From The President

First and foremost I want to tell you that I am truly honored to be the 2015 President of the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs. The fair business in New York is truly a family affair, not only in our local fairs but at the State Association as well.

I am pleased to announce that we are continuing the alliance formed with the New York Farm Bureau last year under the leadership of President Booth. To further that effort we have realigned the former Legislative Committee into a new Public Policy Committee to deal not only with the State Legislature but also the State Executive Branch including the Governor’s Office of Operations and the Department of Agriculture and Markets. This puts us in line with Farm Bureau and others. Past President R. Harry Booth is heading this committee and has been designated our Director of Public Policy.

The committee has been working very hard in the Albany area and has made some fantastic progress. The Public Policy Committee set up a Lobby Day where several of our partners from the New York State Showpeople’s Association met with legislators and staff concerning our associations. They have also met with many key legislators in agriculture and have attended several hearings on our behalf.

The State Budget has been passed and we are very pleased to report that Fair Premium Reimbursements are in the budget at $500,000 which is the same amount as 2014. Our committee worked very hard to get some money included in the budget for fairgrounds improvements. At this point it appears there may be some money in the budget but more work has to be done to get it to the fairs. We will keep you informed.

I want to remind everyone of the IAFE Zone 1 Conference May 14, 15, & 16, 2015 at the Millenium Hotel in Buffalo hosted by the Erie County Fair. NYSAAF Past President Jessica Underberg, Zone 1 Director, has put together a fantastic program. I urge everyone to attend.

The officers of NYSAAF are holding regular conference calls and are working on making 2015 a great year for our association and look to expand our partnership with the NYS Showpeople’s Association. My best of luck to you all as you prepare to make the 2015 fair season in NY the best ever.

Bob Simpson, President NYSAAF

Elthorp honored with Haas & Wilkerson Heritage Award

During the opening session of the IAFE Annual Convention on December 8, Heritage Awards were presented to five exceptional individuals in the field of fair management. These individuals were nominated by their fairs’ staff. The award recognized the achievements of outstanding volunteer fair managers. Each winner received a plaque and $1,000 and each fair nominating the winner received $500. Nominees were required to have at least 10 years of fair management experience and could receive no more than $2500 remuneration annually for service in the positions. Nominees’ fairs were also required to be current members of IAFE.

Richard “Dick” Elthorp from the Herkimer County Fair in Frankfort, NY was one of the recipients of the Haas & Wilkerson Heritage Award. Congratulations Dick!

Lobby Day

The NYSAAF Public Policy committee through our Alliance with the New York Farm Bureau put together a very successful Lobby Day on Monday March 2, 2015 attended by several Officers, Directors, and Members of both our association and the New York State Showpeople’s Association. We met with many legislators and their staff members as well as Council to the new Speaker of the Assembly. We also attended the Farm Bureau Taste of New York Legislative Reception and set up a NYSAAF booth with the help of the Washington County Fair. This was a great place to network with not only legislators and their staff but the Department of Agriculture and Markets and local Farm Bureau from across the State. Our Public Policy Committee has been working very hard and we are seeing great results from their efforts on our behalf.

Bob Simpson - President

Associate members Dawn and Griff Gillette of Polar Bear Ice Cream at the Strawberry Festival, Plant City, Florida
Obituary

Raymond M. Christensen

Raymond M. Christensen, 76, of Davenport Center, NY passed away Tuesday, September 9, 2014.

Ray was Special Assistant to the New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets in 1999 and served throughout the George Pataki Administration. He was the fair liaison for many years, attended NYSAAF board meetings and he and his wife, Gail attended many of our annual conventions.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Gail; his children, Chris (Jeanne Marie) Christensen, Katrina (Michael) Crandell, Erik (Marissa) Christensen and Peter (Shannon) Christensen; 9 grandchildren and a large extended family.

Kevin Doyle

Kevin Doyle, 80, of Ocean Ridge, Florida died January 16, 2015 after a brief illness.

In the mid-1970’s he purchased and ran the Fair Publishing House and the Rotary Printing Company in Ohio. At the time of his death, he was still active in the operation of the Fair Publishing House.

He is predeceased by his wife, Dianne and survived by three children, Kevin Doyle Jr, (Ricky Ian Gordon), Charles Doyle (Lori) and Kerry Doyle-Waitie (Dylan); two grandchildren; a brother, Richard and a sister, Mary Stahl.

Robert H. Haeger

Robert H. Haeger, 77 of Verona died Saturday, February 14, 2015.

Bob was a director of the Boonville Oneida County Fair for over 50 years.

Bob served as a NYSAAF district director from district 4 in 1998 & 1999 and for many years was the photographer at the annual convention.

He is survived by his wife, Fran; one daughter and son-in-law, Susanne and Kenneth; two sons and daughters-in-law, John and Kristen Haeger and James and Deborah Haeger; 4 grandchildren and a sister-in-law Mary Haeger.

Nelson Navarra

Nelson Navarra, 92, formerly of Watertown passed away on March 16, 2015.

Nelson was a member and director of the Jefferson County Agricultural Society in Watertown for over 50 years serving as Vice President and in 1990-1993 President.

Nelson also served as a district director of the NYSAAF in 1990 & 1991.

He is survived by a daughter, Sister Kathleen Navarra, SSJ, a son and daughter-in-law, James and Cheryl Navarra, a daughter-in-law, Susan Haefner, a half brother Joseph Navarra, and a half sister, Ann Marie Agosta, 5 sisters-in-laws, 6 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

John J. Keough


He is survived by his wife Rosalie; son, Daniel J Keough II and his wife Laurie, daughters, Jacqueline Weir and her husband Brian and Michele Anderson and 5 grandchildren.

Feed New York! Agricultural Awareness 2015

Russell L. Marquart, CFE, Project Coordinator

Spring is just around the corner!

It is important as an Association that we continue to focus on the importance of agriculture at all of our Fairs.

As you begin to think “Fair Thoughts” our Ag Awareness project participants will be organizing their exhibit, reflecting on how each can help get the message across and “Feed New York!” This year we have six exhibits and improvements projects that will be partially funded by NYSAAF.

The Afton Fair Museum will be housed in an older structure near the Main Entrance. The museum will showcase a historical representation of the region in addition to artifacts and implements. The Altamont Fair’s scavenger hunt will be involving the various departments and how they are impacted by agriculture. At the Franklin County Fair agriculture tours will be the new focus throughout the barn area. The Schaghticoke Fair is partnering with New England Dairy & Food Council and the American Dairy Association to promote the Great American Milk Drive. A new informational agriculture DVD will be featured at the Steuben County Fair this year. The soybean is an important regional commodity and will be featured during the Trumansburg Fair.

All of the Fairs throughout the state feature wonderful examples of agriculture at its best! If you are planning a weekend adventure or a day trip to a County Fair, be sure to look for one of these exciting new innovative exhibits. With the support of the local farmers, Fair Management and our guests, we can all help to “FEED NEW YORK!” Have a great Summer Fair season!

Dates to Remember

2015

April 30- May 3 .................................................. IAFE 47th Annual Management Conference, Millennium Hotel, Buffalo, NY
May 14-16 .......................................................... IAFE Zone 1 Meeting, Millennium Hotel, Buffalo, NY
July 1 - Oct. 4 ....................................................... New York State and County Fairs

Check our web site at www.nyfairs.org for member fairs and locations

September 1 .......................................................... September Newsletter articles due
October 2-4 ...................................................... NYS Fair Managers Meeting, Vernon Downs Raceway & Casino
October 3 .......................................................... NYSAAF Board of Directors Meeting, Vernon Downs
November 29 – December 3 ............................... IAFE 125th Annual Convention & Trade Show
December 1 .......................................................... December Newsletter Articles Due
December 15 ...................................................... Pre-registration for NYSAAF Convention
December 15 ........................................................ Reservations for Convention Banquet

Registration, banquet & breakfast tickets will increase after 12/15

December 31 ......................................................... Deadline for hotel room reservations

2016

January 15-18 ..................................................... NYSAAF 128th Annual Convention & Trade Show

Joseph A. Floreano Rochester

Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY

Have a great Summer Fair season!
**New District Directors**

**District #1 Director - Steven G. Berninger**

Steven has been on the board of director’s of the Columbia County Fair in Chatham for 27 years.

He chaired the committee for the 150th Fair in 1990; Independent Concessions Manager for 5 years, Assistant Treasurer for 5 years, Entertainment Committee Chair for 8 years and has been on various other committees.

His involvement with the NYSAAF has been a Scholarship Committee member 4 years, District Director 2 years, Vice President for 3 years, President for 1 year and served as Past President for 1 year.

Steven lives in Valatie with his wife, Ruth Ellen Berninger. They have a son, Michael Berninger who lives in Oakland, CA and a daughter, Bridget and her husband, Chris and grandchild, Benjamin who live in Denver, CO.

Steven’s hobbies are the Columbia County Fair and the Boy Scouts of America.

**District #3 Director – Donald Peck**

Donald was born and raised in Gouverneur, graduated from the Gouverneur High School in 1972 and SUNY Canton in 1974. He has been an auctioneer for 43 years.

He was Town of Gouverneur Supervisor for 22 years and a St. Lawrence County Legislator for 8 years. He is a member of the Gouverneur FFA Ag Advisory Board, Gouverneur Kiwanis Club, Gouverneur Correctional Facility Advisory Board, and past member of the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Board.

Don became a Gouverneur Fair Director in 1985, President of the St Lawrence County Fair 6 years, President of the Gouverneur Fair 5 years and is currently Fair Manager for both societies. He has also been concessions superintendent for the last 8 years.

**District #5 Director – Jefferson L. Mayne**

Jeff has been on the Madison County Fair board for 35 years. He was vice president for 15 years, president for 10 years and treasurer for 2 years. He has been the water system operator for the last 15 years.

Jeff has been NYSAAF district director once before.

He and his wife, Wanda have been married for 43 years and have three children; Richard, Carl and Scott.

Jeff was Highway Superintendent for the Town of Brookfield for 15 years and has been on the Town Board for the last 15 years. He has owed the Beaver Den Diner since 1990.

His hobby is spending time at the Madison County Fair repairing buildings and mowing the lawn.

**District #7 Director – Shana Jo Hilton**

Shana Jo Hilton secretary from the Ontario County Fair will be continuing on as the District 7 representative. A second generation fair board member carrying on the family tradition when her father passed away some 20 years ago. Shana Jo has attended the NYSAAF Annual Convention each year since becoming a member and has served on and chaired the Agricultural Awareness committee.

She enjoys every part of the fair and working towards making it better. District 7 has re-connected as a group and she looks forward to this revitalized connection and continued effort to meet, network, and share items with the common goal of helping each to be the best fair they can be.

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**Congratulations to John Burr**

NYSAAF Past President John Burr of the Lewis County Fair in Lowville was presented the 2015 Hall of Fame award by Steven Berninger.

This is in recognition of his devoted and invaluable service to the NYSAAF and one of its member fairs. This annual award is presented to individuals who exemplified and distinguished themselves by their commitment.
NYSAF 2015 Convention

The 127th Annual New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs Convention at the Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center in Rochester, NY was held January 16-19, 2015. Forty-two fairs attended as well as associate members of the Association. Over 800 individuals were in attendance. President R Harry Booth of the Washington County Fair in Greenwich welcomed everyone to the convention.

The keynote speaker was Humorous, Jane Jenkins Herlong on “Don’t Throw Tomatoes at my Field of Dreams” and IAFE speaker Martha Roth with “Just Squint”.

A variety of breakout sessions continued throughout the four day event.

The auction to benefit the scholarship program grows in items and attendance each year.

The trade show held on January 17 & 18 included 88 booths and was the location of the Little Red Wagon “Halloween” Parade.

NYSAF “Hall of Fame” award was presented to NYSAF Past President John W. Burr of the Lewis County Fair in Lowville.

New York State Showpeople’s Association awards were presented to Mark St Jacques of the Washington County Fair for “Fair Person of the Year”; Joey Sofo, Jr. of Playland Amusements, Inc. for “Show Person of the Year” and Sarah McAndrew for “Workhorse of the Year”.

Robert Simpson of the Jefferson County Fair in Watertown is the NYSAF 2015 President. Other officers are First Vice President, Andy Imperato of the Dutchess County Fair; Second Vice President, Gary Newkirk, CFE of the Ulster County Fair; Third Vice President, Scott Christian of the Essex County Fair; Treasurer, Joan Rowland of the Saratoga County Fair and Executive Secretary, Norma Hamilton of the Schaghticoke Fair.

Parade Winners
Decorated Mask:
Joyce St Jacques, Washington County Fair

Floats:
1st Otsego County Fair
2nd Trumansburg Fair
3rd Hemlock Little World’s Fair
3rd Jefferson County Fair

Costume Category:
Jefferson County Fair
Otsego County
Hemlock Little World’s Fair
Herkimer County Fair
Trumansburg Fair

District Directors are:
District 1 ................................................................. Steven G. Berninger, Columbia County Fair
District 2 ................................................................. John J. Luskin, Schaghticoke Fair
District 3 ................................................................. Donald Peck, Gouverneur and St. Lawrence County Fair
District 4 ................................................................. Richard J. Ellthorp, Herkimer County Fair
District 5 ................................................................. Jeffrey L. Mayne, Madison County Fair
District 6 ................................................................. Nick Pelham, Steuben County Fair
District 7 ................................................................. Shana Jo Hilton, Ontario County Fair
District 8 ................................................................. Alton M. MacDuffie, Genesee County Fair
NY State Fair Acting Director ........................................... Troy Waffner, Syracuse
Associate Directors ..................................................... Joseph Sofo, Jr., Auburn & Jeff Lloyd, Utica

Showcase Acts: Sylvia Fletcher’s The Magic Trunk – Comedy Ventriloquist; Country Artist Hannah Bethal - Love Shine Agency; Seventeen year old recording artist Caroline Kole - Klein’s Entertainment, Inc.; Heidi Newfield and Keith Burns reunite in Trick Pony-Variety Attractions and Buffalo and Brandy - Magical Music Show

2016 Convention dates are January 15-18 at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY.

For more information on NYSAF Fairs & Convention contact Norma Hamilton, Executive Secretary at carousels4@aol.com or visit our website at www.nyfairs.org.

State Wide Pass
NYSAF is offering the 2015 Statewide Fair Pass to members of the public for $100.00 each.

This non-transferable pass, good at NYSAF member Fairs and New York State Fair, admits person named on the pass and one companion, plus parking when available. Passes lost or stolen cannot be replaced.

For an order form and list of our Member Fairs, visit the NYSAF Association website at www.nyfairs.org

Get To Know T-3
The 2015 IAFE T-3 (Trade, Treats, and Traditions) Specialty Seminar will be held Sept.

23-25 at the Holiday Inn in Enfield, Conn. Educational sessions during this seminar will focus on concessions, commercial exhibits, and competitive exhibits. Attendees will share ideas on best practices in booth layout, exhibitor selection, rules, vendor management, and the latest in food trends. The program will also feature a trip to the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, Mass., which will be occurring during the T-3 Seminar. Keep an eye on the IAFE website as more information become available.

NYS Fair Managers
The NYSAF Gateway Managers’ Meeting will be held at the Vernon Downs Raceway and Casino October 2-4. Further information will be sent at a later date from Carol Sweeney, President of the Fair Managers and President of the Oswego County Fair in Sandy Creek.

Clinton County Fair
Please note a change in the dates for the Clinton County Fair in Morrisville, NY. It will now be held July 28 to August 2, 2015.

Newsletter
The NYSAF Newsletter is published 3 times a year in April, September & December. Send information for the newsletter to Norma Hamilton at carousels4@aol.com. Thank you to all who contributed to this newsletter. Visit us on our website at: www.nyfairs.org
Sarah McAndrews received the NYS Showpeoples award for "Workhorse of the Year" award from Jeff Lloyd.

Mark St. Jacques, CFE of the Washington County Fair in Greenwich received the NYS Showpeoples award for "Fair Person of the Year".

Joey Sofo Jr. of Playland Amusements received the "Showperson of the Year Award".

Opening ceremony of the 127th Annual Convention and Trade Show.

Masters of the Chainsaw - Brian Ruth at the trade show parade.

President R Harry Booth is presented with a past president's plaque, gold pass and a personal photo book by 1st Vice President Bob Simpson.

2014 President R Harry Booth with Keynote Speaker Jane Jenkins Herlong and First Vice President Bob Simpson.
Showcase Act - Caroline Kole

President R Harry Booth with wife, JoAnne and their family

President R Harry Booth, Jessica Underberg, CFE, IAFE Zone 1 director and IAFE Speaker Martha Roth

Showcase act - Trick Pony

Don and Mary Tripp from the Washington County Fair at the Strawberry Festival in Plant City, Florida

Join us
January 15 - 18, 2016

128th NYSAAF Annual Convention
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