



Fair Play

Puyallup's fall extravaganza becomes the Washington State Fair

The barnyard animals will be dancing to a different tune this year as the state's largest fair transitions from its "Puyallup Fair" name to "Washington State Fair." Meant to reflect the fair's scope (it attracts more than 1 million attendees), the rebranding is actually the event's fourth. What began in 1900 as the Valley Fair was known as the Western Washington Fair from 1913 until 1976, when the famous "Do the Puyallup" ad spawned the most recent moniker. ¶ Beyond the name change, the Sept. 6–22 event offers other new enticements, such as "Rainier Rush"—an inverted looping roller coaster that travels at up to 50 mph—and the fair's completely restored classic wooden coaster. A new Piglet Palace will house two sows and their little oinkers, due during the fair; the high-tech Luminasia display will offer a modern take on Chinese lanterns; and Cirque Mechanics acrobats and aerialists will perform on a roving truss structure. ¶ And whether you do it at a trot, a gallop, or real slow, this fair still boasts our favorites: Fisher scones dripping with raspberry jam (1.2 million sold last year), midway thrills, animals galore, and concerts in the Grandstand. —MICHELE WHITEHEAD

Visit AAAWashingtonJourney.com/events for a list of more fall fairs across the Northwest.

National Treasure

JEFFERSON'S POPLAR FOREST DEEPENS OUR UNDERSTANDING OF A FOUNDING FATHER

FOR 30 YEARS, a painstaking restoration and archaeological investigation have been revealing insights into the brilliant mind of our nation's third president. While Thomas Jefferson is most closely associated with his beloved Monticello, he also built a house on almost 5,000 acres just outside Lynchburg, Va., in 1806. Poplar Forest's red brick octagonal house and elaborate gardens were Jefferson's own designs, the synthesis of his best ideas for a tranquil personal retreat.

The house entered a long oblivion as a private residence after Jefferson's death in 1826; it was almost completely unknown to the rest of the country until its purchase in 1983 by the nonprofit founded for its rescue. Now visitors can watch this gem continue to re-emerge, as master craftsmen make repairs using early 19th-century techniques and historians deduce Jefferson's vision for the gardens and plantation. There is a stark but elegant beauty to the rooms, where Jefferson's love of architecture and symmetry are evident. In the parlor, a single campeachy chair—a Mexican design Jefferson liked because it was comfortable for his long frame and eased his arthritis—faces tall triple-sash windows looking upon the rolling countryside he loved so much.

Poplar Forest is open daily March 15 through Dec. 30, and on weekends from January through mid-March. Special events include November's Thomas Jefferson Wine Festival and candlelight tours, plus a holiday open house. poplarforest.org —CHERYL-ANNE MILLSAP

FAIR: STUART ISETT; COURTESY OF POPLAR FOREST

