

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

NEWS RELEASE

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2018 Minnesota State Fair Celebrates the Very Best

Sept. 4, 2018

St. Paul, Minn. – One Giant Sing Along, a dozen Grandstand shows, scores of rides and attractions, hundreds of educational exhibits, 900 free music performances, thousands of food and beverage offerings, nearly 15,000 animals (including 217 newborns) and more than 2 million people celebrating the very best of each other at their State Fair made the 2018 Great Minnesota Get-Together the best ever.

Labor Day attendance of 171,588 brought this year's cumulative attendance total to 2,046,533, setting a new overall attendance record. The previous record of 1,997,320 was set last year. This year's edition of the Great Minnesota Get-Together had five daily attendance record days set on:

Thursday, Aug. 23, with 122,695 visitors

Saturday, Aug. 25, with 222,194 visitors

Wednesday, Aug. 29, with 144,940 visitors

Thursday, Aug. 30, with 156,764 visitors

Saturday, Sept. 1, with 270,426 visitors*

*All-time single day attendance record

The Minnesota State Fair's agricultural and creative competitions drew more than 36,000 entries this year, with competitors vying for a share of ribbons, trophies and more than \$1.5 million in prize money. Competitions included events for livestock, horses, school projects, dog trials, baked and canned goods, fruit, vegetables, crafts, bee and honey products, fine arts, farm crops, flowers, butter, cheese and more.

The State Fair's Fine Arts Exhibition featured the largest juried art show in Minnesota. The 2018 People's Choice Award's Adult Choice went to "Van Gogh with Gray Felt Hat" oil, acrylic, mixed media by Toni Dachis of Minneapolis, Minn. Brian Berle of Shakopee, Minn., won the Kids' Choice Award for a sculpture "Metal Dog."

The Purple Ribbon Auction on Saturday, Aug. 25, set seven new record prices and raised more than \$690,000 to benefit youth programs statewide, of which \$62,000 was awarded to 40 youth in scholarships.

In open class livestock competitions, supreme champion titles were awarded to the best grand champions out of all beef and dairy breeds, and breeding sheep and swine:

Open Class Supreme Champion Dairy Female: Valley Gem Farm, Cumberland, Wis.

Open Class Supreme Champion Beef Female: Kiersten Jass, Jass Simmentals, Garner, Iowa

Open Class Supreme Champion Beef Bull: Wesly Johnson, Chestnut Angus, Pipestone, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Boar: Country Girls Show Pigs, Kenyon, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Gilt: Anakin Bosek, ANK Farm, Garfield, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Ram, Wool Breeds: Isaiah Bauck, New York Mills, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Ewe, Wool Breeds: Rae Ann Peterson, Austin, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Ram, Meat Breeds: Northern Starr Livestock Service, Shakopee, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Ewe, Meat Breeds: Bobendrier Hampshires, Pipestone, Minn.

Open Class Supreme Champion Dairy Goat Herd: Mary Thompson, Houston, Minn.

FFA Supreme Champion Breeding Female premiums were also awarded:

FFA Supreme Sheep Champion Breeding Female: Adriana Wendland, Kenyon-Wanamingo FFA Chapter

FFA Supreme Dairy Champion Breeding Female: Kendra Waldenburger, Spring Grove FFA Chapter

FFA Supreme Beef Champion Breeding Female: Beau Peine, Randolph FFA Chapter

FFA Supreme Swine Champion Breeding Female: Jordan Markegard, Rushford-Peterson FFA Chapter

FFA Supreme Market Lamb Overall: Thomas Sommers, Jr., Waseca FFA Chapter

Supreme and Signature winners in the Minnesota State Fair Horse Show were:

Supreme Champion Open English Pleasure: Rider: Jamie Moeller, Stillwater, Minn.; Owner: Morgan Sexe, Lake Elmo, Minn.

Supreme Champion Western Pleasure: Blaine Burt, Oakdale, Minn.
Supreme Champion Western Horsemanship: Rider: Kathryn Meiers, Lakeville, Minn; Owner: Linda Davis, Apple Valley, Minn.
Supreme Champion Stallion Draft Horse: Troy Wetterau, Germantown, Wis.
Supreme Champion Mare Draft Horse: David Stalhiem, Stalhiem Farms, Deer Park, Wis.
Supreme Champion Gelding Draft Horse: Gordon Joseph, Elkview Percherons, Winchester, Ind.
Draft Horse Supreme Six-Horse Hitch (North American Six-Horse Hitch Classic Series Qualifying Show): Albert Cleve & Jim Day, Blue Ribbon Days, Farmington, Mo.
Draft Horse Supreme Classic Cart Series: Johnson Belgians, Unity, Saskatchewan, Canada

Signature Liberty Champion: Kathryn Speer Cook, Hudson, Wis.
Signature Tandem Bareback Champion Team: Paige Newcomb & Allie Bonander, White Bear Township, Minn.
Signature Northwoods Trail Cup Challenge: Jackie Thayer, Ridgeland, Wis.
Signature Mounted Costume: Lacey Sizer, Becker, Minn.
Signature Youth Horsemanship: Olivia Flack, Lake Crystal, Minn.

Supreme Champion Light Horse Stallion: Gail Triden, Grandy, Minn.
Supreme Champion Light Horse Mare: Andrew Abeln, Lakeville, Minn.
Supreme Champion Light Horse Gelding: Lexi Hansen, Good Thunder, Minn.

The Douglas K. Baldwin Award for FFA livestock show participation and leadership went to Riley Donkers of Faribault, Minn. (Kenyon-Wanamingo FFA Chapter).

Rebekka Paskewitz of Browerville, Minn., representing Todd County, was crowned the 65th Princess Kay of the Milky Way and will serve as the official goodwill ambassador for nearly 3,000 Minnesota dairy farm families this year.

The award-winning CHS Miracle of Birth Center welcomed 217 newborn animals, including 157 piglets, 12 calves and 42 lambs and, for the first time ever, six kids (goats).

Total Grandstand attendance was 113,937 (not including MSF Amateur Talent Contest Finals). Sugarland: Still The Same 2018 Tour with special guests Frankie Ballard and Lindsay Ell (Aug. 24), The Current's Music On-A-Stick featuring Trampled By Turtles with special guests Lord Huron and Lissie (Aug. 25), The Beach Boys with special guests John Stamos and The Righteous Brothers (Aug. 27) and Old Dominion: Happy Endings World Tour with special guests Neal McCoy and Morgan Evans (Aug. 29) were sold-out shows.

Nearly 8,000 fans cheered on the best amateur talent in the state at the 46th Annual MSF Amateur Talent Contest Finals, sponsored by JACK'S[®] Pizza, held Sept. 2, at the Grandstand. Contestants were competing for more than \$20,000 in cash awards and JACK'S[®] Pizza prize packs. Winners were:

Open Division

First place: Nick Hodge of St. Paul, Minn., acrobatic solo, "24K Magic"
Second place: Russell Sweet of St. Paul, Minn., saxophone solo, "Pequeña Czarda"
Third place: Roland Bernard Hawkins II of Orono, Minn., vocal solo, "Nessun Dorma"

Teen Division

First place: Lauren Senden of North Mankato, Minn., vocal solo, "A Doll Song"
Second place: Abby King of Mounds View, Minn., vocal solo, "Waves"
Third place: Britta Aas of Tenstrike, Minn., ukulele/vocal solo, "Wagon Wheel"

Preteen Division

First place: Aaliyah Dixon of St. Michael, Minn., dance solo, "Rhythm Nation"
Second place: Darien Hull of Mendota Heights, Minn., piano solo, "Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum"
Third place: Lauren Cameron of Rosemount, Minn., piano solo, "Preludium"

Jeremy Reichenberger of Minneapolis, Minn., and Angie Voight of St. Paul, Minn., were the overall male and female 5K Milk Run winners with times of 16:17 and 19:47, respectively.

The 2018 Outstanding Senior Citizen Awards were presented to Judy Peterson of Itasca County and Al Sannerud of Anoka County. A ceremony was held at the Leinie Lodge Bandshell on Thursday, Aug. 30, to honor 63 seniors representing 36 Minnesota counties. This year's ceremony was sponsored by Humana.

New additions and highlights for 2018 included: Cambria Kitchen, a new demonstration kitchen, in the Creative

Activities Building; seven new thrilling rides; Mental Health Awareness at Dan Patch Park; a new restroom building; new Pet Pavilions and Outdoor Demonstration Area; an expanded schedule of draft horse and miniature horse competitions; a new destination for food, craft beer and entertainment on the north end called The Hangar; two new Park & Ride locations; and more.

The State Fair's 2018 Best Awards recognized outstanding vendors, attractions and commercial exhibits. Winners were: The Anchor Coffee House, Big Bamboo Fun House, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, The Hangar, Haunted Castle Dark Ride, Minnesota United FC, Nordic Waffles, Paddle North, Rainbow Midwest Inc., The Vintage Tin, Whatnot Boutique and Whopper Water.

The 2018 fair featured 27 new foods: Ahi Tuna Poke Bowl, Bananas Foster French Toast, BBQ Split, Blueberry Rhubarb Cobbler, Earth Wings[®], Firecracker Shrimp Stuffed Avocado, General Tso Chicken Taco, Honey Cream Soda Float, Irish Tater Kegs, Mangonada Shave Ice, Messy Giuseppe, Moroccan Sausage Bowl, Nordic Waffles, Pepperoni Chips with Roasted Red Pepper Queso, Rainbow Cloud Roll, Shrimp Ceviche, Slider Flights, Smoked Soft Serve Ice Cream, Swedish Meatball Smörgåsar, Sweet Greek Cheese Puffs, Sweetie Cakes, Triple Chocolate Strawberry Shortcake, Turducken Sausage Sandwich, UpNorth Puff Pasty, Wood-Grilled Elote, Za-Waffle Sticks and Zesty PB&J Sausage.

The 2019 Minnesota State Fair will run Aug. 22 through Labor Day, Sept. 2. For more information, visit mnstatefair.org.

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