

“FAIR facts” For Indian River County

- The Firefighters’ Indian River County Fair held March 11-20, 2011 was themed “**Our Fun Is A Family Tradition**”. Total attendance at the event was 52,300 people, up from 2010.
- No rain fell this season during the 10 day run and the fair had its best financial season ever. The School District of Indian River County had spring break the same week and all this made for a perfect event. The fair’s official website www.firefightersfair.org had over 10,000 hits on the site in 2010-11 and we believe this assisted in getting information to the public. Visitors were welcomed at the main entrance to the fair grounds as well as the outdoor food court area with landscape designs and fire pits donated by **Coast to Coast landscaping, Beech Annuals and Seal Rite Pavers**.
- Admission prices have held steady for the last 16 years: \$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 compared to 2010 however, advance sale of ride ticket “Fun Cards” were down compared to 2010. A concert on Wednesday evening March 16th was with Sophie B. Hawkins. It was presented by **Breeze FM 93.7** with gate attendance on this evening monitored at 1,100 visitors. We have always offered free parking.
- Strates Shows provided the midway, where the carnival gross was up 23% compared with 2010. This was the first season the carnival and the fair used “Barcoded” ticket cards and wristbands. This new system now allows proper tracking of ticket sales and rider usage on the grounds. The **SpringHill Suites** opening day ride special March 11th had unlimited rides scheduled for \$20. Other ride specials included; The **Harvest Food & Outreach** weekend held March 12th and 13th gave all visitors a \$4 savings on their ride wristband when they brought a boxed or canned food donation per person. If no food donation was brought the price was \$22. **Dyer Chevrolet** “Carload Night” was March 14th which offered up to 7 persons seat belted in a vehicle gate admission and wristbands for \$60. The **Treasure Coast Community Health** special for \$20 was offered March 15th and 17th which allowed a visitor unlimited rides. Saturday, March 20th was **Skate Factory** Day where visitors purchased a ride wristband special for \$20 from 1:00pm until 7:00pm and then rode till closing.

On Sunday, March 20th we provided the **Salvation Army** with a clothing drive. All visitors had a \$4 savings on their ride wristband when they brought an article of clothing to share per person. If no clothing was donated the price was \$22 each.

- Ongoing fair attractions included a demolition derby on March 11th and 12th hosted by **Firehouse Garage & Mike's Towing, Tall Tex, Scarecrow and Tobar** greeted guests as they entered the grounds and **Durty Dingus a Rodeo Clown** provided strolling entertainment all day, every day. A baked goods auction and bull whip cracking contest kept patrons busy as well as the grapefruit packing contest by local fruit packing houses. **The Vero Beach Recreation Department** Aerial Antics Circus performed, there was a motorcycle show hosted by **Treasure Coast Motorcycles**, the Little Mr. & Miss Firefighter Pageant was held March 12th at 6:00pm. The **Boy Scouts of America Order of the Arrow** "Hitchiti Indian Dancers" performed. The **Indian River Blood Bank** was on site March 12th and 19th for a community blood drive. The **American Red Cross** Day was Friday, March 18th. Here for every paid adult visitor, the fair donated \$1 and the total was for \$2,170. Michael Hyde with his bagpipes greeted patrons on their visit along with Garret Abernathy and Mike Bryan who provided wood carving demonstrations and displays for visitors.
- An increase this season in the number of entries for competitive exhibits were; photography, baked goods, creative crafts and canning. An exciting competitive exhibit introduced last season was a **Hay Bale** decorating contest. Six 4-H clubs this year decorated large round hay bales which were placed around the carnival. This way we could bring "Agriculture to the midway". A Karaoke contest along with a Barn Dance was held on March 18th at the 4-H livestock pavilion. The Barn "King & Queen" Competition, a 4-H Youth BBQ Cooking contest, the 4-H Youth Rabbit & Cavy Show, there was 4-H BINGO, a Steer Grooming competition, a Swine Show, the Steer Show, an Adult & Pee-Wee Showmanship routine along with the Rooster Crowing contest were all held in the beautiful **Florida Farm Bureau** Livestock Pavilion.
- Three grounds attractions entertained fairgoers; the "Marcus Magic" Comedy & Illusion Show presented by **Inside Track Almanac**. The "Firefighter Training Show" was sponsored by **Wachovia Bank** and the **Interactive**

Blacksmith Demonstrations were located at the livestock pavilion. The “Simon Sez” Comedy Hypnosis Show had the crowd laughing each evening. Also, plenty of local entertainment performed daily on our main stage sponsored by the **Vero Beach Press Journal**.

- Once again this year, our partner **Touch of Class Cleaners**, provided “Lost Kid Tags”. 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 housed 48 local and regional vendor spaces that were available for the public as they strolled through this air conditioned facility.
- 4-H entries for Swine, Steers, Cavy’s, Chickens Goats and Citrus trees were up from 2010. Breedstock and Rabbits were down. Total livestock sale prices were up from 2010.
- 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 9th - 18th, 2012** and is themed “**Your Fair, Your Family, Your Fun**”.

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, all Indian River County 4-H Youth and Parents, as well our visitors for making “Their” fair a success.

Toby D. Turner
General Manager