



LET'S GO TO THE FAIR!

In 1905, the 46-year-old Minnesota State Fair's premium booklet listed an amazing variety of possible entry categories. You could enter horses such as French Coach, Belgian, and Percheron, along with many kinds of poultry. Topping the premium list were over 30 varieties of apples. Embroidery of various kinds might win a first place ribbon and \$2.00. And the crowds at the Fair, brought in by four local railroad lines, were always there to watch the horse races, where the winners could receive thousands of dollars in prize money. Entries from the Canosia School (which went to the eighth grade) were entered in the Minnesota State Fair in the 1920s: drawings won ribbons that were saved these many years in their families' albums.

There is a long tradition of local fairs and, since 1921, the South St. Louis County Fair has drawn entries from local residents, young and old, especially those in 4-H. There's particularly great enthusiasm among the young people, some standing with bated breath when they see the judge coming by. A winner's picture might even appear in the newspaper! Old scrapbooks kept by the Canosia Historical Society include a few pictures from those early years, of people who have met the standards of excellence.

The summer gatherings at these small and large fairs were educational and inspirational to all ages as well as fun. Minnesota's University Extension Service established Farm Clubs and Boys and Girls 4-H Clubs (now called 4-H Clubs) to help and educate farm families in agriculture and health. Their new skills led to an interest in entering their best animals, foods, garden produce, and hand crafts in these local fairs, and became a major endeavor for many families. Bringing home a white, red, blue, or even a purple Grand Champion ribbon brought delight to the winner and pride to the whole family!

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