## Previews **Previews**

## **Texas State Fair opens today**

For a while there, it almost felt like the Texas

anniversaries in Texas' illustrious 150th birthday celebration earlier this year and then wearly said, "Get thee behind us sesqui...susqua... what-ever you're called. We've had it up to here with you.

And just when you thought it was out of mind, some pesky sesquicentenniel Joe Bob, who actually revels in all that sesquicentenniel trivia, doesn't hesitate to remind us all that this year's State Fair of Texas offers its biggest, best and longestrunning extravaganza and one final sesquicentenniel stab.

In this, the year of the giant Texas birthday celebration, the best is yet to come. The State Fair of

Texas is nigh. The fair, located in Fair Park in Dallas, is one of those experiences that says to all who attend, "Everything's bigger and better in Texas.

Officially designated "Texas 150," the fair is a celebration of the state's sesquicentenniel and the fair's own centenniel.

The gates officially open today and festivities will continue for 31 straight days until October 26. The fair grounds are open daily from 7 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and exhibit buildings are open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Adults get in for \$5, children ages 5 to 11 get in for \$2, children under 5 get in free at all times and senior citizens get in free on Tuesdays. There are \$1-off weekday admission discounts.

\$18 million worth of reno-

vation and restoration in order to showcase a diverse slate of activities.

We heartily celebrated crafts, cooking, fireworks, anniversaries in T miniature horse show, a quarter horse show, concerts, plays, wandering impromptu acts, rides, a

ule their trip to the fair to Texas Pavilion. It will coincide with these dates: house some of Texas Sept. 28 — T. Graham most precious historical Brown; Sept. 29 — Steve documents. Wariner; Oct. 3 and 10 the Mac Band; Oct. 4 -Keith Stegall; Oct. 5 -Jim Collins; Oct. 11 — the Maines Brothers Band;



**Big Tex welcomes visitors to the Texas State** Fair. With size 70 shoes and a 75-gallon hat, the 52-foot tall statue made its debut in 1952. The theme for this year's fair is "Texas 150," a celebration of the state's sesquicentennial and the fair's centennial.

car show, games, diving, football, pig races, ice skating, parades, beauty queens, dancers, professional wrestling and gymnastics. And even that isn't all.

At 7 p.m. each night there will be a parade featuring parade-type staples such as marching bands and beauty queens. A The fair just underwent fireworks display will follow at 7:50 p.m.

Oct. 12 — Little Joe and La Familia; Oct. 13 — Stallion; Oct. 17 — Ulti-mate Force; Oct. 18 — Frenchie Burke; Oct. 19 - Exile; Oct. 20 - Randy Travis: Oct. 24 — Jewel Akens and the Boys; Oct. 25 — Chance; Oct. 26 — Sweethearts of the Rodeo. Most concerts are scheduled for 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

A major exhibit attrac-

Music lovers can sched- tion this year will be the

The "In the Name of Liberty" display in the pavilion will contain copies of the Texas Declaration of Independence, Col. William B. Travis' letter from the Alamo, the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the Magna Charta.

The pavilion will also be loaded with other historic documents, photographs and artifacts.

The China Pavilion will house products for sale by artisans from the People's Republic of China. Taking up 17,000 square feet, the China Pavilion will contain a replica of the Great Wall of China.

And yes, they brought those Incredible Acrobats of China. You know, the ones who can do onehanded handstands while juggling, rotating a hoop and twirling a plate.

The acrobats will perform eight times daily in the Centennial Building. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for children.

If you have a passion for theater, the national touring company of the Broadway hit musical, "Cats" will be performing in the Music Hall from Sept. 30 to Oct. 19.

Tickets for "Cats" range from \$6 if you're a theater lover of modest means, to \$40 if you're lucky enough to have that kind of money. You can get tickets for these shows through Rainbow Ticketmaster outlets

Of course, no state fair would be complete if there weren't the heated livestock and homecrafts competitions.

And if you think you look a lot like that towering cowboy, Big Tex,

you can enter that competition as well.

The fair is even catering to professional pig racing fans. Decked out in custom racing silks, the pigs will be going for glory as they squeal around "Porkchop Downs." Oct. 11 is the only

weekend that you might really want to consider avoiding the fair, unless you're an experienced veteran of the annual Texas - Oklahoma football weekend, or you enjoy sitting in traffic for hours. Enough said?

There's always been a certain flair to the State Fair of Texas.

From its very beginnings in 1886, when the fair actually split into two rival fairs only to see them both lose money, the need to be "Texanic" in scale has been the guiding goal.

By the time the Texas Centenniel rolled around in 1936, the fair had to be rebuilt to live up to the expectations of a demanding public. Not unlike this year's fair, millions of dollars were spent. Definitely unlike this year's fair, there were nude dancers on the Midway in 1936.

The 1936 fair lasted 178 days, and drew 6.35 million people. And imagine what \$25 million in 1936 dollars was com-pared to the \$18 million worth of improvements of this year's fair. They went all out fifty years ago.

And then there is the bizarre.

The 1887 fair had one of the more unusual exhibits to appear not just at a state fair, but anywhere — a replica of the Washington Monument made entirely of human teeth and Texas-raised camels. Honest.