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For Immediate Release

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STRONG FINAL WEEKEND BUMPS FAIR ATTENDANCE

Almost perfect Fair weather on the final weekend helped boost attendance up over the 315,000 mark when the Central Washington State Fair closed on Sunday. On the final Saturday a huge crowd of 55,709 streamed through the gates to get one last chance to see the animals, ride the rides, take in the entertainment and eat the unique fair foods. Another 49,058 came to the fair on the final Sunday. With the big final weekend the attendance finished up 15 percent over last year. This year's fair attendance was 315,107 compared to last year when the Fair drew 269,253. Last year the fair was hit with several days of cool, rainy, inclement weather. In 2012, when the weather was warm and sunny all 10 days the attendance was 304,769.

This year the fair had some rainy days during the middle of their 10-day run. Cool, rainy days definitely affected the attendance on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday only 9,907 people came to the fair.

"The weather really does affect our attendance," said fair president and general manager, Greg Stewart. "We are so thankful that opening weekend and our final weekend weather was good, because the people sure came out to enjoy what we think was a fantastic fair!"

When the weather cooperates Fair attendance usually surpasses the 300,000 mark. Over 301,500 attended the Fair in 2011, and in 2010, when the Fair experienced another run of almost perfect early fall weather, some 312,149 people enjoyed the Fair.

"Food is still the number one reason people give for coming to our Fair," said Stewart. "We had over 60 food booths with many unique items that you can only get one time a year."

Thrill seekers were entertained all ten days by the dozens of midway rides and games presented by Butler Amusements.

The other big draw was the entertainment at the Budweiser Stage and the Coca-Cola Grandstand.

On opening Friday the fair presented George Thorogood, who drew a standing-room-only crowd at the concert. The 80's band Kansas drew another good crowd on the opening Saturday night.

Other entertainment throughout the week included the Kumbia Kings, Joe Nichols, Neal McCoy, Trapt, Joan Jett and the Black Hearts, comedian Louie Anderson. On the final Sunday, the Latin group, El Coyote y su banda Tierra Santa played to another packed crowd.

Large crowds also took in two days of sprint car races on the opening weekend, and both the Monster Truck show and Demolition Derby had full houses on the final weekend.

Other attractions that drew plenty of interest was the mega exhibit SWEET, the All-Alaskan Racing Pigs, and MAXX the Robot, along with the exotic animals at Walk on the Wild Side and the many farm animals at Barnville.

The Fair also presented some new entertainment on the Pacific Power Stage including the dance/music group Street Beat, Hotel California, Helles Bells, and Draw the Line.

Stewart said fair management and staff are already making plans for next year's event. The fair will move back a week next year. The dates for the 2015 fair will be September 25 through October 4.

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