

Mule Day festivities begin in Tennessee

The event has been held annually since the 1840s.

March 30, 2009

Mule owners and admirers are gathering in Columbia, TN this week for the historic Mule Day celebrations. Mule Day began in 1840 as a meeting for mule breeders, but has become a week-long festival that attracts 200,000 people each year.

Throughout the festival mules will be showcased in a variety of events and competitions. Besides the traditional pulling competitions, show ring classes are offered in western, English and gaited riding as well as driving. Mules are also exhibited in halter with classes for mini and draft mules included. On Saturday, April 4, the mule parade travels through downtown. This event has been an annual highlight of the festival since 1934.

In addition to the mule competitions and exhibitions, the festival includes music, dancing, and arts and crafts.

Mules are the offspring of a female horse and a male donkey. They are valued as work animals as they are stronger than horses or donkeys and are often considered smarter. Originally bred as work and pack animals, today they are also selectively bred to be show animals or trail mounts as well.