



# NYSAAF

## Newsletter

NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL FAIRS, INC.



Julia Reynolds

As we are hopefully getting a little rest after the fair season and getting ready for the next, we can now take some time to reflect on how our fair went and the changes we would like to make moving forward. Even though there have been raindrops and overly hot days, we have made it through another year with hard work and dedication.

The association has had several changes in the last few years; a new location for convention, a new Executive Secretary, and for the first time ever an all-female Executive Committee. We have had women presidents before but never four in a row. I am excited to see how these passionate women move the association forward in the future.

Convention 2025 is fast approaching, the theme of 2025 will be The Roaring 20's, so dig out your feather boas and fedoras! We have decided to continue the relationship with the Syracuse Marriott Downtown Hotel for 2026 and 2027. We also have a few adjustments for the convention this year to make it even better. We hope the changes are to everyone's liking.

Ag and Markets and New York State supported fairs this year with their advertising campaign. You should have received a letter for a \$10,000 advertising grant. Ag and Markets also launched a Passport Program. All NY fairs received passports, stamps, and buttons to stamp fairgoers passports for the fairgoers to win prizes through the State. Passports were also sent to all state pass purchasers. This program will help increase attendance to your fair.

I had the opportunity to visit several fairs this summer and was quite impressed. Every fair was unique in their own way.

Above all, laugh more and stress less, and enjoy the opportunity of educating others about our great agricultural fairs. Looking forward to seeing you at the convention in Syracuse, January 17-19, 2025!

Sincerely,  
Julia Reynolds  
NYSAAF President

# **"Hello Again!"** **Syracuse Convention 2024**

## **Overview**

January at the Marriott Syracuse Downtown Hotel proved to be both an educational and fun filled weekend. The hotel is beautiful with its ornate decorations and woodwork. While there are growing pains with every change we make, ultimately, the hotel and staff worked hard to provide our organization with everything we needed to continue to hold the convention there for the next three years.

The educational opportunities were diversified, interesting, and thoughtfully planned. From Security to Succession Planning, there was something for everyone.

We enjoyed the beauty of the ballroom for our morning sessions and banquet and utilized the main floor for the auction and Showmen's Party. While we are working out the acoustics and some spacing issues with both rooms moving forward, neither issue stopped Fair friends from enjoying each other's company as we came together for the first time in Syracuse, since 1997.

**Congratulations to the 2024 NYSAAF  
Lifetime Achievement and Hall of  
Fame Award Recipients!  
Presented by Andy Imperati**



**Pat Evans**

**Washington County Fair  
Lifetime Achievement**



**Mark St. Jacques, CFE  
Hall of Fame**



# NYS Showpeoples Association Award Winners PRESENTED BY JEFF LLOYD



**Jerry Gillette**  
**Gillette Shows**  
**Workhorse of the Year**



**Lauren Delaney**  
**Saratoga County Fair**  
**Fairperson of the Year**



**Marla Calico, CFE\***  
**Showperson of the Year**

**\*The NYSAAF would like to thank Marla Calico, CFE\* for her many years of dedication to the Fair industry. Marla has taught us all how true passion for your career makes all the difference. We will take all of the lessons you've taught us and will continue to apply them and make you proud.**

**ENJOY YOUR RETIREMENT!**



# **Board of Directors**

## **Officers:**

**President: Julia Reynolds, Washington County Fair, Greenwich, NY**

**First Vice President: Lauren Delaney, Saratoga County Fair, Ballston Spa**

**NY Second Vice President: Lisa Jackson, Ostego County Fair, Morris, NY**

**Third Vice President: Rachel Lisk, Lewis County Fair, Loweville, NY**

**Immediate Past President: John Craft, Columbia County Fair, Chatham NY**

**Treasurer: Jane Luskin, Schaghticoke Fair, Schaghticoke, NY**

**Executive Secretary, Mark St. Jacques, Argyle, NY**



## **Directors:**

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

**District 2: John Luskin, Schaghticoke Fair, Schaghticoke, NY**

**District 3: Donald Peck, Gouverneur & St. Lawrence County Fair, Gouverneur, NY**

**District 4: Kathy Elthorp, Herkimer County Fair, Herkimer, NY**

**District 5: Martha Bush, Cortland County Junior Fair, Cortland, NY**

**District 6: Jim Folts, Yates County Fair, Penn Yann, NY**

**District 7: Sarah Jean Hamilton, Wayne County Fair, Palmyra, NY**

**District 8: Jessica Underberg, Erie County Fair, Hamburg, NY**

**NY State Fair: Julie LaFave, New York State Fair, Syracuse, NY**

## **Associate Directors:**

**Jeff Lloyd, Lloyd's Concessions**

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



# NYS Fair Passport Program

**The NYS Fair Passport Program was kicked off with a press conference at the Saratoga County Fairgrounds, July 2, 2024.**

**State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball joined the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Saratoga County Fairgrounds staff and board members, representatives from the State's regional Welcome Centers and Cornell Cooperative Extensions, as well as 4-H student members to kick off the State's numerous county fair promotions at the Saratoga County Fairgrounds. The initiatives launched were developed as part of the Governor's commitment to strengthening New York's County and local fairs, including cross-promotion with the Great New York State Fair, and improving youth and agricultural programming initiatives at all fairs statewide.**



**New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs President Julia Reynolds said, "We are very grateful for the continued support from Governor Hochul and Commissioner Ball for the promotion of our county fairs. The county fairs across the state would love to showcase the many avenues of agricultural diversity to those that come through their gates. So, grab your passport and experience the fairs of New York."**





# Scholarship Committee Report

**Congratulations  
to all our 2024 scholarship  
winners!**

**For any students that did not  
receive a scholarship, they  
are strongly encouraged to  
apply again next year.**

**Thank you to the Scholarship  
committee for all your hard  
work this year.**

## **SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2024**

### **SUTTON BARRETT**

- Lewis County Fair (District 4)

### **KIRSTEN WIDRICK**

- Jefferson County Fair (District 4)

### **ABBIE AINSIE**

- Otsego County Fair (District 5)

### **AIDAN AINSIE**

- Otsego County Fair (District 5)

### **ISABELLA YETTO**

- Delaware County Fair (District 5)

### **CARLY LANG**

- Hemlock Fair (District 7)

### **KATHRYN PENIRD**

- Ontario County Fair (District 7)

### **MADISON KEHR**

- Erie County Fair (District 8)

### **GIANNA LOIACONO**

- Allegany County Fair (District 8)

### **KELLY NIEFERGOLD**

- Erie County Fair (District 8)

### **NYS FAIR MANAGERS ASSOCIATION WINNER**

### **MEGAN KLOSSNER**

- Lewis County Fair (District 4)



## Dates to Remember

**December 1st-4th.....2024 IAFE Annual Convention & Trade Show Phoenix, AZ**

**January 17th-19th.....2025 NYSAAF Annual Convention, Marriott Syracuse Downtown**

**May 1st-3rd.....2025 IAFE Zone 1 Meeting, New Hampshire**



# In Memoriam

## George A. Payne



October 5, 1929 – September 13, 2024, George A. Payne passed away peacefully, in his sleep, at his home on September 13, 2024. He was 94, just 22 days shy of his 95th birthday. He was with, and survived by his wife of 70 years, Aliene Harter Payne.

George was born to Irma Wheatley Payne and George H. Payne, in Clifton Springs, NY, on October 5, 1929. He was raised in Chapin NY above the family's general store, coal yard, gas station and post office. He attended Canandaigua Academy where he met his future wife. George and Aliene were married in 1954 after George graduated from Alfred State College and served in Japan in the US Army during the Korean War.

George and Aliene lived in Shortsville for 44 years.

They raised their 3 children there. George was quietly "always there" at his children's concerts, sporting events, college graduations, grandchildren's weddings, graduations, Bar and Bat Mitzvah's and other everyday events. George was, at onetime, active in the Hopewell Fire Department, eventually serving as its President. He was a 70+ year member of The Ontario County Fair Association, where he served as President for 30 years. George was an original member of Troop 29 of the Boy Scouts of America in Canandaigua. He served as an adult leader from 1970 to 2022, rising at one point to the highest volunteer position in the Finger Lakes Council, Council Commissioner. He received Scouting's highest award for an adult volunteer, The Silver Beaver. In later life, he became an active member of the Red Jacket Rotary Club of Shortsville. This organization and its members became the center of his social life. He avidly attended meetings and volunteer events. He received numerous Paul Harris Awards, given by Rotary "for substantial contributions". George started his first trucking business after his Army service, hauling milk from farmers to dairies. He grew that business, serving farmers and later other industries until 1968 when he purchased Canandaigua Express. He operated the truck line until it was sold and closed in 1978. Shortly thereafter, he purchased the NAPA Store in Shortsville and operated it for 45 years. He sold the store 4 months before his passing. At various times he owned NAPA stores in Canandaigua and Naples. He was fortunate to have many long-time, loyal employees who allowed him to work actively through his 94th year. George A. Payne is survived by his wife of 70 years, Aliene Harter Payne and his children, Roger (Lisa Rogovin Payne) of Leawood, KS, Leslie of Canandaigua, NY and Patricia of Irondequoit, NY, his grandchildren, Jordan Payne Hay (Colin), Ross Payne, Taylor Payne (Dennis Cornwell), Jessica Cropro (Ralph) and great grandchildren, Griffin and Tenley Hay, and R.J. and Jake Cropro. George was preceded in death by his daughter-in-law, Cathryn Troyer Payne, and his parents.



## John R. Charlesworth

82, of Little Valley, passed away Sunday, August 18, 2024, at Olean General Hospital surrounded by his family. He was born on January 9, 1942, into the farming family of John H. and Georgia (Morton) Charlesworth, the youngest and most spoiled of five children. In October 1963, John married Mary L. Minnekine who survives. Together, they built a life they loved. From the beginning, John and Mary operated Charlesworth Family Farm with dairy cattle and, later, beef cattle.

Throughout the years, a myriad of animals also lived on the farm. As they welcomed each of their four children into their family, they fostered a love of animals, hard work, and family unity. A true farmer through and through, John was quick with a quip about the weather, knowing just the right time to buy or sell, and when to get the crops planted and harvested. Additionally, John was the longtime owner and operator of Little Valley Sand and Gravel. Building the business from the ground up, John was a proud and strong business owner with a business mind like no other. Using those same principles, John was thoroughly dedicated, and honored, to serve as President of the Cattaraugus County Fair for more than 30 years. Again, together with his family, like many directors and friends, the fair became a success under his watchful eye from the red truck or golf cart. John loved seeing the exhibitors and fairgoers enjoy the fair each summer after months of hard work and planning. He was known to eat, sleep, and breathe the fair all year long. In 2023, John was honored by the NY State Association of Fairs with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedication. John was also a past president of the Little Valley Central School Board, the town of Mansfield assessor, a member of the Beef Producers Association and Dairy Farm of Distinction. Besides his loving wife of 60 years, John is survived by two sons; John E. (Sherry) Charlesworth of Cattaraugus, and Jay Charlesworth of Cattaraugus, as well as two daughters; Jennifer (Wayde) Savidge of Little Valley, and Kristina (Dave) Golden of Little Valley. John also cherished his five grandchildren: Ashley, Courtney, Nicholas, Amelia, and Jack. He is also survived by sisters, Hazel Fellows of Little Valley and Jane Ritter of Jamestown as well as several nieces and nephews. Besides his parents, Mr. Charlesworth is predeceased by a brother, Howard Charlesworth and a sister, Phyllis Krug. John's family wishes to extend thanks to everyone who expressed condolences via cards, calls, visits, flowers, and food. Your kindness did not go unnoticed.



# 2024 Fair Reports

## **Allegany County Fair**

**Attendance:** 20,789

**Gate Admission:** Adult \$10.00

Children under 4 Free, Wednesday \$5.00 for all.

**Parking:** Free

**Weather:** Rain, wind & tornado watch, nice last 3 days

**Carnival:** American Amusements

**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Truck/Tractor Pull-

Free -Cancelled; Horse Pull-Free; Boys & Bulls-Free;

Outlaw Pullers-Free; Demolition Derby-Free.

**2025 Fair Dates:** July 14-19

**Reported by:** Dawn Santangelo-Treasurer

## **Columbia County Fair**

**Attendance:** 60,000

**Gate Admission:** Adult \$15.00, Children 12 & under Free,

Wednesday \$5.00 for all

**Parking:** Free

**Weather:** Good! Saturday called for Rain

**Carnival:** Amusements of America

**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Antique Tractor Pull-

Free; 500 Demo Pull, Free, 3000; Sammy Kershaw-Free:

2500; Painted Pony Rodeo, Free, 3000.

**2025 Fair Dates:** August 27-September 1

**Reported by:** Eric Barnes, Manager

## **Broome County Fair**

**Attendance:** 17,500

**Gate Admission:** Adult \$8, Children \$2, Senior \$8

**Parking:** Free

**Weather:** Threat of rain 1st Demo night

**Carnival:** Gillette Family Shows

**Entertainment/Fee/Attend:**

Flying Wallendas-Free; 700 total week, TJ Hill Magician-Free;

2500 total week Attend. Demo Derby-Paid; 7000- 2 shows,

Super Stock & Modified Tractor Pulls- Paid; 7000 Broken B

Rodeo-Paid; 4000

**2025 Fair Dates:** July 22-27

**Reported by:** Rita Smith- Treasurer

## **Delaware County Fair**

**Attendance:** 71,087

**Gate Admission:** Adult \$10, Children 12 & under Free,

Senior \$5 on Thursday

**Parking:** Free

**Weather:** Nice with a few rain showers

**Carnival:** Dreamland Amusements

**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Demo Derby X 2-Paid;

4403/4473, Parade-Free, 4X4 Trucks-Paid;1848, FMX Stunt

Show-Paid;1599, Tractor Pull-Paid;1435

**2025 Fair Dates:** August 11-16

**Reported by:** Edward Rossley-President

## **Chautauqua County Fair**

**Attendance:** 42,983

**Gate Admission:** Adult \$15.00 Children \$15.00, Senior \$9.00

**Parking:** \$5.00

**Weather:** Nice Weather

**Carnival:** Amusements of America

**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Demo Derby X 2 -Paid

Grandstand; 2000/4000 Figure 8 Race-Free; 2000, Tractor

Pull-Free; 3000, bull Riding- Free; 2000, Monster Truck-Paid

Grandstand; 2500

**2025 Fair Dates:** July 15-20

**Reported by:** Deb Kuzma-Office

## **Dutchess County Fair**

**Attendance:** 289,647

**Gate Admission:** Adult \$15.00 online, \$18.00 in person,

12 & under Free, Senior \$12.00

**Parking:** Free

**Weather:** Sunny and Pleasant

**Carnival:** Powers Great American Midway

**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Tracy Byrd-Paid;1500,

Rick Springfield-Paid;3000, Bluffet-Free;1500, Kameron

Marlowe/Connor Smith-Paid;2000, KissNation-Free;2500

**2025 Fair Dates:** Aug. 19-24

**Reported By:** Andy Imperati-CEO/Fair Manager



# 2024 Fair Reports

## Gouverneur & St. Lawrence County Fair

**Attendance:** 26,000  
**Gate Admission:** Free  
**Parking:** \$5.00  
**Weather:** Rain first 2 days, very hot rest of the week  
**Carnival:** Coleman Brothers  
**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Talent Show, Free; Cancelled weather Parade/Band Day-Free; 1200, Local Concert-Free; 800, Tractor Pull-Paid; 1100, Concert-Paid; 1000, Demo Derby-Paid: 1700  
**2025 Fair Dates:** July 29 – Aug 3  
**Reported by:** Don Peck-Fair Manager

## Saratoga County Fair

**Attendance:** 61,252  
**Gate Admission:** Adult \$15.00, 12 and under Free, Seniors \$5.00 Wednesday  
**Parking:** Free  
**Weather:** Beautiful, not too hot and no rain  
**Carnival:** Amusements of America  
**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Dialed Action- Free, Wild West-Free, Niels Duniker-Free, Oakley-Free, Grandstand Motorsports-Free  
**2025 Fair Dates:** July 22-27  
**Reported by:** Jennifer Flinton- General Manager

## Grahamsville Little Worlds Fair

**Attendance:** 10,000  
**Gate Admission:** Adult \$8.00, Child \$5.00  
**Parking:** Free  
**Weather:** Sunny, Periods of rain, Sunday rain  
**Carnival:** Shamrock Shows  
**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Pig Racing, Bubble Dad, Draft Horse Pull, Lumberjack Show, Fireworks  
**2025 Fair Dates:** Aug 15-17  
**Reported by:** Nicole Gorr- Treasurer

## Tioga County Fair

**Attendance:** 7,495  
**Gate Admission:** Adult/Senior \$15.00, Children \$15.00  
**Parking:** Free  
**Weather:** Significant rain 2 Days  
**Carnival:** Gillette Shows  
**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Demo Derby X 2-Free; 1946/1629, ATV Rodeo-Free; 722, Tractor/Truck Pulls-Free; 2745  
**2025 Fair Dates:** Aug 5 -Aug 9  
**Reported By:** Michelle Scott-Pierce- Treasurer

## Madison County Fair

**Attendance:** 9,872  
**Gate Admission:** Adult \$5.00, Children under 3 Free, Seniors Free on Friday  
**Parking:** Free  
**Weather:** Rain on opening day then nice weather  
**Carnival:** N/A  
**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Tom Nitti-Paid; 50  
**2025 Fair Dates:** Tentative July 23-27 depending on Midway availability  
**Reported By:** Terry Tanney-Secretary

## Ulster County Fair

**Attendance:** 42,016  
**Gate Admission:** Adult/Senior \$20.00 Pay one Price, Children under 36" Free  
**Parking:** Free  
**Weather:** Extreme Heat, thunderstorms everyday at dinner time  
**Carnival:** Dreamland Amusements  
**Entertainment/Fee/Attendance:** Jo Dee & Lug Nuts, Mark Wills, Frankie Justin, Raelynn, Marshall Tucker Band, Jake Hoot  
**2025 Fair Dates:** July 29 – August 3  
**Reported By:** Gary Newkirk-CFE, Fair Manager



# Fair Ag Awareness

**As we close the 2024 fair season, let this be a reminder for all the fairs that had Ag Awareness projects to submit your receipts, a short project description to be read during the presentation at convention and photos of the project taken during your fair. Once you submit these, NYSAAF can send a reimbursement check**

**The following fairs were 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.**



**NYS Senator Rhoades  
Farm Tour**

**Long Island Fair  
Ag Education**





# Fair Time Fun 2024

## Broome County Fair



## Saratoga County Fair





# Grahamsville Little World Fair



# Dutchess County Fair





# Delaware County Fair





# Columbia County Fair

