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Country music stars Lonestar and Sarah Buxton are the featured performers at next week's Cedar County Fair in Hartington, Neb. Buxton performs Friday, July 16, while Lonestar takes to the stage on Saturday, July 17. (Courtesy photos)

Top Country Acts Highlight 2010 Cedar County Fair

CEDAR

COUNTRY

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HARTINGTON, Neb. — The first fair in Cedar County in 1874 had trouble just getting a pig for the crowd to go along with a few horses and a couple of cows.

Now 136 years later, two top country music acts will play at the Cedar County Fair on back-to-back nights, with Sarah Buxton performing July 16 and Lonestar taking to the Hartington stage July 17.

"Usually we try and hit it with one big group, and this year we hit a gold mine; it's like having two headliners instead of one," said Fritz Steinhoff, who is on the Cedar County Fair Board. "We didn't think we would get Sarah (Buxton), but we tried and she signed in October, and Lonestar signed in December, so we are thrilled for this year."

The Cedar County Fair Board is not alone in being excited that Lonestar will be performing in Hartington.

"I'm so glad that we are coming; we have

passed through the area several times, so I am excited we are going to be playing there," Lonestar lead singer Cody Collins said in an interview this week with the *Press & Dakotan*. "I always love doing fairs, because the crowd always seems to be cool, loud and crazy, and that's what we like."

Michael Britt (lead guitar), Keech Rainwater (drums) and Dean Sams (keyboards, background vocals) round out the group's lineup.

Collins became the lead singer of Lonestar in 2007 after Richie McAlyster left the group.

Lonestar made its debut on the Billboard country music charts in 1995 with the single "Tequila Talkin'." Since then the group has had nine number one hits on the country charts.

One of their hits was "Amazed," which was also the number one song on the Billboard Hot 100, becoming the first single to top both charts since Kenny Rogers' and Dolly Parton's "Islands in the Stream" in 1983.

Collins said the group can't do a show without doing "Amazed," but the group never gets sick of singing the song because of how involved the audience gets with it.

"The crowd keeps the song alive because they sing it with you, and it's impossible to get tired of it when they are singing with you," he said. "The song is new to me over the past couple of years, since I did it as a cover song for bands I was in, but it's different when you are actually singing with the band that has the song."

The other song Lonestar plays at every show is "I'm Already There," which spent six weeks as the number one song on the country charts in 2001.

"We don't do a show where we don't do it for the troops," Collins said. "It wasn't a military song at first, and was about someone being away from their family, but it evolved into that kind of song because they have to spend seven months away from their families. It became a very personal song for people."

Lonestar will play a 90-minute show starting at 8:30 p.m., with about a 15-minute break from the country side to play some rock songs, plus they will play their hits.

But the concert will have a new feel to it

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