

Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest Senior Division

The Senior Division of the Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest will be held this year from September 21st through September 28th, 2008. This year's Talent Contest is aimed to draw crowds to enjoy some of the best talent in the southeast.

The Youth Talent Contest has been a tradition at the Mid-South Fair for over 50 years. This annual event is the largest amateur performing arts talent contest in the world. Our program is designed to discover, develop and encourage young entertainers throughout the eight-state area served by the Fair and is open to anyone ages 13-21 by opening day of the Mid-South Fair. In order to qualify to compete in the Youth Talent Contest at the Fair you must first compete in a fair-sanctioned local preliminary contest. The winner of a fair sanctioned contest receives an automatic invitation and other acts from that contest may be selected to advance by a Mid-South Fair Representative. You may obtain a listing of qualifying Preliminaries by contacting Jeanne Rinnander, Youth Talent Director at 901/322-1456 or jrinnander@midsouthfair.com.

There will be two preliminary contests each day during the Mid-South Fair, and the top six acts from each daily preliminary will advance to the Semi-Finals. Cash awards of \$50 will be presented to the top acts of each daily preliminary contest after their performance in the Semi-Finals. From the 72 acts that make it to the Semi-Finals, judges will select 20 acts to advance to the Finals. Each act competing in the Finals will receive an additional \$100 and a trophy.

The winners of the Grand Finals will receive trophies and cash awards. The Third Sweepstakes Winner will receive \$1,000, Second Sweepstakes Winner will receive \$1,250 and First Sweepstakes Winner will receive \$1,500. The Grand Award Winner will receive \$3,000 and is assured to be the Special Entertainment at the 2009 Grand Award Finals.

The Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest is sponsored by The Commercial Appeal and Lipscomb & Pitts, Insurance. The Commercial Appeal also provides publicity for the Contest and will cover the Finals events.

Contestant's packets with additional information and 1st assigned show time and check-in sheet will be mailed out the first full week of September. Please read and follow all instructions and rules carefully. This will be an enjoyable stage for you to perform on and many of our contestants come back every year until they are too old to participate. Many past participants are now in the audience enjoying what you will display to them.

Senior Division CONTESTANT RULES

1-Age limits are 13 through 21, inclusive. All contestants must be at least 13 years of age , and not more than 21 years of age at opening date of the Mid-South Fair.

2-It is recommended that an act run no more than 3 minutes, and under no circumstance, more than 4 minutes. Any act running over 4 minutes will be disqualified. An act is timed from the first vocal utterance in a vocal act, the first body movement in a dance act, and the entirety of any other act.

3-Acts using batons, machetes, knives, etc. will not be accepted for safety and insurance reasons.

4-No fire, smoke, or smoke effect will be allowed on stage during the Mid-South Fair.

5-A contestant may compete only once in each different act description.

6-No member of a Grand Award winning act may compete again in the same description.

7-The description of the act must remain the same as invited at the preliminary. Members of an act may drop out without penalty, unless it changes the act from a group to a solo.

8-All props must be inanimate, with the exception of those used by a magician.

9-For contestants entered in any vocal act, accompaniment tracks with vocal utterances are strictly prohibited. This includes recorded live voices and voices that are produced and recorded synthetically (i.e. synthesizers or digitally sampled).

10-There must be no taps or blatant tap effects on a taped recording used by a dancer.

11-In Instrumental Solo, the only accompaniment allowed is a live or taped acoustical piano. In piano solo, no accompaniment is allowed. In the use of any electronic keyboard, all sounds must be created live on stage. No pre-programmed music is allowed.

12-Bands or Instrumental groups may have no accompaniment. All sounds must be created live on stage.

13-Accompanists are permitted on stage, but must not assume visual importance in the performance.

14-All persons assuming visual importance in the act must meet the age qualification of the Youth Talent Contest.

15-An individual cannot be a part of an act at the Fair, if that individual does not appear in the act at the preliminary contest.

16-Judges will be instructed to consider the appropriateness of material used in competition. The Youth Talent Committee recommends that all presentations must be tasteful and appropriate for the contestant's age.

17-The first place overall winner of a sanctioned preliminary contest will be guaranteed an invitation to compete in the Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest (providing eligibility).

18-If the first place winner of a preliminary contest is ineligible to enter the Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest, or has already received an invitation to the Fair, it is up to the Fair Representative as to which act will receive the official invitation.

19-All contestants may only enter and exit from stage left and right. No act may exit or enter from front or back stage before, during or after the act. Nothing may be thrown or tossed from the stage towards the audience at any time. This is for safety and insurance reasons and will result in the disqualification of the act.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How can I find out when and where preliminary contest are being held?

A. There is a Preliminary Contest Schedule on one of the links. You may also call the Youth Talent office at 901-322-1456 or e-mail jrinnander@midsouthfair.com.

Q. How do I get invited to compete in the Senior Division of The Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest?

A. The Senior Division of The Mid-South Fair Youth Talent Contest is open to anyone ages 13-21 as of opening day of the fair. In order to be invited you must either win a preliminary contest at the local level, or be invited by a fair representative from a local qualifying preliminary contest. This is also called receiving your "bid" or "invitation".

Q. Is there a qualifying preliminary process for the Junior Division?

A. No, there is no qualifying preliminary for the junior division. We accept the first 200 applications received with the entry fee on a first come, first served basis. Deadline for entry is August 31 or when the 1st 200 acts have been received whichever is earlier. The junior contest begins Friday, September 19 and Saturday, September, 20 and is followed by the Jr. Grand Finals on Sunday, September 21 at 2:00 pm.

Q. I am a singer; can my accompaniment track have any type of background vocals?

A. NO. Rule #9 in the Contestants Rules states "accompaniment tracks with vocal utterances are strictly prohibited." This includes recorded live voices and voices that are produced and recorded synthetically (i.e. synthesizers and or digitally sampled). Please don't be disqualified. (This also includes a whistle or an 'oooooooooooo')

Q. I have a scheduling conflict during a particular time of the fair; can I request a specific day or time to perform?

A. Schedule requests will be granted only for extreme conflicts, (i.e. school function or activity, family emergency, other fair obligation etc.) Please report any scheduling conflict to the Youth Talent office immediately by phoning 901-322-1456 or e-mailing jrinnander@midsouthfair.com by August 1st. Every effort will be made to reconcile your schedule conflict, but the fair cannot guarantee a specific time or day so please have several day and time options that you can perform on – there are 12 1st round shows over 6 days...contestant should be available for at least half of them.

Q. Do I have to perform the same number at the fair that I performed in my preliminary contest?

A. No, you may change your number at any point in the process as long as the act stays in the same category that you were invited in.

Q. May I compete in more than one category at the fair?

A. You may compete only once in each different act description, for example, you may compete once as a vocal solo, once as a vocal group, once as a variety act and so on. And you must be "invited" with each of those acts at qualifying sanctioned preliminaries. (Juniors may compete once as a solo and once as a group.)

Q. How do I get to the fair?

A. Click on the [Directions to the Fair](#) link from this website. The directions will also be provided in your contestant's packet that you will receive after Labor Day.

Q. I was selected to compete in the Mid-South Fair from my local preliminary, when will my performance schedule be mailed out?

A. By the first full week of September, you will receive the date and time of your Mid-South Fair Preliminary. If you have not received your information by September 10, call the fair office immediately at 901-322-1456. If you did receive an invite and do not plan to compete, please also contact this office by August 15 to withdraw. Also if you did not get "invited" until September then you will not get your packet until you have been contacted by the Youth Talent Director.

Q. How is my act timed?

A. Vocal acts are time from the first vocal utterance; Dance acts from the first body movement; Instrumentals - the entire act; Because variety acts can vary widely, the official timing of a variety act would be best determined by the Youth Talent representative at time of your preliminary.

Q. Is the time limit the same for all divisions?

A. No. Senior Division has a time limit of 4 minutes; Junior Division has a time limit of 3 minutes.

Q. Who can sponsor a contest?

A. Any organization! Just notify us at least three weeks prior (the longer the notice the better) to the contest date. We'll set you up with entry forms, brochures, judge's sheets and all the advice you ask for. We'll do our best to supply you with a Mid South Fair Rep to attend your contest. You only need to supply a minimum of 10 eligible acts, at least three or more judges, and a venue to hold the competition. If a Rep is unavailable, then we will ask you to record the contest and we will then issue "invitations" or "Bids" once the DVD/Video has been viewed by the Youth Talent Committee.

Q. Can I use an accompaniment CD instead of a tape for the Youth Talent Contest?

A. Yes. Be sure that your song accompaniment is the ONLY track on the CD. If your CD has more than one track, you will be subject to disqualification. It will also be required of all contestants using accompaniment to bring a tape-recorded copy of your accompaniment to use as back up. If you are utilizing a recorded tape as your accompaniment, it is required that you bring with you two copies of your accompaniment tape to the contest, one for backup in case your original tape were to be damaged.

Q. Where do I park on the fairgrounds for the contest?

A. Parking is available in any of the public lots on the Fairgrounds on a first come, first serve basis. Take this parking into account when coming to your scheduled contest and leave in plenty of time to check in prior to your assigned show time.

Q. What happens if I miss my scheduled day or time to perform?

A. Remember, you must arrive at least one hour before your scheduled contest time for check-in. If you miss your performance time for any reason, you will not be allowed to make it up, and will forfeit your chance to compete. Please allow enough time to park and check-in-this is especially important on weekends and "busy" days.



YOUTH TALENT

PAYMENT FORM

(Please print/write legibly)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St. Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Name of Act: _____

Solo: \$30 _____ Group: \$55 _____

Method of Payment: Check: _____ Money Order: _____ Amt: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Type of Credit Card: _____ Exp. Date/Year: _____

Person's Name on Credit Card: (Print) _____

Signature for Credit Card Payment: _____

Mail to:

Mid-South Fair Youth Talent (Make checks payable to this as well)

940 Early Maxwell Blvd

Memphis, TN 38104

Fax: 901/274-8804