



October 2-9, 2022

8 Full Days • Sunday to Sunday



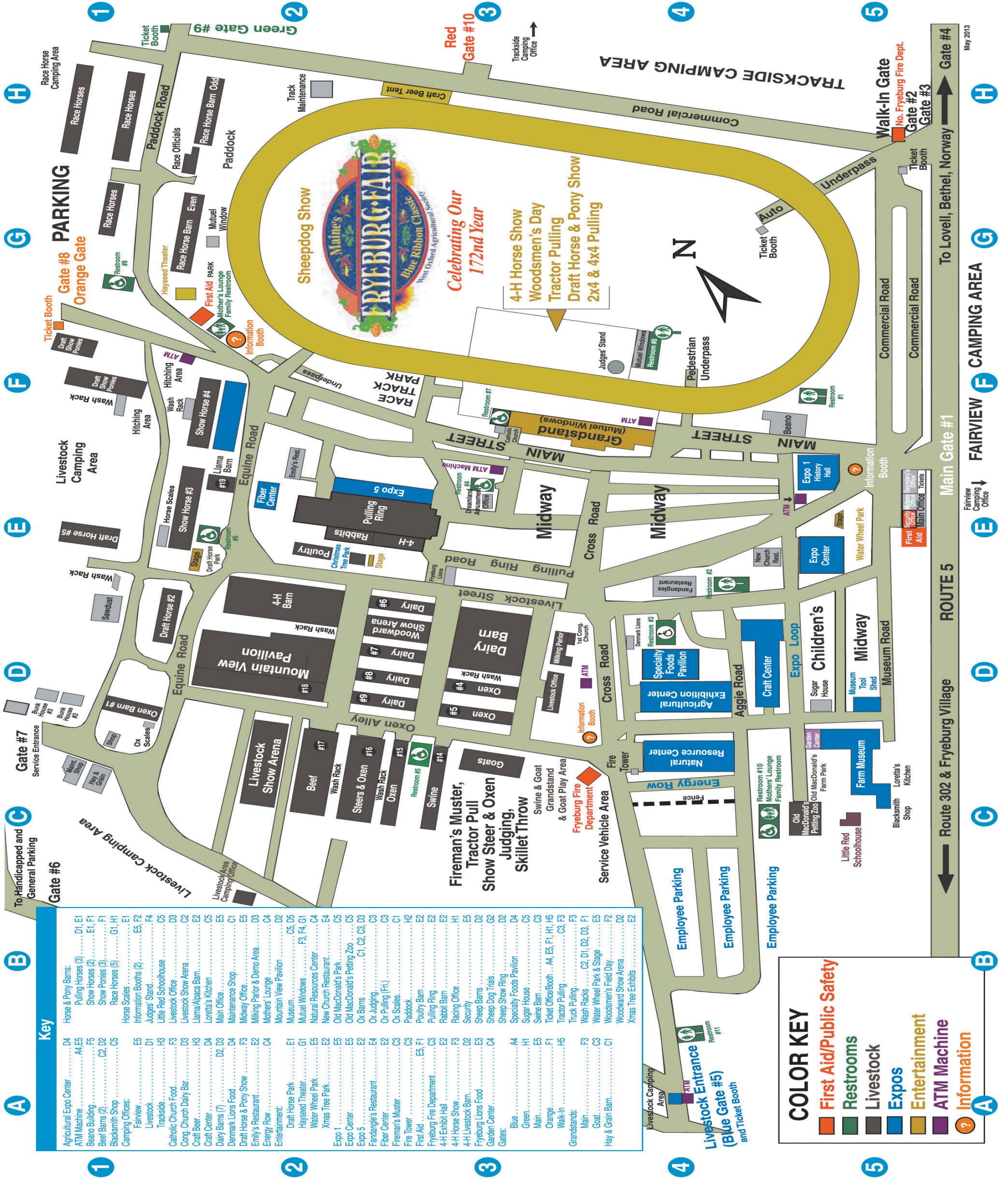
Cover Photos by Rachel Andrews Damon

Agriculture & Livestock  
Woodsmen's Field Day  
Exhibitions & Museums  
Tractor & 4WD pulls  
Harness Racing  
Night Shows & Fireworks  
Grand Parade  
Spectacular Food  
Midway & Rides  
Campsites



[www.fryeburgfair.org](http://www.fryeburgfair.org)





**Key**

Agricultural Expo Center	D4	Horse & Pony Barns:	D1, E1
ATM Machine	A4, E5	Pulling Horses (2)	E1, F1
Beano Building	F5	Show Horses (2)	E1, F1
Beef Barns (2)	C2, D2	Show Ponies (3)	F1
Blacksmith Shop	C5	Race Horses (5)	G1, H1
Camping Offices:		Horse Stables	E1
Fairview	E5	Information Booths (2)	E5, F2
Livestock	D1	Judges Stand	F4
Trackside	H3	Little Red Schoolhouse	C5
Catholic Church Food	F9	Livestock Office	D3
Cong. Church Dairy Bar	D3	Livestock Show Arena	C2
Craft Beer	H3	Llama/Alpacas Barn	E2
Craft Center	D4	Loretta's Kitchen	C5
Dairy Barns (7)	D2, D3	Main Office	C1
Denmark Lions Food	F3	Midway Office	E5
Draft Horse & Pony Show	F3	Milking Parlor & Demo Area	D8
Emily's Restaurant	E2	Mothers Lounge	C4
Energy Row	C4	Mountain View Pavilion	D2
Entertainment:		Museum	C5, D5
Draft Horse Park	E1	Mutual Windows	F3, F4, G1
Hayseed Theater	G1	Natural Resources Center	C4
Water Wheel Park	E5	New Church Restaurant	E4
Xmas Tree Park	E2	Old MacDonald's Park	C5
Expo 1	E5	Old MacDonald's Petting Zoo	C5
Expo 2	E5	Ox Barns	C1, C2, C3, D3
Expo 3	E5	Ox Judging	C3
Fandangle's Restaurant	E4	Ox Pulling (Fr.)	C3
Fiber Center	E2	Ox Scales	C1
Fryeburg's Muster	E2	Paddock	H2
Fire Tower	C3	Poultry Barn	E2
Fire Aid	E5, F1	Pulling Ring	E2
Fryeburg Fire Department	C3	Rabbit Barn	E2
4-H Exhibit Hall	E2	Racing Office	H1
4-H Horse Show	F3	Security	H5
4-H Livestock Barn	D2	Sheep Barns	D2
Fryeburg Lions Food	E3	Sheep Dog Trials	G2
Garden Center	C4	Sheep Show Ring	D2
Gates:		Specialty Foods Pavilion	D4
Blue	A4	Sugar House	C5
Green	H1	Swine Barn	C3
Main	E5	Swine & Goat Grandstand	H5
Orange	F1	Swine & Goat Play Area	H5
Walk-in	H5	Ticket Office Booth	A4, E5, F1, H5
Grandstands:		Tractor Pulling	C3, F3
Main	F3	Truck Pulling	F3
Goat	C3	Wash Racks	C2, D1, D2, D3, F1
Hay & Grain Barn	C1	Water Wheel Park & Stage	E5
		Woodsmen's Field Day	F2
		Woodward Show Arena	D2
		Xmas Tree Exhibits	E2

**COLOR KEY**

First Aid/Public Safety	Restrooms	Livestock	Expos	Entertainment	ATM Machine	Information
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May 2013



# You really can get there from here

By **TERRY LEAVITT**  
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

There's a famous joke about asking for directions in Maine that ends with the punchline, "You can't get there from here."

That may be how it seems when you are stuck in traffic going to the Fryeburg Fair, but it really isn't true.

Having personally tried several approaches, times and methods — from driving to the gate to biking from Conway — I can tell you it isn't always easy but it's always worth the trip.

Rachel Andrews Damon, publicist for the fair on Thursday offered a report on this year's traffic along with travel advice for fairgoers — particularly good to have if you are planning to go on Saturday.

Saturday is always the busiest day of the fair, with more than 35,000 people attending on that day alone.

And any day at the fair is busier when the weather is good. Saturday and Sunday are both looking to be beautiful fall days with peak foliage and Accu-weather forecasting a partly sunny, breezy day with a highs in the upper 50s.

"You always have to take the weather into consideration," Damon said.

Damon said the fair puts out a statement in publications, on the internet and on Facebook to alert people about the traffic along with tips to make their travel easier.

"A lot of people work on traffic," Damon said. The fair creates two lanes for cars to get in and outas traffic nears the fairgrounds in downtown Fryeburg, and police and direct traffic to keep things flowing as smoothly as possible.

In addition, Damon works to get out advice. "We're posting four times a week before the busiest days," she said. "The biggest advice is to come early."

The gates open at 7 a.m. every day, and Damon said on the busiest days, its best to get to the fair before 9 a.m. if you can. On the not-so-busy days mid-week (not Tuesday, because seniors get in for free on that day), you should still plan to get there before 10 a.m. to avoid the traffic.

"Get here early, park your car before 9, get a cup of coffee and a doughnut, spend the whole day. There's plenty to do," she said.

A less direct route, such as through East Conway, may save you time, though as those routes become more well known traffic slows on them as well, and will slow as you get closer to the fair.

Included in the regular Facebook post is the following advice:

"Arrive at Fryeburg Fair from Lovell, Maine. Coming from the Bridgton, Maine, area use alternate routes of Route 93 or Knight's Hill Road, driving into Lovell, and follow Route 5 South to the Fair's Lovell Gate.

"Coming from the south on Route 16 try re-routing to Route 113 and follow East Conway Road, stay on Route 113 and come into Maine. Three miles from the New Hampshire border, take a right onto Corn Shop Road, follow to the end, take a right, you're on Route 5. Head South for 2 miles to the Fair's Lovell Gate.

The second most important thing, she said, is to

see **TRAFFIC** page 5

24 Hour Emergency Number  
During Fair 207-935-3268

## PROGRAM OF EVENTS 2022

No Pets Allowed Inside  
The Fairgrounds  
SERVICE DOGS ONLY

Subject to change if necessary

Strollers, wheelchairs & scooters are available to rent at the "Blue Gate" and "Orange Gate" on a first come, first serve basis.  
Free Admission to Grandstand (Except Racing Boxes)  
Agricultural Exhibition Center Open Daily 9 am - 9 pm  
Schoolhouse Open Daily 9 am - 5 pm Farm Museum Open Daily 9 am - 8 pm  
Museum Craft Demonstrations Open Daily 10 am - 5 pm  
Fiber Demonstrations Open Daily 9 am - 9 pm  
Llama/Alpaca Demonstrations Daily @ 11 am and on-going

### Key to Buildings

AEC	Agricultural Exhibition Center	PR	Pulling Ring
CC	Craft Center	RB	Rabbit Barn
CTE	Christmas Tree Exhibit	RG	Racing Grandstand
FC	Fiber Center	SGG	Swine & Goat Grandstand
LSA	Livestock Show Arena	WSA	Woodward Show Arena
MVP	Mountain View Pavillion		

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8

9:45 am Speaker - American Farm Bureau - RG  
10:00 am Flower Show - Expo 1  
Grand Parade - Trophy Presentations - RG  
11:00 am Wreathmaking Demo at Christmas Tree Exhibit  
Sheep Shearing Demo - MVP  
11:30 am 4-H Swine Show - SGG  
12:00 pm Flower Show - Expo 1  
4-H Sheep Show Type Classes - MVP  
Ox Pulling 2900 lbs. - 6' Elimination - PR  
1:00 pm 4-H Dairy Show - WSA  
1:30 pm Harness Racing - RG  
2:00 pm Flower Show - Expo 1  
Wreathmaking Demo at Christmas Tree Exhibit  
4-H Beef Heifer Show - LSA  
2:30 pm 4-H Showmanship - Working Steer - SGG  
Horse Pulling - 3300 lbs - Distance - PR  
4:00 pm Flower Show - Expo 1  
Ox Pulling 3300 - 6' Elimination - PR  
5:00 pm Sheep Shearing Demo - MVP  
6:00 pm Adult Beef & Dairy Showmanship - LSA  
6:30 pm Horse Pulling, Ride the Boat - Sweepstakes, 20' (NO Touch) - PR  
7:00 pm 4-H Sheep Lead Line - MVP  
8:00 pm Night Show - TBA

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9

8:30 am Church Service - Hayseed Theater  
4-H Working Steers Scooting Contest - SGG  
9:00 am 4-H Sheep Showmanship Classes - MVP  
4-H Beef Heifer Show - LSA  
4-H Dairy Show - WSA  
10:00 am Flower Show - Expo 1  
10:30 am Open Pig Scramble - PR (Ages 8-10) Entries Close at 9:30 am (Drawing)  
11:00 am Catholic Mass - Hayseed Theater  
Wreathmaking Demo at Christmas Tree Exhibit  
12:00 pm Ox Pulling - 4 Ox Pull (Two pair of Oxen Driven by one Driver)  
Percentage Distance (each team must weigh 2400 lbs) - PR  
Flower Show - Expo 1  
Sheep Shearing Demo - MVP  
Scooting Contest - SGG  
12:30 pm Children Pie Eating Contest - AEC  
1:00 pm Harness Racing - RG  
1:30 pm Flower Show - Expo 1  
2:00 pm Horse Pulling - 2 lbs of rock per lb. of horse Percentage - Distance - PR  
3:00 pm Children Decorate a Farm Themed Cookie - AEC  
5:00 pm Following Races is 4WD Pull - RG  
(Grandstand seats reserved until racing ends) - Infield Area

See you in 2023 - Oct. 1 through Oct. 8

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FRYEBURG FAIR

The West Oxford Agricultural Society (presenters of the Fryeburg Fair) was incorporated on June 3, 1851. Originally nine Maine towns were included, with six New Hampshire towns added in 1888.

After moving from town to town for the first few years, a permanent fair site was purchased in Fryeburg. After nearly 30 years it moved to its present location, north of town, with the purchase of 26 acres for \$133. The first fair was held there in October 1885. During the next 100 plus years it has expanded to 200 acres and includes 100 permanent buildings, with over 3,000 camping sites. Currently, about

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### DAILY ENTERTAINMENT

Fryeburg Fair is pleased to present over 200 of Maine's most talented musicians and entertainers throughout the Fair week. Performances are ongoing in five different locations, the Waterwheel Park by the Front Gate, Christmas Tree Park next to the Pulling Ring, Hayseed Theater by the Orange Gate, and the Draft Horse Park by the Llama Barn. Entertainment brochures are available at each gate and the

No Pets Allowed Inside  
The Fairgrounds  
SERVICE ANIMALS ONLY

### FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE

Historically, traffic has been heavier on Saturday's due to our great morning Parade, afternoon Midway and Harness Racing. To avoid traffic we suggest that you Come Early and Stay Late. Also, for your convenience and to help with traffic flow, Fryeburg Fair has posted alternate routes to and from the Fairgrounds.

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## Fair on track for strong attendance numbers this year

Fryeburg Fair has had strong attendance numbers throughout the week, fueled by good weather and a desire of people to get back to normal after more than two years of COVID.

"We expected it to be a big year and it is a big year," fair publicist Rachel Andrews Damon said Thursday. "If you want to see people and you want to meet and greet, this is the place to go. Foliage is almost peaking. People are happy."

After going completely virtual in 2020, last year's fair attendance also had a good showing, even with COVID precautions still in place. This year, though the virus is still circulating, COVID precautions have been removed and fair attendance is expected to be higher.

This year's paid attendance so far: Opening Sunday — 25,064; Monday — 21,648; Tuesday — 12,677; Wednesday, 14,919. Tuesday is a much busier day than paid attendance figures suggest because people over age 65 can attend for free that day.

The Fryeburg Fair annually draws about 300,000 people during its eight-day run. That number includes both paid and free admissions. Children under 12 get in free every day.

Fair attendance in recent years hasn't quite been up to the all-time record for paid attendance of 199,266, set in 2004.

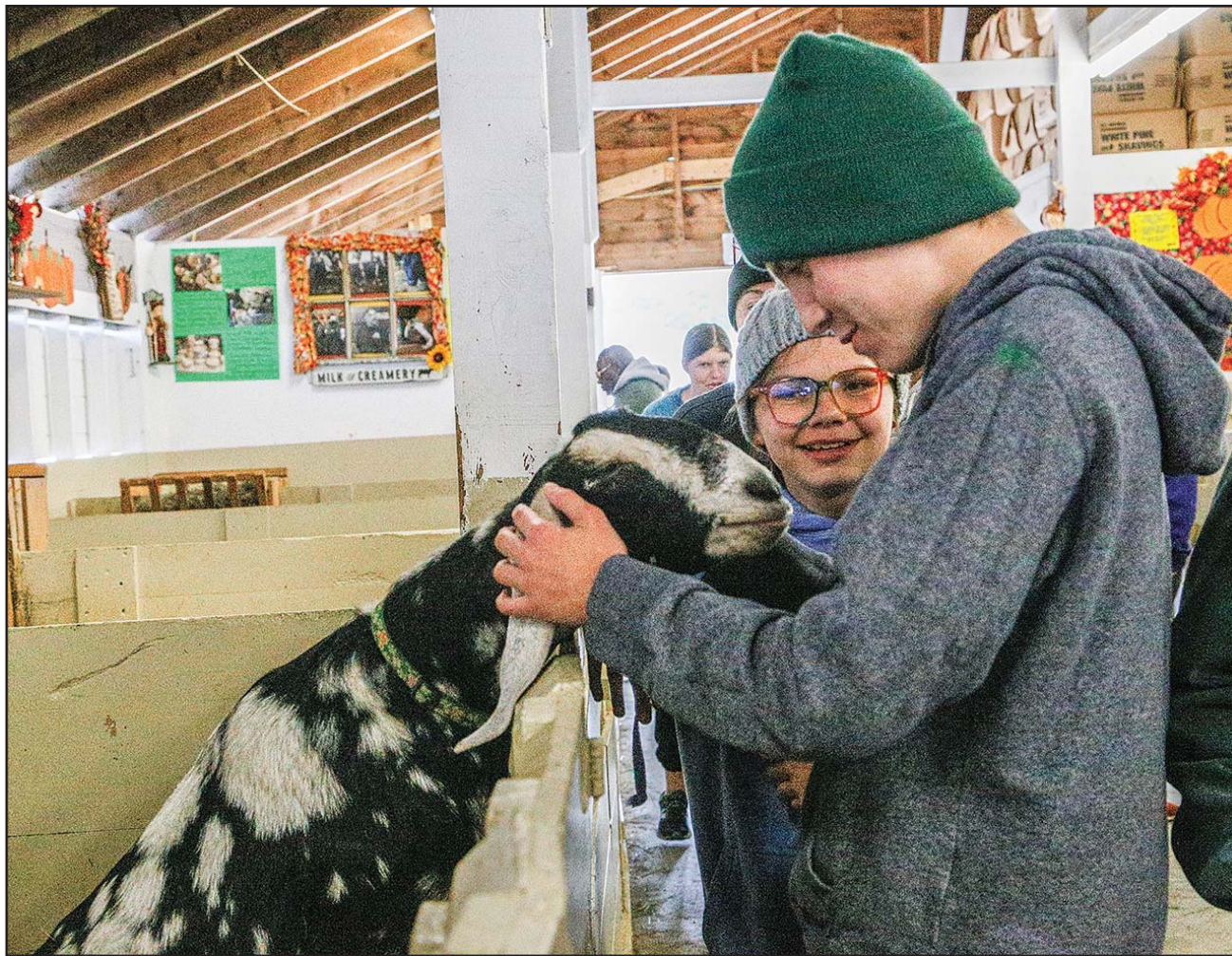
Total paid attendance for the 2021 fair was 165,817, up over 4,000 from 2019's tally of 161,476.

No daily attendance records were set in 2021, but five days of the eight-day fair showed higher totals than 2019.

Daily paid attendance records over the years include:

- Opening Sunday — 29,995 in 2001.
- Monday — 26,017 in 2014.
- Tuesday — 17,014 in 2006.
- Wednesday — 20,125 in 2001.
- Thursday — 20,438 in 2009.
- Friday — 31,451 in 2012.
- Saturday — 46,834 in 2000.
- Closing Sunday — 28,011 in 2001.

Saturday is traditionally the busiest day of the year. As an example of the weather factor, the 2016 paid attendance on a sunny day was in 37,994. In 2014, when it was raining on Saturday, attendance was 18,007.



Jaxon and Aubri Libby, 14 and 11 respectively, of Dixfield, Maine, pet one of the goats in the goat barn on the opening day of the Fryeburg Fair on Oct. 2. (RACHEL SHARPLES PHOTO)

## Animals, agricultural exhibits are the heart of Fryeburg Fair

For all its rides and games, the Fryeburg Fair is at its heart an agricultural fair, with thousands of animals, as well as exhibits of award-winning produce and crafts, demonstrations and competitions aimed at spotlighting and improving agricultural practices.

Crowds of people who never have raised their own goats, sheep or other livestock, and crowds wander through the many barns of animals every day of the fair, watching as the animals are prepared for competitions or resting their stalls, petting the goats and marveling at the size of some of the cattle and horses.

There are shows of dairy cattle and beef cattle, sheep and oxen, horses, goats, swine and rabbits. Most years, there is poultry, too, but they have been canceled this year due to bird flu.

Saturday and Sunday's agricultural events include sheep shearing demos; 4-H shows for sheep, dairy, beef heifers and working steers; an adult show for beef and dairy showmanship; and horse and ox pulling contests.

For those who want to get a taste of all those shows, the Grand Parade on Saturday morning is not to be missed. The parade takes place on the race-track in front of the grandstand and judges stand.

Fair publicist Rachel Andrews Damon said "What's so grand about the Grand Parade? It includes the highlights of the fair. Lots of people with horses, oxen, llamas, goats. Some businesses put floats

see **AGRICULTURE** page 6

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## Favorite memories of the Fair



Roy Thorne, 44, Havelock, New Brunswick, Canada, seen (above) with his father Claude in the Grand Parade at Fryeburg Fair and (below) driving a pyramid hitch of horses in front of the Grandstand : "My favorite memories of Fryeburg Fair are all about the great friendships I have been made over the years. Friends that were made from sitting in the barn getting to know people year after year. Sitting in the pulling ring and people watching us from the stands coming to chat after the show. It's an amazing fair." (COURTESY PHOTO)



### TRAFFIC from page 3

"leave the fairgrounds heading north, even if you're going south."

That said, it depends on where you parked and where you are going.

If you park at the large Swans Falls parking lot at the fair, it is relatively easy to turn right, heading directly toward Conway when you leave the fair and quickly be out of traffic.

Again timing is important. Damon suggests leaving after 4 p.m. to avoid the worst of the traffic.

While the fair does get complaints about traffic, Damon said, "We ask people to understand we are rural and nothing's going to change anytime soon. For the most part, people know what they're getting into. We ask people to remember they are one of thousands and to bring their best demeanors forward. You can't be in a hurry."

And if your up for it, the bike ride can be fun.

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A young competitor takes his horses to the pulling ring at Fryeburg Fair. (COURTESY PHOTO)

**AGRICULTURE** from page 4

together and bands have floats.”

Some of the grandest of the displays in the parade are the teams of horses, Damon said. “They’ll have several draft horses with one hitch — up to eight horses. And some of them will do a figure eight in front of the grandstand. It’s a massive display of skill and handling and horses ability to play on a team.”

“It’s a good hour and a half show,” she said.

If you have kids and want a chance to get close to the animals, there’s Old MacDonald’s Petting Zoo near the children’s midway, where young children can play with animals.

For those interested in history, the nearby Farm Museum features exhibits of old tools and techniques, including a working Blacksmith Shop and “Loretta’s Kitchen” where lucky visitors might get to sample home-baked goods.

The Farm Museum is one of four museums on the fairgrounds. Next door to the Farm Museum, is a one-room school house museum. On the opposite side of the fairgrounds, near the pulling ring and the race track, is the horse-drawn wagon museum, which features a different exhibit each year. And near the Main Entrance, you can find a museum dedicated to the fair itself and its 172-year history.

The fair also has six expo halls that feature everything from exhibits of homemade crafts and agricultural expertise to vendors of specialty foods and other goods to displays of information on natural resources.

General admission continues to be \$12 daily and includes the 8 p.m. night show. Tickets can be pre-purchased online or in-person at the gate. Children under 12 are always free. Gates open at 7 a.m.

For more information on Fryeburg Fair, go to [fryeburgfair.org](http://fryeburgfair.org), email [info@fryeburgfair.org](mailto:info@fryeburgfair.org) or call (207) 935-3268.



Visitors walk through one of the steer barns on the opening day of the Fryeburg Fair on Oct. 2. (RACHEL SHARPLES PHOTO)



Kids run around after the ducks and rabbits in Old McDonald’s Petting Zoo at the Fryeburg Fair in 2021. (RACHEL SHARPLES PHOTO)



A wagon pulled by a team of four draft horses passes the Grandstand in the Grand Parade in 2014. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

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*Favorite memories of the fair*



Charlie Berg, 45, Portland, Maine: "I grew up in Fryeburg and have lived in Maine my entire life. I have been to the fair every year except for the last two, so I'm pretty excited to take my family back! Some of my favorite memories of the fair include watching my kids on the rides, working shifts for Fryeburg Rescue, and eating dog bowls of fries all by myself. But a moment I'll never forget is when we were in grade school, my mom (Cathy Berg of Fryeburg) let us bring a few friends to the fair with us. She didn't know one of them had earned a spot in the pig scramble. When he caught one, all of us were thrilled but my mom. She hadn't planned on watching five young kids and carrying a squealing pig in a sack all around the Fair that day!" Wife, Erin Berg, 45 Portland, Maine: "I'm originally from Barrington, R.I., but married a guy from Fryeburg! One of our first dates was to the Fryeburg Fair 25 years ago, where I got to see my first tractor pull and ate a dog bowl of fries. 2019 was my favorite year because my whole family came up from Providence to visit the fair. When they come back, they want to help my in-laws park cars at the Catholic Church! (COURTESY PHOTO)

# A Fryeburg Fair primer

For those who haven't experienced the Fryeburg Fair before — as well as for those who just can't get enough of it — here's a quick primer:

**WHEN IS IT:** Sunday, Oct. 2-Sunday, Oct. 9.

**WHAT IS IT:** Well, it's an agricultural fair foremost. That's its roots. But it's also a giant carnival, with rides, games and food booths. French fries with vinegar are a Fryeburg Fair staple. Don't knock it until you've tried it.

**WHERE IS IT:** The center of the universe. Or just take Route 5. Can't miss it.

**HISTORY:** The Fryeburg Fair has been around for 172 years,



A young fair participant is seen with her calf. There are many 4-H shows at the fair, as well as shows for adults, of cattle, horses, goats, pigs, sheep and other animals. (RACHEL ANDREWS DAMON PHOTO)

see **PRIMER** page 11

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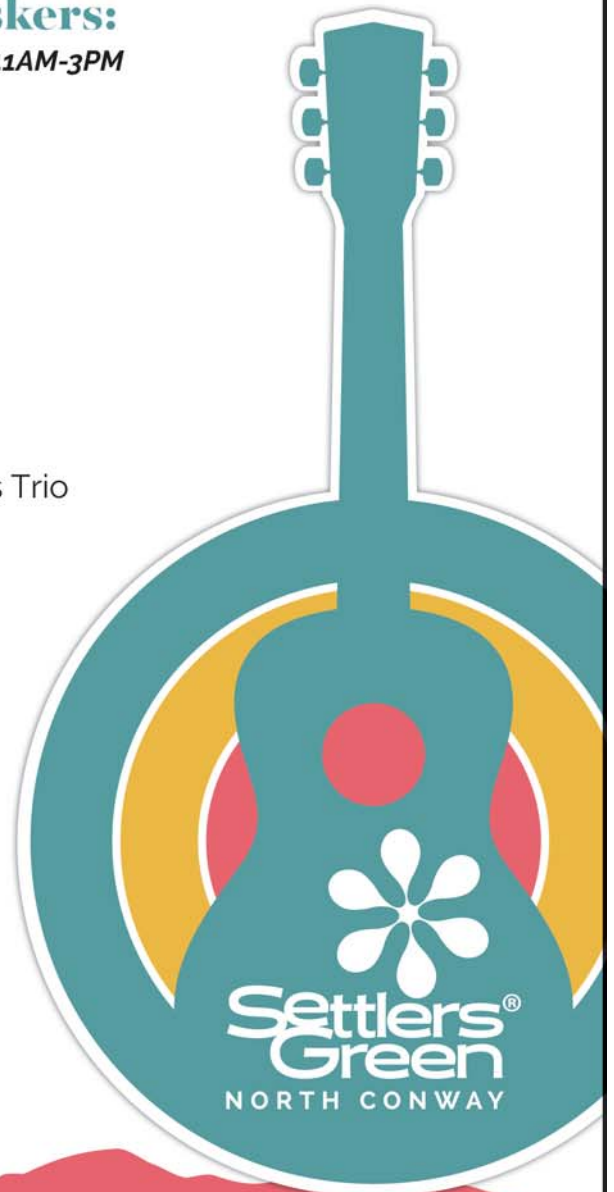
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See street musician play times and locations at [settlersgreen.com/events](http://settlersgreen.com/events)



# Months of work behind filling the fair's stages

By RACHEL ANDREWS DAMON  
SPECIAL TO THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

Fryeburg Fair, established in 1851, has long mixed talent and entertainment of all kinds with their agricultural mission. Rudy Vallee, Tammy Wynette, Jeannie C. Riley, The Mamas & The Papas, Tiny Tim, Chubby Checker, Lady Antebellum and Jamey Johnson are just a few of the long list of performers that have headlined the Night Show at Fryeburg Fair.

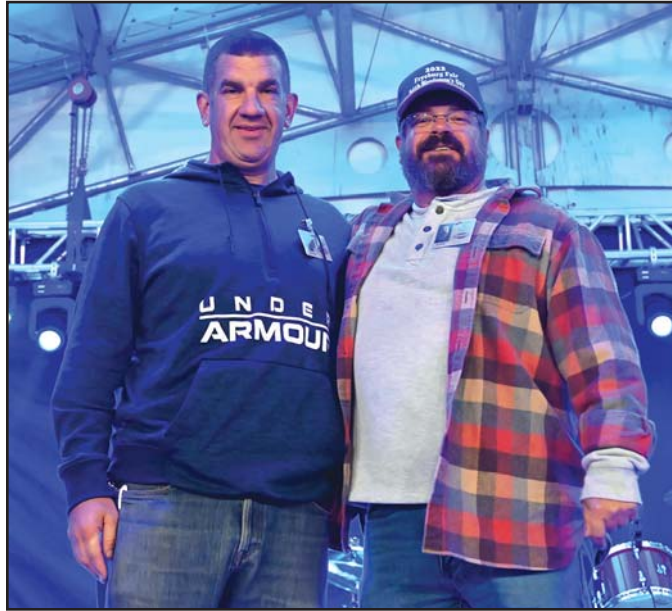
Ken Nelson and Chris Muse are the guys behind the fair's music and entertainment scene. They work with consultants Jon Bliss, of Lovell, Maine, and Tony Martineau, of Fryeburg, who were co-entertainment directors for the fair themselves for several years. Chris is also the son of a former fair entertainment director, Kevin Muse.

Martineau started working at the fair in 1999 joining entertainment directors Kevin Muse and David Hastings III, both of Fryeburg.

Now is his 18th year, Martineau replaced Muse in 2004 when he tragically passed. Bliss joined the fair in 2004 replacing Hastings when he moved to the fair's finance committee. Martineau and Bliss have shared all talent responsibilities since.

A.O. Pike, of Fryeburg, who began working with the fair in 1967, held the entertainment reins in the late 1960s and '70s.

Pike says, "Back then, our budget



LEFT (from left): Ken Nelson and Chris Muse are the co-entertainment directors for Fryeburg Fair. RIGHT (from left) Tony Martineau and Jon Bliss, longtime heads of entertainment at the fair are now consultants. (COURTESY PHOTOS)

was \$500 and our most regular act was the Fryeburg Fair Boys, two talented blind men from northern Maine who were a big draw."

Much has evolved in country fair entertainment since then, leaving behind daredevil motorcycle acts, polesitters and "girly shows."

Today, Bliss and Martineau work closely with talent agent Diana Ammon of Atlantic Music Productions from Newton, N.H., to book night show entertainers.

"Diana knows when a performer or group is just about to hit it big and often we can snag them for a show. She has the ability to identify up-and-coming stars. We've been very fortunate to contract with a few right before they hit the big-time like Lady Antebellum, Jamey Johnson and Phil Vassar. We pretty much stick with country music but some diversity is good for the fairgoers as long as we don't stray too far," Bliss says. "We tried rap and that's not going to happen again."

"And we probably won't do comedy," Martineau adds. "Comedians are best in a small setting and it doesn't trans-

late as well in the great outdoors."

Fryeburg Fair built a much-needed new performance stage on wheels in 2009. The fair's year-round maintenance crew is charged with rolling it out as soon as the space becomes available.

The stage sits on the fair's 1/2-mile horse racing track. Set up begins right after the last horse crosses the finish line.

A local group of seasonal hires makes up a strong and fast-moving stage crew. They populate the stage with music, sound and light equipment set up to the artist's specifications.

see ENTERTAINMENT page 9

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Country music singer Nate Smith will perform at the Grandstand at 8 p.m. Saturday night. (COURTESY PHOTO)

# Final night show to feature Nashville talent Nate Smith

Saturday's night show at the Grandstand at Fryeburg Fair features Nashville up-and-coming super talent Nate Smith, known for such hits as "One of These Days," "Wildfire," "Under My Skin" and his latest release, "Whisky On You."

Admission to this show, as with all night shows at the fair, is part of general admission to the fair itself. The show starts at 8 p.m.

Featuring a mix of gritty backwoods soul, rock 'n' roll swagger and velvet-thunder vocals, Smith is a Nashville artist with a unique connection to life's inner tug of war.

And with his first batch of major-label music (he signed a record contract with Sony Music Nashville in 2020), he's aiming to tip the scales once and for all.

A California native and lifelong music lover, Smith first moved to Nashville in 2008 but quit the music business and returned home.

It was in 2018 that he gained national recognition when his song about the devastating Camp Fire that tore through his hometown of Paradise, Calif., "One of These Days," went viral online and relaunched his career.

He cites Garth Brooks, Elvis Presley and Bob Seger among his musical influences. Among his songs, "Wildfire" and "Under My Skin" have been described as mixing timeless country soul with a touch of '70s-rock toughness, a sweet-and-sour sound with deeper implications. Earlier this year, he debuted at the Grand Ole Opry.

For more information, go to [natesmithofficial.com](http://natesmithofficial.com).

## ENTERTAINMENT from page 8

New England Audio Tech's Rainbow Productions from Atkinson, N.H., has been the fair's sound company for over 20 years. It's high pressure and time-sensitive to seamlessly finalize the process by showtime — always 8 p.m.

Before most shows start, Martineau's wife, Gail, manages the "meet and greets." Lasting an hour or less, the "meet and greets" give a few lucky members of the public an opportunity for a brief visit and photos with their favorite entertainers. Unadvertised and by word-of-mouth, these informal

gatherings are popular. It's up to each artist to determine if they want to do the meet and greet and decide how many people are allowed to attend.

Bliss and Martineau enjoy the excitement of each show. They alternate as emcees and introduce the performers to excited fairgoers.

Martineau says, "We pride ourselves on being on time. We have lots of things that need to go right — especially the lights and sound."

Martineau adds, "It takes a bit for the performers to dial in on the soundboard. We can breathe a sigh of relief

see ENTERTAINMENT page 10



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**ENTERTAINMENT** from page 9

right around the second song. That's about enough time to feel confident that all is well!"

One challenge is the ever-changing weather of Maine's October nights.

Martineau says, "The weather is huge for our night shows."

Bliss adds, "But the show must go on, as they say! It absolutely poured during Michael Delguidice's 2014 Saturday night show and it was windy too. He was fantastic just the same. A truly great performer. The weather didn't matter to him but the crowd was small."

Shortly after his appearance, Delguidice hit the big-time becoming a permanent member of Billy Joel's band.

Martineau's favorite talent act was Lady Antebellum.

Pike says, "Boxcar Willie was probably the best hit we ever made in the '80s. His show was great."

Bliss adds, "Clint Black did a super job. It was one of the best shows we've ever had here. We figure we had 10-12,000 people in attendance."

The fair's grandstand holds approximately 3,200.

The team of Bliss and Martineau are constantly asked why they don't book huge country music legends. .. George Strait, Garth Brooks, Willie Nelson.

"Our roads could not accommodate the traffic," says Bliss. "We don't have enough restrooms, seat-

ing or parking. We don't want to do more harm than good and have people get stuck everywhere. Lots of our current acts max out our grandstand. There are times when we have to have security open up paths through the crowds. If someone needed medical attention, we have to be able to get to them."

Pike notes that Martineau and Bliss have made the fair's entertainment offerings much more professional and the shows just keep getting better.

"We want entertainment to be part of the Fryeburg Fair experience," Bliss says, "but we don't want to overwhelm our agricultural mission. We also take pride in the fact that the night shows come with the price of admission at Fryeburg and it's affordable. Lots of fairs charge separately for big name entertainment."

Besides the Night Shows, booking approximately 132 daily entertainment gigs is a huge aspect of Martineau and Bliss's work. They spend most of May, June and July booking and confirming entertainers. Shows in five parks run from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. each day.

What do Bliss and Martineau look for in an act? "We look for genuine talent and performers that enjoy being on stage with each other because that translates to our fairgoers," says Martineau.

Bliss adds, "Denny Breau is a great example of an entertainer who loves performing. You can't help but have a

good time with him. He's smiling and happy, he's incredibly talented and he connects with the audience. Everyone has a great time."

Bliss says, "We have hundreds of inquiries about performing at the fair. Our entertainers want to be here. They love the fair as much as we do. For every stage we have filled, we have 10 other acts that would love to get that spot. We have some incredible talent in Maine and many of them are at the fair every year. Kismet Strolling Quartet, Jon Sarty, Linwood Cash, Heather Pierson, Nancy & Jeff Ray, Junco and so many more. All excellent. We make an effort to bring in new entertainment each year. But we have many regulars who are incredibly popular. Jose Duddy is 'the man!' He draws the largest crowd for sure."

Martineau notes, "He's got silver hair, a cowboy hat, tight pants and a great voice. It's a sea of women in his audience!"

Post-Fryeburg Fair, Martineau's year-round job is in sales at Fryeburg's Green Thumb Farms.

He works promoting and selling the company's many varieties of local potatoes and dried heirloom beans.

Bliss owns Bliss & Associates in Lovell, a land surveying company, and is also a talented drummer.

The Martineaus have two children, daughter, Erica Martineau Maguire



Tammy Wynette (1942-1998) was the Night Show headliner in 1983. (COURTESY PHOTO)

and wife, Dr. Chris Maquire, grandson, Ryan, and son, Tim Martineau.

Bliss and wife, Pam, have one son, Django, and wife, Cherie. Pam Bliss is in charge of all the information booths at Fryeburg Fair.

When asked about retiring (Martineau and Bliss are in their 60s), both men agree, "We love our jobs at the Fair. We're going to do it for as long as we're able. It's very entertaining!"

"Wicked!" says Martineau.

For more information on Fryeburg Fair entertainment, go to fryeburgfair.org.

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### Favorite memories of the fair



Barbara Gushee, 56, Fryeburg (seen with son PJ Clair in 2004 and 2022: "My best memory was from 2004 when I had my son four days before the fair began. That was his first fair and he hasn't missed one yet. He'll be 18 on Sept. 29.")

**PRIMER** from page 7

and at the present location on Route 5 for about 135 of those years. It started out on 26 acres. It now covers more than 185 acres and has 100 buildings for expos and livestock.

**WHO RUNS IT:** The fair is put on by the West Oxford Agricultural Society, made up of 16 Western Maine towns and six New Hampshire towns. General superintendent is David Andrews, supported by many division superintendents.

**HOW MUCH DOES IT COST:** If you're under 12, nothing. And on Tuesday, being 65 or older will get you in free. Otherwise, admission is \$12. The sights, sounds and smells, of course, are priceless — especially in the vicinity of the livestock barns.

**PERENNIAL FAVORITES:** Woodsmen's Field Day, held on Monday, is always a big draw. Men and women compete in several categories, from ax-throwing to log-rolling. Also on Monday is the skillet throw for women and anvil toss for men, with competitors throwing for distance and accuracy. Pig

scrambles, with youngsters trying to catch the darting little rascals, are held several times throughout fair week. Parimutuel harness racing starts on Tuesday and continues through the end of the fair. And the Grand Parade, starring well-fed and well-groomed livestock, is Saturday morning. Four pig scrambles will be held during fair week. The first is on Sunday at 11:30 a.m. in the Pulling Ring.

**LOCAL FLAVOR:** In addition to a traveling midway from Dreamland Amusements, Fryeburg Fair is a showcase for local artisans and a major fundraiser for local churches and non-profits, which offer games and sell food.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Spend some time in the Craft Center. Lots of talented people creating some pretty cool stuff. Think about doing some Christmas shopping at the fair. Other local crafters are scattered throughout the fairgrounds. Look for them. Chat with them. Support them.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** The fair's website is fryeburgfair.org, and the phone number (207) 935-3268.

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# Scenes from the Fryeburg Fair



LEFT: Norway firefighters smile together between events during the Firemen's Muster at the opening day of the Fryeburg Fair on Sunday, Oct. 2. ABOVE: A North Conway firefighter scales a ladder held by his teammates during the ladder event at the muster. (RACHEL SHARPLES PHOTOS)



ABOVE: Riders raise their hands and cheer as they fly through the air on the "Pharaoh's Fury" on at the Fryeburg Fair on Oct. 2. RIGHT: Crowds navigate through food vendors, rides, and other stands at the opening day of the Fryeburg Fair on Oct. 2. (RACHEL SHARPLES PHOTO)

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ABOVE LEFT: Calvin Willard of Barnet, Vt., winds up for his toss in the ax-throwing competition part of the annual Woodsmen's Field Day on Monday at the Fryeburg Fair. ABOVE RIGHT: Susan Mattern of Preston, Conn. (center), and Darcy Rose of Chaplin, Conn., saw through their beam in the crosscut competition. RIGHT: Zack Jordan of Sterling, Conn. (right), and Eric Piazza of Bethlehem, Conn., push the log along the tracks in the log roll competition. BELOW: Maurice Mollieur of Greensboro Bend, Vt., (left) and Gilles Mollieur of Derby Line, Vt., take part in the crosscut competition. (RACHEL SHARPLES PHOTOS)





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# History of the Fryeburg Fair: How it all began

FRYEBURG, Maine — It was a chilly day in March 1851 when a few local farmers and merchants got together and decided to show off their produce, cattle and wares to the community.

Since those humble beginnings, Fryeburg Fair has grown to become Maine's largest agricultural fair, with harness racing, a farm museum second to none, the world's largest steer and oxen show and a reputation known throughout North America.

The eight-day "Blue Ribbon Classic" has flourished since that first fair when William Walker of Lovell, Maine, won \$3 for the best acre of corn, and William Spring of Brownfield earned \$1 for the best seed wheat.

Today, the early-October fair boasts nearly 100 buildings on 185 acres in the Saco River Valley. Attracting more than 300,000 people annually, it is Maine's largest fair, second only in size in New England to the Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, Mass.

The original history of the fair emerged in the mid-1980s, thanks to surprisingly well-documented records discovered by longtime fair trustee Donald Buzzell of Fryeburg.

Two yellowing books, one of secretary reports and the other a membership listing, were located in a shed cupboard at the Buzzell farmhouse, purchased by Don's late father in 1884.

Signing the original documents for the society formed "for the improvement of agriculture and horticulture" were Gen. Pegleg Wadsworth of Hiram, president; David R. Hastings, a Lovell lawyer who served the original board as vice president; Thomas Souther of Fryeburg, recording secretary; and Isaac Spring of Brownfield, corresponding secretary and librarian.

To consider the "expediency of forming an agricultural society," several men from Fryeburg, Brownfield and Hiram met at Sam Stickney's Inn in Brownfield on March 22, 1851. It was there that Wadsworth was chosen president and named, along with Souther and Col. Edward S. Osgood, to a committee to report on a constitution and bylaws, according to the original secretary's report.

Enthusiasm for the idea spread quickly through the original incorporating towns of Fryeburg, Hiram, Brownfield, Lovell, Denmark, Porter, Sweden, Waterford, Stow and Stoneham. Any resident of those towns could join by paying \$1 per year, and a lifetime membership was available to the affluent for \$10.



The cattle barns and the ox teams at the Fryeburg fair in 1900. (MAINEMEMORY.NET/FRYEBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHOTO)

The 31st Maine Legislature passed a special act incorporating the society, and the charter was officially accepted Oct. 31, 1851. The following Friday, the first fair was held in Brownfield, and it rotated towns each year until today's permanent location was found in 1856. It took two years to purchase the land near the old Portland-Ogdensburg Railroad depot.

In 1884 and 1885, the fair sold its railroad land for \$2,145, and in 1895 purchased 25 acres, the first of several parcels at the present site along the Fryeburg-Lovell Road for \$135. The last expansion came in 1995, when 10 acres were purchased on the east side of Route 5.

While the fair was the creation of a group of Maine men, they quickly realized they could not go it alone. They voted to allow women into the membership in 1859

on payment of 25 cents annually.

In 1861, when fighting broke out during the Civil War, optimistic officials had already increased the annual exhibition from one to three days. With membership rolls from Maine down during the war, premiums were added to attract New Hampshire residents, although it would be another 40 years before they would officially be voted into society membership.

Fryeburg boasts many superlatives, including the oldest continuous 4-H baby beef sale in New England.

Fryeburg officials pressed on with their sale during World War II, while Eastern States (the Big E) curtailed its sale until after the war. A former president emeritus and Maine legislator, the late Francis Buzzell, chaired the first baby beef program, which this year will celebrate its 59th anniversary. He served on the original committee, along with the Phil Andrews, Donald Buzzell and John Weston.

Andrews, a finance committee member for four decades, was elected president in 1991, when Francis

see HISTORY page 15

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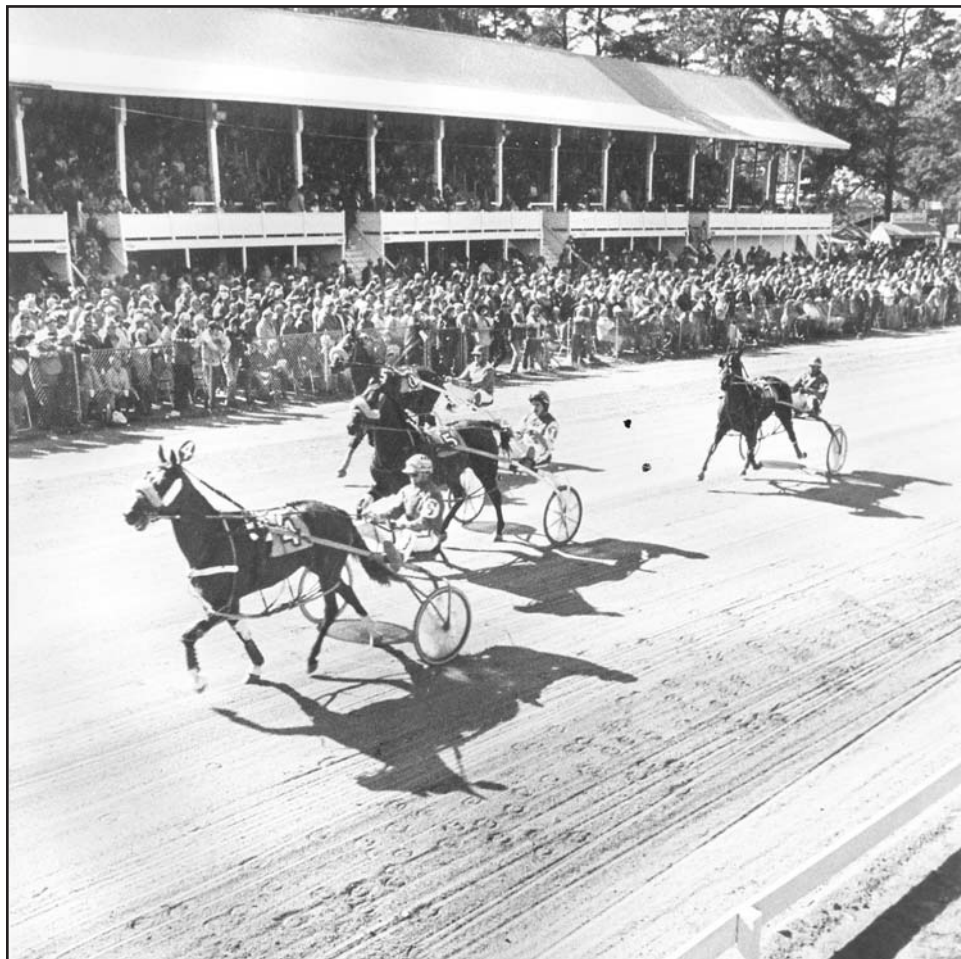


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The Racing Grandstand was built in 1894. (FRYEBURG FAIR PHOTO)

**HISTORY** from page 14

Buzzell's health forced him to step down. Andrews passed away in 2002, and long-time friend David Hastings II succeeded him as president.

The fair's growth to eight days has been a gradual one. Trustees voted to expand the fair to four days in 1941, but World War II stalled the expansion until 1945. The fair swelled to five days in 1954, seven days a few years later, and eight days in 1981,

when the second Sunday was added. While the fair continues to grow in popularity, officials say they are satisfied with keeping the event at eight days.

The history of the Fryeburg Fair is chronicled in words and photographs in the History Hall, located just outside Expo 1 near the front gate.

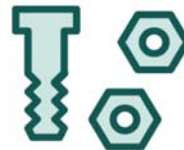
*This history of the fair originally appeared in The Conway Daily Sun in 2003.*



The 1999 4-H Baby Beef Grand Champion. (FRYEBURG FAIR PHOTO)

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