

A county fair for everyone

The first thing one noticed when entering the Jefferson County Fairgrounds was the abundance of little kids. Children squealing on the carnival rides, talking to Smokey the Bear, trying their luck at games of chance, poking curiously at livestock, and all with money burning holes in their pockets. It is easy to assume that county fairs are for kids.

And to an extent that is true. Only kids enjoy feeling sick from dizziness and too much cotton candy. And kids are the reason many adults attend the fair.

But one quickly learns that a county fair has something for every age or interest. The serious craftsman, grower or homemaker, as well as a cowboy looking for thrills in the rodeo arena can enjoy the fair as much as the kids. The Jefferson County Fair maintained its tradition of diversity this year during its week-long activities, and a variety of people flocked to participate.

Highlights of the fair week were, as in years before: the parade and barbecue on Saturday, the two-day rodeo and rodeo dance, 4-H and FFA showmanship and animal sales, and the selection of the 1977 Jefferson County Queen and Court. The new queen is Lisa Nelson, daughter of the Robert Nelsons of Madras, and her princess is Margo Friday, daughter of the Warren Fridays also of Madras.

Of special note this year was the dedication of the old farmstead which is now completely furnished and decorated; the opening of the cafeteria; and the return of 62 former county queens and court members who came from as far as L.A. to join in the parade and queens' luncheon.

Ongoing exhibits, both open and 4-H-sponsored, featured crops, baked goods, flowers, various handicrafts including needlework and macrame, and such art forms as drawing, painting and photography. Participation was reportedly quite

good, especially in the flower show and photography exhibit.

Warm Springs contributed significantly in several areas of the fair. This community boasts some prize-winning artists, photographers, relic collectors . . . and one intrepid cake-baker (see article elsewhere about our editor's new hobby). The Warm Springs 4-H club was also involved in livestock judging on Thursday. And about a dozen people from Warm Springs performed traditional dances for the fair crowd Thursday night.



The Fair Board is looking forward to even more participation by Warm Springs next year so that it might be a truly county-wide fair. Planning a fair

How does an annual county fair, which so many take for granted, become a reality? Year-long planning and preparations are carried out by scores of people, most of whom are volunteers. Fair Board Chairman Marie Macy explained the behind-the-scenes efforts of the board and the many others involved.

The five-member board includes Ms. Macy, Carol Alley (vice-chairman), Vic Suratt, Helmer Wallan, and Chuck Simmelink. The secretary Audrey Ditmore and the grounds managers Jake and Irene Lappin, who work closely with the board, are the only people who receive pay for their work.

Each board member, who is appointed by the County Commissioner for a three-year term, is responsible for dif-

ferent areas of the fair. For instance, Ms. Macy, in addition to being chairman, specifically oversees the 4-H and FFA activities and the Rodeo Court. Others are in charge of advertising, rodeo, open class exhibition, construction and grounds, premium books and the many other components of the fair.

Funding for the county fair comes from three sources: the county, which contributes a percentage of the taxes (amounting to around \$838 this year), gate receipts, and the Oregon Racing Commission. This last source is a tricky one because the amount of funding depends on a yearly rating of the fair on a point system by representatives of the commission. The judges usually look favorably on the Jefferson County Fair in its small fair classification.



The fair has changed over the years with the moving of the location, the addition of buildings and the expansion of events and exhibits. Next year Chairman Marie Macy hopes for even more improvements. A more elaborate Senior Citizens Day, including a talent show, picnic, musical entertainment and contests, might be in the offing. The amount of prize money awarded may increase. And more exhibits and more participation are the continuing goals of the Fair Board.

This year's fair was certainly fun for the kids. But it also represented the efforts of many interested adults who by their contributions provided a good time for everyone.



JOHN AND ELI MILLER of Warm Springs enjoy some of the county fair livestock. Photo by Cynthia D. Stowell



SMOKEY THE BEAR chats with the Courtneys, from Warm Springs. Photo by Cynthia D. Stowell



FROSTING THE CAKE is really the most fun part as this novice baker (Sid Miller) discovered. Sid was the only male to enter a cake in the Jefferson County Fair.

Photo by Sandy Rangila

