, no, you gotta trade... you trade discomfort for it? They don't have 'em in winter.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: You trade the discomfort!

Teresa: What about a nice, cool spring day? [chuckles]

Travis: Or like fall—

Teresa: Can't we do that?

Travis: No, ideally, they're in fall ever. Every—but then kids are in school and it's harder to travel, and I get that. But more fall affairs would be great. That's why—

Teresa: That would be great.

Travis: You know what I've always wanted? And I know you're going to agree with me on this. The Harvest Festival from Parks and Rec.

Teresa: Yes!

Travis: That's the dream.

Teresa: Ah...

Travis: Li'l Sebastian there.

Teresa: Yeah. Beautiful. That's a really great representation, I think, from movies and TV, is the Harvest Festival. That's a really great state fair representation. There's also a musical called State Fair. Here is another event that was happening around the time of the state fairs becoming popular and each state kind of developing their own flavor of state fair, the Industrial Revolution. And it was very slow to come to America, because like 90% of Americans still lived on farms.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: So they didn't have the kind of opportunities to see like the cities developing, to see like the steelworks happening and things like that, right?

Travis: I also have to imagine that there was a little bit of, let's be honest, obstinance. Right?

Teresa: Maybe.

Travis: Of like, it's always been fine the way we've done it. Right? Like, how much better could it really be? You're talking about like a plowing competition, right? Where it's like we take pride in our ability to do it ourselves. The idea of mechanizing this, of industrializing this in any way goes against the spirit of the farm. I've watched Yellowstone a lot.

Teresa: You have.

Travis: That thing about like the spirit of it, what it means.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: I shouldn't say that. If any of you are listening, I'm so sorry. Please don't be mad at me.

Teresa: According to a source from the Saturday Evening Post, Iowa fair goers in 1858 got their very first look at a newfangled device called the tractor.

Travis: *Ooh!*

Teresa: And so state fairs around the country would bring rural citizens their first encounters with electric light bulbs, automobiles, and moving pictures, not to mention the airplane.

Travis: Do you know that there's a huge resale market right now for tractors that are like 20 years older or older? Because newer models of tractors have like computerized systems in them.

Teresa: Which makes sense.

Travis: That cannot be worked on at home. You have to like take them to a dealership to get them fixed.

Teresa: Oh. A lot like cars.

Travis: But older models you can still fix at home, right? Without having to go in and do like computer diagnostics and everything on it. So a lot of times like 20 year old tractor models will sell for more in resale than new models, because you know you're buying it and you're going to be able to fix it at home and have it for way longer.

Teresa: That makes sense. How do you know that?

Travis: I just know things.

Teresa: Speaking—

Travis: I play a lot of Stardew Valley. I'm a farmer myself.

Teresa: Speaking of airplanes, this is why airplane shows are often called barnstormers, because the local barns would be the performance venues.

Travis: And they would open both sides of it and fly through the middle of it. That's what I always picture.

Teresa: I... I don't... I don't know, but they would—

Travis: I bet that definitely happened at least once!

Teresa: They would go quite close.

Travis: I bet that happened at least once. Or they would like pull out and be like, "This could be your new tractor."

Teresa: Oh, maybe.

Travis: And they're like, that's an airplane. How would that even work?

Teresa: [chuckles] Okay, let's talk about a few other like iconic parts about the state fair.

Travis: Definitely. But first, how about a word from another Max Fun show?

[theme music plays]

Brea: Hi! My name is Brea Grant and I host Reading Glasses and Reading Smut. And I'm here with Max Fun Member of the Month, Nick Roy.

Nick: Thank you so much.

Brea: What episode would you recommend to a new listener who's just jumping in for the first time?

Nick: Oh, definitely the one where it's like, let's talk about Reading Glasses.
[chuckles]

Brea: Oh? [chuckles]

Nick: Because as someone who started listening, what, seven years in, I—even I was like, oh, that's why we say that.

Brea: [laughs] Oh my god, Mallory's gonna love that you said that, because she really was like, "We gotta—we gotta people more about ourselves." I'm like, we just talk about ourselves every week! What would you say to other people who are considering supporting Max Fun shows?

Nick: I would say if you want to keep listening to content that you enjoy and you want to support the creators, oh, no, I just won't get a Starbucks once a week and I give you guys 10 bucks a month? Sounds good to me.

Brea: I love that. And listen to Nick. Nick's a librarian. He knows what he's talking about, so...

Nick: [chuckles]

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[break]

Brenda: Hi there. Sorry to interrupt your podcast listening time. I know you're doing the dishes right now. That's okay, that—I don't—don't worry about it. You might not know me, but I'm Brenda. And I'm here to tell you about the podcast I host with my good friend, Austin. It's called Secret Histories of Nerd Mysteries, and we cover all kinds of pop culture topics.

Like did you know that there was a real life replica of the Simpsons house in Las Vegas, Nevada? Or that Flint, Michigan was once home to an indoor amusement park themed around the automobile? If those things sound interesting, you should definitely check us out every Tuesday on Maximum Fun, or wherever you get podcasts. Goodbye! You can get back to your dishes now, it's fine.

[break]

Travis: Okay, tell me about these icons.

Teresa: So in Mississippi, there is the Choctaw Indian Fair, which is dedicated to preserving the history, culture and traditions of the Choctaw tribal nation. And you know, the other indigenous people of the state.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: So fair goes there experience social dancing, tribal arts and crafts, traditional food and Choctaw stickball, which is like the granddaddy of all kind of like field sports, like lacrosse. Think about like that.

Travis: I've heard of it. I've heard of lacrosse. Yes.

Teresa: And they also have—

Travis: Spanish for the cross.

Teresa: Eh... They have—

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: A pageant where each year, a young woman is nominated to be "introduced into an elite and exclusive circle with the honor and responsibility of representing her tribe." This happens at a lot of state fairs, you have a kind of like beauty pageant that like—

Travis: Oh, yeah, that's how you get like Miss Georgia Peach, right?

Teresa: Yes, right.

Travis: It's like that kind of idea of you see this a lot too in like, I want to say like '80s movies. But this idea of when they talk about someone being a pageant winner, like a beauty pa—they're not talking about like Miss USA or whatever, they're talking about these—

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Kind of like state fair—

Teresa: These kind of things.

Travis: Things.

Teresa: Right. The Minnesota State Fair is routinely voted the best state fair in the country, drawing a whopping two million visitors every year. And it is located on a 320 acre fairground. It's physically the biggest fair in the nation—

Travis: That still feels like too many people to be—I don't know how big an acre is, let alone all those acres, but I hear two million and I'm like, well, I don't wanna... be somewhere with two million people.

Teresa: The fair itself employs 80 full-time employees. 80.

Travis: 80, for two million people? Not enough.

Teresa: I mean—

Travis: There should be 1.5 million employees.

Teresa: And 2,000 seasonal workers.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: I was talking about year-round full-time employees.

Travis: That makes a lot more sense. Okay. I was going to say, long lines.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: 80 people.

Teresa: Another thing that we do here in the US is butter sculptures.

Travis: Oh, yeah we do!

Teresa: The Ohio State Fair, which I apologize, I've never been to—

Travis: Yet.

Teresa: Yet. Yet. Thank you. Is home to the largest butter sculpture display of any fair in the country. Every year—

Travis: Take that, everyone else!

Teresa: Every year, sculptors use more than 2,200 pounds of butter and upwards of 500 hours working on extreme works of butter sculpture.

Travis: And what happens to all that butter afterwards, do you think? Slip and slide?

Teresa: You know, I am of the belief that salted butter is shelf-stable. And so I don't know if like they use it, but I don't think it goes bad? So maybe there's some kind of industrial use?

Travis: I'd love to know if there's a none... what's the word I'm looking for, like dietary use of it.

Teresa: Mm-hm!

Travis: Because that feels like a lot of butter to just be like, and right in the garbage. Also, could you imagine disposing of 20—like 2,200 pounds of butter? Where do you put it?!

Teresa: Do you remember in—there's a Bob's Burgers episode where there's the lobster fest?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Where they take a butter sculpture and they melt it down to use to eat the lobsters with. And one of the characters is a food inspector—

Travis: Yeah, Bob falls into it at one point.

Teresa: And they inspect it and he's like, "Ah, not grade A butter, but still good enough to eat."

Travis: Good enough for human consumption.

Teresa: Yeah, yeah. It's funny. [chuckles]

Travis: It is funny.

Teresa: It is—

Travis: You're right.

Teresa: Funny! [chuckles]

Travis: It is—it's a funny thing to happen.

Teresa: I like Bob's Burgers—

Travis: Bob's Burgers is great—

Teresa: It's funny.

Travis: It's funny!

Teresa: Here are some past sculptures. A Hasbro Tonka truck, a massive Furby, a 400 pound, six foot eight Darth Vader.

Travis: Oh, nice.

Teresa: And a complete homage to the 35th anniversary of the film, The Christmas Story, including a butter Christmas tree, Ralphie in his footie pajamas, and Flick getting his tongue stuck to the frozen flagpole.

Travis: Oh, nice.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Okay!

Teresa: Let's go over some etiquette.

Travis: Don't eat the butter.

Teresa: Don't eat the butter.

Travis: I mean, at least not until the competition's done. And I don't know what happens, but if you're just walking around like looking at the judging area, don't take a bite out of someone's sculpture until the judging is done. It's just rude.

Teresa: In general, don't touch the displays, unless—

Travis: Yeah, that's probably a good idea.

Teresa: Unless it's something that you're supposed to touch, right?

Travis: Wouldn't it be wild if they took the butter and then the giant vegetables, and they just made a huge sauté?

Teresa: Ooh.

Travis: And they're like it's the world's biggest stir fry or whatever. That'd be awesome, actually.

Teresa: You think so?

Travis: Yeah. Put the butter on the bottom of your feet and skate around like in Paul Bunyan.

Teresa: But I'd rather have butter on something like bread instead of vegetables. [chuckles]

Travis: Do they have—

Teresa: Maybe potatoes.

Travis: Do they have the biggest wheat, you know? And then they can make big bread. And they put big butter on it.

Teresa: Maybe.

Travis: And then make a big toast.

Teresa: Big toast. [chuckles] I love it. Nikki Black did a piece for the Minnesota Star Tribune about specific fair-going behaviors to follow. She's an etiquette expert, you guys, in case I didn't say that. So basically, she goes to talk about how what we're really talking about when we say etiquette at a state fair is like crowd etiquette—

Travis: Mm-hm.

Teresa: Right? The same thing that we talk about when we talk about going to Disney World, or about like even walking and like a general like downtown. You want to make sure that you go with the crowd flow. For example, at the Popcorn Festival, they never really put like arrows on the ground. But in general, people walk the way that cars drive.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: You walk down—

Travis: Because it's on a street, yeah.

Teresa: It's on a street, and it has the yellow lines. And somehow, people always go down the right side, and they come back up the other way, right? So if you notice that about the fair that you're attending, do go with the crowd. And if you need to make a stop, move to the side instead of stopping in the middle. In the same way, you want to make sure that if you're walking with a group, you're not walking like four or five across. Keep it to two people across, and kind of like fold and double up your group.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: As far as dress goes, it's expected that you'll dress for the weather, but keep in mind that this is like a family place, right? So maybe don't wear expletives or sexually explicit things on your T-shirt.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Or whatever, right? But sneakers are always a great idea. The more that you walk around, the better time you'll have if your feet are comfortable.

Travis: That's always true.

Teresa: Always. Make sure to wear your sunscreen and stay hydrated.

Travis: I would also say, as far as etiquette goes, I think the frame of mind that you go into it is the experience you're going to take away from it, right?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Like, I don't think one should attend something like this ironically. I don't believe you can enjoy something ironically. I believe you enjoy things, period.

Teresa: Yes. Yes.

Travis: You have fun doing it. So if you go to this thing and you're like, I'm going to have a great time making fun of how kitschy this is or whatever, or how dumb—

Teresa: Yeah, maybe don't go.

Travis: Don't go! One, or if you're going to, save all that for the car afterwards. You know what I mean? Don't walk around and like while people are eating the fried food on a stick around you—

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: You're making fun of how gross the idea of fried food on a stick is, right? Because other people are there to enjoy it. And maybe don't take this opportunity to like make fun of people, you know?

Teresa: In the same vein, remember that there are a lot of people in a very small space. So like yelling and running and raucous laughter, right? If there's a lot of people around, can be a little jarring. So make sure that you take the space that you need if you need to do that. I would say that if you are eating, stopping in the middle or stopping in line to eat is not really what we want to do. We want to move off to the side, find a small space that you can like actually stop and not have to fight your way of the crowd going around you. There are going to be lines. This is something we explain to our children when we have taken them to Disney World. You will have to wait for things. Expect there to be long lines.

Travis: Yeah, build that into your mind as you go.

Teresa: Lines for food, for rides, attractions, contests, everything. There are always going to be lines. And if you go in knowing that, you won't be upset—

Travis: And probably bees!

Teresa: By the fact that you have to wait. Yeah.

Travis: Let's be honest, bees.

Teresa: Probably bees.

Travis: Lots of sugary stuff around and sugary drinks and trash cans with that stuff in it. There's probably going to be bees. Just know that there's going to be bees!

Teresa: Black says, be patient and calm in line, and if someone cuts you, assume it was an accident before you assume malice. So it is in a crowd easy to step in front of someone and not really know where the line is. But if you feel like someone is out of line, you can say, "Excuse me, the line actually starts back there." And hopefully they will look around and, you know, read the room so that they'll go back to where they're supposed to be at the end. This is the same thing, like I said earlier, making sure that you're kind of spatially aware. It can get kind of crowded, it can get kind of hectic. Be really observant of what is going on around you so that you can act accordingly.

Travis: Especially keeping in mind that there may be people around who need a little bit more consideration.

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: Right? Than yourself.

Teresa: Like the elderly.

Travis: The elderly, children... everything, right, of like, a lot of times I've seen in crowd, especially since we have two small kids, right, people kind of think in terms of like looking at their eye level.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Right? And not considering like there may be a child in front of you that you're about to trample or squish or whatever, because you're worried about pushing to the front and there's children right here.. So maybe wait a second and observe.

Teresa: She also suggests to bring wet wipes. I think that is a great idea that I will definitely be taking away, because there's lots of things, yummy things to eat, and usually with your hands or on a stick, right? And so wet wipes are a great way to make sure that you can be clean like that, but not have to like sit down and—or find a bathroom to wash your hands, or things like that. And as always, we are making sure that we are saying please and thank you and excuse me, and those sorts of things. They really go a long way, especially for people who are working all day long.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Teresa: Being kind is really important like that.

Travis: Usually in un-air-conditioned environments and—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Maybe not as ideal as one would hope.

Teresa: And lastly, this was the big question for Miss Black, who was being interviewed for the, like I said, the Minnesota Star Tribune. What is the polite way to eat a corn dog?

Travis: From the side. Like an ear of corn.

Teresa: [chuckles] Like an ear of corn. No, she says eat it right off the stick. You don't need to cut it up. You don't need to put it on a plate. You can eat

it in a presentable way by chewing with your mouth closed. And that's the important part.

Travis: Yeah, man. If you're eating a corn dog and you're worried about decorum, you're in the wrong place.

Teresa: [chuckles] Well, but you know, some people, it could be unwieldy. You might think about cutting it up, but—

Travis: Some people are wrong!

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Hey, everybody! Thank you so much for listening. Thank you to our researcher, Alexx, without whom we would not be able to make the show. Thank you to our editors, Gino and Rachel, without whom we would not be able to do the show. And thank you to you for listening! You're the biggest lettuce I've ever seen.

Teresa: [laughs] I thought you were going to talk about the butter statues.

Travis: You—

Teresa: You're the butter to our bread.

Travis: You're our—you're our butter statues. We've carved you all from 2,200 pounds of butter.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Welcome to the world. What else, Teresa?

Teresa: Well, we always thank Brent 'brentalfloss' Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pin-Up Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today. And as always, we are taking your topic submissions, your questions, your

biography suggestions, all of that. Please send those to shmannerstcast@gmail.com, and say hi to Alexx, who reads every single one.

Travis: And that's going to do it for us, so join us again next week.

Teresa: No RSVP required.

Travis: You've been listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: Manners, Shmanners, get it?

["Shmanners Theme" by brentalfloss plays]

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