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2013 BIG FRESNO FAIR RECORDS HIGHEST ATTENDANCE IN OVER 20 YEARS

Diverse entertainment, exceptional weather and big discounts credited as factors in attendance surge

Fresno, CA...October 16, 2013... The Big Fresno Fair's Board of Directors, Management and staff are pleased to announce an incredibly successful completion of the 2013 Big Fresno Fair, which ran October 2 – 14. On closing day of the 2013 Fair, loyal guests packed the grounds for an extra day of Fair entertainment, food, education and fun, rounding out what Fair organizers call "the best Fair in decades!"

For the 130th edition of The Big Fresno Fair everything just fell into place perfectly – 13 days of exceptional and consistent weather, a strong and diverse entertainment line-up boasting four sold out shows as part of the Table Mountain Concert Series in the Paul Paul Theater (Ramon Ayala, Gabriel Iglesias, Korn and Darius Rucker), great discount opportunities and promotions to draw people to the Fair and a strong horse racing meet. "I could not be more pleased with the results of this year's Fair," said John C. Alkire, CEO of The Big Fresno Fair. "Our team worked incredibly hard to put on the best

Big Fresno Fair possible from attractions and entertainment to discounts to community service programs to exceptional customer service - all of that paid off and the community turned out in crowds to support us. We thank them for that unwavering support!"

The overall 2013 Big Fresno Fair attendance during the 13 days was 641,351, which is an 11.06% increase from the 12-day 2012 Big Fresno Fair. The last time the Fair drew crowds in excess of 600,000 was in 1992 when it was a 17-day Fair. And as you may imagine, in turn the Fair's concessions were up by 13.25% over last year. That upward trend continued into the live horse racing meet despite lagging racing numbers statewide due to smaller herd sizes and an increased challenge in getting horses on the fair racing circuit. Alkire credits the Fair's track reputation, incentive program for trainers and owners, as well as a new initiative to recruit out-of-state horses to come race at Fresno for the increase in handle. The Big Fresno Fair 9-day live horse racing meet was up 2% for both On-Track and Northern California wagering and up 6% for out-of-state wagering.

As the economy continues to struggle with recovery, the Fair focused on deep discounts – both pre-Fair and Fair-time. Popular pre-Fair discounts included the Season Pass, a great money-saving opportunity providing unlimited admission to the Fair for just \$25; up to a \$10 discount for Unlimited Carnival Ride Wristbands; plus \$2 off admission when purchasing early at participating Save Mart & FoodMaxx locations. Fair-time discounts included



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the returning \$1 Wednesday Mania (10/2); new “Fans & Followers” Day (10/3); Eye-Q Seniors’ Day presented by PG&E and Humana (10/7); Special Interest Day (10/7); Les Schwab Tires \$2 Tuesday (10/8); \$1 Carnival Ride Wednesday (10/9); Save Mart & FoodMaxx “Feed the Need” Community Food Drive (10/10); and the Sun-Maid Kids’ Day with the new “Family Play Date Expo” (10/14). The Save Mart & FoodMaxx “Feed the Need” Community Food Drive collected 143,676 pounds (71.8 tons) of food to support The Salvation Army and Community Food Bank’s efforts to feed the nearly 484,000 people living in poverty every day in Fresno, Madera, Kings and Kern counties. Wawona Frozen Foods stepped up in a big way donating 24,000 pounds in frozen fruit cups, fruit pops and turnovers. More cash donations continue to come in from community members pledged as part of this effort. This year’s efforts (excluding pending cash donations) bring the five year total to more than 568,022 pounds (284 tons) of food collected at the Fair’s annual Community Food Drive.

Again this year, The Big Fresno Fair continued several programs that recognize the achievements of the community’s brightest scholars, agricultural leaders and talented individuals. This year the 3rd Annual 4.0 & Above Program presented by Fresno County Office of Education, Friends of the Big Fresno Fair, EECU and Toyota, where Fresno County high school students whose cumulative GPA was 4.0 or higher, were invited to enter the Fair for free on Opening Day. They also were able to enter-to-win in a random drawing for amazing prizes including; (10) \$3,000 scholarships, 2014 Toyota Corolla S, proudly donated by Toyota, (2) iPads, (6) mountain bikes and other assorted prizes, all donated by community members and organizations. Over 5,000 students, their families and friends packed the Brian I. Tatarian Grandstand in this rally-like event to watch as winning tickets were drawn for students who were present. The top prize winner was Victor Quintos from Central East High School who proudly walked away with a new Toyota Corolla S because of his scholastic achievement of maintaining a 4.208 GPA.

The Big Band Review presented by EECU and Toyota, also in its third year, was host to 24 Junior High and High School marching bands awarding \$13,500 in a variety of prize categories with Clark Intermediate School receiving \$1,500 and Washington Union High School receiving \$2,000 as top prizes.

Fairgoers were greeted by a variety of new attractions which included the “Reptile House” in the Meyers Water & Wildlife Tree in Table Mountain Rancheria Park, the Discover the Dinosaurs Exhibit, Sea Lion Splash, the new Ex-Scream Rollercoaster and 100 ft. tall Vertigo in the Main Carnival and, of course, all the fabulous new and returning Fair food vendors! The Big Fresno Fair has continued to move forward and make BIG improvements while maintaining their mission to celebrate, educate and have fun each and every year!

The overall success of the 2013 Fair would not be possible without a community who loves and supports their Fair. Many families stayed local for their entertainment and The Big Fresno Fair provided a family-friendly and affordable option. Planning is already underway for the 2014 Big Fresno Fair, which will run October 1 -13 and will mark the 131st year of this valued tradition.