



A sign from above

NEWS PHOTO IAN SORENSEN

The Canadian Forces SkyHawks Parachute team glide down toward the Medicine Hat Stampede Grounds to officially kick off the 2010 Exhibition & Stampede.

A long walk off a short dock

AMANDA STEPHENSON
astephenson@medicinehatnews.com

Some of the pups participating in the Dock Dogs challenge looked a little uncertain at first. But after taking the plunge into a pool of cool water on a hot Wednesday afternoon, most of the first-timers were wagging their tails with excitement.

Dock Dogs is a new attraction at the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede. The Dock Dogs organization brings the stage and the pool, but the stars of the show are local dogs. Anyone is welcome to bring their dog to the Stampede and let them participate in a variety of events, like "Big Air" (where a dog is judged on the distance it can jump off the dock into the pool), and "Speed Retrieve" (in which dogs are timed on how long it takes them to retrieve a chew toy from the pool.)

Terrie Holgerson and Ken Pollard travelled to Medicine Hat from Edmonton to compete in Dock Dogs with their yellow lab, Tangent. It is Tangent's second competition.

"We read about it in the paper and thought we have a dog who likes water," Holgerson says. "We thought we'd like to try it."

While some people choose to try to qualify for Dock Dogs nationals with their canines, Pollard says Tangent is still learning.

"We're just out to have fun," he says.

"And it's neat to meet other people who are just out having fun with their dogs," Holgerson says.

While labrador retrievers have a natural affinity for water and are the most commonly seen breed in a Dock Dogs event, any breed or size of dog can participate.

"Chances are if they like water, they'll do it," Pollard says.

"Except the French bulldog — they sink," Holgerson says with a laugh. "One did compete once, though — they put a lifejacket on her."



NEWS PHOTO EMMA BENNETT

A yellow labrador retriever competes in Dock Dogs at the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede.

The Dock Dogs organization encourages everyone with a dog who would like to give the event a try to come down to the Stampede grounds. Dock Dogs perform three shows daily.



Clowning around at the parade

NEWS PHOTOS IAN SORENSEN

Above — A Shrine Clown high fives kids along Third St. S.E. during Thursday's Stampede parade. Below — Zach Fischer, left, and mother Nancy are all smiles as a friend takes their photo during the parade.



Miss Rodeo Canada

NEWS PHOTO EMMA BENNETT

Miss Rodeo Canada Princess Dana Hansen waves to the crowd during Thursday's performance of the Medicine Hat Stampede rodeo.

Arts show provides venue

Visual Arts show is for local artists

AMANDA STEPHENSON
astephenson@medicinehatnews.com

For more than 50 years, local artists have displayed their best works at the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede. And the popularity of the Stampede's Visual Arts Show shows no sign of waning, judging by the nearly 400 entries received this year.

"The artists really appreciate it," says Visual Arts Show coordinator Evelyn Kleis. "A lot of people wouldn't be able to show their work publicly without it. Every year, we have people come in who are quite tentative, because they've never done this before, but a friend has convinced them that they really should be showing their work."

The show has a children's and an adult's component, and accepts everything from photographs to pottery to oil paintings, acrylics, and watercolours.

"What we're noticing overall, even in the children's art, is the presentation," Kleis says. "People are taking the time to mat and frame it and it really ends up enhancing the work."

The pieces are judged by experts in the field — trained art



NEWS FILE PHOTO
Bob Milner is awarded Juror's Choice for his wood sculpture in the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede Visual Arts Show during Monday's reception.

professionals, retired high school art teachers, a member of the Saskatchewan Arts Council.

Kleis says the quality of the judging means artists get constructive feedback on their work.

"They're treating it seriously," she says. "They're looking for real elements of art — not just what makes a cute picture."

Medicine Hat photographer Kelly Matson received an honourable mention this year for her photo "Ghosts of the Past," portraying a woman wearing an elaborate carnival mask. It was

the first time she had entered the Stampede show.

"I found it very interesting," Matson says. "It was the first contest I've ever entered. I've done several exhibitions with different galleries, but this was the first contest I've done."

Matson's young daughter also entered a painting in the show, and Matson says it was a great thing to do together.

"We really enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun, and it was a great experience to do it together with my child," she says.