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**NORTH GEORGIA STATE FAIR NON-COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS,**  
**FLOWER SHOWS ALLOW AREA RESIDENTS TO PROUDLY DISPLAY**  
**THEIR TALENT**

The time is fast approaching when the 75<sup>th</sup> annual North Georgia State Fair will be accepting entries for the non-commercial exhibit competitions, which feature canning and arts and crafts. Area residents are encouraged to enter their masterpieces in categories such as homemade canned goods, photography, painting, woodcarving, basketry, needlework and more in the competition.

For more than 35 years, Doyle and Margie Huddleston of west Cobb County have been entering their canning and preserving specialties in the fair's non-commercial exhibit competitions. And every year they walk away with at least one blue ribbon.

Margie, who learned about canning from her grandmother, said entering at the fair has become a family tradition. Her mother and mother-in-law have entered quilts, her daughters entered arts and crafts when they were kids, her oldest has entered some canning in her adult years and her granddaughter took home a blue ribbon two years ago for a collage. Last year, Margie won blue ribbons for her soup mix, green beans and tomatoes. Doyle won blue ribbons for his pickled pepper relish and pickled okra.

The Huddlestons can various jellies, pickles, preserves, tomatoes, green beans, soup, salsa and peppers. But they are known for their chow-chow (a mixture of cabbage, peppers, onions, green tomatoes and spices that is usually eaten with beans or collard greens) and every year, she gets calls from people who want some.

"Chow-chow is the No. 1 thing I get requests for. It is the most time consuming but I am known for it," she said.

Margie spends most of her summer and fall canning. She usually starts canning in June when the peaches ripen, and she continues to can until September when the last of

**(more)**

PAGE 2 – NON-COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

the peppers and tomatoes come in. But when it comes time to can a fair entry, she takes extra special care.

“I use special jars and I give an extra amount of time to make sure it looks just right. You can’t just throw it in the jar because part of the judging is on appearance,” she said.

Over the years, she has earned about 100 blue ribbons. The money she wins goes back into their garden and canning supplies.

“I get a lot of self satisfaction in winning. Plus canning and preserving is a dying art,” she said, adding she cans about 48 quarts of green beans and 52 jars of tomatoes every year. That way, she and her husband can eat them all year long. So far this year, Margie has canned bread and butter pickles, pickled peaches and peach jam, chow-chow, tomatoes, green beans, blackberry jam, fig preserves and blueberry jam. She said she has about 10 cases of canned goods already prepared.

“I don’t know what it is but there is a difference in the taste, and ours taste so much better than a can of tomatoes you would buy at the store,” she said.

Every year, the couple enjoys visiting the exhibit hall to see what others have done, to see if they won or to see who beat them – and some years it has been a competing family member that took home the prize.

“We always look forward to the fair,” she said. “We are passing down the tradition of entering our homemade items into the competitions. It is just fun and something we have always enjoyed.”

Non-perishable exhibits can be submitted from 1 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 15 and Sunday, Sept. 16. Baked goods must be submitted from 2 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 19.

Judging for the non-perishable adult exhibits and youth exhibits will be Monday, Sept. 17, at 10 a.m. The baked goods judging will take place on Thursday, Sept. 20, at 10 a.m.

**(more)**

## PAGE 3 – NON-COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

Besides earning ribbons, winners will collect premiums in the amount of \$2 to \$4 for youth and \$3 to \$5 for adults. Quilt winners can earn between \$5 and \$15 in each category of quilt sizes: miniature, small, medium and large.

There are usually several classes in all categories. For a whole listing of classes for all non-commercial exhibit entries, visit [www.northgeorgiastatefair.com](http://www.northgeorgiastatefair.com).

Kids, ages 18 and under, can enter in the following categories:

Food: junior youth food preservations, senior youth food preservations, beginner youth foods, junior youth foods and senior youth foods.

Crafts: beginner youth crafts, special population beginner youth crafts, junior youth crafts, special population junior youth crafts, senior youth crafts and special population senior youth crafts. Ages 12 to 17 can enter the youth division of creative arts, as well.

Photography: beginner youth picture gallery, special population beginner youth picture gallery, junior youth picture gallery, special population junior youth picture gallery, senior youth picture gallery and special population senior youth picture gallery and youth photography.

There are also junior youth sewing and senior youth sewing categories.

Adults can enter in the following categories:

Needlework, sewing, and handicrafts, which include jewelry, toys and woodworking. Creative arts such as basketry, an expanded photography division, oil painting, watercolors and other media as well as ceramics, woodcarving and sculpture are displayed along with food products in the agriculture/horticulture area. Food preservation, canning, drying and preserving vie for honors along with baked goods by entrants of all ages. The popular Christmas corner continues to grow, and an expanded quilting division promises added incentives for quilters.

After visiting the non-commercial exhibits at the fair, make sure to check out the Fair General Store, where volunteers will sell fair shirts, disposable cameras, old fashioned candy and some of the arts and crafts made by some of the most talented blue ribbon winners.

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### **Two flower shows showcase area's prettiest species**

The Marietta Council of Garden Clubs, Inc. and the North Georgia State Fair Association will present two standard flower shows at the 2007 North Georgia State Fair.

The first show will be from Sept. 20 to 25, with the second running from Sept. 26 to Sept. 30. This year's overall flower show theme is "The Colors of Life." Entries are open to the public.

"The fair offers something for everyone, but the flower show is part of what the Fair was originally when it was first established," said Holly Walquist, chairperson of the flower shows and board member of the Marietta Council of Garden Clubs, Inc. and the North Georgia State Fair Association. "It's a great opportunity to showcase the flowers, plants, vegetables and fruits that people grow in their home garden. I encourage everyone to enter in the flower show – it is a great sense of accomplishment."

Exhibit Hall A on the fairgrounds will be filled with the sights and smells of colorful, fragrant flower displays designed to help you see remnants of the south in a different medium. The categories of competition include roses, dahlias, orchids, cactuses, lilies, irises, begonias, zinnias, marigolds, asters, impatiens, daisies, herbs, shrubs, trees, vines, chrysanthemums, hanging plants, fruit plants and more; as well as design categories.

Instead of a single bloom or plant, the design categories encourage creativity in designing displays with natural and floral ingredients. Design exhibits need to be reserved by calling Vy Shinn at (770) 919-9345. Vegetable entries are also accepted at both flower shows. Educational exhibits are also welcome. Call Phyllis Goff at (770) 971-4822 to make a reservation. Participants in the single specimen or container categories just need to get their entries in by the proper time. Holly Walquist advises participants to make sure their prized specimens are free of flaws and signs of insects.

The flower shows draw competitors and nationally accredited judges from throughout metro Atlanta. Entries for the first flower show will be accepted from 6 to 9 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 19, and 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 20. Second show entries

**(more)**

PAGE 5 – NON-COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

will be accepted from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Sept. 26. The first show entries will be judged on Thursday, Sept. 20, at 12:30 p.m. and the second flower show will be judged on Wednesday, Sept. 26, at 12:30 p.m.

The competition is open to gardeners of all ages, and children are encouraged to enter. The flower show rules and entry categories are listed on the North Georgia State Fair website at [www.northgeorgiastatefair.com](http://www.northgeorgiastatefair.com).

To visit the North Georgia State Fair, take Interstate-75 North to Exit 260 (Windy Hill Road) and go west. Go approximately five miles until Windy Hill Road dead ends and turn left on Austell Road. Turn right on Callaway Road. Jim R. Miller Park is on the right.

For information, call (770) 423-1330 or after September 3, (770) 528-8989 and visit [www.northgeorgiastatefair.com](http://www.northgeorgiastatefair.com) or call Marilyn Ellis at 770-436-8514 for the non-commercial exhibits or Holly Walquist at 770-424-4664 for the flower shows.

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