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Marion County Fair to open Thursday, July 22 with 80th anniversary festivities, salute to veterans

INDIANAPOLIS – The 80th edition of the **Marion County Fair** opens Thursday, July 22 with anniversary festivities including a Salute to Veterans, Town Hall meeting with Mayor Greg Ballard, musical entertainment by the Friends of Indiana Wind Symphony, **and an 80 percent discount on gate admission - from \$5 to \$1 for this night only!**

Additional opening night events include Battle of the Bands preliminary competition, the Tri-County Garden Tractor Pull, Master Gardener Clinics and Q&A with “Dr. Dirt” Dick Crum, and a performance by the perennially popular Dazzling Mills Family jugglers.

An anticipated 100,000 visitors will pour through the gates at 7300 East Troy Avenue during the fair’s 10-day run, July 22-31. Long recognized as one of Central Indiana’s best bargains in family-oriented entertainment, this year’s fair will feature a variety of concerts, great grandstand attractions, the always delicious array of fair foods, amazing 4-H competitions and exhibits, and one of the state’s finest fair midways.

This year also marks the inaugural appearance at the Marion County Fair of the ultra-popular Dock Dogs in competition on Friday and Saturday, July 30-31. Dock Dogs frequently are seen in Big Air (“long jump for dogs”) competitions on ABC-TV and ESPN. A special performance area with pool will be constructed just east of the Expo Hall for fairgoers’ viewing enjoyment.

“Our challenge every year is to identify and book exciting new events that will appeal to our guests,” said Marion County Fair president Ron Phillips, “while keeping the traditional, beloved events on the schedule that folks come back to see year after year.

“I think we have a fabulous 10 days planned, a great mix of brand new attractions and long-time favorites,” he stated. “There truly is something for everyone in the family, regardless of age, and at a price that can’t be beat!”

Tickets are just \$5 per person at the gate, with children age five and under free. US Military, both active and retired, are free with presentation of ID. Parking is free in convenient Fairgrounds lots. The Marion County Fairgrounds is located at 7300 East Troy Avenue, just east of the I-465 & Southeastern Avenue interchange.

In addition to the 80th anniversary/80 percent admission discount on opening night, discounts of \$1 or \$2 per person are available to fairgoers on other days, or simply by logging on to the fair's website, www.marioncountyfair.org and downloading a printable coupon. Other discounts include:

Monday, July 26 – Bring an item for donation to **Indianapolis Animal Care & Control** for \$1 admission discount. Items needed by the shelter include pet food and treats, dog and cat toys, cleaning supplies, cat litter, grooming brushes, blankets and towels, pet carriers, horse and pony halters, and other similar items.

Monday also is Seniors Night, when fairgoers age 55+ receive a \$1 admission discount.

Tuesday, July 27 & Wednesday, July 28 – Bring a non-perishable food item for donation to **Gleaners Food Bank** for \$1 admission discount.

Wednesday also is Art Carroll Ladies' Night, when women receive a \$2 admission discount and ride midway attractions for free when accompanied by a paid adult.

Daily food contests – chocolate chip cookies, ice cream, brownies, corn, quick breads, and more – are scheduled in the Family Arts Building. Three fair-long competitions also will be held there: the Marion County Ugliest Lamp Contest, a Green Contest saluting the best re-purposed item, and a Lego® Contest. The latter will have adult and child pairs working together to build the most imaginative Lego® creation.

Other fair highlights include:

- Marion County Fair Queen Pageant
- Bear Hollow Chain Saw Carving Demos
- Heavy Weight Horse Pull
- Fireworks (Friday, July 23, 9:30 pm)
- Baby Contest
- Flat Track Motorcycle Racing
- Cowboy Church Service (Sunday, July 25, 9 am)
- Open Class Car Show
- Junior, Senior & Adult Talent Shows
- TQ Midget Races
- Pro-Stock Hoosier Tractor Pull
- Calling Contests
- ITPA Truck Pull
- Demolition Derby
- Kids' Day Activities.

Additional information about the fair is available by calling the administration office at 317.353.2444. A complete day-by-day event agenda, plus registration forms and rules for a wide variety of competitions, are available by logging on at www.marioncountyfair.org.

“The Marion County Fair is pure, classic family entertainment at unbelievably reasonable prices,” said Phillips. “Whether you come to the fair to ride the rides, feast on the food, support 4-H, take in the displays, see the animals, thrill to the grandstand events, learn something new, or listen to some great musical performances, you’ll find it all here, for the 80th consecutive year.

“Come on out and have some fun!”

The 80th annual Marion County Fair is July 22-31 at the Marion County Fairgrounds, 7300 East Troy Avenue (just east of the I-465 & Southeastern Avenue interchange). One of Central Indiana’s most outstanding entertainment bargains, fair admission is just \$5 per person; children 5 and under are free; US military, active or retired, are free with ID, and parking is free. Make it YOUR fair! – the 80th annual Marion County Fair. For more information and discount offers, log on at www.marioncountyfair.org.