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A jam-packed program of events for Richmond's 156th

By Claudia Villemaire
RICHMOND

Highlights on this year's program at the 156th Richmond Fair include some innovative displays that are interesting and informative.

In the hospitality area at the front of the arena, visitors will find a display of memorabilia giving viewers a peek at tools

and lifestyles 50 or more years ago. An interesting arrangement modeled after a farm kitchen, complete with a cook stove, ice box and various cooking utensils will surprise younger viewers when they remember their modern homes with today's technologies almost taken for granted.

In the tent, attached to this area, organic foods, prepared on site, will be offered for sampling or for sale all weekend, making this area not only a step back in time to a lifestyle almost forgotten but to a taste as well.

Judging begins for 4-H Clubs early Friday, the mini farm opens and the Granby Zoo Mobile display opens, beginning at 9 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

The official opening this year will be a special event featuring

flag carriers, VIP arrivals and a wine and cheese reception for VIPs and exhibitors - a perfect place to meet newly elected officials and bring town and country folk together. Paul Côté and his guitar will be on hand to charm the gathering with favorite melodies from the past to the present. Meanwhile, out in the recreation center, the band, Slightly Haggard will be tuning up for the usual Friday night party. Of course, the "street truck" pulling competition will be the first of three sessions of truck, 10-wheeler and tractor competitions scheduled Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Saturday's program includes the Youth Talent Competition at 11 a.m. Winners at this talent show which features local singers and musicians between 13 and 20 years old could move on to a provincial competition next year. If they qualify there, then it's off to the Nationals where prizes include recording sessions and money prizes.

This is a busy day for partici-

pants, exhibitors and visitors alike with judging ongoing in the arena for dairy breeds, as well as in the poultry house and rabbit section.

In the Recreation Centre, line dancing with Nicole du Club Country Les Perdus gets underway at 2 p.m. Over in the Kiddies Korner, the "Crazy Science Guy" takes the stage. Around 5:30 p.m. the Shepherd, Shepherdess contest goes into the arena, the Irish Dancers take over in the Rec Centre at 6:30 p.m., the horse show gets started in the arena, the 10-wheelers roll out onto the pulling track and eventually, around 9:30 p.m., the Bad Boys country band gets the ball rolling in the Rec Centre.

Sunday, more horse shows in the arena for horses and ponies right after the 4-H Interclub competitions, which begin in the arena at 9 a.m. Richard Peron keeps the music going in the Rec Centre, a final horse show in the arena and the farm tractor pulling fill the final af-

ternoon of the 2012 Richmond Fair.

More highlights include a climbing wall, trick horseback riding presented all weekend and a special part of the MAPAQ project - a bit, (that's the piece of steel in a horse's mouth which plays a major role along with pressure on the reins and with the legs against the horse) clinic.

The Caravane du Gout, the Taste Caravan will also be on the grounds all weekend as well as Ben Martin with his team of oxen, Fred and King. They'll be hitched to an ox cart and free rides are offered all weekend.

Admission at the gate is \$10. Children four and under are admitted free, parking is \$2 and an adult, weekend pass is \$30 (parking included). For children five to 14 years of age, the weekend pass is \$15. There's an automatic bank teller machine on the grounds and the website is: richmondfair@hotmail.ca or call 819 826 2764.



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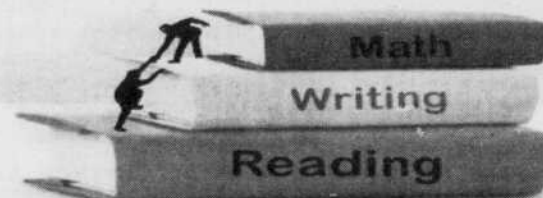
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CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE

Fred and King, Ben Martin's 7-year-old oxen, will be at Richmond Fair, giving free rides in his oxcart all weekend.



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Kids get full fair experience

By Claudia Villemaire
RICHMOND

Sarah Fowler loves the youngsters. It's a good thing too because Fowler and her crew of volunteers will welcome between 400-500 primary school kids to the Richmond Fair Friday morning and, by 1 p.m., have over 400 entries categorized and on display for the judges at this annual Richmond Fair tradition.

"It's quite a rush but you have to remember lots of these youngsters will have brought their entries in Thursday evening or had them ready to take with them Friday morning. That helps to diminish the last minute rush," Fowler points out. "Sometimes we have to make a new class for unlisted projects or handicrafts but the whole point is participation in the activities that all add up to make this an inviting and fun county fair."

The Youth Fair, the inspiration of the always remembered Allan Nourse and Eileen Perkins, supported by local WI groups and other generous sponsors, has enjoyed nearly 30 successful years. Participation has fluctuated, depending on primary schools' involvement in the area, but the numbers of entries have always varied between 300 and 400. "There's no limit on a child's willingness to present several projects and every

class is divided into age groups that begin with one-year to five-years and so on," Fowler explained.

Friday, just after 9 a.m., the Richmond Fairgrounds will echo with the excitement of hundreds of school children from at least five primary schools in the area. As school bus doors open and youngsters up to the sixth grade tumble out to, first of all, check out their entries at the Youth Fair section and then scatter and scoot into every nook and cranny, stopping only long enough to enjoy a free container of juice or perhaps, for some, a picnic lunch somewhere on the grounds, answering a few simple questions about their day at the fair seems a simple price to pay for what, to most, is a special day off. It doesn't seem to matter carnival rides do not operate while the children are there. Exhibitors are prepared to answer questions, lead out an animal or two, explain the art of harnessing a horse or milking a cow or even check out a freshly laid egg in the poultry house.

"We scramble to get every entry in place so the judges can begin by 1 p.m. There are plenty of prize ribbons and trophies and every competitor will receive a participation ribbon," Fowler said, "and special thanks to the folks who help out during these busy hours. Classifying the judges' results as they complete each class, registering the names of prize and



CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE

Sarah Fowler, chairperson for the Youth Fair committee.

trophy winners and making sure everyone knows awards night will be later this fall at St Francis. I've always loved the kiddies and I really enjoy helping to chalk up another success at the Youth Fair."

Richmond Fair goes to the dogs

By Claudia Villemaire
RICHMOND

Richmond Fair will go to the "dogs" Thursday evening. But in the nicest way anyone could imagine. Traditionally, Thursday evening, when there's

no admission but lots of activity on the grounds as exhibitors arrive and friends drop by to say hi, this is also Dog Race night.

Sarah Oakley came up with the idea of organizing a special interest event during the first hours of this county fair.

"With so much importance aimed at the farm animals such as cows, horses and poultry, we sort of forgot dogs were also a farmer's friend and often, a partner when handling or herding his animals. I thought perhaps organizing an evening of events that would spotlight the intelligence and loyalty of the family pet could be interesting," Oakley said earlier this week.

Anyone thinking about watching these canine "best friends" race to their owners should take note. There's much more to this unusual evening than a simple dog race. To get things started,

CONT'D ON PAGE 6



CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE

Sarah Oakley, second vice-president, and Pierre Perron, president, install the cook stove for the antique farm memorabilia display.

Salon 4 Pattes

*Sarah Oakley
Organizer of the Dog Races*

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Over the 156 year history of the society, dedicated board members have accepted leadership responsibilities. Many volunteer hours are needed to organize and to administer activities on the grounds; as well as the numerous pre-event activities to organize. Thank you for your dedication!

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Thursday, September 6

- 6:00 p.m. Registration for amateur dog competition
- 7:00 p.m. Amateur Dog Competition, costume & race classes
Obstacle course demonstrations by canine clubs

Friday, September 7

- 9:00 a.m. Opening of the Petting Zoo
Draft horse Judging
- 9:30 a.m. Youth Fair Judging
Zoo Granby Mobile
- 10:00 a.m. Horticulture & Ladies Building Judging
Beef Judging
- 1:00 p.m. Sheep Judging
- 5:00 p.m. Midway opens
OFFICIAL OPENING
- 7:00 p.m. Street Truck Pull
Horse Show
- 9:00 p.m. Country Band: 'Slightly Haggard'

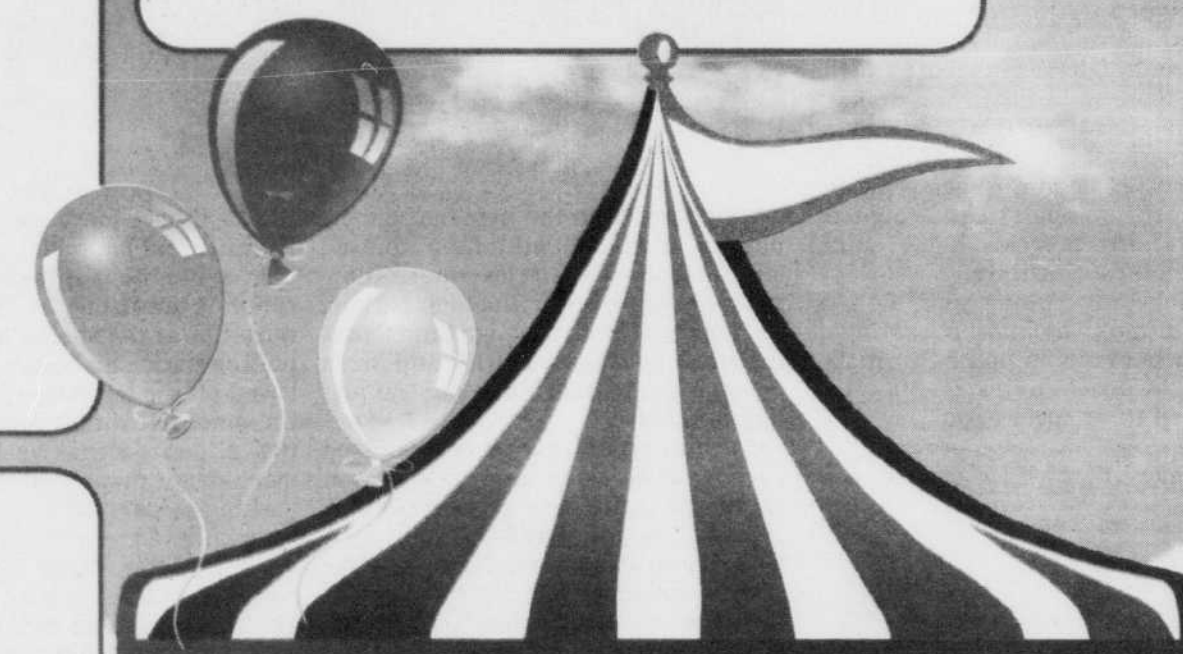
Saturday, September 8

- 9:00 a.m. Pony Show
Opening of the Petting Zoo
- 9:30 a.m. Holstein, Ayrshire & Jersey Judging
- 10:00 a.m. Rabbit & Poultry Judging
- 11:00 a.m. Youth Talent Show
- 12:00 a.m. Midway opens
- 1:30 p.m. Mad Science
- 2:00 p.m. Country Les Perdus Line Dancing
A.S.T.T.Q. Truck Pulls
- 3:00 p.m. Mad Science
- 4:00 p.m. Band: 'Lucky Boy (Luc)'
- 5:30 p.m. Shepherd & Shepherdess Lead Class
- 6:00 p.m. A.S.T.T.Q. Truck & Tractor Pull
Horse Show
- 6:20 p.m. Irish Dancers
- 9:30 p.m. Country Band: 'Bad Boys'

Sunday, September 9

- 9:00 a.m. Pony & light horse Judging
Opening of the Petting Zoo
4-H & Young Farmers Interclub Competition
- 11:30 a.m. Farm Tractor Pull
- 12:00 p.m. Midway opens
Mad Science
- 2:00 p.m. Band: 'Richard Perron'
Horse Show
- 6:00 p.m. **END OF RICHMOND FAIR**

* SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.



Admission:

Midway & attractions included: \$10.00
0-4 years old: Free

Parking: \$2.00

Weekend pass (parking included): \$30.00
Weekend pass 5-14 years old: \$15.00

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Richmond Fair is located between
Richmond and Windsor on Route 143.
128 Route 143, exit 88 off highway 55.

For more information:

Fair Ground Office: 819-826-2764

Mailing address: P.O. Box 3116, Richmond, QC J0B 2H0



Rookie prez Pierre Perron is ready for challenge

By Claudia Villemaire
RICHMOND

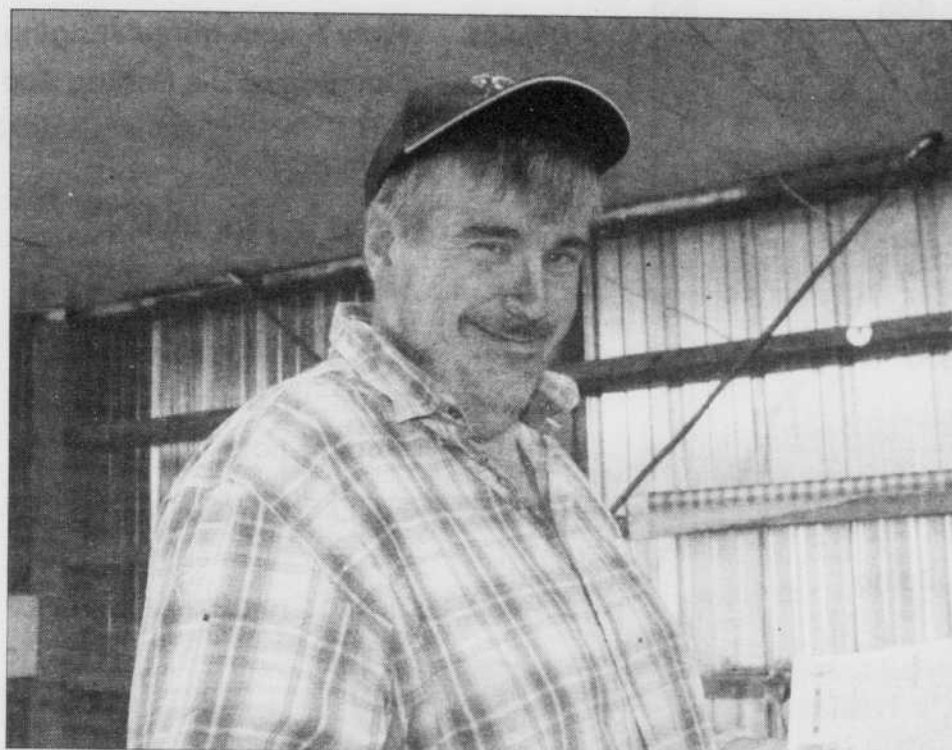
Pierre Perron, in his first term as president, admits he's probably the youngest member on the board of directors at this county fair. "And we would certainly like to see more younger people come forward too," he said Monday in between answering questions from arriving exhibitors and commercial kiosk operators, dashing off for a few minutes to check a completed task.

A dairy, hay and cereal, wood and maple products producer, active in his community, a longtime supporter and member of the Farmers' Association in the area, he admits, being president of a county fair is much more time consuming than he expected. Anyone passing the fairgrounds in the wee hours of several early mornings might have noticed the lights of a tractor or heard the buzz of a chainsaw on the fairgrounds. What they wouldn't have realized was who was out there and what he was doing.

"I came out one night after haying and clipped all the weeds around the fence," he admits sheepishly. Did some brush and small-tree cutting too," he says, adding he arrived home in time for chores most mornings.

"We have no problems here," he says, "just solutions," he adds, chuckling at the wisdom of this approach that makes light of the dozens of details that must be tended to at any weekend event of this size.

Examples of tasks completed are



Pierre Perron, president, Richmond Agriculture Society.

everywhere, from the new roof on the poultry barn and mini-farm to well clipped and raked fields where thousands of fairgoers will find their parking section numbered, new signs and fences installed for their security and fresh paint gleaming from nooks and crannies here and there.

"An important new regulation is no parking at all along the highway from the bridge to the curve at the other end. Signs will be posted and the SQ is ready with tickets and the legal right to order vehicles towed away. Anyone arriving at the gate delivering young folks to the fair should pay special attention to traffic, which will be moving more rapidly if there are no cars parked along that stretch of highway.

"We'll have more security, more SQ presence and I'm told, roadblocks at either end of the fairground property. Alcohol is available in the recreation center or at the special kiosk near the pulling track - no bottles or cans are allowed on the fair site, which is, in fact, the fenced area that surrounds the actual midway, arena, fair buildings and machinery exhibit. What folks do in the parking areas is up to them. I only ask that folks act responsibly and if they want to party, make sure their ride home is secure. We have a taxi service available, the poster is on the wall in the office where the phone number is clearly indicated; there are taxis in town or simply designate a driver. After all, this is an event for every member of the

family including the youngest to the most elderly."

We toured the grounds, going out to see the progress of work on the pulling track that will give firmer footing to the track.

"I brought down a machine to make stone-picking easier and quicker and we've distanced the cement blocks used as a security perimeter twelve inches from the fence where hundreds of spectators stand. Now, there's a cushion between the block and the fence so that the block will not simply be rammed directly into the fence but simply pushed, hopefully, enough to slow down its progress."

There's new signage everywhere, increased washroom facilities and extra gates for crowd control in the hitching area. "We only want to keep our visitors of all ages, children to seniors, safe. That's our first priority," the president explained, underlining the importance of safety.

Perron and his wife Annie and their family have been turning up at the fairgrounds regularly these past weeks. The regular tasks such as cleaning up the arena and pressure washing the benches, dragging the show floor and wetting this area down on a regular basis, verifying the water and plumbing system and making certain enough hydro power is available - just a few of the usual tasks that must be completed every year.

"We're almost ready," he said Tuesday as the first of the carnival transport trucks began to arrive. "Looks like there's going to be a fair here," he said, laughing. "By the way, see all the vehicles parked around the grounds? Those are just some of the volunteers here today. We're very lucky to have their support, for many, year after year. That's what makes any fair great."

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Dogs

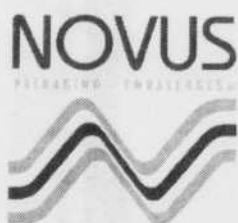
CONT'D FROM PAGE 3

the first class invites dogs and their owners to turn out in costume. It's a masquerade class like no other with dogs showing up in formal attire, complete with tuxedo and tails or decked out for a grand ball, complete with flowing gowns and wide-brimmed hats. Dog owners are especially in-

spired for this class with all sizes of dogs wearing costumes that might include caps, sunglasses or prisoners' stripes. Prizes and a trophy are awarded on the spot and the program continues with demonstrations by AccroCanine obedience and guard dog school, obstacle races and presentations of different breeds, describing their strong points and showing off their intelligence. In the middle of these interesting events,

the dogs, separated into three groups - small, medium and large - are expected to speed to their owner across a measured space on the arena floor. But sometimes, with so many dogs around that have not been checked out, spectators and of course, some dogs straining their leash to hurry to some place where their costume can be finally removed, there's always at least one racing dog who pays no heed whatsoever to his whistling and calling owner and bounds off to the sideline to make some new friends.

Thursdays are a fun evening with a special invitation to local dog owners who rarely have a chance to show off their pet pooch. Admission is free and the show starts around 7 p.m. with registration at 6:30 p.m.



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Small but mighty horse breed to be shown at fair

By Claudia Villemaire
RICHMOND

There's a new chapter opening at this year's 157th Richmond County Fair. For the first time, miniature horses will be introduced to spectators in the arena, in competition, hitched to a cart or four-wheeled wagon, in different classes during the weekend.

Many folks see these miniatures as nothing more than glorified ponies, which live to a ripe old age, some as old as 45 or 50 years. But, according to the American Miniature Horse Registry, a miniature should be a small, sound, well-balanced horse and should give the impression of strength, agility and alertness. A miniature should be eager and friendly but not skittish in disposition.

Mickey Blemings and his wife Maureen, who was intrigued by ads and photographs of miniatures in a magazine, can't say enough about the qualities their minis have.

"According to the American Miniature Horse Association, founded in 1978 these diminutive creatures cannot exceed 34 inches at the withers, (shoulder) but the AMHR allows two classes — the A-division for horses 34 inches and under and the B-division for horses 34 to



CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE

Mickey Blemings brings his miniature horses to the fair.

38 inches at the last mane hairs on the withers. "Actually, if you were looking at a photograph of a horse, not knowing what its size was, if it's a true miniature,

you would think it was a photo of a horse," Blemings insists.

So, the Richmond Fair will record a first in the horse judging books with the required number of exhibitors registered for competitions. Spectators will watch these tiny replicas of fancy, high-bred horses, perform the same required moves and patterns in their various classes, although admittedly, for once, the arena surface will be much too large and the show circle will have to be adjusted accordingly.

The Blemings will be out in full show regalia for this groundbreaking event, which will bring the Circle M Ranch Miniatures to the Richmond Fair for the first time, officially.

"I love these little animals," Blemings stated. "No they're not a house pet, they have the same character as a full size horse. But I have to admit, as a person gets older, these little fellows make owning a horse much easier physically. You can train on the front lawn, or they'll nibble away at your grass as you show them off to visitors. They're not intimidating, although I must admit, if they do lift a foot to give you a kick, you'll feel it," he admitted, laughing. Sounds like a part of the traditional horse show not to be missed.

New secretary of Agriculture Society



Vanessa Tittlemore, the new secretary at Richmond Agriculture Society office is broadening her horizons with new tasks in her new position.

PHOTO BY CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE

THE RECORD

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Best wishes to the
Richmond Fair
organizers and
the numerous volunteers!



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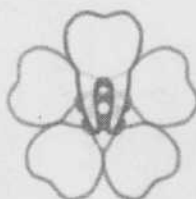
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PHOTOS BY CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE



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