

2011 Minnesota State Fair Amateur Talent Contest

Entry Rules and Information

ONLINE REGISTRATION AVAILABLE AT www.mnstatefair.org

Entry: Acts must submit an entry form along with the entry fee. Participants may either register online or complete the enclosed entry form. **The fee is \$15.00 for acts with 1-3 participants, \$25.00 for acts with 4-9 participants and \$30.00 for acts with 10 or more participants.** *Entry fees are non-refundable. Checks should be made payable to the Minnesota State Fair. Returned checks are subject to a \$15 service charge.* Each act may audition only once. (An act is defined as the same person or configuration of people.)

Divisions: All acts compete in one of three different divisions. The Preteen Division is open to acts age 12 and under only. The Teen Division is open to acts ages 13 through 18 only. The Open Division is open to any act, regardless of age. In cases where the act consists of a group of people, choose the division that is appropriate for the majority of the group members. Contestant's age at audition date determines which division an act competes in. Accompanists, when not a part of the act, may be any age.

Eligibility: The contest is open to all amateur entertainers. Professionals are NOT permitted to compete. This includes Union musicians and anyone whose principle source of income is from their talent. Compensation for performing at weddings, etc. does not constitute principle source of income. With the exception of first place winners in the Open Division, acts that have participated in the past are welcome to compete again. Former Teen Division first place winners are required to compete in the Open Division if they choose to compete again. Past Preteen first place winners must also compete in the Open Division if they are not of age to compete in the Teen Division.

Auditions: The contest consists of three parts: auditions, semifinals, and finals. Auditions are **Monday, July 18 through Sunday, July 24** at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds Bandshell stage. Weekday auditions begin at 5:30 p.m. and weekend auditions begin at 11 a.m. Upon receipt of the signed entry form and fee, an audition date and time will be scheduled and the act will be notified by mail. All acts must audition in person.

Semifinals: Sixty Open Division, thirty Teen Division and thirty Preteen Division acts selected from all auditions advance to the semifinals during the fair. Each act will be scheduled to compete on one of ten semifinal evenings (Aug. 25 through Sept. 3.) Each evening's acts must attend a mandatory check-in meeting at 5 p.m. on their performance night at the Libby Conference Center. The contest begins at 6 p.m. on the Bandshell stage.

Open Division semifinal competition is August 25 through September 3. Teen Division semifinal competition is August 25 through August 29 and Preteen Division semifinal competition is August 30 through September 3. One finalist and one runner-up from each division are selected each night.

Finals: Finals for all divisions will be held at 8:00 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 4 in the Grandstand. Five finalists from both the Preteen and Teen Divisions and ten finalists from the Open Division will advance, as will the MSF County Fair Talent Contest's first and second place division winners.

GENERAL RULES

Admission & Parking: The Minnesota State Fair operates an "All Pay Gate" policy. Acts are responsible for gate admission and parking fees. Discount admission tickets can be purchased through August 24. Free parking and bus service is also available through the State Fair Park & Ride system.

Dressing Rooms: Dressing rooms are available **for auditions only!** Please plan to use public restrooms for semifinals and finals.

See backside for more information and awards!

Judging: Judges' decisions are final and scores are not released to acts or the public.

Acts will be judged on:

- quality of performance (including selection)
- stage presence
- entertainment value

Selection: All semifinalists and finalists must perform the same act or musical selection as used for their audition. This includes the number of people in the act, as well as the musical choice.

Stage: The Bandshell stage is an outdoor covered facility and is 56' wide and 24' deep with a concrete floor. (*These dimensions only apply for auditions.*) Auditions, semifinals and finals will be held rain or shine.

Time Limit: Time limit is four minutes (this includes any spoken intros by the act). Points will be deducted for acts going overtime. Acts are allowed to perform a medley of tunes, but must remain within the four-minute time limit.

SOUND AND ACCOMPANIMENT

Sound System: If sound amplification is necessary, *all acts are required to use the sound system and sound technician provided by the Minnesota State Fair.* The State Fair will also provide microphones, monitors, a piano, and a compact disc player. All other instruments and amplifiers must be provided by act, if needed. The State Fair does not allow microphones supplied by the act.

Piano accompaniment: For auditions, a professional piano accompanist will be available for acts' use **July 18 through July 24.** If you intend to use our accompanist, be sure to note it on your entry form and please bring sheet music **IN YOUR KEY** to your audition. You will have an opportunity to discuss your music with the accompanist before going on stage, but there will be no rehearsal. Acts who advance to the semifinals and finals will have the option to use our house band that consists of a piano, bass guitar, drums and rhythm guitar.

Recorded accompaniment: A CD is REQUIRED. Vocalists may use recorded accompaniment, provided it contains instrumental accompaniment **ONLY**; absolutely no vocals are allowed on the recording. **For vocal acts, acts will be disqualified if accompaniment recording has vocals of any kind.**

AWARDS

Semifinals

- Open Division: Each nightly winner will receive \$100 and advance to the finals on Sunday, Sept. 4 in the Grandstand; each nightly runner-up will receive \$50.
- Teen Division: Each nightly winner will receive \$40 and advance to the finals on Sunday, Sept. 4 in the Grandstand; each nightly runner-up will receive \$20.
- Preteen Division: Each nightly winner will receive \$40 and advance to the finals on Sunday, Sept. 4 in the Grandstand; each nightly runner-up will receive \$20.

Finals

- Open Division: First Place, \$1,500 plus the opportunity to negotiate a contract to appear at the 2012 Minnesota State Fair as a featured entertainer. Second Place, \$750; Third Place, \$375.
- Teen Division: First Place, \$500; Second Place, \$300; Third Place, \$200.
- Preteen Division: First Place, \$500; Second Place, \$300; Third Place, \$200.

QUESTIONS? If you have any questions regarding the contest, call **(651) 288-4395** or email msfent@mnstatefair.org