



**MONTANA  
STATE FAIR**

*"Keepin' it 406"*

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## 2017 Montana State Fair Numbers



**GREAT FALLS** - The 2017 Montana State Fair "Keepin' It 406" was a banner year with revenues in excess of \$1,745,000. The revenue produced by Montana State Fair in 2017 is more than any Montana State Fair since Cascade County resumed management of Montana ExpoPark in 2009. Hot weather did not discourage anyone from enjoying the delicious treats on Food Alley, a stroll through all the wonderful exhibits, an evening at the 3 Rivers Stage with the Nick Crawford Band, the strolling magician or Nerdy Noah, ice cream from the 4-H booth, a shopping opportunity, or an evening at a night show or rodeo. There was plenty for all to do.

Igniting the 2017 Montana State Fair, Great Falls Turf Club kicked off with a Friday race day with post time at 4pm. Not even the 92 degree heat on opening day could keep the fans away. This was followed by a weekend of racing. Some won, some lost, but all had a fun time with the ponies.

Rock-n-Ride brought thrill seekers to enjoy the rides presented by The Mighty Thomas Carnival. The Mighty Thomas Carnival set a new record on Saturday, July 29th hitting triple digits in revenue at \$103,194. Over the course of the nine day event, The Mighty Thomas Carnival grossed \$622,879, which is up \$10,692 from 2016. The Mighty Thomas Carnival has not increased the price of their rides since 2014.

The scorching temperature of 97 degrees on Saturday, July 29 did not discourage 10,986 fairgoers from enjoying a day at the track, rides with The Mighty Thomas Carnival, and a variety of foods on the midway. With 40 different options for something to eat, you could get Stuff'd at any one of these delicious Food Concessionaires. To make your mouth water, these are a sampling of items available during Fair: Turkey legs, chicken skewers, shrimp sticks, Vikings, lemonade, pork chop sandwiches, Cowpies, mini donuts, street tacos, cheese curds, ice cream, fry bread, baked potatoes, Chinese food, barbeque, bacon baskets, tacos, snow cones, pretzels, coffee and anything sweet you could desire. The Food Concessionaires grossed \$721,119, an increase of 8.3% over 2016. The Food Concessionaires busiest day was the last day of fair, grossing \$105,347.

The most visited day on the grounds was Saturday, August 5 with 12,774 guests while the temperature topped out at 67 degrees. Total paid guests at the 2017 Montana State Fair was 71,388 compared to 65,906 in 2016. The total revenue was \$394,133. Fair Gate Admission was up 9% over the 2016 Fair which was \$361,561.

Competitive Exhibits displayed everything from cookies to fine art, goats and school art, and everything in between. Competitive Exhibitors were awarded \$47,112 in premium monies. There were 770 exhibitors and there were over 5,408 exhibits for everyone to view. The number of animals sold at the Junior Livestock Sale this year was 49 compared to 41 animals in 2016. Junior Livestock Show and Sale continues to grow and this year the Junior Livestock Sale grossed \$49,367 compared to \$39,286 in 2016.

Commercial vendors came from near and far. There were a total of 51 vendors from the state of Montana and a total of 54 vendors from out of state. Vendors came from New York, New Jersey, Texas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Florida, California and several other states. Total booth spaces filled by all of the vendors exceeded 200 booth spaces.

PRCA Big Sky Pro Rodeo action was produced by Sankey Pro Rodeo with Robinson Bulls and was enjoyed by 6,382 fans. This is a slight dip from the 2016 attendance of 6,647. The total payoff for the PRCA Big Sky Pro

Rodeo was \$124,582. PRCA Big Sky Pro Rodeo's largest attended evening occurred on Wednesday, August 2. Patriot Night brought together 1,774 rodeo fans. Patriot Night honors all military personnel, past and present, for their tireless service that benefits the safety of all citizens of the United States of America. The Rodeo Committee's Military Appreciation Dinner was well attended. The Rodeo Committee provided 500 rodeo tickets for military personnel to enjoy the evening with the PRCA Big Sky Pro Rodeo. Mutton Bustin', The Exceptional Rodeo, Big Sky Pro Rodeo Royalty Competition, Gold Buckle Club, Contestant Tent, and Ranch Rodeo are activities provided by the Rodeo Committee to enhance the PRCA Big Sky Pro Rodeo.

Friday, August 4, Tough Enough to Wear Pink turns the arena stands to a sea of pink, supporting breast cancer awareness. In addition to this, hope was highlighted in memory of Rocky Heckman, a founding member of the Big Sky Pro Rodeo Committee, through CANCERVIVEIT and the First Annual Rocky's Road Award presented by the Heckman family to a recipient who inspires hope. Rocky's Road Award was awarded to one of Rocky's closest friends, Mike Moore, who is also facing life's challenges with honor and strength.

A combination of country, comedy, and active rock proved to be a winning mix for the night show lineup. Night shows produced \$499,869. Brett Eldredge, 2014 CMA New Artist of the Year and 2016 AMC Male Vocalist of the Year Nominee took center stage and entertained 2,626 people. A very funny Gabriel Iglesias, also known as "Fluffy" was well received and had the crowd in stitches on Monday with 3,124 laughing attendees. Old Dominion, the ACM and ACCA Breakthrough Duo/Group of the Year performed for a crowd of 2,721 on Tuesday night and rounded out the first three nights of entertainment.

"There's always been a certain level of positivity with Shinedown- that's even where our name came from," says Brent Smith, songwriter and lead vocalist for the band Shinedown. Positivity is right. On the last Saturday of Fair, 3,856 people attended Shinedown, making it the most attended concert of 2017. The community asked for rock, and rock fans positively supported Shinedown. Rock is back!!!

The support of our fairgoers, sponsors, business partners, and the community make the Montana State Fair successful. Montana State Fair is looking forward to the 2018 Montana State Fair "Keepin' It 406" which will open Friday, July 27 at Noon and conclude August 4 at midnight. Montana State Fair is already working on next year.....See you soon.

Item	2017	2016	Variance	% +/-
Total Fair Revenue	\$1,745,092	\$1,551,364	\$193,728	12.5%
Fair Gate Admission (\$)	\$394,133	\$361,561	\$32,572	9.0%
Fair Gate Attendance (#)	71,388	65,906	5,482	8.3%

Food Concessionaires - Gross Sales	\$721,119	\$665,771	\$55,348	8.3%
The Mighty Thomas Carnival - Gross Sales	\$622,879	\$612,187	\$10,692	1.7%

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