

THE TOLLESBORO LIONS CLUB FAIR
USE OF GROUNDS AND
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TOLLESBORO LIONS FAIRGROUNDS
TOLLESBORO, LEWIS CO., KENTUCKY

The Tollesboro Lions Club is a non-profit organization that operates and functions ENTIRELY BY VOLUNTEERS! Not one member of the Tollesboro Lions Club is paid, not even the officers! We are a small club, approximately 25 members, and located within a small community (NOT a city) of only approximately 800 persons. HOWEVER our members are dedicated individuals who volunteer their time and talents, energy and efforts in order to improve and make a positive impact on our small community. While we accomplish a lot through the dedication of our membership, we rely heavily upon our friends and family, neighbors, and through the support of a number of local businesses, as well as churches and religious organizations. We have also been the recipient of several grant opportunities and donations. ALL OF THIS SUPPORT has permitted us to accomplish more than what most organizations of similar size (with regards to number of members) would even dare to dream to accomplish, and it is this support that has the most significant impact on our organization's successes as we couldn't accomplish all that we do without the respect, encouragement, and participation of our community! WE AS A CLUB WISH TO THANK EVERYONE WHO HAS ASSISTED IN OUR SUCCESS which has permitted our small organization to be thriving part of our community for OVER 60 YEARS!!!

The Tollesboro Lions Club was chartered April 30, 1954. The Tollesboro Lions Club hosted it's first fair in 1957, a one-day event held at the Tollesboro High School (the club had not yet purchased any land and did not have a clubhouse in 1957). The club celebrated it's 50 Anniversary April 30, 2004. In 2007, the Tollesboro Lions Club conducted, promoted, and celebrated it's 50th Annual Fair, a NINE DAY EVENT *(we increased from a one-week fair to a nine-day fair sometime in the mid 1990s to permit us to have two weekends so that the Horse Show and the Speed Truck & Tractor Pulls were not on the same weekend as the noise from the Speed Pulls tended to drown out the announcer at the Horse Show)!!! We will conduct our 61st annual fair in 2018!!!*

The Lions Club Motto: "WE SERVE!!!"

The annual Tollesboro Lions Club Fair is the main fund raiser which in turn permits the Tollesboro Lions Club to benefit the community in a number of ways including: Donations to the Fire Department for new equipment and training; eyeglasses and eye-testing provided for the seeing impaired who cannot afford costs of testing and eyeglasses; annual scholarships to students planning to enroll in college; Project Christmas to permit underprivileged and needy to have a gift and items of clothing at Christmas; annual donations to Lions Club International charities; among other projects to benefit the community and citizens thereof.

The Tollesboro Lions Club Fair is an agriculturally based fair that includes a two day horse show (a Walking Horse Show and a Saddle Horse Show), Horse Pull, Beef and Dairy Cattle Shows, Swine and Sheep shows, and Floral Hall (that includes garden vegetables, tobacco/corn crop samples, home-baked foods and hand-made crafts). Motorized events include (or have included) Tug Tractor Pull; Tractor, Truck & Semi-Truck Speed Pulling (as well as Truck Tug O' War) events; ATV/Motorcycle Races (Drag-Strip style as well as round track and obstacle course styles); Demolition Derby; Mud Sling; and Garden Tractor Pull events (as well as miniature remote-controlled operated vehicles). The operation of the annual fair brings a social atmosphere and a general

“closeness” and “small-town feel” to our community that reaches out to our neighbors in adjoining counties and beyond. We typically attract a large number of non-residents to our community during our fair. This acts much like tourism as persons flock to our community during our fair and use local services and contribute to the “bottom line” of local businesses.

The Tollesboro Lions Club Fairgrounds provides the site and location and structural improvements that are used to promote many worthwhile organizations and causes, including: Lewis County 4-H (*in addition to using the grounds and facilities for meetings, the Lewis County 4-H Buckaroos, a new branch organization of the Lewis County 4-H was started in 2005 and utilized the fairgrounds in 2005 for their first Fun Horse Show, and beginning in 2006 expanded their usage of the grounds to conduct Fun Horseshows*); Future Farmers of America (*a 2006 Speed Tractor Pull hosted by the Tollesboro Lions Club raised in excess of \$5,000 for the Lewis Co. Future Farmers of America*), Girl Scouts (*two local troops have used the clubhouse and grounds for monthly meetings; we also grant the Girl Scouts - or alternatively the Color Guard - the use of a concession stand free of charge during our fair to raise monies for their projects*), summer Little League and T-Ball make use of the ball-fields, and other community events are hosted (*we also purchased a baseball pitching machine to aid youngsters in batting practice, the use of which is free to area youths*).

In addition, the fairgrounds, clubhouse, other structural improvements, and the grounds are available for family reunions, weddings, political gatherings, and other community events, including free use by local religious organizations. A blacktop walking track extends around our present land-holdings providing for a safe, convenient place for health-conscious members of the community to exercise. A playground (swings, slide, etc.) is available to interest and occupy young children. A basketball court, tennis court, and baseball/softball field are also located on the grounds and available for use by the general public or organized teams for casual recreation, exercise, practice, or competitive use. Others use the grounds for family outings including cornhole, croquet, horseshoe-pitching, picnicking, and other recreational uses. We have also conducted auctions on the grounds, proceeds going to the Lions Club or to other organizations or parties in need.

To “kick off” each fair, we have a large parade that extends through town and back. Although only a community of approximately 800 persons, it is estimated that in 2017 our parade involved at least 1,500 to 1,750 persons involved in the parade (riding on floats, ATVs, horses, in antique cars, on fire trucks, walking, biking, etc.), with possibly as many as 2,000 to 3,000 persons watching the parade from yards, parking lots, and businesses within the community (this is at least double and possibly in excess of three times the population of our community); this was our largest parade ever!!! It is a great annual event and the only parade annually conducted in our small community.

The Tollesboro Lions Club is a community-minded civic organization. When the Tollesboro High School was closed and the Tollesboro High School property was considered surplus property by the Lewis County School Board and made available for purchase, the Tollesboro Lions Club “stepped up to the plate” and purchased the property for \$95,000, which we have since made significant portions of the property available, at no cost, to be utilized and provide for a private Christian (faith-based) school (known as Tollesboro Jr.-Sr. High School). In addition, we provided an additional portion of the structural improvements, again at no cost, to a local food pantry and clothing bank that provides free food and clothing to needy persons (*as well as victims of fire or other catastrophe; the Food Pantry serves in excess of 300 families each month, with up to 500 persons in November and just shy of 500 persons in December*) within the community, county and region (*in 2009, the Tollesboro Christian School purchased this property from the Tollesboro Lions Club at less than our initial cost – even though substantial improvements had been made to the facilities since we first acquired the facilities -- in order to apply for grants and other funding to improve the school and increase the*

number of students in attendance). In addition, the Tollesboro Lions Club permitted the Tollesboro Christian Jr./Sr. High School to operate our concession stand (building and equipment, again at no cost to the school) during the fair -- as well as other events --- as a fund-raiser *(Sadly the Tollesboro Christian School closed their doors after the Class of 2012 graduated. However in 2013, the property was purchased by a Lions Club member for commercial operation as an auction center. This Lions Club member has continued to donate the use of the main high school building - actually permitting the Food Pantry to expand to permit them to use the entire building rather than a portion of the building that was formerly used - to permit the continued operation of the Food Pantry and Clothing Bank. The food pantry is a vital operation as it serves approximately 300 families each month from throughout the region, turning no one away. During November and December the number of families served swells to between 400 and 500 or slightly more, thus making a significant impact in our community as well).*

The Tollesboro Lions Club has taken aggressive actions in the past few years to significantly improve our facilities. This has resulted in more successful fairs and has permitted our organization to conduct increased charitable activities within our region.

In 2006, the Tollesboro Lions Club had expended in excess of \$30,000 for improvements to our fairgrounds including:

A). A large addition to the livestock show barn to include a new ring and stall areas.

B). The former livestock show barn was converted to promote FFA and 4-H activities, while providing for a shelter and stage area for pageants and other events.

C). A new two story building was constructed at the Tractor Pull area to provide for an announcer's booth over a food sales facility (the main level provides for food sales, however all foods are prepared at the concession stand as this facility is not provided with commercial cooking equipment).

D). Concrete barriers were purchased and placed alongside the Tractor Pull area to promote crowd safety.

E). New fencing was constructed alongside the Demolition Derby/Mudsling area to improve crowd safety.

F). New portable bleachers were purchased to add over 600 additional seats at key areas (Tractor Pull area, Demolition Derby/Mudsling areas, Livestock Show areas, etc.).

In addition, the Fairgrounds were improved by actions of the Lewis County Court which included widening and blacktopping of Fairgrounds Road (also known as Lions Club Lane or Grainery Lane, a county maintained roadway), making the roadway safer and easier for negotiating larger vehicles entering the fairgrounds. Also, the Tollesboro Lions Club has partnered with the Lewis County Detention Center in a joint effort whereby supervised inmates mow and trim the fairgrounds in exchange for providing meals to the inmates, thus taking some of the burden off the county's foodservice costs.

In 2007, significant additional improvements were made to the grounds of the Tollesboro Lions Club Fair including:

A). Additional improvements to existing buildings at the location of the Tractor Pull areas;

B). Placement of permanent scales for use for weighing farm tractors and trucks involved in activities;

C). Completely remodeled the interior of the existing Floral Hall building;

D). Landscaping of the entrances to the fairgrounds to commemorate our 50th Annual Fair!

In 2009, the Tollesboro Lions Club, thanks to a \$75,000 matching grant through the Kentucky Land and Water Conservation Fund, expended in excess of \$182,000 (*actual costs in cash; we received a lot of help from our community, and although the total costs of the improvements were \$182,000, the actual value of the improvements exceeded \$225,000 as we had a lot of donated labor as well as donated materials from many businesses and individuals, not just members of our club*) for improvements to our fairgrounds including:

A). Permanent bathroom facilities (a \$90,000 cost).

B). Purchase and erection of a large set of bleachers providing seating for over 600 persons (*cost in excess of \$40,000, however this does not include the costs of setting these bleachers on eighteen 32' long concrete berms weighing 17,000 pounds each, which acted to elevate the bleachers and increase safety during events such as the speed tractor pull. These berms were considered State Surplus Property and were donated to the club by the Kentucky Department of Highways, however we had to pick up and transport the berms, and set them up. It took two loaders to unload the trailer which hauled them to the facilities. The berms were much longer than our new bleachers, however the length permitted us to fill in the extended areas with gravel that could then be used as an access and walkway to access the bleachers front. We also placed shorter berm pieces one on top of the other along the length of the berms which makes our new track probably the safest of any county fair in the region!*).

C). Reconstructed our Horse Show Ring/Arena, enlarging it and replacing the existing wood fence with vinyl fencing.

D). Constructed a new, larger, safer track for tractor pull and other events.

E). Made significant improvements to utilities serving our facilities (*electrical, water, lighting, and sewage improvements*) to make our grounds safer and more environmental friendly (*in addition, the lighting improvements make our facilities much more efficient as the lighting installed requires much less electricity*).

F). Installed a lighted signage along the "AA" Hwy. (KY 9) upon land which we recently acquired by lease.

G). Constructed a new 120' x 40' pavilion to permit additional events at our fair.

H). Made improvements to our livestock show barn to further promote FFA and 4-H activities, while providing for a shelter and stage area for pageants and other events.

I). Remodeled our new (2006) two story announcer's booth to permit it to be used for events on both sides of the structure, and added a shed at the rear main level to permit the main level to provide for a concession stand (however all foods are prepared at the main concession stand as this facility is not provided with commercial cooking equipment).

In addition, we leased an adjacent 3.24 acre tract of land which increased our holdings in addition to extending our facilities to front on the "AA" Hwy (KY 9), the main east-west thoroughfare of travel within the community.

In 2011, we obtained a matching grant through the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Kentucky State Aid to Local Agricultural Fairs Program that permitted our club to construct additional

permanent bleacher seating on our grounds, expanding our seating capacity to well over 1,000 persons. We concreted the walkway areas that were formerly gravel, installed ramps, and provided blacktopped and concrete parking spaces so as to permit the seating to be utilized and accessible to handicapped persons. The total cost/investment of these improvements exceeded \$55,000.

In preparing for our 58th Annual Fair in 2015, we continued to invest in our fairgrounds, expending in excess of \$20,000 (a significant portion of these monies was provided by the Lewis County Farm Bureau Board; Lions Club Member Jim Meadows is on the Board of the Lewis County Farm Bureau and was instrumental in acquiring this contribution of funds) in improvements including a needed expansion to our Livestock Barn (our livestock shows are increasing in the numbers of persons involved in showing livestock, and we have expanded our livestock shows to include poultry/barnyard fowl, having added goats last year), including new concrete floors, and we roofed the area over the scales. We also placed a concrete floor in our Pavillion (the pavillion we built in 2009) thanks to a generous contribution from Citizens Deposit Bank & Trust (\$8,000). We also painted the roofs of the existing livestock barn (matching it with the new roof of our new addition) and the Floral Hall, and we painted the Horse Show Practice Ring (we have vinyl fencing surrounding the Horse Show Ring, however the Practice Ring has wooden plank fencing requiring maintenance and paint).

In 2016, the Tollesboro Lions Club received a contribution of the Lewis County ADF Funds (through Buffalo Trace Area Development District) for blacktop repair of the Walking Track at the Tollesboro Lions Club Community Park/Fairgrounds in the amount of \$3,818.80 (this representing the entire 2018 allocation of funds recieved by Lewis County. This was arranged by cooperation of Lions Club First Vice President Craig A. Stanfield who was the Buffalo Trace Area Development District Chairman of the Board at that time, Lewis County Judge Executive Todd Ruckel and Mayor of Vanceburg Matt Ginn to coincide with the Buffalo Trace Area Development District Annual Picnic which was conducted on the grounds of the Tollesboro Lions Club in 2016, permitting for a grant presentation on the grounds during the event). The Tollesboro Lions Club opted to nearly match the ADF Funds so as to make \$7,500 available for this project. This resulted in repaving approximately 1000 linear feet of the walking track, 6 feet in width.

In 2017, the Tollesboro Lions Club received another huge donation from the Lewis County Farm Bureau (this time of \$15,000; Lions Club Member Jim Meadows is on the Board of the Lewis County Farm Bureau and was instrumental in acquiring this contribution of funds. Keep in mind that the Lewis County Farm Bureau had made a \$10,000 contribution to improve the Livestock Barn in 2015), which the Club basically matched, to permit a large expansion and additional improvements to the Livestock Barn, in total at a cost in excess of \$30,000. This required the Club to tear down the old barn that was the last original improvement situated on the grounds from before the Lions Club purchase the property in the 1960s, so as to make room for a significant addition to the Livestock Show Barn resulting in an increased number of holding pens, an improved wash area, and the creation of a garage-type storage structure for storage of gates and pens when the facility was not being used for livestock shows.

In 2018, the Tollesboro Lions Club was offered approximately \$30,000 in playground equipment from a Center For Disease Control Grant offered through the Lewis County Extension Office under the condition that the Club provide for an area for placement of the playground equipment and undertake the considerable cost of installation, as well as future maintenance of the playground. Installation costs were an additional \$14,615, however this excludes site prep, fencing, and mulch. The Club borrowed funds for the installation through Buffalo Trace Area Development District through their Revolving Loan Fund (2017 Lions Club President Craig A. Stanfield, a member of the BTADD Board of

Directors, is the longtime chair of the Revolving Loan Committee, and while not a voting member, made the appeal to the BTADD RLF committee for this loan commitment), and will pay the balance out of funds on hand.

The improvements we have made to our grounds will hopefully permit the Tollesboro Lions Club Fair to continue to grow as we have over past several years as continue to strive to: A).Add new events to the fair to meet the increasing interests of the public. B). We have increased the number of days in operation (from a one week fair to a 9 day event). C). We have improved the facilities used in the increased the number of activities we offer. D). The acquisition of the 3.24 acres by lease has actually increased the size of our grounds, allowing for additional parking where we had no room for expansion. This has also extended our facilities to the "AA Hwy." (KY 9) providing superior visibility.

We have a dedicated volunteer membership that strives to be productive and active in our community and region, both individually and as a club, and we host our annual fair as a nonprofit entity *(no dividends or profits go to any members but are used solely to further community relationships and provide goodwill to our community, as well as furthering Lions Club's projects within our region, state, nation, and world).*

Between 15,000 and 25,000 persons attend our annual fair paying gate admission the week of our annual fair (depending upon weather, based upon the past 4 years), all impacted and concerned with agriculture and the future of agriculture in our community, region, state, nation, and world. However, considering all events combined (we strive to conduct a number of small weekend "mini-fairs" and host several tractor pulls throughout the summer months, as well as events for 4-H and FFA outside the scope of the Annual Fair) the total number of persons impacted would likely exceed 25,000 individuals annually, possibly as many as 30,000 to 35,000. This number however excludes the number of persons who use our fairgrounds and facilities for "other" uses such as recreational (walking track, tennis court, basketball court, baseball field, playground, etc.) and social (family reunions, class reunions, Christmas parties, auctions, political gatherings, etc.) as our fairgrounds are open to the public without membership or cost. This also excludes the persons served on our grounds by other organizations, such as Little League, Softball, 4-H, Girl Scouts, and local churches. Adding these persons could raise our total annual number of users of our fairgrounds to over 50,000.