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State Fair of Texas

Big Tex Bulletin

State Fair of Texas celebrates second best year in event's history

DALLAS – The closing day of the 2008 State Fair of Texas was filled with visitors scrambling to enjoy the last few hours of the annual event. In the process of enjoying good times with families and friends, **Fair visitors spent approximately \$28.6 million on food and amusement rides.** The amount – representing revenue from coupon sales (State Fair currency for food and rides) – almost matched last year's record high of \$29 million.

Food led the way, as fairgoers' growing fascination with all-things-fried produced **single-day record sales of \$2,835,000** on Saturday, October 11. The hottest new items were Chicken Fried Bacon and Fried Banana Split, winners of this year's Big Tex Choice Awards. The Domino Man wowed more than 72,000 visitors to the African American Museum with his daily domino construction. Thousands of dominoes were painstakingly balanced on their edges in perfect curves and rows on the floor and toppled each evening.

The renovations to the Cotton Bowl were enjoyed by 175,000 football fans attending one of three games held during the Fair. Stadium seating capacity is 92,000 and ticket holders enjoyed increased concession stands and additional restrooms.

Jessica Simpson and **A.B. Quintanilla & Kumbia King All Starz** proved to be the top free concert attractions on the Chevrolet Main Stage – each performing before crowds of more than 25,000. Demi Lovato, Bell Biv DeVoe, Kevin Fowler and Michelle Branch played before enthusiastic fans that filled the streets in separate shows. The concert series was produced for the twentieth consecutive year by Glenn Smith Presents, Inc.

Mundo Latino presented *El Mariachi: Music and Tradition* - a celebration of cultures in the Hall of State. Down the Esplanade in The Women's Museum, fairgoers learned about the latest time and energy saving technologies in the SmartHouse exhibit.

At the annual Youth Livestock Auction of Champions, **animals raised by young Texans sold for \$1,032,450.** An anonymous donor choosing to support Texas 4-H and FFA Foundations bought the **grand champion steer for a record \$95,000**, and a group of State Fair food concessionaires paid \$20,000 for the reserve grand champion. Tom Thumb Food & Pharmacy purchased the grand champions in four categories – lamb, swine, meat goat and broilers.

Next year's State Fair dates are September 25 through October 18.