

Gilpin County Fair enthralls attendees



PHOTO BY DAVE GIBSON

Bull riding is always a highlight

With hundreds of onlookers in the stands and his fellow cowboys cheering him on, a rider hopes to stay aboard for eight seconds. See story page 16.

Ned parties through rain and hail



PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER KELLEY

Great times at Nederland Farmers Market

Left: Carrie from Gold Dirt Distillery seen getting into the spirit. Right: The chef behind Washoku fries up some of his delicious Japanese fried chicken. See story page 20.

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-QUOTE OF THE WEEK-

"We do not need to go out to find love;
rather we need to be still and let love discover us."

- John O'Donohue

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DAVE GIBSON
GILPIN COUNTY

According to The International Association of Fairs and Expos, “The concept of the ‘county fair,’ organized by an agricultural society, was initiated by Elkanah Watson, a New England patriot and farmer. He earned the title ‘Father of US agricultural fairs’ by organizing the Berkshire Agricultural Society and creating an event (known then as a Cattle Show) in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in September 1811. It was not a market and was more than just an exhibit of animals – it was a competition, with prize money (\$70) paid for the best exhibits of oxen, cattle, swine, and sheep.

“There are about 2,000 fairs held in North America each year. They provide industrial exhibits, demonstrations, and competitions to advance livestock, horticulture, and



PHOTOS BY DAVE GIBSON

An entertaining exhibition

Top, left: A cowboy scores high in style points. Top, right: A member of the Westernaires cracks four whips at once. Bottom, middle: The Indian Interpretive Dance Team put on quite a show.

agriculture, emphasizing educational activities such as 4-H, FFA, and similar youth development programs. Most fairs provide exceptional educational activities to help today’s consumer understand the importance of farming and the food source on their plate. While enjoying these high-minded pursuits, fair visitors can also see, hear, touch, smell, and taste the richness and variety of what the world has to offer.”

While Gilpin County’s fair certainly fits the traditional blueprint, every fair has its own unique character and flavor. On July 19, 20, and 21, hundreds of local residents and visitors headed to the Gilpin County Fairgrounds for a taste.

In the fairgrounds’ parking lot, bounce houses had been set up for the kids to play in. New to the fair in 2024, an inflatable boxing ring with oversize gloves was available to hone their pugilistic skills. The mechanical bull

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ON AUGUST 24TH @NEDJAZZWINE



Enjoyed by locals and visitors

Top, left: A slobbering bull rids himself of an entrant. Top, right: The horses were also ornery. Bottom, right: The sheep were a little tamer but still spirited. Bottom, left: The Shockwave Trick Riders performed amazing feats of horsemanship.

Gilpin fair

Continued from page 16

unmercifully tossed its potential riders to the mat as it had in years past – it was open for anyone brave enough to climb aboard and possessing an unlimited ride wristband.

And where would we be without clown Suz-Q-Z? She cheerfully painted faces all day long. A petting zoo including younger goats without butting inclinations could be found next to The Barn. Some of the numerous food

options included corndogs, barbeque, and corn on the cob on a stick.

Headquartered in Golden and composed of participants 9-19 years old, the Westernaires' Whippers were first to perform in the arena. The cracking sound of their bullwhips could be heard from a great distance. The Ropers followed with an entertaining array of tricks. In a burst of colors, the Indian Interpretive Dance Team showcased Native American dances from tribes of the High Plains. The Fancy Dancers' costumes were fabricated incorporating up to 10,000 feathers. A circle dance that included audience members concluded



PHOTOS BY DAVE GIBSON



the show.

Inside The Barn, the Dog Agility competition was underway. Hilarity ensued as canines completed the course, no two in the same way and never as their owners would have ideally intended. A log spitting contest, axe throwing, and a dunk tank rounded out the fun.

Colorado's Shockwave Trick Riders amazed onlookers with a dazzling display of acrobatics on horseback. All of them expert equestrians, they made hanging by a foot strap upside down off the side of a galloping steed seem routine.

The highlight of any fair is its rodeo. Two rounds of bareback, saddle bronc, and bull riding commenced in front of the overflowing bleachers. In the first round of the bull riding, the disagreeable beasts with flank straps cinched tightly around their lower bellies to induce bucking got the better of the cowboys. The last rider was lucky enough to draw one of the smaller bulls that spun in a circle for the entire eight seconds. The

cowboy may have gotten a little dizzy, but scored a 79.5 and in the money for his efforts.

Most of the riders took their lumps whether they stayed aboard for the required time or not. One downed cowboy had his stomach stepped on by a bull. Another was driven into the dirt by the head and horns of an angry bull while the bullfighters scrambled to distract the animal's attention from the unfortunate entrant. Chaps flapped wildly as bareback and saddle bronc riders streaked across the arena to the cheers of spectators.

Mutton busters fared about the same as the bull riders. Except for a sheep rolling over a determined young cowgirl who refused to let go, their landings were usually soft, receiving only a mild jolt and bruised ego. Some of the littlest busters' fathers ran alongside, lifting their kids off the sheep almost immediately before things got too hairy. Medals were awarded to the kids for their courage.