RIDES, FOOD AND FUN ON OFFER WHEN UPPER STATE FAIR OPENS THURSDAY



Amanda Brady, left, and Rensha Bindeman work to clean the Funtastic Train at the Upper South Carolina State Fair in Easley on Tuesday. The fair runs Aug. 30-Sept. 9. MYKAL MCELDOWNEY/STAFF

Fair days ahead

By Julie Howle
Staff Writer
jhowle@greenvillenews.com

Steeped in tradition and packed with thrilling rides, fair food and an assortment of attractions and shows, the Upper South Carolina State Fair is ready to once again welcome droves of families and fair-loving fans.

The 49th annual Upper South Carolina State Fair will run from Thursday until Sept. 9 at the fairgrounds off U.S. 123 at the Greenville-Pickens Speedway, said Tammy Hawkins, coordinator of the fair.

"It's just one of those family traditions that everybody gets excited about the fair every year," Hawkins said. "You see a lot of grandparents bringing their grandchildren."

Hawkins said tens of thousands of people are expected again for the fair's 11-day run.

The fair will include a classic car cruise-in, a rodeo, amusement rides, games, exotic and farm animals, a demolition derby, pig racing and vendors selling items such as collectibles, home décor and toys.

Shows such as Fantazia Circus, which includes acrobats, stunts and a motorcycle cage, and Wambold's Amazing Animals, which has tigers and ligers among other animals, will entertain fairgoers as well,

See FAIR, Page 4B



Rides begin going up in preparation for the start of the Upper South Carolina State Fair. MYKAL MCELDOWNEY/STAFF



Amanda Brady, right, and Rensha Bindeman help get the Funtastic Train ready for riders when the fair opens. MYKAL MCELDOWNEY STAFF

FAIR

Continued from Page 1B

Hawkins said.

She said there also will be the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East-Kevin Whitaker Chevrolet 140 race on Labor Day.

A new feature this year is a show called The Comedy Magic of Lee Germain & Judi.

Fair admission will be $7 per person, up from $6 last year.

Hawkins said there hadn't been an admission price increase in several years.

The fair will offer children's rides and traditional rides, such as the Ferris wheel and Merry-Go-Round, as well as rides with names packing a more powerful punch, from G-Force to The Ring of Fire.

Hawkins said safety is a priority.

Playworld Amusements, which provides the rides, does safety checks, and security from local law enforcement and ambulance service are at the fair throughout the event.

Fair foodies will find their favorites, with everything from burgers and barbecue to funnel cake and cotton candy, and they can check out some new items this year, too, such as catfish at a vendor named Bite Me and Cuban cuisine from Cowboys and Cubans, Hawkins said.

"A lot of people with the economy being the way it is they haven't been able to afford a vacation so this is kind of their vacation without having to go too far," she said.

Hawkins recalls going to fairs with her family growing up. The sights and sounds are etched in her memory.

"Even still now I get excited about it because the fair's in town," she said.

YOU CAN GO

Admission is $7. Advanced tickets can be purchased through today at BI-LO stores for $6. Free admission opening night, Thursday. Parking is $3. Gates open at 4 p.m. on weekdays and noon on Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day. It will close at 11 p.m. all nights except for Friday and Saturday. It closes at midnight. visit upperscstatefair.com.