

Make a Memory

Make a Memory, is the Madison County Fair Theme this year. There are lots of great memories to be cherished when participating in a county fair. Please take your hats off to Jim and Betty Sykes as they have been chosen to be the Parade Marshall's this year. Jim and Betty have been a very important part of the community and fair for many years. We are honored to have them represent our fair and parade.



We are getting prepared for another great fair in August. Everything seems to be rolling right along with repairs and upkeep. As many of you may or may not know, our covered grandstands have been condemned until they are either restored or replaced. This came about last fall when the county applied for some grant monies to restore the Pavilion Building (round log building), Jeffers Building (square log building), and the covered grandstands. In order to get grant monies there needed to be an architectural report prepared for the application process. The architects reported that the Pavilion and Jeffers were structurally in pretty good shape and just needed to have some maintenance work done to preserve them. However, the grandstands report suggested that they were not structurally safe due to rotten pilings underneath and that the structure was leaning. The recommendation was that we do not put a crowd in them until they are either restored or replaced. An estimation of restoration on the grandstands is approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000 with an approximate replacement value of \$600,000. With this in mind, these structures are historical and on the historic register, so we cannot just tear them down without permission from Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or putting a lot of effort into trying to restore them. The grandstands are approximately 75 years old and are a grand old wooden structure which means a lot to our community. The commissioners have spent a considerable amount of time and effort trying to get some stimulus monies to help with this restoration project. The Fair Board operates on a minimal budget and the county does not even begin to have the extra funds required for these projects. There have been some monies set aside for historic preservation in Montana but there are other historic facilities who have applied for these funds also. In short, we will still be having arena events this summer with the use of the bleachers west of the grandstands and we have put in a new set of bleachers on the west end of the arena next to the crows nest. Please bear with us as we will be rerouting all the arena crowds to use the metal gate by the beer gardens, the metal gate behind the yellow building, and the arena entrance for taking tickets. We will have the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Team available for fair to help with traffic control and helping people get to where they need to go.



The campground in the back of the fairgrounds is finished. It has been leveled, graveled, and seeded with a circular road through it. We have put in a new vault toilet. The new road will be used as the fire lane during events and there are a couple of big security lights which makes it nice for people camping.

We have had a pretty wet spring and everything has greened up nicely. The flowers are all blooming and are beautiful. We had a moose hanging around for a while but she has since left with all the events going on.



The buildings have been pretty busy this spring with family reunions, weddings, dinners, meetings, etc. It is great to have such a facility that will house a crowd. We just finished with Senior Pro Rodeo. It was a sight to see all the people gather here with their big outfits and horses. They are like a big happy family and we always love to see them come. 3 Rivers Arena Club put on a fantastic show with over 250 contestants, even with having to put in all the efforts of pumping out the arena which was under water. We had two beautiful days for the rodeo.

The Fair is only a month away; get ready for a great time! We have made a few changes in the fair activities. The 4-H Horse Show will be Saturday August 8, followed by the Youth Rodeo on Sunday, August 9. Please take note of this change as we will not be having a Youth Rodeo Sunday, August 16 of the fair. There will be a concert on Thursday, August 13, at 8 pm with the Dillon Junior Fiddler's opening for country artist Eric Dodge. This new country artist has been to Nashville, opened for famous artists such as Diamond Rio, Little Texas, and Chris LeDoux. He has been in the Country Weekly Magazine, put on benefit concerts, and performed at many fairs. If you would like to know more about Eric, visit www.ericdodge.com and check out his website. The Ranch Hand Rodeo is back by popular demand which will take place Thursday evening August 13, start time 4 pm with Calcutta. Call Nancy Matheson 406-684-5172 for more information. For all the youngsters at heart, the carnival is coming back this year, Play with Gravity motorcycle stunt show, and the petting zoo. We are looking forward to new vendors, a Dutch oven demonstration, and many other fun activities. The fair books have gone to the printers and should be back any day so watch for them at the local businesses. If you would like to be a vendor at our fair, visit the county website, www.madison.mt.gov and under the fairgrounds, you can print off the vendor information and contract for fair.



We'll see you at the Fair!!!