

Vanner Fair is back for its second run this weekend

By Jordan Nunziato

Vanner Fair, the red carpet expo for the Gypsy Vanner horse breed, is returning for a weekend sure to please horse enthusiasts. Held in conjunction with Destination Equitation in the Hills of the Headwaters at the Orangeville Fairgrounds Sept. 21 and 22, these gypsy horses are sure to entertain.

This equi-tourism event welcomes the public to enjoy the equestrian events, entertainment, food, shopping and showcasing the crafts and businesses based in the Hills of the Headwaters community.

Isabella Devine, of DeerFields Client Services and Communications and an organizer of the event, emphasized that Saturday is going to be the "bang!" day.

"We're going to have the VIP lounge; the Supercars are going to be there for Supercar Saturdays, we're anticipating 100 cars; we're doing charity things with the hospital; the horses are going to be evaluated and the final trophy is going to be given out on Sunday," she said, adding that Sunday will be rather low-key compared to Saturday.

The Gypsy Vanner, the horse breed paramount to the event, has many wonderful qualities and years of selective breeding have developed personality traits that have made this breed one of the most gentle and docile in the world.

Highly admired, the Gypsy Vanner is still extremely rare in the North America. Due to their increasing popularity, there may be more of them in the very near future.

Traditionally used for driving, this dynamic breed also excels at dressage, hunter jumper and both English and western riding.

"These horses are an extremely special breed that was not recognized for 200 years," Devine said. "The gypsies kept them excluded in Britain. They were not known to North America at all."

Devine said that once they were brought here, "the first thing we wanted to do was give the horse breed some recognition, and that is the heart and soul of the Vanner Fair.

"We got such an incredible response that we knew we had to keep it going, but every year it is such an undertaking," she said. "We start organizing this in January for September, and still we're working at it. So, that's why we decided to do it every two years." Proceeds from the 2013 Vanner Fair will support the Headwaters Health Care Centre with its \$14 million Commitment to Care Campaign.

Event host DeerFields will be donating one of their prize Gypsy Vanners in the Fair's Elite Auction. In addition, there will be a donations booth with free collectable items with each donation. All gifts contribute to the quality of patient care.

For more information, visit vannerfair.com