



SPRING 2023

New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc.

Is it spring yet?! Mother nature waited to the end to give some of us a taste of winter! Hope you and your families are well and excited for all the good that will come to us this year.

In 2023 we began a new chapter for our Association. If you have not heard yet, our 2024 New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs Convention will be held January 12th-14th at the Downtown Marriott in Syracuse. Yes, that's right Syracuse. We are driving forward looking through a wide-open windshield and not looking back. There will be many positive changes that will be incorporated into the venue and the convention program this year. The improvements come from the well thought out recommendations we have received over the past couple years from all of you. The great County Fairs of New York State.

Our executive committee met several times in January and February reviewing multiple quotes from different venues. The Syracuse Marriott really wanted our business and went the extra mile to make it work for us.

They have a great ballroom that will host our business meetings and banquet. The area for our trade show is larger than what we had last year, and they have a large hall for our breakfasts, presidents reception, auction and Show Peoples party. All in all, this will be a great venue for us.

Thank you to Ed Rossley, Julia Reynolds, Lauren Delaney, Mark St. Jacques, Jane Luskin, Gary Newkirk, Andy Imperati, Jessica Underburg, Lisa Jackson, and Harold Smith for your time and input in our convention selection process. Lauren Delany was extremely valuable throughout the research process of venues, utilizing her professional background in hospitality and conventions to clarify contract terms and conditions and to make us aware of unnecessary costs and fees.

Julia Reynolds has assembled a program committee to provide us with a new format that will include excellent educational opportunities. More to come as we progress through the year.

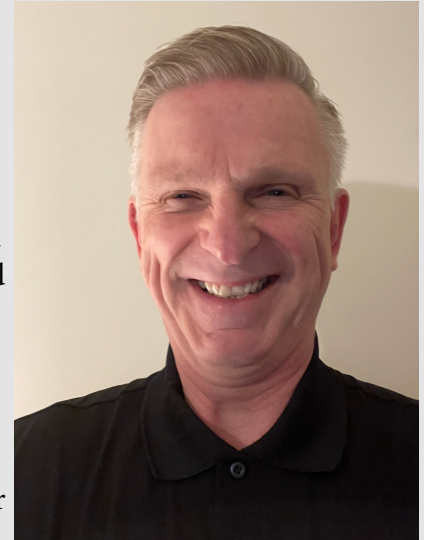
Many thanks to Ed Rossely who has spent countless hours and is relentless in his pursuit to have our grant monies distributed to all our fairs who have been waiting for their money. Please note we have Commissioner Ball committed to attend our spring, Board of Directors meeting, on April 29th at 1pm, at the Herkimer County Fairgrounds. All fair representatives are encouraged to attend. This is your opportunity to network with other fairs and to voice your opinions. Our Board is energized and willing to help where we can.

R. Harry Booth organized our Lobby Day meetings at the Capital. We had a great turn out with representatives from several fairs. See his report for more details.

Looking forward to seeing you at our spring meeting.

Anyone interested in working on a committee please contact me with the committee you would like to participate on.

Remember the closing statement from January's convention. The 2024 Convention will have the **WOW! Factor!**



John Craft,
President

2023 Lobby Day

I believe that the 19 fair representatives who met with our legislators and state officials will agree that our Lobby Day efforts were successful and well received. It was really good to be able to get back to meeting in person. We met with 16 legislators on the schedule and some of us went to see an additional 8 or 10 to give them our information.

The \$500,000 for premiums appear to be safely within the Governor's budget. A legislative bill to lower the \$5,000 threshold to \$2,000 has been submitted by Assembly member Carrie Woerner in the Assembly and I understand, a similar bill will be introduced by Senator Michelle Hinchey in the Senate. I know the Assembly Bill has been moved into committee for consideration.

We had a very positive meeting with Kevin King, Deputy Secretary for Food and Agriculture, from the Governor's office with a surprise appearance of Commissioner Richard Ball.

This led to a very frank discussion about how difficult it is to get approval from the staff at Ag. & Markets to receive the Grant funds. We also discussed the promotion dollars of up to \$50,000 per fair. However, we're waiting on particulars on how they will be made available. The track record of Ag & Markets for making this sort of funding readily available to the fairs isn't great, so it's unlikely they will be much help this year. We can only hope. We had asked the legislators to include an additional \$25,000 for premium dollars in each of their one house budgets. The bad news is that neither included the additional \$25,000, but the good news is that they each did include another \$5,000,000 for capitol projects. The scope of this Grant seems to cover a wide range of projects. Hopefully, assuming money stays in the approved budget, more of our fairs will be able to take advantage of this Grant. At the time of this writing we're at least 2 weeks away from the state budget being in place. Assuming there's not a major fight over the big ticket items, we should come out of this okay.

I'm optimistic that Joe Ganley will help get the process moving. As you know it certainly has been a struggle. My source within the comptrollers office assures me that none of the Grant contracts have remained in that office longer than 15 days. Obviously they are not the problem. Once the "hoorah" over the budget is over I will contact our Reps to see what the status of the bill is.

Thank you to Renee St Jacques and Maureen Bartczak at Farm Bureau for so much help setting up our meetings with so many influential people. Also thank you to all who participated and helped tell our story.

Respectfully,

R Harry Booth, Director of Public Policy



NYSAAF Ag Awareness Report

Committee Chair: Renée St. Jacques

Most eligible fairs for this year's Ag Awareness program have submitted applications. Thank you to the Ag Awareness Committee for reviewing these applications. Here is a list of projects that have been approved for this year so far:

Chautauqua County Fair- purchase gates for a travel path for cows to milking parlor so that they have easier access and install hose bibs in the wash racks to eliminate leakage when washing cows.

Columbia County Fair- design signs that detail various agricultural facts and information including the difference between dairy and beef cows.

Fonda Fair- purchase new pens for goats, sheep and hogs so that more livestock can be brought to the fair which adds to the agricultural educational experience for fairgoers.

Gouverneur & St. Lawrence County Fair- purchase barn fans for the show ring to run during livestock shows to help with the comfort of livestock during hot temperatures.

Livingston County Agricultural Society and Fair at Caledonia- create new food and agriculture display with raised garden beds. Local students will grow the vegetable plants in small pots at school and then the plants will be put in the raised garden beds at the fair. Creates an opportunity for youth to learn about growing food, but also adds an educational display about food agriculture at the fair.

Long Island Fair- add four TV monitors and educational signage to displays at the "Farmer for a Day" barn where there are interactive learning areas for youth to learn about chickens, potatoes, apples and dairy.

Niagara County Fair- purchase movable bleachers to use during fair that will provide seating for fairgoers watching the youth livestock shows

Ontario County Fair- purchase barn fans for the show ring to run during livestock shows to help with the comfort of livestock and fairgoers during hot temperatures.

Orange County Agriculture & Family Festival- create a 4-H Food System and Farm-to-Table educational display where fairgoers can learn how food is grown and processed.

Steuben County Fair- install sound system in cattle barn to keep exhibitors and visitors better informed on show schedule and other information between shows.

Warren County Youth Fair- purchase portable hand-washing station to set up near animals that are being displayed for educational purposes. Also, develop a display with an outline of the county and each township within the county. This display will be adaptable to feature different aspects of agriculture, such as locations of farmers markets and farm stands.

Wayne County Fair- create interactive agricultural informational posters, banners and displays to set up throughout the livestock exhibits

Here is the list of fairs that will be eligible for the Ag Awareness program in 2024: Afton Fair, Hemlock Fair, Seneca County Fair, Broome County Fair, Greene County Youth Fair, Otsego County Fair, Franklin County Fair, Wyoming County Fair, Altamont Fair, Essex County Fair, Trumansburg Fair, Schaghticoke Fair, and Grahamsville Little World's Fair. Please start thinking about possible projects you can do in 2024!

MEET YOUR DIRECTORS

Lisa Jackson, Fair Manager 3rd Vice President Otsego County Fair in Morris



I have been on the board for 13 years, 8 as the Fair Manager, serving 1 year as the treasurer.

Since my time on the Otsego County Fair Board, I have brought to the fair the 100 bicycle giveaway, kids day. The Fair Store, the Entertainment Tent, the Karaoke Contest (adult, teen, and children's), as well as commercial tent, the directors float for our Firemen's Parade and booking a lot of the grounds acts you see at the Fair.

We have several off-season events on our grounds, Holiday of Lights is our Christmas event and takes a lot of preparation but is truly a magical event in December!

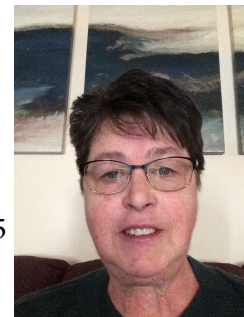
I have been involved with county fairs all my life as my dad was the track guy when I was a little girl and later became the Vice President of the Delaware County Fair in Walton, NY.

At the age of 16, I decided I wanted to drive in the demolition derby like my dad, so he built me a car and away we went! One year later, a documentary was made of me called "America's Culture of Crash."

I started the 50/50 at the age of 17 which I still go back and do every year. Being involved with the fair is a part of who I am! I'm a self-employed cosmetologist for 27 years, the last 19 of which have been at the Cottage Day Spa in Oneonta, NY.

I recently married the love of my life in August, yes, fair month!!! We spent the month of September traveling the country together. I am truly honored to have been chosen as the third Vice President of the NYSAAF and will do my best to be an asset to the board!

Jennifer Thomas District 5 Cortland County Jr. Fair



I have been on the Fair Board for 5 years and President for the last 3 years.

My involvement with our fair actually goes back to my 4-H years as I have remained involved as a volunteer wherever needed during fair week. I participated in our fair, my son participated, and now I have 3 grandchildren who participate and want to see them have the same fair experiences as well as our youth in the community.

Since joining our Fair Board in 2018 I have been on the Program Committee, Property Rental Committee, Ag. Awareness, and Grant Committee.

I have attended several of the District 5 meetings, however have been unable to attend the NYSAAF Convention and look forward to doing so.

Since retiring, I have more time to commit to our Fair and getting updates done with the Ag. & Market Grants and the American Relief Funds received from the County.

I am looking forward to visiting all of the District 5 Fairs and many others.

iafe[®] THE NETWORK!

2023 Zone 1 Meeting

The 2023 Zone 1 Meeting will be held May 4-6 in Albany, NY at the: Crowne Plaza Albany-The Desmond Hotel
660 Albany Shaker Rd
Albany, NY 12211-1056
(518) 869-8100

<https://fairsandexpos.com/zone-1/>



**Donald Peck
District 3
Gouverneur & St. Lawrence County**

I am an auctioneer and have been for over 50 years. I was Town of Gouverneur Supervisor for 22 years and a St. Lawrence County Legislator for 8 Years. I've been on the Gouverneur Fair board since 1986, was president for 5 years, concessions manager for 12 years, and Fair Manager for 10 years.

**2023 Fair
Pass**

An official 2023 New York State Pass will be available for \$125.00. This pass is good at all NYSAAF member Fairs and New York State Fair. It admits the person named on the pass and one companion, plus parking, when available. Member Fairs are listed on our web site at nyfairs.org



The Great NYS Fair 2022



**Jenny Lang
District 1
Ulster & Dutchess County Fairs**

The joke is that I wear two hats in the Fair world but I'm best suited in a tiara!

I began serving on the Ulster County Fair Board in 2011 however, I started participating in the Fair in 1989, showing my leased pony, Princess, in the 4-H Horse Show. I then started volunteering for other 4-H "jobs" during Fair week so I could be more involved. When I aged out of 4-H, I became a 4-H leader, educating youth and urging them to showcase their exhibits at the Fair. In my teens, I began announcing the Open Horse Shows and in 2000, became a Horse Show Superintendent, eventually moving up to a management role in each of the shows. I also began my journey at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds in 1989, participating in the 4-H Horse Clinic every year until aging out. In 2021, I began working at the Dutchess County Fair as a ticket taker and am now a full time employee as the Executive Assistant.

I attended my first NYSAAF Convention in 2015. It was an eye opening experience, learning from others in the round table discussions and getting to talk one on one with vendors and entertainers. Since then, I have strongly recommended that more fair volunteers take advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them. I have since led round table discussions at the Convention in 2020, 2022, and 2023.

In 2018, I won the YPI Scholarship from Zone 1 to attend the IAFE Annual Convention and have continued to attend every convention since. I have also recommended that more board members attend as well and successfully passed a motion creating a fund, within the Ulster County Fair, to help support those that wish to attend.

I live with my beloved border collie, Spruce, and two wild kittens and I enjoy spending time with my horse and donkeys as often as possible. Aside from my "9-5" at the DCF, I am a licensed Aesthetician and Certified Hypnotist. In my free time, I am still an active volunteer with the Ulster County and State 4-H program, the Vice President of the Woodstock Riding Club, am an AKC Certified Canine Good Citizen Evaluator and HiTecK9 trainer.

I look forward to continuing my involvement in the Fair industry and can't wait to see what other opportunities present themselves. As the new District 1 director, I am ready and waiting to provide my District with all the news related to keeping agricultural fairs alive and well!

Board of Directors

Officers:

President: John Craft

Columbia County Fair, Chatham, NY

First Vice President: Julia Reynolds

Washington County Fair, Greenwich, NY

Second Vice President: Lauren Delaney

Saratoga County Fair, Ballston Spa, NY

Third Vice President: Lisa Jackson

Otsego County Fair, Morris, NY

Immediate Past President: Edward Rossley

Delaware County Fair, Walton, NY

Treasurer: Jane Luskin

Schaghticoke Fair, Schaghticoke, NY

Executive Secretary: Mark St. Jacques

Argyle, NY



Directors:

District 1 Jenny Lang, Ulster County Fair, New Paltz, NY,
Dutchess County Fair, Rhinebeck, NY

District 2 Amy Anderson, Altamont Fair, Altamont, NY

District 3 Donald Peck,

Gouverneur & St. Lawrence County Fair, Gouverneur, NY

District 4 Harold Smith, Jr.,

Oswego County Fair, Sandy Creek, NY

District 5 Jennifer Thomas,

Cortland County Jr Fair, Cortland, NY

District 6 Mike Reese,

Chemung County Fair, Horseheads, NY

District 7 Sarah Jean Hamilton,

Wayne County Fair, Palmyra, NY

District 8 Jessica Underberg, CFE,

Erie County Fair, Hamburg, NY

NY State Fair Sean Hennessey,

New York State Fair, Syracuse, NY

Associate Directors:

Jeff Lloyd, Lloyd's Concessions, Utica, NY

Joseph Sofo, Jr., Playland Amusements, Auburn, NY



2023 Lifetime Achievement Award Winners

Presented by Andy Imperati



Angelo Nero (not pictured)
Columbia County Fair
Award accepted by John Craft



JoAnne Booth
Washington County Fair



Pauline Bunce
Herkimer County Fair



John R. Charlesworth (not pictured)
Cattaraugus County Fair
Award accepted by his daughter,
Kristina Charlesworth-Golden

2023 Hall of Fame Honorees

Presented by Andy Imperati



Dick and Martha Bush
Cortland County Junior Fair



Jessica Underberg, CFE
Erie County Fair

2023 NYS Show People's Awards

Presented by Jeff Lewis



Work Horse of the Year
Edward Rossley
Delaware County Fair



Fair Person of the Year
Jason Lawrence
Chenango County Fair



Show-person of the Year
Tim Coleman

Scholarships!

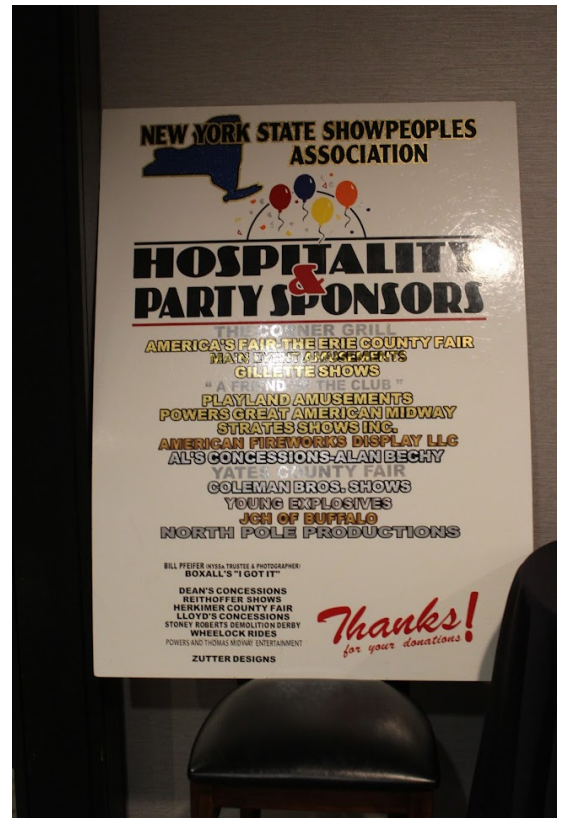
April is here which means that the deadline for scholarship applications is too! If you haven't already, please send the NYSAAF/NYSSA scholarship information out to your local high schools, 4-H clubs/CCE Offices, or other youth connected to your fair. These are the future leaders in our industry, let's support them as best we can!

There are up to 10, \$1500 Scholarships and a \$500 Fair Manager's Association Scholarship available.

Applications must be received by the second Friday in April.

Applications must be received by the member fair or NYSSA by the 2nd Friday in April. Each application must be signed by a fair or NYSSA officer and must contain a written endorsement from the fair or NYSSA stating that the applicant was an active participant in your fair or outdoor amusement business. The more information you provide in this area, the easier it will be for the Scholarship Committee to review the applications. Selected applications must be sent to your District Director by the 3rd Friday in April.

Reminder: If you know a youth that applied last year and didn't receive a scholarship, encourage them to apply again as the field was quite competitive.



Dates to Remember

- April 19-21.....53rd Annual IAFE Management Conference
Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch, St. Louis, MO
- April 29.....Board of Director's Meeting
Herkimer County Fairgrounds, Frankfurt, NY
- May 4-6.....IAFE Zone 1 Annual Meeting
Crowne Plaza Albany - The Desmond Hotel, Albany, NY
- November 26-29..... 132nd Annual IAFE Convention & Trade Show
Salt Lake City, UT
- January 12-15, 2024New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs Convention
Marriott Syracuse Downtown, Syracuse, NY
- April 12-13, 2024.....IAFE Institute of Fair Management Summit
Bellevue, WA

Farewell Rochester, scenes from the 2023 Convention







See you in Syracuse!