

RURAL TEXAS TOURISM LLC

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*History and Culture an Enormous
Part of the Fayette County Fair Staged in La Grange
Thursday, August 31-Sunday, September 3*



Life just doesn't get any better than this. When you attend the Fayette County Fair in La Grange, you immediately become a part of an exceptional experience that has mixed traditions, culture and history with loads of venues, music, and events—all part of that experience that connects the visitors decade after decade creating those precious memories each year. Always held on Labor Day weekend, the Fayette County Fair (this year from Thursday, August 31 through Sunday September 3) dazzles the young and charms the old into a peaceful, loving era of the good ole' fashioned fair. And what a grand era it's been because this is the 90th celebration of an incredible venue established in 1927—tried and true for all ages.

Showcased Texas famous entertainers include: Clay Walker, Kevin Fowler, Curtis Grimes, Sunny Sweeney, Texas Unlimited Band, Dean Seltzer, Jeff Woolsey, Keith Hickle, Spirit Riders, Mark Randall, the Incredible Music Makers, Taylor Mclayne, Reed Ravens, Blue Sunset Band and much more. If you are a true concert goer, you'll see the enormous bargain of attending the Fayette County Fair vs. one concert for one of these great names—these guys will capture your heart with their great music and entertainment.

Venues to this event is almost endless—you, your family, friends (old and new) will clearly be kept busy with the many forms of entertainment, kid's activities, Bar-b-que cook-off, washer pitching contest, parade, livestock shows, culinary events, creative competitive venues, and so much more, all for the price of one ticket!

Kiddos from 1 to 100 will find their niche at the carnival. Safe and clean, with a fun atmosphere, Talley Amusements has returned to the Fayette County Fair over and over again. Keeping in mind that safety and heat (and other weather elements) are always a priority, the carnival will serve the daredevils and brave beginning at 6:00 pm to closing from Thursday, August 31 through Sunday, September 3. "All you can ride wristbands" are available for \$35.00 on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday and no wristbands are available Friday--only tickets for purchase. Thursday evening celebrates a need for the community. If you donate four unexpired canned goods to the local food pantry, AMEN, you may purchase a wristband for \$30.00. And, a "real deal", if you purchase a passport-to-fun coupon book for \$80.00, it includes all rides unlimited times all four nights of the Fair with admission to the Fair included in the price per person. Books are limited.

Get ready to meet some interesting creatures as Noah's Way Petting Zoo makes an appearance to the Fair and is scheduled Friday through Sunday. This Zoo was developed by an agricultural science teacher of 20 years and is a dream that includes farm animals with exotics making it unique. There are no barriers once inside the enclosure and all of the animals run freely with the public. The zoo includes llamas, fallow deer, wallabies, African pygmy goats, assorted exotic and domestic goats and sheep, miniature Sicilian donkeys, antelope, kangaroo, alpacas, camel, various exotic cattle, and sometimes a zebra!

Needless to say, it's so much more than those fun rides and awesome entertainers. If you've never worked with farm and ranch animals as well as poultry or if your family is interested in getting started, this show is a real treat. With a Junior Dairy Department, Junior Breeding Department, Junior Commercial Heifer Show and Sale, Lamb Prospect Show, Open Meat Goat Show, Breeding Doe Show, Breeding Poultry Show, Game Bird Show, Backyard Poultry Show, Junior Poultry Show, Pigeon Show, Hay Show, Horse Project Show, you are guaranteed to get an education on raising and proper upkeep as well as sale of the critters in a rural country environment. Mark your calendar for the Jr. Commercial Heifer Sale scheduled for Saturday, September 2 at 5:00 pm.

The Agriculture Department is yet another great venue of the Fayette County Fair. See how garden and fruit products as well as pecans "fair" against stiff competition. Check out prize winning corn, sorghums, clover seed, honey, and a host of garden crops and learn what it takes to be the "best" in planting and yielding great crops. Creative Arts rarely takes a back seat and this year will be no exception. Categories are massive and includes: genuine collectibles, educational exhibits, scrapbooks, needlework (embroidery, crochet, knitting, weaving, spinning to name a few), culinary (cake, pies, cookie, candy, bread), preserves (vegetables, fruit, jams, jelly, pickles, sauces, and others) and more. Fine Arts flag out the best as acrylic, oil, watercolor, pen & ink, pencil/crayon, computer art, pastels, fabrics, plastic, wood crafts, metal, ceramics, and quilting. More not-to-miss exhibits are with the 4-H Department, machine sewing fabric and fibers, photography, "memorables", and the Flower and Plant House where visitors are able to view favorite flowers and plants in a climate controlled setting—a big plus!

The Fayette County Fair can be traced to right before World War I when it was considered a Flower and Industrial Fair. "County-wide" has always been a very important term to this fair so it was most appropriate that La Grange Casino Gesellschaft sponsored this event being that "Gesellschaft" is a German word illustrating community and society. By 1924, there was a La Grange Fair Association with a purpose to encourage agriculture/horticulture and maintain

public fairs with the exhibition of stock and farm products and at that point relocated to its' present location with the purchase of 81 acres from Alex Von Rosenberg. The new site hosted tractor pulls and horse races. The fair today takes loads of dedicated volunteers and sponsors and is truly a year-round endeavor that draws many scholarships for the local kiddos, a clear win-win.

Food and drinks are plentiful and everything you could wish for, so there's no reason to leave the grounds. Credit cards will be accepted at the food and drink token booth this year as well. Some of the vendors include: Fayetteville Show Fund selling chicken fried steak burgers, fries, and drinks, Lerma's Tacos selling gorditas enchiladas, tacos, hot dogs and more, Pizza Hut selling personal pan pizzas, La Grange Optimist Club selling canned beer, La Grange Rotary selling hamburgers, Schulenburg Lions selling keg beer and wine coolers, Old Time Funnel Cakes selling corn dogs, pretzels, nachos, turkey legs, funnel cakes, Tom's Ice Cream selling smoothies and ice cream and more, Joe's Family Kettle Korn selling pork rinks and kettle korn, Beyer's Shaved Ice selling shaved ice, D &K Enterprise selling roasted corn, bar-b-que on a bun, Cook's Crooked Pot selling sliders, baskets, panini's, Doc's BBQ selling ribs, brisket, sausage and more, Reba's selling bake potato, sausage wrap, jumbo shrimp, pita, brownie sundaes, Domino's Pizza selling wings, habanero, bread twists, and more. Don't forget when you're purchasing drinks and food that many food vendors are non-profits that return their monies back into local scholarship funds.

If you prefer not to park or drive to the fairgrounds, parking will be available downtown as well as the St. Marks parking lot and air-conditioned motor coaches will be picking up and dropping off at the front gate of the fairgrounds at no cost. Fayette County Fair tickets are available from any of the queen contestants with pre-sale season tickets a nominal \$35.00 (good for ALL concerts), daily passes for Thursday, August 31 is \$10.00, for Friday, September 1 is \$15.00, Saturday, September 2 is \$25.00, and Sunday, September 3 is \$35.00. Children 11 and under are free. These passes are general admission to the grounds and all activities offered within, carnival tickets and wristbands are sold separately.

To contact a contestant to purchases tickets or to obtain more information/registration forms on the Fayette County Fair in La Grange from Thursday, August 31 through Sunday September 3, go to www.fayettecountyfair.org or call 979-968-3911. La Grange is 65 miles east of Austin, 80 miles north of Victoria, 125 miles south of Waco, and 90 miles west of Houston with zip code of 78945 for GPS users.

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Cathy Chaloupka

Rural Texas Tourism, LLC