

“FAIR facts” For Indian River County

- The Firefighters’ Indian River County Fair held March 14-22, 2008 was themed “The Hottest Place In Town”. Total attendance at the event was 39,518 people, down from 2007.
- There was rain on opening Friday the 14th as well as on closing day Saturday the 22nd. The fair was down on revenue due to the fact that leap year brought Easter earlier on Sunday March 23rd. The fair board felt it was in our best community interest not to be open on Easter so attendance as well as total dollars were down overall.
- The fairs website www.firefightersfair.org had over 5,000 hits on the site during March alone. We believe this assisted in 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 down 4% even though when you purchased your gate admission ticket early and then visited the fair on any date, you were eligible for hourly prize give-aways. These prizes included; fair food, ride wristbands, additional gate passes as well as vendor and sponsor merchandise. Advance sale of ride ticket books were also down compared to 2007. We have always offered free parking.
- Strates Shows provided the midway, where the carnival gross was down 11% compared with 2007 due to not having a 10 day event. An opening day ride special March 14th had unlimited rides for \$15. Other ride specials included; The **Sam’s Club** Family Fun weekend held March 15th and 16th gave all kids under the age of 11 wristbands for “Kiddie Land”. Here all rides were \$10 from 12:00pm until 6:00pm, a **Snyder Plumbing** special for \$15 was offered March 18th and 20th which allowed visitors unlimited rides. And a closing day wristband special was offered March 22nd for \$20 from 12:00pm until closing.
- Ongoing fair attractions included a demolition derby on March 14th and 15th hosted by **Firehouse Garage & Mike’s Towing**, Tall Tex, Scarecrow and Tobar along with 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 & Earl's Hide-a-way**, there was the Little Mr. & Miss Firefighter Pageant held March 15th at 6:00pm. Andrey Plata and his steel drum music along with Michael Hyde with his bagpipes greeted patrons on their visit. A limited number of competitive exhibits were photography, baked goods, creative crafts and canning. A Karaoke contest along with a Barn Dance was held on March 21st at the **Indian River County Farm Bureau** livestock pavilion.

- Three grounds attractions for fairgoers were “Sandscapes” a 20 ton sand sculpture sponsored by **Toyota of Vero Beach**. The “Firefighter Training Show” was sponsored by **Wachovia Bank** and “CowTown” in the livestock pavilion was partnered by the **Press Journal Newspaper**. Also, plenty of local entertainment performed daily on our stage sponsored by **Comcast Cable**.
- 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 available this season after not having it for the last 4 years. The Indian River County Sheriffs Department was using this facility as a county jail. 60 local and regional vendor spaces were available for the public as they strolled through this air conditioned facility. **Storage Solutions** of Vero was our front gate sponsor.
- Entries for swine’s, rabbits and citrus trees were up from 2007 however, steer entries were down. Livestock sale prices were down slightly from 2007.
- 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 10 day event is scheduled for March 13th – 22nd, 2009 and is themed “Fully Involved” with the community.

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 Indian River County Youth Livestock Association and local 4-H members as well our visitors for making “Their” fair a success.

Toby D. Turner
General Manager