

Subject: Sweetheart of the Mountains

Date: June 29, 2009

For Immediate Release

Back in 1947, the organizers of the re-born Plumas County Fair decided they needed a young lady to represent them at various events. It was that year the Miss Shirley Dakin was crowned the first Sweetheart of the Mountains. She later became Mrs. Gene DuPont and began a long line of former Sweethearts that continued to grace Plumas and Sierra counties throughout their lives. They came from every part of the two counties and have gone on to be housewives, mothers and Phd's. Some went beyond their Sweetheart crowns to be named Miss California State. All represented the finest our counties had to offer.

Sweetheart of the Mountains 1961 was Miss Nancy Gambell of Quincy. Over the past several years, Nancy has worked to gather updated information on past Sweethearts with mixed success. A pleasant side effect of her efforts has been a gathering of these ladies at the Fair two years ago. This mini reunion gave some of the girls a chance to reflect on what the Fair meant to them, and vice versa. This year, Nancy has successfully planned another get together for any Sweetheart who wishes to attend. Their activities will begin at 10:30am on Saturday as the former Sweethearts will ride atop a float in the Fair parade under the guard of Chipper, the Fair mascot. Afterward, they will gather in the Mineral Building for a private luncheon catered by Back Door Catering. They will be joined by several friends who were instrumental in putting on the pageant in the past. The group will take in the display of photos and memorabilia celebrating the Sweetheart of the Mountains' pageant. The display will be open to the public throughout the Fair. Finally, all the attendees will be given a sash to wear that allows them in to any event and on any ride, just like when they were first crowned. If you see one of these ladies at the Fair, please introduce yourself and tell them thank you for what they've done for the Plumas Sierra County Fair.

Sadly, several former Sweethearts have passed away. Several more have left without a trace. Nancy asks that anyone that has knowledge of the whereabouts of any Sweetheart to please contact her at 927-7473 or the Fair office at 283-6272. Specifically, she is looking for information on 1951-Shirley McKowsky, 1960-Pat Kelly, 1964- Starra O'Brien, 1967 Janie Lewis, 1968-Mary Lou Meredity, 1978-Brenda Shanks, 1979-Heidi Shuler, 1989-Hannah Kotz, 1991-Michelle Kemp, and 1996-April Ravenscroft. Any clues or information would be appreciated. The Fair Board would also like the public to know they would love to have a return of the Sweetheart of the Mountain pageant and just needs the right person to head the event up. Interested? Contact the Fair office at 283-6272.