



4-H on Parade 2009

The energy, excitement and competitive spirit of nearly 600 Calgary region 4-H members set the 33rd annual 4-H on Parade apart from the number of other events that were taking place at the Calgary Stampede grounds May 29- 31. Sharing space with a high school graduation and an international dirt biking competition proved to be a non-issue for 4-H on Parade, which is the largest show of its kind in Canada, with this year being hailed as the strongest show ever.

“There is no question the overall satisfaction level at 4-H on Parade 2009 is higher than I’ve ever seen,” commented Rob Smith, 4-H Specialist for the Calgary region and 4-H on Parade organizer. “I guess at a time when we are given so much to worry about, and we have so many difficult factors in our lives to deal with, it is very easy to get charged up about spending a weekend with 4-H members in this very optimistic atmosphere.”



The three-day event consisted of beef, dairy, horse, sheep and rabbit shows, as well as a new heavy horse decorating class, where members were given a time limit in which they had to turn out a show-quality grooming job. Multi-judging was a very popular class, with more than 80% of the competitors participating. However, perhaps the most innovative and successful event at this year’s 4-H on Parade was the newly introduced Art Show. Over the show’s three days, life skills members’ projects were put on display for the public to view, with 16 pieces of photography and artwork put up for silent auction. At the end of the event, the pieces sold for a combined total of \$1725.00

Wayne Shuttleworth, who spearheaded the new event, explains “I knew that the Life skills members had a lot of talent and put a lot of hard work into their projects, and yet their work was going mostly unrecognized by the larger 4-H audience. By displaying their work in a professional, gallery-type layout, it gave the



members a chance to showcase their work and impress the other competitors, leaders, and the public. The visual arts display also added a marketing component to their project like they had never seen before.”

Despite 4-H on Parade being a regional competition, the community spirit that is universal with 4-H was alive and well. Each year, the clubs that attend the show rotate the donation of a charity steer and a charity lamb, both of which are sold at the end of the 4-H on Parade, with sale’s proceeds being donated to STARS Ambulance. This year, the STARS Charity steer sold for \$8.00 a pound and the charity lamb went for \$22.00 a pound.



In all regards, the weekend was a success: members from competing clubs were seen helping one another out in the show and sale rings, parents made sure that there was plenty of food throughout the entire weekend and the amazing staff of the Calgary Stampede worked hard to ensure that everyone enjoyed their weekend.

As Rob Smith concluded, “4-H on Parade is rural Alberta at its finest.”

For more information on Alberta 4-H’s projects, programs and region-specific events, please visit www.4h.ab.ca.

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