

“FAIR facts” For Indian River County

- The Firefighters’ Indian River County Fair held March 9-18, 2007 was themed “The Fair, Be Seen There”. Total attendance at the event was 48,000 people, down from 2006.
- There was excellent weather all week; however, some rain fell on Friday March 16th around 4:00pm until 6:30pm. Of course, this is at dinnertime when people are trying to make decisions about their evening. Like “What should we do now”? “Is it also raining at the Fair”? So, attendance was about 50% less on this day.
- The fair’s website www.firefightersfair.org had over 4,000 hits on the site during March alone. We believe this assisted in increasing our fair traffic and getting information to the public.
- Admission prices were \$5 at the gate or \$4 if purchased in advance for adults. \$3 for senior citizens 55 and up and youth’s ages 6-12. Free for children ages 5 and younger. The advance purchase of gate admission tickets were up 2% because when you purchased your gate admission ticket early and then visited the fair on any date, you were eligible for hourly prize give-a-ways. These prizes included; fair food, ride wristbands, additional gate passes as well as vendor and sponsor merchandise. Advance sale of ride ticket books were down by 3% compared to 2006. We have always offered free parking.
- Strates Shows provided the midway, where the carnival gross was down 6.5% compared with 2006. Opening day fireworks started the event with a ride special March 9th where unlimited rides were \$15. Other ride specials included; The **Sam’s Club** Family Fun weekend held March 10th and 11th gave all kids under the age of 11 wristbands for “Kiddie Land”. Here all rides were \$8 from 1:00pm until 6:00pm; **Firehouse Garage** provided a March 12th wristband special where all municipal employees who purchased that date’s ticket earlier by mail, saved \$7; A **National Food Mart** coupon special was offered March 13th and 15th. This coupon allowed visitors unlimited rides with a \$3 savings; The early bird ride special March 18th gave unlimited rides until closing for \$15 if purchased between 1:00pm and 6:00pm. And on the final day March 18th, **Indian River Medical Center** offered a \$15 wristband special from 1:00pm until closing.

- Ongoing fair attractions included Tall Tex, Scarecrow and Tobar. Dirty Dingus a rodeo walk around clown entertained, the Vero Beach Recreation Department Aerial Antics Circus as well as the Sebastian Elementary Sensation performed, there was a rooster crowing contest, a motorcycle display and contest hosted by **Treasurer Coast Motorcycles and Fishbone Tattoos**, there was the LaSala's DOJO Power Breaking demonstration also the Little Mr. & Miss Firefighter Pageant was held March 10th at 6:00pm sponsored by the **Disney Vero Beach Resort**. Andrey Plata and his steel drum music, Michael Hyde with his bagpipes, the River Rats duo as well as a 5-piece mariachi band greeted patrons on their visit. A limited number of competitive exhibits were baked goods, creative crafts and canning. A Karaoke contest along with a Barn Dance was held on March 16th at the **McCall Agency- Farm Bureau** livestock pavilion.
- Two grounds attractions for fairgoers were "Wambold's Menagerie Circus" sponsored by **Riverside National Bank**. And the "Mapapa African Acrobats" show sponsored by **Comcast Cable**. A packed house was present for a Christian concert "Barlow Girl" this was hosted by **91.9 FM Christian Radio** in association with **Next Level Productions** on March 12th. Also, plenty of local entertainment performed daily on our stage sponsored by the **Press Journal Newspaper**.
- Once again this year, our partner **Touch of Class Cleaners**, provided "Lost Kid Tags" at our information gazebo. Here, parents filled out a neon colored tag with the child's name, age and the guardian's cell phone number. This was then tied to the child's belt loop or another part on their clothing. If the child was to get separated from the guardian, security or other staff members could assist in locating that guardian.
- Our indoor exhibit building was unusable again this season due to the fact that the Indian River County Sheriffs Department was using this facility as a county jail. The new jail wing under construction will be completed by our next season and the fair will once again have indoor exhibit space. **Storage Solutions** of Vero was our front gate sponsor. And our Open Air Pavilion was sponsored by the **Outlets of Vero Beach**.

- Entries for swine's, rabbits and citrus trees were up from 2006 however, steer entries were down. Livestock sale prices were down slightly from 2006.
- All proceeds from this event benefit the Indian River County Burn Fund, Local High School Scholarships, Fair Ground improvements, other Various Charitable organizations, and for the benefit of Public Safety.
- Next seasons 9 day event is scheduled for March 14th – 22nd, 2008 and is themed “The Hottest Place In Town”.

The Vero Beach Firefighters Association in cooperation with the Indian River County Fair Association has sponsored this event since 1980. We wish to THANK all our corporate partners, fair volunteers, committee heads, the Youth Livestock Association, our 4-H and F.F.A. members as well our visitors for making “Their” fair a success.

Toby D. Turner
General Manager