

Are you ready? Chase County Fair is well underway

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Thursday, 14 August 2014 00:00 - Last Updated Wednesday, 13 August 2014 16:47



Fair activities kicked off Friday night with the annual Wrangler Roundup Supper. Casey Francis with Country Caterers puts a hot juicy steak on Bob Mendenhall's plate. (Imperial Republican Photo)

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Ready or not, it's Chase County Fair week.

That's easy to tell when passing by the fairgrounds in Imperial and the bustle of activity that started early this week.

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Several events are already history, starting with Friday night's Wrangler Roundup supper organized by the Chase County Fair Board as a thank-you to its corporate sponsors, which now number 75.

In anticipation of weather forecasts, the dinner, originally planned for the open air pavilion, was moved indoors to the show arena.

It was a good move as a strong thunderstorm blew through the area just after the meal was served.

Ticket sales continue to grow for the Friday and Saturday shows. Ticket co-manager Jeanette Munger said Saturday's Chris Young show with Courtney Cole was at 34.6 percent sold Monday. Friday's Marshall Tucker Band/Starship concert was at 30.5 percent sold.

There are still tickets available in both the seating and standing areas both nights. Munger said they always have a lot of walk-up window sales on show nights.

The fair board extended its group purchase ticket discount through today (Thursday). Standing tickets purchased in lots of 10 or more, in any combination for the Friday or Saturday concerts, can be purchased for just \$30 each. The individual ticket price is \$40.

4-H shows

The first 4-H show of the fair also had to deal with a little bit of weather, too, toward the end of Sunday's horse show. But, the last few barrel competitors were able to compete and the show wrapped up about on schedule.

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After the completion of the 4-H dog and cat shows Tuesday, followed by swine, goat, sheep, poultry and rabbit shows on Wednesday, the focus turns to the 4-H/FFA beef show today (Thursday) starting at 8:30 a.m. in the show arena.

Thirty-five animals are expected to compete for Grand Champion Market Beef. Youths will also compete in showmanship divisions and the younger set will also have animals in the ring in the bucket calf and Clover Kids divisions.

4-H and FFA events finish up on Friday with the rocket launch at 8 a.m. on the fairgrounds, round robin showmanship contest at 9 a.m. and the livestock auction at 2 p.m., the latter two in the show arena.

The exhibit building containing the 4-H, FFA and open class entries opened the first time for the public at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday. Opening time is also 12:30 the rest of the week.

Expo

One of the largest expos in southwest Nebraska opened on the grounds at 12 noon on Wednesday until 7 p.m. that night. It reopens each day at 12 noon, but runs later Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights until 10 p.m.

This year, more than 100 exhibitors will feature ag equipment and products, cars and trucks, recreational equipment and more in the northwest area of the grounds, in the expo building and added areas north of the expo building and north of the grandstand entrance.

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Carnival

The Heart of America Carnival returns to the fair this year, and opened for the first time Wednesday at 5 p.m. Crews started setting up Monday.

The carnival reopens Thursday and Friday at 5 p.m., and then at 1 p.m. on Saturday. Each day features ride specials.

Carnival-goers can purchase the mega-ride pass at the fair ticket office that provides unlimited rides all four days. Individual day ride special tickets/bands must be purchased at the carnival ticket booths.

Country Showdown

A good cross-section of country music talent is expected on stage Thursday for the Country Showdown talent show at 1 p.m. in the open air pavilion.

John Brandt, a spokesman for Clear KOGA Radio which is presenting the show, said they will take entries up until the show starts Thursday. Any type of country music act can register with a \$20 entry fee, with the local winner moving on to the State Fair later in the month. Local judges Rev. David Kahle, Rob Browning and Jill Moline will pick a first, second and third place who will win \$100, \$50 and \$25 in prizes. Winner at the State Fair will claim \$1,000 and move onto regional competition and possible the nationals, where that winner will receive \$100,000.

Brandt emphasized that since the show is affiliated with the Country Showdown, all acts must be country music entertainment.

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Free magic show

The first of three shows featuring the Keith West Family Friendly Las Vegas Style Show kicks off Thursday at 3:30 p.m. in the open air pavilion. Shows will also be staged Friday and Saturday at the same time, and each show promises something a little different.

West and his partner Kitty Marie will perform some of the biggest and best tricks in the trade. He said those at the fair can expect to see audience members levitate, lay on spikes of nails and witness his ever popular candy box trick.

The performer specializes in grand illusions and will cater his presentation to the crowd.

Many of the fair events have additional local sponsors, whose names can be found in the fair brochure schedule, available at the info booth on the fairgrounds.

Demolition derby

The grandstand is usually full for the Thursday night demolition derby. This year's 26th edition is again sponsored by the Imperial Jaycees.

The derby starts at 6:30 p.m. General admission tickets are available now and the night of the derby at the fair ticket office.

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Pedal pull, horseshoes

Youths, age four to 12, will compete Friday at the pedal tractor pull in the open air pavilion. Registration opens at 11:30 a.m. with the pulling to start at 12:30 p.m.

New to the event this year are trophies to the first, second and third place puller in each age group. First and second place winners at the local contest also qualify for State Fair competition.

The first of two horseshoe contests starts south of the show arena Friday at 1 p.m. Friday's will be the open contest. Saturday's contest is limited to Chase County residents and also starts at 1 p.m.

Fair Run

Numbers are growing and on pace to match last year's record numbers for the first event Saturday morning. The Chase County Fair Run kicks off at the school on East 9th St. with 6:30 a.m. registration.

On Tuesday morning, a combined 90 runners/walkers had registered for the 36th annual event that starts with the 5K, 10K and mile at 7:30 a.m. The kids' half-mile (age 12 and younger) on the school track has an 8:45 a.m. start time after the other races conclude. Awards will follow.

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This is the second year the races are starting at the school. Organizers liked the move there last year after years of starting on the fairgrounds.

People can still register up until the day of the race for an \$18 fee. Youths age 12 and under, no matter which event in which they compete, have no registration fee.

Car, motorcycle, truck shows

Car, motorcycle and truck enthusiasts will have their fill Saturday afternoon with four different shows on tap at the fairgrounds, school parking lot and streets west of the fairgrounds. All shows are from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

The motorcycle show will headquarter on fairgrounds' main walkway, while the Chase County Corvette Classic and the Carnutz Cruize-In show are on Wellington St., west of the grounds.

Returning to the fair this year is the Smokin' Chrome Truck Show, which will set up at the CCS parking lot, adjacent to the fairgrounds along East 9th St. Each show will present a number of prizes.

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Dance Crew Contest

Youth dance teams will be at the fair for Saturday's Dance Crew Contest starting at 1:30 p.m. in the open air pavilion.

Coordinator Vanessa Terryberry said she has five teams registered so far and each will present a dance hip-hop routine up to seven minutes long.

Teams will be competing for the first, second and third place cash prizes of \$400, \$300 and \$200. An individual best dancer will also be chosen by the judge and receive additional prizes.

Antique tractor pull

The fair continues Sunday with one main event, the 13th annual antique tractor pull with a 10 a.m. start in the grandstand arena.

Livestock and the other 4-H, FFA and open class exhibits will be released on Sunday.

Two dances are scheduled during fair week. Wednesday night features a square dance at 8 p.m., while on Friday, Night Sounds Entertainment will provide dance music after the concert.

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Lions Club bingo opens Wednesday at 3 p.m. and continues each day through Saturday night.

The Chase County Stompers will again provide golf cart tours on the fairgrounds.