



NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF FAIRS

Newsletter

July

www.ndfairs.org

2010



Watch me mom! The 2009 Fair Spirit Photo Contest winner from the Red River Valley Fair in West Fargo.

Check out our new website

The North Dakota Association of Fairs has a new website: www.ndfairs.org. Check it out for the latest information on fairs and events in the state.

Besides a directory of members and associate members, the site will have all of the newsletters and forms in a pdf format that you can download and print at home. There is also a page devoted to the latest member news and soon there will be a page for posting pictures that you send to the association secretary.

Keep watching for additional features and services on the website and check back often for the latest news.

www.ndfairs.org

Fair Season Underway!

We are right in the middle of the current fair season-the season actually started in early March with the North Dakota Winter Show and will conclude in early December with the North Star Classic.

Early indications point to another good fair year, with the usual weather problems hitting some of the fairs.

Hopefully you are taking a lot of pictures At your fair and will enter them into the two photo contests held during the convention in November. Better yet, put them on a zip drive and bring them to the convention so they can be shared on the big screen, or you can email them to Dean Clott at dean@dcntconcerts.com.

Good luck to all of you who will be having your fair soon and if you have already had your event-that it was the best ever!

Dates to Remember

2010 Rocky Mountain Convention

Nov. 10-13 Missoula, MT

2010 Dakota Fairs Convention

Nov. 18-20 Bismarck, ND

2010 IAFE Conventon

Nov. 29-Dec. 3 Las Vegas, NV

From the President's Desk

By Brian Carlson



As many of you may have heard, Jerry Lehman passed away May 21. Jerry is the husband of Janet Lehman, secretary for the South Dakota association. Jerry was a fun person with a great smile and devilish twinkle in his eye. He worked alongside Janet in many respects to make her job less stressful. He will be missed. Our board has sent condolences on behalf of the North Dakota association and Dale attended the funeral on our behalf as well.

Wanted to remind you that convention this fall will be in Bismarck. That information will come out later via Dale. The theme will be 'THE YEAR OF THE COUNTY FAIR' celebrating our long history of county fairs in 2011. We are planning to have the Governor at the convention to sign a resolution and declare this event for us. 2011 will be a chance to market your county fair more than usual so take this opportunity to get out and ask for additional support; plan a special building project; increase entertainment opportunities; get more folks from within your county involved with your fair. Remember...if you don't ask...you won't get.

Frank Hockridge, Wells County Fair, has been named our official Fair Historian for the state association. He is trying to gather as much info on county fairs as possible. We hope to have a display at convention featuring our county fair histories so contact Frank with what you have to offer.

Wade is working with Mark and Diane on Fair Visitations. His number is 701-567-3473 if you are interested in one. These have been appreciated by those who participate. It gives you another view of your fair from a new set of eyes coming on the grounds. Wade and I did one for Dickey County in Ellendale. I also visited Stutsman and Red River fairs this summer. While travelling I had to stop in Grand Rapids, ND to say "Hi" from Grand Rapids, Minnesota. It was an interesting weekend.

I want to thank the board we have this year. What a group of workers. Ideas have been flowing at each meeting and when a job comes up that needs to be done these folks have not waited or paused to jump in. I can't tell you how appreciative I am of them. As members you can rest assured they are not slacking in any form of the word. Attendance at our meetings throughout the year has been very good...which is wonderful considering the miles each has to travel...but they are committed.

We have had many successes this year so far but I will address those at the convention just before Dean Clott takes over as your new president. May God Bless you all as you work to garner your friends, neighbors, and relatives together in an atmosphere of a social gatherings around the state....your county fairs.

Brian Carlson, President

Fair Tales

From the Secretary

By Dale Hildebrant



I am sure all of you are very busy with your event for this year. And likewise, the board of the North Dakota Association of Fairs has been busy planning for this fall's convention, which will be held Nov. 18-20 at the Ramkota in Bismarck. This year's convention will be highlighting the history of the county fair. And we have a special program centered on not only the history of the fairs in our region, but also what each fair can do to preserve their history for the future generations to enjoy.

The board was committed to keeping the registration fees the same as the last two years, which proved to be a difficult task with the price of everything going up, but we did succeed! Every indication points to a great and exciting convention this fall and I hope each of you plan on attending!

Registration packets will be going out around the first part of September, so keep an eye out for those. This year we will also have all of the registration forms on our website- www.ndfairs.org. These will be in a pdf format and you will be able to print them off on your printer.

Yes, that is the correct web address for the Association. We now have a new website! This is a site that I can update on a regular basis and some new features are being added occasionally. One page will be devoted to Member and Associate Member News and another will feature just photos from your fair or event. Please feel free to send any photos and news to me at: northdakotafairs@q.com and I will post them to our website. Since using a web page is so fast, I plan on using that more and more for getting out information and news. You will notice that our newsletters, such as this one, are posted on the site as well, on the appropriate page.

I have had a chance to visit a few fairs this summer and have plans to visit a few more before the season is finished. It's always amazing how each fair manages to offer such a unique blend of entertainment for the community they are held in.

Congratulations to Renae Korslien on being named manager of the North Dakota State Fair and for being elected as the IAFE Zone IV Director.

Finally, our thoughts and prayers are still with Janet Lehman and her family. Janet's husband Jerry died in May after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Jerry was a regular at the conventions and a good friend to many and will be missed.

Check out the new website-

www.ndfairs.org

New grandstand to greet State Fair visitors

By RENAE KORSLIEN
State Fair Manager



The North Dakota State Fair is approaching its 45th Anniversary Fair July 23-31, 2010 in Minot, North Dakota. A dream of many that the fairgrounds would be home to a new grandstand is soon to be a reality!

With the concrete slabs completed, the high roof decking only have trim pieces remaining and the stadium seats are beginning to be installed. Ticket holders for grandstand shows will be the first to see this new facility.

Speaking of grandstand shows, finding the perfect mix of entertainment to fill this new facility is quite a challenge. The North Dakota State Fair will present the "Brooks and Dunn's Last Rodeo" on Friday July 23rd to kick open the doors of the new "grand"stand. The band KISS along with opening act "Alana Grace" will pack the stands on Saturday July 24th. Because of the thank you promotion of a \$10 discount while purchasing a Kiss ticket you may purchase a BuckCherry ticket for only \$15, Without the discount this concert on Thursday July 29th is \$25 (opening act is the Band Perry). The grandstand show pass includes four country concerts with Darius Rucker on July 30th and Sugarland on July 31st to provide a grand finale! The Enduro race, Demo Derby, The Front Fenders in concert at the Collectors Car show, Bull Riding and a Ranch Rodeo are all returning because of public demand and are ready to put on shows to please every fair attendee. When one considers the livestock shows, on grounds "Free" entertainment, indoor and outdoor commercial vendors and food booths along with the largest carnival in North Dakota, the State Fair remains the best entertainment bargain anywhere. So text, facebook, twitter or phone your friends "Meet you at the Fair~ July 23-31, 2010."

North & South Dakota Associations meet in Rapid City for annual convention

The North and South Dakota Associations of Fairs met in Rapid City, South Dakota Nov 19-22 to discuss fair issues and elect officers. Shown here attending are (L to R) Associate Director, Brian Carlson-Grand Rapids, MN - newly elected President of the North Dakota Association of Fairs, Dale Hildebrant of Valley City, ND - Secretary of the ND association, and Ron Oleheiser of Grand Rapids, MN, the (IAFE) International Association of Fairs and Expositions Zone Director for the national association of fairs.



Marian Gerntholz named North Dakota's "Fair Person of the Year"

One of the founders of the North Dakota Winter Show's Women's Division was honored recently by being named North Dakota's Fair Person of the Year. Gerntholz received the award during the Dakota Fairs Convention which was held in Rapid City.

In presenting the award, Dale Hildebrant, secretary of the North Dakota Association of Fairs, said, "Back 47 years ago, Marian felt there needed to be a program that focused on the women attending agricultural shows with their husbands. Because of her efforts along with others, the Women's Division of the North Dakota Winter Show was born in 1962 and remains a big part of this annual event"

Gerntholz still serves on the Women's Division board of directors and has been a member of every committee of that organization at least one time and four times she has been the group's president.

She has also been active within other aspects of the fair industry, having lead round table discussions at the Dakota Fairs Convention. In addition, she has attended virtually all of the Dakota Fairs Conventions since 1980 and has attended two International Association of Fairs and Expositions conventions in Las Vegas representing the Winter Show and also looking for new ideas to bring back to her organization. The North Dakota Fair Person of the Year is given to one individual every year who has made an outstanding contribution to the fair industry in the state.

Dale Hildebrant presents the
'Fair Person of the Year'
Award to Marian Gerntholz
during the convention last
November. Looking on is
her husband Gerry



Thank You from Marian Gerntholz

I was thrilled to receive the North Dakota Fair Person of the Year Award which was presented to me at the Dakota Fair Association convention in Rapid City in November. Thank you for the beautiful North Dakota shaped plaque which has a special place in our home. I have been a part of the North Dakota Winter Show for 48 years and also attending the show when I was growing up. Attending Dakota Fair conventions many years was a resource of ideas for my being a director of the Women's Division of the North Dakota Winter Show. Round table were always of interest for new ideas. Probably the best part of being associated with fairs are the people we meet and providing programs and entertainment that people enjoy. And in the case of the North Dakota Winter Show--a break in the long winter.

Marian Gerntholz

Two North Dakota fairs win awards at IAFE convention

The North Dakota State Fair and the Red River Valley Fair both won awards at the 2009 International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) convention in Las Vegas.

In the Agricultural Awards Contest, the State Fair won first place in Division 3 for the best Overall Program for Commercial Ag Exhibitors. Division 3 fairs have an attendance between 250,000 and 500,000. The State Fair also took home first place honors in the Competitive Exhibits Contest for the category General Competitive Exhibit Display Photo.

In the Hall of Honor Communications Contest, the State Fair won top honors in the following categories: Color Newspaper Ad; Magazine Ad; and Printed Promotional Material-Brochure/Flyer. In the same competition, only in Division 2, for fairs with 100,000 to 250,000, the Red River Valley Fair was named the best in the Newsletter-Email/Web category.

In addition, these two fairs also placed in several categories in the Ag Awards Contest, which are as follows:

North Dakota State Fair: 3rd place-Overall Program Competitive Ag Exhibitors; 3rd place-Overall Ag Program for the Non-Ag Fairgoing Public; 3rd place-Video of a Special or Unique Event for Exhibitors or Fairgoing Public; and 3rd place-Printed Material Developed and Produced to Promote Ag Programs.

Red River Valley Fair: 2nd place-Overall Agricultural Program for the Non-Ag Fairgoing Public; 2nd place-Non-Fair Ag Event or Program; 2nd place-Agricultural Photo; and 2nd place-Fair and Sponsor/Partner Joint Exhibit Program.

Congratulations to the Red River Valley Fair, newcomers to this competition, and the North Dakota State Fair. Hopefully more IAFE-member fairs in the state will enter the competition in the future.

Don't forget...
Dakota Fairs Convention
November 18-20
RamKota Inn-Bismarck

Frank Hockridge named NDAF historian *Looking for fair history pictures*

The NDAF board of directors recently appointed Frank Hockridge as the association's historian. This is especially timely due to the theme of this year's convention that will be looking at the history of fairs in the region and working with fairs to preserve their history.

He will be putting together a display of those historic photos and fairs are encouraged to send copies of those photos to him by the end of August for that display.

The pictures can be mailed to Frank at: PO Box 185-Fessenden, ND 58438. If you don't want to mail your old photos, you can take a picture of them with your digital camera in the macro mode and email those pictures to Dale Hildebrant at northdakotafairs@q.com. He will see that Frank gets a copy of those photos emailed to him.

Want Ads

For Sale-Blue wooden benches from the ND State Fair. For more information contact Renae at the State Fair office at 701.857.7620

Wanted-Pictures for the annual convention photo contest-Fair Spirit and Overall Color categories. Bring your entries to the convention in November.

Wanted-Articles from you about your fair for the newsletter. Email them to northdakotafairs@q.com.



Kids and animals = Fairs

Creating a marketing plan for your fair

By DALE HILDEBRANT

Whether it's obtaining sponsorships, finding volunteer workers for the fair, or selling tickets to a grandstand performance, one of the key elements to the success of such efforts is **marketing**. Let's face it, marketing is essential in just about every aspect of the fair business, whether your event is big or small. And there are basic steps in any marketing campaign, according to Michele Payn-Knoper, a presenter at the 2009 IAFE convention in Las Vegas.

According to her, there are six cornerstones in a marketing program: who, what, why, how, where and when.

Who-Find your target audience and prioritize them. Once that is done you start to build connections with that audience.

What-What are the "hot buttons" of your target audience? What is important to them? Take time to identify those areas of interest and make sure they are items that will catch their attention, not items you want to sell.

Why-Why does your cause matter? Once the hot buttons are identified, push those buttons. Relate to them on their terms, not yours; speak their language.

How-Start a sales process. Build rapport and develop trust with that target audience. Gather information on your target audience by *listening and asking questions*.

Where-Think global but act local, consider online marketing opportunities. Focus on strategic events within your community other than your own to get the message out. Define other communication tools that will work in your situation.

When-Commit to your plan; spend one hour per person per week to developing and executing your plan.

The process involved in creating a marketing strategy always starts with identifying your target audience, Payn-Knoper told the workshop. Once that step is completed, you need to identify their hot buttons and then decided upon some measurable tactics to accomplish your goal. Finally, set a realistic timeline for your marketing program.

Fair Visitation Program Update

By WADE BLEND

Hello all! One of the benefits of being a NDAF member is the opportunity to participate in the fairs and celebrations visitation program. Any Association member may request a critique team visit their fair once every three years and suggest improvements. This visit is entirely confidential and the results are only shared with the fair or event requesting the visit.

The team will use a form to review such things as parking, staffing, signage, entertainment, grounds conditions, exhibits and many other areas as they relate to our industry. There is no fee for the visit but it is suggested that gate passes be given to the team that comes to evaluate.

Information letters and a request form are sent to all association members in the spring each year. This year they were mailed in early June. If you did not receive a form and would like to request a visit, please contact Dale Hildebrant at the NDAF office and he will get the right people in touch with you. If you would like to help and be included on a visitation team please contact Dale as well.

For those fairs who haven't arranged for a visit to your fair yet-it isn't too late. Contact someone from the fair visitation committee to get your event on the list today!

Hope you all have a wonderful summer!

NDAF visitation committee: Wade Blend, Diane Schell, Mark Landa

Zone IV attendees tour Ralph Engelstad Arena

By DEAN CLOTT

The busses left the motel at 2:15 and took us to the Ralph Engelstad Arena, Our tour guide was Myron Bender...volunteer: and a good one at that! There was 80 of us there and he split us into 2 groups and then proceeded to inform us that the Ralph opened in 2001 and served 300,000 customers in the first 3 years. Hockey started at UND in 1946. Ralph was working construction in the area and someone asked him if he had ever played hockey. He said yes and they asked him to try out for the team. He made it and donned number 23 for 2 years as the teams goalie. He then tried out for the pros and that didn't work out too well so he entered the then school of commerce. After school he went to 2 banks for a loan to start a construction company and was turned down. A 3rd bank gave him \$2500.00. He worked the area for a while and then left for Las Vegas. He bought some land and later sold it for the new Vegas airport. He opened the largest casino at the time downtown called the Imperial Palace, and later one in Biloxi Ms.

Years later Ralph donated \$100 million dollars for a new arena. 50 for the building and 50 for scholarships. The building came in at \$104 million dollars, thus no money for scholarships. The arena is owned by the Ralph Engelstad foundation and the school rents it for \$1.00 per year. The profits are then donated to the school. Now they had Money.

The arena was built in a record 21 months and was completed in 2004. It has 300+ tv's, 11640 seats, 50 luxury suites at a cool \$99,000 for 3 years, a video ring that is 4 ft x 887 feet, a scoreboard that cost \$2 million, with a 6 x 12 screen on 4 sides and a 4 x 6 scoreboard and penalty board, 2 ice sheets, an underwater treadmill, 14 locker rooms and 3.2 miles of brass accents. The arena features a laser show at each game that is programmed in Minneapolis. This occurs between the 2nd and 3rd period. All of the seats are the same and made of leather and cherry wood. Ralph said that "there are 2 kinds of wood. Cherry wood and fire wood".

The arena sports 2200 logos and 5 large granite ones. The floors are all granite and 2 colored. The \$1.1 million Brick all came from Hebron brick so it would match the rest of the university. The only granite that would match was imported from Italy and India.

There is a members lounge called the Club 21. To remain in the lounge you must buy a membership for about \$3100.00 per year. It has a pipe organ from the Imperial Palace that plays 5 instruments and 100 hockey tunes.

The teams arrive inside on the ice level, in the warmth. It holds 3 busses inside.

The ice is 3/4 inch thick and can be removed in 1 hour. It can then be made into a basketball or volleyball court with seating for 12000 or seating for 15800 for concerts. Ralph said "smaller is better so he only wanted it to hold about 12000".

24 former players now have played in the pros and the Olympics. 2 of them are Parize and Toewes.

Betty Stocker Engelstad, after Ralph's death, donated \$7 million for a basketball court that holds 4000 and is named after her.

The arena is rated #6 of top world top sports stadiums.

This place is phenomenal, beautiful and really cool for us fair people.

Congratulations to...

Trina Mills-new Greater Grand Forks Fair manager.

Welcome Aboard.....

Other Interesting Items from the Zone IV Meeting

Jerry Iverson Keynote at Zone IV **By BETTE FURGESON**

As always Jerry's address was so informative and down to earth, it contained something for all of us.

He touched a little on making sure you check your budgets carefully, don't just scan over them- instead read and ask questions. Stick to the budgets you make. Don't be so eager to spend money, instead check out all the options.

When dealing with people remember check out what's best for all concerned. Be honest-your word is what you are.

Jerry also shared some amusing things that happened over the years during his time as manager of the North Dakota State Fair.

He closed by urging people to follow the old saying- 'Treat others as you wish to be treated'. You can't go wrong on that!



The NDAF was well represented at the Zone IV meeting. Pictured from left to right: Ron Rasmussen, Bette Furgeson, Mark Landa, Brian Carlson, Dale Hildebrant and Dean Clott.

A full-color version of this newsletter is available for viewing on our website: www.ndfairs.org

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