

January 16, 2009

Dear Talent Show Coordinators:

We are already making plans for our 2009 Iowa State Fair. We are looking forward to working with you on the 50th Iowa State Fair Bill Riley Talent Search!

Please find enclosed the rules for the Talent Search. There are two different sets. One is designed for the coordinators and one for the contestants in the show. We have made exciting changes to the Talent Search. There are now three age divisions. Please read both sets of rules very carefully.

The "List" (location of local shows) is put together from the application sheet included with this letter. We need all information from this sheet to put our list together. This may seem early, but we get calls daily for a list of shows. **Please return by March 31, 2009. If I do not receive a show application, your show will not be put on the list, and will not be an official qualifying talent show.** This list will be posted on the website by April 15, 2009.

Please encourage contestants who are qualifying for the Bill Riley Talent Search to keep dates of August 13-23 open. We strongly discourage making schedule changes once contestants have received a performance date. We need to keep our show fresh with a variety of acts on each day and changes make this impossible. Absolutely no changes can be made when you win at the State Fair and advance to the Semi-finals.

August 8th, 2009 is the final day for qualifying for the Iowa State Fair Talent Search. Winners of the August shows will be scheduled to appear on August 18 or 19, 2009. Please inform contestants of this.

Thank you for being a coordinator for the Bill Riley Talent show. Without your show we would not be able to hold our State Fair Talent Search at the Iowa State Fair. Please feel free to contact Bill Riley, Jr. or myself if we can help you with any questions.

Sincerely,

Tonya Cook
Special Events Director
(515) 262-3111 ext. 215
E-mail tcook@iowastatefair.org
E-mail rileystage@gmail.com (Bill Riley, Jr.)

2009 BILL RILEY'S IOWA STATE FAIR TALENT SEARCH
RULES FOR SHOW COORDINATORS

1. Please read the following information carefully. It is the responsibility of the coordinator to see that the winning acts qualify according to the rules. Please hand out the Contestant Rules to participants before entering contest.
2. The sponsoring group will select a committee or person to coordinate the show. Set the date of your show and return the application before the deadline! Include all information!
3. The program is best presented as a "Free Admission" event for a local celebration or county fair. Young people cannot be charged a fee for participation in the talent show. All participants must be legal residents of Iowa.
4. The Talent Show is a state wide program. We encourage competition in your local show to be open to anyone in Iowa. We ask that you not limit the competition to a specific county or area. Winners from earlier shows around the state can compete in any subsequent local shows to get as much experience as possible. If such an act in your show is an earlier winner at another show and is already qualified for State Fair competition, and that act wins first place in your show, they receive the cash award. The second place act will advance, unless they have already qualified at an earlier show, then the third place act will advance, and so on. The Master of Ceremonies must ask the acts if they have already qualified for the State Fair Talent Show at the time prizes are presented.
5. **Semi-Finalists:** Semi-Finalists from last year's Iowa State Fair Talent Search automatically qualify for the next year's competition. They do not have to re-qualify for next year's show, but can compete at a local show. If that act wins, they are to receive the prize money. We encourage semi-finalists to compete at local shows.
6. **Birthdays and Semi-Finalists:** If a "Junior" act makes the semi-finals at the age of 14, they pre-qualify for the next year. If they turn 15 prior to the start of the Iowa State Fair they would be competing in the "Senior" division. If the birthday falls during the Iowa State Fair they will stay in the "Junior" division.
7. **Junior Division Championship:** There will be 9 finalists competing in the Championship Show. First, second, and third place winners in the Junior division must sit out one year of competition. They also must re-qualify when returning after the one-year absence, and be 14 years old or less.
8. **Senior Division Championship:** There will be 9 finalists competing in the Championship show. All finalists in the Senior Division must sit out one year. The "Grand Champion" of the Senior division is no longer allowed to compete at the State Fair Talent Search.
9. The only exception to the one-year absence will be for Junior division champions who were 14 years old when they won. They do not have to sit out a year and are automatically qualified for the next State Fair. They will, however, be competing in the Senior division. It is highly recommended that they compete at the local level as a Senior to get a feel for the older division.

10. **Seniors and Juniors must qualify within the age requirement. For example, if you are 21 and don't qualify before you are 22 you are ineligible, or if you are a Junior and don't qualify before you are 14 you will compete in the Senior division.**

Age Groups: Sprouts: 2 through 5 years. Juniors: 6 through 14 years. Seniors: 15 through 21. Only the Junior and Senior divisions are in competition, the sprouts are not. A person's age for the Iowa State Fair competition is determined at the time they win at a local show. A 14 year-old (or 21) could turn 15 (22) prior to the start of the State Fair and still be eligible in the Junior or Senior division, as they met age requirements at the time of qualification.

11. Acts with multiple performers will be placed in competition by adding the ages of members, and dividing by the number of members. The average age for that group dictates what division they compete in.

12. **Winners:** Only one winner from your show is permitted to advance to the Iowa State Fair from each division (Junior and Senior.) **NO TIES** are permitted in all placing.

Sprouts: Sprout acts are performing for experience only. We encourage the judges to allow a Sprout to advance to the Iowa State Fair if they feel they were exceptional, however, they are not in competition and this would not affect the results of the Junior division at the Fair. Sprout acts are not to take the place of a Junior act advancing to the Iowa State Fair.

13. The local sponsoring group is expected to provide prizes, which may include ribbons or trophies. The suggested range is:

SPROUTS: Ribbons for all Sprouts as they are not in competition.

JUNIORS: Low range: \$15, \$10 & \$5 High Range: \$50, \$25, & \$20.

SENIORS: Low range: \$25, \$15, \$10 High Range: \$100, \$50 & \$25.

14. The stage should measure 16' by 32' or larger to accommodate acrobatic dance acts, and it should have a smooth surface such as plywood or masonite. Provide a well-tuned piano, a CD/cassette player, and an excellent public address system.

15. To help us schedule the acts as they advance to the Iowa State Fair, please categorize as follows:

- Vocalists: classical, country, or contemporary areas.
- Dancers: tap, jazz, ballet, pointe, acrobatic, or baton.
- Instrumental: classical or contemporary categories.

16. Acts should meet with your Master of Ceremonies one half hour prior to the show. The committee will have the show acts lined up with the complete Sprout show first, with ribbons presented to every Sprout act. The Junior and Senior divisions will follow. The suggested number of acts is 10 to 14 in each category, but there must be at least five acts in each of the Junior and Senior divisions to qualify as an Iowa State Fair sanctioned show. No minimum number for the Sprout division. No more than five persons are allowed in an act. A pianist is not considered part of the act and can be of any age.

17. **Please have the judges or an assistant time each act.** Acts must attempt to keep the performance as close to three minutes as possible. Acts running considerably past three minutes are subject to possible disqualification or point deduction. Five - Ten seconds over would be a starting point to begin deductions, with twenty - thirty seconds well within your right as a judge for disqualification. This is at the judges' discretion and should be monitored closely. Set up time is not included. Please try to limit set up time to one minute.
18. Contestants may appear only once in any one show (not in a multiple and also as a single act at one show.)
19. 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.
20. The committee will arrange for judges (three adults are best) to meet with your Master of Ceremonies and declare a winner. We strongly suggest that judges should be recruited from other towns (music teachers, dance teachers, etc.) No parents, teachers, students, or family members are allowed to judge. There will be competition in the Junior and Senior categories with the First place act in each group advancing to the Iowa State Fair. Only **ONE** act may advance in each category. **NO ties are permitted.** Upon completion of your program, it is the responsibility of the contact person to let Tonya Cook know **ALL** information regarding your winners. You may call the results in to Tonya at (515) 262-3111, Ext. 215, fax them to her at (515) 262-6906, or e-mail them to tcook@iowastatefair.org.
21. You will need name, complete address, birth date, age, social security number, phone number (include area code), and type of talent. Multiple member acts need one of the group members to act as a contact person with all information going through them. Additional members of the act need only birth date, age and town.

Vocalists are strongly encouraged to practice and perform with the assistance of a vocal coach and/or a live accompanist. We understand that live accompanists are expensive, and sometimes very difficult to obtain for some performers. We will allow prerecorded accompaniment as long as it is a single instrument. Any prerecorded tape with backing vocals, multiple instrumentation or orchestration is not allowed, and the act will be disqualified. Coordinators and Judges, please pay close attention to this!

2009 BILL RILEY'S IOWA STATE FAIR TALENT SEARCH
RULES FOR SHOW CONTESTANTS

1. Show is open to legal residents of the state of Iowa only. Acts must appear in a locally sponsored show somewhere in the state of Iowa and win to be eligible to compete at the Iowa State Fair. Judges decisions are final.
2. Sprouts: 2 through 5 years
Juniors: 6 through 14 years
Seniors: 15 through 21 years
A person's age for the Iowa State Fair competition is determined at the time they win a local show. A 14 year old (or 21 year old) could turn 15 (or 22) by State Fair and still be eligible in the Junior (or Senior) division, as they met age requirements at the time of qualification.
3. Acts with multiple performers, shall compete in the appropriate category by adding all of the ages in the act and dividing by the total members in the act.
4. Acts must attempt to keep the performance as close to three minutes as possible. Acts running longer than three minutes are subject to possible disqualification or point deduction. This will be at the judge's discretion, but why take the chance? Keep the act at three minutes please. Set-up time is not included. Please try to limit set-up time to one minute.
5. No more than five persons are allowed in an act. Piano accompanist is NOT included in an act and may be any age. No more than three accompanists permitted per act. Drums, amps, etc. are discouraged due to the one-minute set-up time. No combos, rock bands or similar musical group permitted.
6. Acts are asked to not dance onto or off the stage. After introductions, you may take any position you wish to begin your performance.
7. **Vocalists are strongly encouraged to practice and perform with the assistance of a vocal coach and/or a live accompanist. We understand that live accompanists are expensive, and sometimes very difficult to obtain for some performers. We will allow prerecorded accompaniment as long as it is a single instrument. Any prerecorded tape with backing vocals, multiple instrumentation or orchestration is not allowed, and the act will be disqualified.**
8. Contestants may only appear once in any given show. They may not perform "solo" and then return in the same show in a duet or trio. Contestants are allowed to perform in different acts in different shows, but they may only qualify for the State Fair Show with one act.
9. 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.

10. Competition at the State Fair:

- Preliminary rounds: First 7 days
- Semi finals: Days 8, 9, and 10
Five acts advancing to the semi-final round from the Senior and Junior divisions during the preliminaries.
- Championship show: Day 11
Three Senior and Junior division acts advance to the championship show from each semi-final round.
- Sprout acts that perform will receive a ribbon, but are not in competition. If the judges deem the act appropriate to advance they may be asked to return and perform again on a different day. They may be included in the Championship Show as well, but again, not be in competition.

11. Semi-Finalists: Semi-finalists from last year's Iowa State Fair Talent Search are automatically qualified for the next State fair competition. You do not have to re-qualify for next year's show by winning a local level show, but are encouraged to compete at local shows. If you win a local level show, you are entitled to the prize money, but you must inform the Master of Ceremonies that you have already qualified for the State Fair. The second place winner will then be able to advance to the State Fair competition. Remember you are entitled to the first place prize money.

12. Birthdays and Semi-Finalists: Semi-finalists returning the following year will perform in the division for their current age. Example, if a 14 year old makes the semi-finals in the Junior division, and they turn 15 by the next State Fair they will be placed in the Senior division.

13. Junior Division Championship: There will be 9 finalists competing in the Championship Show. First, second, and third place winners in the Junior division must sit out one year of competition. They also must re-qualify when returning after the one-year absence, and be 21 years old or less.

Senior Division Championship: There will be 9 finalists in competition. All finalists in the Senior division must sit out one year. The "Grand Champion" of the Senior division is no longer allowed to compete at the State Fair Talent Show.

"The only exception to the one-year absence will be for Junior division champions who were 14 year old when they won. They do not have to sit out a year and are automatically qualified for the next State Fair. They will however be competing in the Senior division. It is highly recommended that they compete at the local level as a Senior to get a feel for the older division."

Seniors and Juniors must qualify within the age requirement. For example, if you are 21 and don't qualify before you are 22 you are ineligible, or if you are a Junior and don't qualify before you are 14 you will compete in the Senior division.

14. You will need name, complete address, birth date, age, social security number, phone number (include area code), and type of talent. Multiple acts need one member to act as a contact person with all information going through them. Additional members of the act need only birth date, age, and town.

Contact Tonya Cook at the Iowa State Fair for more information.

Phone: (515) 262-3111, Ext. 215

Fax: (515) 262-6906

E-mail: tcook@iowastatefair.org

E-mail: rileystage@gmail.com (Bill Riley Jr.)

2009 BILL RILEY TALENT SEARCH
SHOW APPLICATION

PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 31, 2009

Date _____ City _____
(Show date) (Location of show)

In conjunction with _____
(County fair, fun days, etc.)

Name _____
(Contact person coordinating contest)

Address _____
(Street, box)

City _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Email Address _____

CHECK OPTIONS APPLYING TO YOUR SHOW:

Area residents only _____ Show is open to anyone _____

Do not contact before a certain date _____

Former coordinator whose name should be removed from mailing list:

_____ No show this year; remove my name from mailing list.

_____ No show this year; leave on mailing list for next year.

For your show to be placed on "The List" which will be posted on www.iowastatefair.org, you **MUST** return the above application by **March 31, 2009**.

Return to:

Tonya Cook
Iowa State Fair
PO Box 57130
Des Moines, IA 50317-0003

Fax No: (515) 262-6906
E-mail: tcook@iowastatefair.org