



## **PNE OFFERS FREE ADMISSION TO TRY AND RECOVER ATTENDANCE AFTER STORM PUTS ANNUAL FAIR DOWN 100,000 ATTENDEES**

*BC's Largest Ticketed Event Doesn't Recover Momentum After Record Storm*

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For Immediate Release

**Vancouver, B.C.**- In an unprecedented move, the annual Fair at the PNE breaks with 105 years of tradition in an attempt to recover 100,000 visits that the annual Fair lost due to the storm that rocked the lower mainland and Fraser Valley on August 28<sup>th</sup>. The storm knocked out power to 710,000 lower mainlanders, with many only regaining power on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> and the cold rainy weather lasted until Thursday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*"The first five operating days of the Fair saw the strongest attendance in a decade," says PNE President and CEO Mike McDaniel. "We were tracking to have the best attendance in recent memory, but the wet weather that set in on Friday brought the coldest days in the city since spring. Of course we expect some rain during the Fair, but did not anticipate the impact that would be felt across our region after the rain hit Friday, the winds hit Saturday and the turbulent weather continued until the following Thursday."*

The Fair took the unprecedented step of closing its gates during the storm, reopening an hour later when revised reports from Environment Canada showed the brunt of the second wave of the wind would miss the fairgrounds. The following five days of extremely wet and cold weather effectively ended summer in Vancouver, and the Fair was unable to recover its opening momentum.

### **FAIR AT THE PNE OFFERS FREE ADMISSION SUNDAY 11AM-2PM TO ENCOURAGE GUESTS TO COME OUT AND SUPPORT THE FAIR**

*"This is about calling on British Columbia to come out during this incredibly challenging time in our history and support our non-profit BC institution. Beyond that its about supporting youth employment and countless small businesses that rely on the PNE Fair," says PNE President Mike McDaniel.*

The opening five days of the Fair saw the strongest start in a decade, with over 238,530 in attendance against the anticipated five-day attendance of 216,000.

*"The public's response to this year's Fair was fantastic. We were thrilled that we were trending up over 10% above our 10 year average on those first five operating days," says McDaniel. "We were on track for a very strong Fair."*

*“The first five days were unbelievably strong for us,”* says longtime PNE concessionaire Boyd Newton of One Sweet World. *“We’ve never had an opening like that, unfortunately the wheels fell off when the storm hit.”*

Jim Parsons, one of the Fair’s founding family concessionaires (Jimmy’s Lunch was opened by his great-grandfather Jim Parsons in 1929), reiterated that sentiment, *“the decisions made by the PNE over the past three years across all departments have been unbelievably positive, but the effects of the storm over the past week has been the most dramatic I can remember.”*

**The Fair at the PNE will offer guests free admission into the fairgrounds between 11:00am and 2:00pm on Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>.** The Fair will be open as scheduled (11:00am – late) on Labour Day Monday.

2015 is the third year of a five-year plan to re-energize The Fair at the PNE. Successes of 2015 include an overwhelmingly positive response to The Magical History Tour, A Beatles Exhibition; The Broadway Musical Peter Pan Starring Cathy Rigby; Summer Night Concerts including Boyz II Men, the Beach Boys, and Hall and Oates; and the Superheroes Discovery Centre and Dinosaurs Alive!

Planning is now fully underway for the 2016 Fair at the PNE. For more information visit: [www.PNE.ca](http://www.PNE.ca).

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Owned by the City of Vancouver, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) is a healthy and vibrant non-profit organization dedicated to providing over 3 million visitors a year with first-class cultural, sporting and family entertainment events. Founded in 1910, the PNE operates from a 114-acre site at Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue in Vancouver where the organization operates four activity streams: an annual 15-day Fair, Playland Amusement Park, maintenance and care of the Hastings Park site and management of the site’s year-round facilities. These facilities are utilized to celebrate a variety of hockey, amateur sporting, music, community, social, cultural and commercial events throughout the year.

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