Fair days promise fun for Upstate

New animal show will be among features this year

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Maybe it's the dazzling lights and the spine-tingling rides. Or the funnel cake and candy apples.

Whatever the lure, a flood of fairgoers is expected to soon come out for the Upper South Carolina State Fair.

"When I was younger, it was all about the rides," said Vicki Boling of Easley. Now, she said, "I enjoy going around and looking at the crafts and the livestock exhibitions."

The Upper South Carolina State Fair begins Thursday and runs through Sept. 11 at the fairgrounds off U.S. 123 at the Greenville-Pickens Speedway, said Tammy Hawkins, coordinator of the fair.

This will be the 48th year of the fair, with something for everyone.

"It's family-oriented," Hawkins said.

Mark Webb, who lives in Pendleton, said he might bring his granddaughter to the fair this year.

"Since she's so young, I'll bring her just to put on the kiddie rides, cotton candy, the little things we all had when we were little boys and girls," Webb said.

Fairgoers will find amusement rides, exotic and farm animals, the demolition derby, rodeo and much more, Hawkins said.

"We have a brand-new show this year," she said. "It's called Wambold's Amazing Animals."

Hawkins said they have miniature horses and tigers and other animals.

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She said the fair also will include Doc Swan, a magic variety show, and Fantazia Circus, which includes acrobats, stunts and a motorcycle cage.

Rides include the traditional, such as the Ferris wheel and carousel, along with G-Force, Zero Gravity and the Himalaya.

Hawkins said they also will have plenty of kiddie rides.

There also will be fair foods of all kinds, from funnel cakes, candy apples and fudge to hot dogs, hamburgers and barbecue.

Hawkins said you "see a lot of smiling faces" at the fair, where lots of noise, lights and laughter come together. "It seems like everybody's always in a good mood and everybody's ready to have some fun."

She said last year more than 170,000 people attended the event.

Cindy Dickard, who lives in Easley, said she brought her kids to the fair when they were younger and took her nephews last year.

"I think it's good for the economy," Dickard said. "It gives us something to do, something different."

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