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2013 BLUE RIBBON FOUNDATION

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The Blue Ribbon Foundation, the nonprofit charitable arm of Western Fairs Association, produces this annual report showcasing the most compelling and positive stories taking place at fairgrounds throughout the West. As fairs and their communities work together, amazing things happen. Take a look.

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# PACKAGING EMERGENCY MEALS



**130,680 meals  
packaged in one day.**

Officially designated by the State Office of Emergency Services as a Regional Disaster Recovery Center, the Alameda County Fair partnered with Kids Against Hunger to fund and package 100,000 meals to be used as an emergency food supply for its region. Kids Against Hunger is an organization that packages and ships highly nutritious, life-saving meals to starving and malnourished children in developing countries and disaster situations, as well as feeding hungry children in the United States. Their revolutionary food package provides six nutritionally complete servings for only .25 cents.

More than 1,200 local volunteers helped package the meals at the fairgrounds last year. Shifts of 100 volunteers rotated every hour from 11 a.m.-8 p.m. on a Wednesday during the fair. Fairgoers and volunteers from the Alameda County Fireman and Sheriffs, Pleasanton Rotary, Bank of America, Kaiser Permanente, AT&T, Safeway, and many church groups and service clubs donated time and energy to accomplish this goal. Food-packing volunteers received a ticket for free fair admission.

The goal of packaging 100,000 meals was surpassed by 30 percent, resulting in a total of 130,680 packaged in one day! The fair kept 100,000 meals as an emergency supply for the regional community and the others were donated back to Kids Against Hunger. Those 30,680 meals made their way to Haiti to feed poor and hungry children as well as Hurricane Sandy victims.

"The Alameda County Fair meal packing event is vital to the community in the event of a disaster," said Angel Moore, Alameda County Fair's marketing specialist. "The Alameda County Fair is proud to be a partner with Kids Against Hunger on this life saving program."



# TRAINING THE NATIONAL GUARD



200 National Guard soldiers trained.

The Washington County Fair was chosen by the Oregon National Guard and the 1249th Engineer Battalion to serve as temporary headquarters during their spring training deployment. The training exercise was conducted through the Innovative Readiness Training program that allows soldiers to gain valuable field experience while helping local communities accomplish projects they would have not been able to finance on their own.

Many members of the 1249th Battalion work in the construction industry by trade. When on active duty, they have deployed to various parts of Iraq and Afghanistan, where they helped rebuild worn-torn areas. About 200 soldiers set up a base camp on the fairgrounds in May and trained as if they were truly taking on a wartime challenge.

The training program provided the labor and equipment to repair and improve numerous areas around the fairgrounds. The soldiers graded and leveled areas for parking, and inside barns and arenas to make them safer for pedestrians and livestock. They converted a barn with open sides to a fully enclosed structure, with electrical upgrades, to provide dry storage. They renovated a covered pavilion that had structural issues into a building that serves as a centerpiece during the fair and will provide increased rental revenue opportunities. Lastly, they constructed and dedicated a Memorial Castle—the premier symbol of the US Army Corps of Engineers—at the fairgrounds entrance that will serve as a lasting reminder of their service.

“The projects completed will significantly improve the site for annual county fair attendees and those who will attend other events for years to come,” said Andy Duyck, chair, Washington County Board. “The volume and quality of the work was extraordinary.”



# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS DAY



**More than 1,000 families served.**

Are you prepared in the event of a disaster? The San Mateo County Fair wants you to be.

San Mateo County's annual Disaster Preparedness Day was moved from a different location in the county each year to opening day of the San Mateo County Fair in 2011. San Mateo County Supervisor Adrienne Tissier and fair officials thought the fair was a perfect venue to blend the fun of fair with the opportunity to educate the community to be better prepared in the event of a disaster. This year was the third time this event was held on opening day and, once again, it was a resounding success.

Attendees are treated to first aid, police, fire, emergency equipment, bomb robot and rescue dog demonstrations, and could even take one of three fast and free CPR courses. Emergency kit instructions were included on the schedule for the event with the hopes that attendees would take them home and assemble a kit for their family in case of a devastating fire, earthquake, tsunami or terrorism strike.

"After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, we knew we needed to take immediate action to begin to help prepare our residents in case of a disaster, and the first Disaster Preparedness Day was held on the Event Center grounds," said Supervisor Tissier. "Holding the event on the first day of the fair has proven to be a win-win situation, for the event and for the fair."

Fair management felt so strongly about the need to prepare the region, they offered attendees arriving before 11 a.m. free admission and parking.

"I applaud San Mateo County Supervisor Adrienne Tissier for her efforts in the creation of this important event for the citizens of San Mateo County," said Chris Carpenter, fair CEO. "As a leader in the community, we take the safety of our citizens very seriously."



# TRAVELING FARM



9,378 students visited.

Schools love hands-on education tools that kids can't get enough of, but where do they find them? If they are within a 50-mile radius of the Washington State Fair, then the answer is simple. The fair.

The Traveling Farm is a state-of-the-art educational vehicle that gives students the chance to understand the role of farming in everyday life, care of plants and animals, tools of the farming trade, and how to make healthy food choices. Through hands-on exhibits and live animal encounters, the students understand the essential need of the agricultural industry. To say the Children's Mooseum on Wheels is popular is an understatement. Why? Because it takes children to new places, with new experiences.

Students begin their experience by visiting chickens, bunnies or goats. After interacting with the animals, they move inside to the hand washing station, which was created following recommendations by the Washington State Department of Health. Only after their hands are washed are they able to proceed to the orientation from the educator who travels with the farm.

After the orientation, the class moves comfortably through the trailer spending time at each of the 14 interactive stations. The lively interior features stimulating colors and graphics, which engage almost any child. Pre- and post-lessons are provided to teachers, so they can give students a well-rounded educational experience about agriculture.

It travels October-November and February-June on a reservation basis. It is common to welcome 120-160 students through the Traveling Farm in a day. Last year the Traveling Farm visited 67 elementary schools, 413 classes and 9,378 students.

"Your visit was a great culmination activity," said an Evergreen Heights Head Start teacher. "Many of my students had never seen or touched farm animals before."



# MISSION OF MERCY



**1,659 patients received \$1.28 million in dental care.**

For many without dental insurance coverage, pain is just a way of life. The Arizona State Fair wanted to change that. Last year, they partnered with Mission of Mercy to provide free dental care to Arizonans and to drastically improve their quality of life.

Hundreds lined up outside Veteran's Memorial Coliseum—waiting hours, sometimes days—to receive care. During the two-day event, 1,659 patients received more than \$1.28 million in dental care. More than 1,200 volunteers and 300 dentists helped perform 2,443 extractions, 1,195 fillings, 1,769 dental cleanings, 118 partial dentures and 81 root canals.

According to the Arizona Dental Mission of Mercy, Arizona residents suffer from higher rates of dental disease and benefit less from proven preventive methods than other states. A recent survey revealed that 21 percent of Arizona adults and 31 percent of Arizona children have never had a dental check-up. The fair is working to bridge that gap by working with Mission of Mercy to minimize their overhead costs, maximize the dollars they have and act as a liaison with the Governor's Office, initiating key contacts promoting other state agencies to partner with their resources.

In addition to receiving needed dental treatment, patients also learn the importance of good daily oral hygiene practices, a healthy diet, and routine preventative dental care. They learn about the negative effects of soda, sugary beverages and tobacco products, the link between dental health and overall health, oral cancer and more.

"Giving back to the community is a priority for us," said Don West, executive director of the Arizona State Fair. "Hosting the Mission of Mercy event allows us the opportunity to help people at the most basic level and have them walk away, literally, with a smile on their faces."

