



For Immediate Release

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High resolution images available at

www.flickr.com/groups/1046137@N23/

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Fair Funding

Placerville, CA (April 21, 2011) -- The El Dorado County Fair is June 16 – 19. Notwithstanding numerous rumors regarding California fair funding, this fairground will survive and we believe thrive! The fairgrounds, a 501(c)3, operates without benefit of any local tax dollars. Also, the fairgrounds receive no tourism dollars, despite the fact that the fair is the largest single event held in the county. We provide a venue for many other events that places tourists in hotels and brings thousands of dollars to the county through sales tax on purchases of goods and services.

Be assured that the fairgrounds will continue to produce quality events like the Fair, Family Blast, (held July 2nd this year!), monthly Horse Shows, Sportsman's and Outdoor Expo and the Crab & Pasta Gala. The community will continue to have a great venue to hold events and fundraisers that bring dollars to their causes, which benefit the less fortunate in our community.

Fair funding is an issue that presents opportunities and challenges to the fair staff and our Directors. Since the 1930s, all fairs in California received dollars from the horse racing tax, to help with expenses. The dollar amount received was typically dependent upon the size of the fair. For many reasons, horse racing itself has been declining for years and with the addition of off-track betting, the funds that were taxed have seen great declines. With this scenario, two years ago the State legislature arranged to take back the horse racing tax and fund the fair network through the general fund. This occurred once. As many of you have already heard, they cut the funding from the budget and did not return the horse racing tax.

To our fair, this cut in funding amounts to about \$200,000.00 per year. Needless to say this is challenging! Part of this funding was in the form of annual audit assistance, partial unemployment, training and other expense reimbursement. Money was also made available that allowed us to receive low cost loans to fund major repairs, remodeling and even new construction such as the new Milton Pavilion Beef Barn. These dollars are no longer available to us.

Since we learned of this possibility, we began reviewing our budget to determine where we can decrease costs and increase revenues if need be. No one wants to see their costs increase, but we are looking to spread it evenly and as thinly as possible across all sections of our business.

We are a very frugal operation and have spent many years cutting back without affecting the integrity of our programs. Examples of expense cutting include; required staff furlough days, lowering water usage by changing when and how often we water and the entry guide was not printed this year but is available online. We even create notepads using the backs of used paper.

We are trying to increase our fair partnerships, so if you have a business you would like to promote, contact us on how to get your name on a gate, stage or building! Our building rental prices will increase 10%. We want to keep rental prices as low as possible considering the many non-profit organizations that utilize the grounds. Fair ticket prices will increase \$1, still being a fabulous bargain for a full day of entertainment! Discounted presale tickets are available online or at the fair office.

This “opportunity” allows us to review all aspects of the business and make changes where warranted, but we will endure! Thanks to our community for keeping us relevant to you, so that we may stay strong in these tough times.

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