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## State Fair An Adventure in Fun

JEFFERSON CITY — “Go 4 It” is the theme of this year’s Missouri State Fair, which runs Aug. 7-17 in Sedalia. If you’ve never been, you really ought to check it out. It’s a wonderful showcase of our people, our strong agricultural heritage, and features an unbelievable array of entertainment the whole family can enjoy.

One of the most unusual attractions making a comeback this year is the Missouri Big Irons Cowboy Mounted Shooters Pro Classic Championship competition on Aug. 10 and 11. The sport combines skilled horseback riding with straight shooting. Participants shoot balloon targets using a .45 caliber single action revolver while stopping, turning and changing leads through an obstacle course. Seems like reason enough to attend the fair.

The Amazing Anastasini Circus makes its debut at this year’s state fair and will present three shows daily. Another new attraction includes cart rides for kids featuring Rhodesian Ridgebacks (South African dogs). Other new items include a Kids’ Zone featuring family entertainment, an area of interactive games that let you play the latest video games, more than 30 *Wild Science* interactive exhibits, a Wild West Comedy, and did I mention the human cannonball lady? All of these kids’ events are free upon paid admittance.

In addition to the usual great lineup of country and rock musical acts — including Missouri’s own Sara Evans — the fair will feature the Missouri State Fair IDOL contest. The contest is similar to the wildly popular *American Idol*, which featured winner David Cook of Blue Springs, and is expected to bring out our state’s best amateur singers. The preliminaries are at 4 p.m Aug. 7-16, with finals at 2 p.m. on Aug. 17.

You can also look forward to the fair’s usual offerings, including the FFA and 4-H exhibits, livestock shows, and the always popular animal barns. The ag area also features a nice farm machinery exhibit and farm toy show.

Other popular events that draw good crowds include rodeo competitions (Aug. 7-9), a truck and tractor pull (Aug. 10), antique tractor pull (Aug. 13), bull riding (Aug. 15-16), and demolition derby (Aug. 17). Check for times and applicable prices.

And what would the state fair be without the wide variety of mouth-watering foods we associate with a day at the fair? The traditional corn dogs, funnel cakes and cotton candy will be there, plus a variety of other food items. The long midway of thrill-seeking rides also awaits young fairgoers and those intrepid enough to give them a try.

One of the best things about this year’s State Fair is the affordable admission price. During the fair’s opening day (Aug. 7), admission is \$1 all day long. On the second Thursday (Aug. 14), which is Governor’s, Legislators’ and Judges’ Day, the entry fee is reduced to \$2. The admission price is reduced to \$5 after 5 p.m. on

regular admission dates. Regular admission price is \$8 per person and \$6 for senior citizens, and at all times, admission for children ages 12 and under is free. Admission is half price on the fair's last day (Aug. 17).

For more information about the Missouri State Fair, visit <http://www.mostatefair.com/> or call (800) 422-FAIR.

The Missouri State Fair is a tradition you won't want to miss. See you at the fair!

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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