

# CHINGAWASSA DAYS

## Why The Rhino?

If you've observed Chingawassa Days since the event was born in 1997, you may have noticed that the event's logo, along with ads and posters promoting the weekend, often include a rhinoceros. Early versions showed the silhouette of a classic rhino. As time has passed, the rhino has been transformed into a more cartoon-like figure, usually standing on two legs. He also gained a name "Pete the Rhino" has been seen boarding a rail car; standing with outstretched in a disco pose one upraised arm; in a rock-n-roll pose with his guitar; and in full gallop promoting the rhino run. So why a rhino named Pete?

One of the members of the original Chingawassa Days committee was Pete Peterson. He was an enthusiastic member of the group who was well liked by everyone. Unfortunately, Pete had a serious illness although he was able to participate in the planning of the first celebration, he was severely limited in his ability to participate when the events actually took place. Nevertheless, his dedication was an inspiration to the rest of the committee. Pete had an interest in rhinos, He had a number of statues, figurines, and pictures of them. When Pete passed away, the Chingawassa Days steering committee informally adopted the rhino as a logo in his memory. The committee commissioned a chain-saw artist to carve a statue which is kept in the Marion Chamber of Commerce office most of the year, but it is brought out the weekend of Chingawassa and displayed in the park. The silhouette of the rhinoceros was used on certificates of appreciation and thank you cards. In 2000 the rhino, which had by then come to be known as "Pete" was incorporated into the Chingawassa Days logo for that year. Prior to that time, the logo had always featured a rail car because of the old railroad connecting Marion to Chingawassa Springs. In 2000, Pete was seen boarding a Chingawassa Springs railcar. Pete has continued to be a part of the logo ever since. In recent years, "Pete the Chingawassa Rhino" has become the centerpiece of the logo.

While the original intention of using the rhino as a symbol of the Chingawassa Days event was intended to honor Peter Peterson, the committee has now come to realize that it is also a very recognizable and unique symbol with which to promote Marion's premiere entertainment event. What other community in Kansas has a rhino as a mascot? So look for Pete the Rhino to grow in popularity and to spring up on clothing, signs, publications and anywhere Chingawassa Days is being promoted.