

## **New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc. 2022 Convention**

The 133rd annual New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs Convention at the Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center in Rochester, NY was held January 14-17, 2022. Forty (40) Fairs attended as well as many Associate Members of the Association. Over 450 individuals were in attendance. President Jason Lawrence, Chenango County Fair, Norwich, NY welcomed everyone to the Convention.

Keynote speakers included William Stainton, "Connecting the Dots: Breakthrough Thinking for Agriculture Fair Professionals", IAFE presenter Alicia Shoults, Ohio State Fair, "Communicating A Crisis" and Bill Ogg, CFE, Nebraska State Fair, Corndogs & Elephant Ears" sponsored by the Erie County Fair.

A variety of educational sessions continued throughout the four-day event. Speed Series Topics included: "What does it take to prepare your grounds?" "What's your Dream and How did you Make it Work? Livestock Show Through a Young Person's Eyes?", Entertainment Tent How does it work?, Rides and Inspections, H2B Labor Issues, Do you have an Emergency Plan, and How to keep Animals and People Safe?, YPI (Young Professionals Initiative), networking, capacity building and recruiting.

The Annual Scholarship Auction continues to grow each year. The Auction proceeds will fund scholarships for students pursuing continuing education programs. Funds raised and donations were in excess of \$11,000.00.

The Trade Show was held on January 15 & 16 and included 51 vendors and attractions. The exhibits led to increased opportunities for connections to be made for the upcoming season. A number of attractions participated in the Trade Show game, sponsored by the Otsego County Fair.

The Association's "Hall of Fame" Awards was presented to Gary Newkirk, CFE, Ulster County Fair, Fran Tepper, CFE, retired Monroe County Fair, Carol Sweeney, Oswego County Fair and a surprise presentation to Andy Imperati, Dutchess County Fair.

The New York State Showpeople's Association awards were presented to: Jessica Underberg, CFE, CEO/Fair Manager, Erie County Fair as "Fair Person of the Year"; "Show Person of the Year" was awarded to Debbie Powers, Power's Great American Midways, "Workhorse of the Year" went to entire Committee for producing the "Virtual County Fair" Committee Members included; Kate Lloyd, Rebecca Breese, Joe Zutter, Nick Pelham, Lauren Delaney, Jeff Wise, Jane Luskin, Allison Ward, Pam Shelmidine, Marty Biniaz, Jason Lawrence, Madison Lawrence, Jenn Waite, Ed Rossley, Sarah McAndrew, Jessica Underberg.

The Officers for 2022 are as follows;

President, Edward Rossley, Delaware County Fair, Walton, NY  
First Vice President John Craft, Columbia County Fair, Chatham, NY  
Second Vice Present Julia Reynolds, Washington County Fair, Greenwich, NY  
Third Vice President Lauren Delaney, Saratoga County Fair, Ballston Spa, NY  
Immediate Past President, Jason Lawrence, Chenango County Fair, Norwich, NY  
Treasurer, Jane Luskin, Schaghticoke Fair, Schaghticoke, NY  
Russell Marquart, CFE, Executive Secretary, Elma, NY.

District Directors are:

District 1 Gary Newkirk, CFE Ulster County Fair, New Paltz, NY  
District 2 Amy Anderson, Altamont Fair, Altamont, NY  
District 3 Scott Christian, Essex County Fair, Westport, NY  
District 4 Harold Smith, Jr., Oswego County Fair, Sandy Creek, NY  
District 5 Rhonda Barriger, Afton Fair, Afton, 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 Troy Waffner, New York State Fair, Syracuse, NY  
Associate Directors Jeff Lloyd, Lloyd's Concessions, Utica, NY  
Joseph Sofo, Jr., Playland Amusements, Auburn, NY

Showcase acts included WailOn-Tribute to Waylon Jennings & Classic County, Murphy presented by Klein's Entertainment, LLC and the Rylee Lum Band.

2023 Convention dates are January 13-16, 2023 in Rochester, New York.

For more information on NYSAAF Fairs & Convention contact Russell Marquart, CFE, Executive Secretary at [nysaaf@gmail.com](mailto:nysaaf@gmail.com) or visit our website at [www.nyfairs.org](http://www.nyfairs.org).

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