



SCHUYLKILL COUNTY FAIR SETS ENTERTAINMENT

The Schuylkill County Fair will celebrate its 20th Anniversary, "Mountains of Memories" July 28-Aug. 2 at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds, Rt. 895, Summit Station.

About 30,000 visitors enjoyed last year's fair during a weeklong heat advisory, and this year's entertainment lineup, as well as the addition of a third weeklong family show, should have everyone eager to attend the Schuylkill County Fair.

Monday, July 28, sponsored by Martin's Motor Home Rentals and Pine Grove Landfill/Waste Management will feature Ryan Pelton, one of the best Elvis impersonators. Also, you won't want to miss the first ever Draft Horse Pull competition at the fair.

"If you've ever been to the Farm Show, it's hard to get a seat in the large arena for the horse pulls," said Bob Evanchalk, livestock chairman. "Most of the pullers are from northern Pennsylvania and New York, and we're real happy we were able to entice them to Schuylkill County."

On Tuesday, Rebecca Lynn Howard, a hot new Nashville singer with her Number 1 hit single "Forgive" will grace the main stage. Rebecca has been nominated for two Academy of Country Music awards including Top New Female Vocalist and Song of the Year. Her hit video "Forgive" was nominated for the CMT Flameworthy Female Video of the Year. Admission for kids 12 and under on Tuesday will be \$5, thanks to sponsors, Alcoa and Arthur 'Pat' Aungst, Inc.

Wednesday, gospel favorites, The Wilburns will take the stage on Senior Citizen Day sponsored by South Schuylkill Printing and Publishing and Copycat Business Systems. The Wilburns, have been singing Southern gospel music for 33 years. Hits like "Resting Place," "Another Crossing," "Coming Out Of The Wilderness," and "God's Promised Land" are sure to please fairgoers.

"Seniors 60 and older will be admitted for \$5 on Wednesday and special entertainment will include the Dan and Galla Variety Show, a King and Queen contest, and lots more fun for seniors," said Grace Karrer, senior events coordinator.

On Thursday, The Grass Roots will perform some of their oldie hits including "Temptation Eyes," "Midnight Confessions," and "Let's Live For Today" thanks to sponsor Pioneer Pole Buildings. From their first hit, "Where Were You When I Needed You," in 1966 they had a string of 14 top 40 hits that kept the band on the charts nearly every week. "Spend an evening with The Grass Roots and you'll be singing 'Sooner Or Later,'" said Ron Blew, entertainment coordinator.

Thanks to sponsor Schaeffer's Harley Davidson/Buell, Nashville recording artist Steve Holy will perform his Number 1 hit and the Number 4 Top Country Song of 2002, "Good Morning Beautiful" at the Schuylkill County Fair on Friday. Top 20's "Blue Moon" and "The Hunger" compliment his latest release, "Rock

A Bye Heart" which is 37th on the country charts.

"Steve's second show was rained out two years ago when he filled in for Clay Davidson, who was in a car accident. We knew we had to get him back because the crowd just loved him, especially when he sang 'Good Morning Beautiful' which hadn't even hit the charts at that time," said Kim Morgan of the fair entertainment committee.

On Saturday, Aug. 2, Davy Jones of The Monkees, will invade the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds with hits "Daydream Believer," "Last Train To Clarksville," "I'm a Believer," and many more! Davy Jones first invaded teen hearts as the international idol of millions in the 1960's Emmy Award winning TV classic "The Monkees." Davy has triumphed as both a serious actor and a comedian on the theatrical stage; as a rock musician, composer and artist; and true to his first love, as an extremely able horseman.

"The Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau made this all possible. Without their support, we simply would not have been able to afford such a quality entertainer like Davy Jones," said Craig Morgan, fair chairman.

Monday through Friday there will be two performances — one at 7 p.m. and one at 9 p.m. On Saturday there will be one show only at 8:30 p.m.

In addition to the top name entertainers, enjoy amusement rides, livestock shows and exhibits, contests, and other sights and sounds of the great Schuylkill County Fair for just \$7 per person.

This year there are three family oriented shows three times each day starting at 12:30 with Wagstaff, a ventriloquist featured on America's Funniest Home Videos, Bwana Jim's Reptile Show and The New Dawn Singers thanks to a combination of sponsors including M & T Bank, Leesport Bank, Fidler Brothers Construction, Seltzer Insurance Agency, Red Lion Cafe, and Schuylkill Economic Development Corporation.

The New Dawn Singers hail from Florida and have toured throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Jamaica, into the Bahamas. They bring a Broadway style show full of high energy song and dance, and a great message woven throughout the show that America lives on and so does her people.

Also, see Randy Boni, professional chainsaw carver, Tuesday through Friday thanks to sponsors Koch's Lawn and Garden, Reynold Miller Sawmill, and Pioneer Seamless Gutters.

Plus, tour the farm museum and hands-on nature center, sportsmen's exhibit, see livestock, poultry and other exhibits, antique tractors and gas engines, and more as part of the daily admission. The fair's first ever Antique Tractor Pull will be conducted Saturday also. Plenty of free parking and modern rest rooms are available.

The Schuylkill County Fair is nestled in the beautiful Appalachian Mountains, just 40 minutes from Harrisburg or Allentown. For more information about the Schuylkill County Fair visit their Website at www.schuylkillfair.com or call (570) 754-FAIR.

Fair Commissions Feather Artist Painting

The Schuylkill County Fair unveiled their 20th Anniversary commemorative print at a press conference at Schaeffer's Harley Davidson/Buell yesterday. The painting depicts "Mountains of Memories" of past Schuylkill County fair scenes highlighting the youth and livestock features of the fair. The original painting will be sold to the highest bidder before the youth livestock auction on Thursday, July 31 during the Schuylkill County Fair.

The painting is unique in that it is painted on a grouse tail. Allen E. Crothamel, a nature and wildlife artist from Lake Ariel, Pennsylvania paints on the unusual medium of tail feathers of grouse and turkey and was commissioned to paint the fair scene.

Allen has painted over 160 original paintings and works with many wildlife organization fundraisers across the country, including Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ruffed Grouse Society, Whitetail Deer Association, Fur Trappers Association, The Audubon Society, Trout Unlimited, and Pheasants Forever.

The artist has appeared on several television shows airing nationally and locally. Pen and ink illustrations have been published by magazine and book authors. Feather prints are available for purchase in stores and art galleries around the world.

Allen was commissioned for a painting sent to the Australian Summer Olympics, has sent paintings to many other parts of the world, and has been selected for numerous awards in the art world, including the Eastman Kodak award for innovative art printing. Recently the artist's work was featured in the Fox Ridge Outfitters worldwide catalogue.

A limited edition of 500 20th anniversary prints will be offered for sale and can be purchased for \$25 at the Conservation District office in the Ag Center located on the Gordon Nagle Trail. The fair will commission two additional prints with next years print featuring the 10th Anniversary of the Schuylkill County Agriculture Museum painted on turkey feathers. The scene will feature a tractor and a team of draft horses in a pull-off with the Ag Museum in the background.

For more information about the Schuylkill County Fair, call (570) 622-3742, ext. 112 or visit the fair Website at www.schuylkillfair.com.

Fair Premium Book Available

The 2003 20th Anniversary edition of the Schuylkill County Fair Premium Book is available. Pick up a copy at the Schuylkill County Ag Center located along the Gordon Nagle Trail, open from 8:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Schuylkill County Fair is scheduled July 28-Aug. 2 at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds in Summit Station.

The premium book contains the general entry form for livestock, fruits and vegetables, floral exhibits, needlecrafts, arts and crafts, and others. The center page of the book also contains the schedule of events for the entire fair week with entertainment including: Davy Jones of the Monkees, Steve Holy, The Grass Roots, Rebecca Lynn Howard, The Wilburns, and Ryan Pelton.

To have a premium book mailed to you, send a check or money order for \$2 payable to F.A.R.M. and mail to P.O. Box 222, Summit Station, PA 17979. For more information about the Schuylkill County Fair, call (570) 622-3742, ext. 112 or visit the fair Website at www.schuylkillfair.com.

Interested vendors should call Shirley German at (570) 385-0384.

History Of Fairs

Editor's Note: This excerpt on the history of fairs was taken from the "1998 Fair Management Reference," an IAFE publication containing 13 chapters covering all facets of fair management. The reference was compiled and edited by Mike Heffron, retired manager of the Minnesota State Fair.

The history of fairs is clouded and the record is less than complete. Nonetheless, the story of mankind is replete with references to fairs, not in an institutional context, but as a part of everyday social intercourse.

A casual observer might conclude that American fairs and exhibitions came fresh out of eighteenth century western Europe, delivered to the colonial docks of Boston and Halifax with a predisposed mission to serve agriculture and animal husbandry.

This observation fits with our collective sense of tradition, but fails to recognize centuries of historical linkage to the eastern Mediterranean before the birth of Christ. Old and New Testament references to fairs are mixed with allusions to commerce, trade, the marketplace, festivals, religious feasts, and holy days.

Where and when the first fair was conducted is not known, however, evidence points to the existence of fairs as early as 500 BC Scripture records in the book of Ezekiel: "Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the kinds of riches with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs." Ezekiel's account of the destruction of Tyre, supposedly written about 588 BC, describes Tyre as an important market and fair center.

Fairs were commercial in character from the beginning. Merchants from distant countries would come together, bringing native wares to trade with one another, and even though it is not clearly explained in Ezekiel or in other biblical references, it is reasonable to assume that "fair" was the name given to the place at which early trading between foreign merchants was conducted.

It is equally clear that religious activity was companion to the commerce. The Latin word "feria" meaning holy day, would appear the logical root of the word "fair." Each feria was a day when large numbers of people would assemble for worship. Worship in those early days was centered around temples in great cities, including Ninevah, Athens, Rome, and Mecca. These cities were also respected as the great commercial centers of the world. Fields adjacent to these temples were staked out for traders. Religious figures were placed about the fields in order to protect the traders and merchants.

During the early Christian era, the church took an active part in sponsoring fairs on feast days, and as a result, fairs came to be a source of revenue for the church. Possibly, our modern church bazaars possess some rudiments of these religious fairs.

This evolution which blended religion and commerce continued over time and moved into western Europe. Periodic gatherings brought together the producers of all types of commodities for the



purpose of barter, exchange and, finally, outright sale. To this marketplace were added entertainment and other forms of activity thus, these primitive markets took on the aspect of fairs as we know them today.

In 1765, less than 300 years after Columbus finished his work in the New World, the first American fair was presented in Windsor, Nova Scotia. The same fair continues to operate today. In upper Canada, as Ontario was known in early Confederation, a fair was conducted in 1792, sponsored by the Niagara Agricultural Society. As with Windsor, the Niagara Fair remains in operation today. In addition, many small fairs were conducted during the early 1700's in French Canada while under French rule.

Meanwhile, Elkanah Watson, a New England patriot and farmer, earned the title, "Father of U.S. agricultural fairs" by producing (the first) a small exhibit of sheep under an old elm tree in the town of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The year was 1807. He believed that the fine textured fleece of the exhibited sheep, when manufactured into cloth, would successfully compete with the best wool imported from England. He wrote, "Many farmers, and even women, were excited by curiosity to attend this first novel and humble exhibition."

In 1810 Watson staged a larger and more ambitious project, a Berkshire cattle show. The event was successful beyond all his expectations; entries included 386 sheep, 109 oxen, 9 cows, 7 folds, 3 heifers, 2 calves, and 1 boar.

Early American fairs in both Canada and the U.S. shifted quietly, but decisively away from the European festival model into the systematic development of agriculture and animal husbandry while offering education, local resource and local industry promotion, and entertainment. Competition became the cornerstone of fair programming; youth development provided a social theme.

The 19th century closed with almost every state and province having one or more agricultural fair or exhibition.

Today, more than 3,200 fairs are conducted in North America each year. They provide industrial exhibits, demonstrations, and competition aimed at the advancement of livestock, horticulture, and agriculture with special emphasis placed on educational activities such as 4-H, FFA, and similar youth development programs. While enjoying these high-minded pursuits, fair visitors are also able to see, hear, touch, smell, and taste the richness and variety of what the world has to offer.

