



# NYSAAF

## NEWSLETTER

New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc.



### **From The President**

#### **Hi Fair Folks**

It's hard to believe the NYSAAF convention was nearly two months ago. I hope everyone that participated had a good time and learned something new. If you missed it, you were missed! Spring is right around the corner and the busy season is approaching. We've heard of several people who are enjoying Florida fairs. I hope to visit some while we are on vacation since I'm getting the itch too.

The Executive and Legislative team are trying to reduce the minimum for premium reimbursement, getting premium money included in the budget, asking for another grant approval and extending the grant timeframe.

Please don't forget to petition your representatives regarding H2B workers for our carnivals and concessionaires. We all need to work together.

Be an advocate for our youth exhibitors. It's a win/win for everyone involved.

I wish you the best of luck for a successful 2022 Fair Season. I'm so thankful for this opportunity to be your President.

Ed Rossley, President

### **2022 Public Policy Lobby Day**

I believe that the 15 or 16 fair representatives who met with a dozen or so legislators and state officials will agree that our Lobby Day efforts were successful even considering some of the less than positive reactions to our requests.

The \$500,000 for premiums appears to be safely within the Governors budget. A legislative bill to lower the \$5,000 threshold has a reasonable chance of being passed.

Another \$5 million grant is a tough call. Some of us were faced with the pushback that there is still \$15 million not spent by the fairs, "why do you need more money if the fairs haven't spent what they have". This led to a very frank discussion about how difficult it is to get approval from the staff at Ag. & Markets to receive the funds that the Legislature has appropriated for fairs.

I'm not sure if there will be any pressure to bear on Ag & Markets from the Legislature to fix the problem, but I suspect not.

We had a very Positive conversation with Kevin King, Deputy Secretary for Food and Agriculture, from the Governor's office. (Kevin is Pat Hooker's replacement)

It's possible that he will be able to help us, but our first meeting will be with personnel at Ag. & Markets. Somehow, some way we need to get this ongoing problem fixed. There just doesn't seem to be anyone with authority down there that cares about or supports county fairs.

### **We shall keep pushing forward.**

Thank you to Renee St Jacques and staff 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

### **Our President on the move...**





### **3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Lauren Delaney- Saratoga County Fair**

Lauren joins the Executive Committee from the Saratoga County Fair. She has been involved with the Fair her whole life since her father Richard Rowland serves as Manager and her Mother served as Past Treasurer to the Association. Lauren was elected to the Board in 2009. She currently serves as chairperson of the Concessions Committee and the Tickets/Memberships/Admissions Committee and is a member of the Nominating committee and the safety & security committee. Also serves as the complimentary ticket coordinator and unofficial graphic designer. She served as Scholarship Chairperson in 2012, have been the Recording Secretary for NYSAAF since 2013 and served as District 2 Director from 2016-2018.

Professionally, Lauren is Sales Manager at the Saratoga Springs City Center. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Communications with a concentration in Public Relations and a Master's Degree in Integrated Marketing Communications both from Marist College. In 2019 she graduated from the International Association of Venue Managers Venue Management School.

When not at work, working on plans for the upcoming Fair or attending Fairs across the state, I enjoy reading a good book, brewery tours and tastings, camping and kayaking with my husband Rob and friends or simply hanging out with my two dogs, Oliver and Grace.

## **District Directors**

### **District Director – Amy Anderson – Altamont Fair**

Amy has been involved with the Altamont Fair since 2012. She attended her first State Convention in 2015 and began her journey through the IAFE at that time. Amy has completed classes through the IAFE to become a Certified Fair Manager. In her spare time, Amy enjoys spending time with her family and advocating for children with special needs.



### **District Director 4 – Harold Smith - Oswego County Fair**

I would never have thought A \$30 goat that I purchased at a Farmer's Market for my daughter, would take me where I am today. My daughter was determined to show that \$30 goat at the Oswego County Fair. Unknown to her and me there was a lot more than showing up to County Fair with a goat. Then we ended up buying a goat with papers, and over the years we end up having 40 dairy goats on the farm. So, I have been involved by volunteering at the Oswego County Fair for well over 21 years, working myself from a volunteer to be on the Board of Directors, to becoming the President. While the Board of Directors, I was fortunate enough to go to the Rochester Convention, where I was able to talk about how to get free or stuff donated. I also was able to talk about the Managers Meeting,

Being a running coach, for Fleet Feet sports, coaching people how to start running and also coaching people how to run faster along with coaching to do a marathon. I would never have thought my running enthusiasm, would come in to play when running a Fair. We don't have golf carts. LOL

Professionally, I have been working for the Post Office for over 28 years. I have met some great people over the years on my mail route, just like I have met some awesome people from other county fair's especially at the convention, and when I go visit their Fair, they have become my Fair Family.

Professionally, I have been working for the Post Office for over 28 years. I have met some great people over the years on my mail route, just like I have met some awesome people from other county fair's especially at the convention, and when I go visit their Fair, they have become my Fair Family.

### **District 7 Director – Sarah Jean Hamilton – Wayne County Fair**

I have been involved with The Union Agricultural Society of Palmyra, the host of the Wayne County Fair, since I was a child. In my youth I was a 4-H exhibitor and volunteered as the Flower Show Superintendent. In 2012, once I finished college, I moved back to the area and was asked to join the Board of Directors. Over the years I have taken on various roles. I have assisted in policies and procedures that have resulted in restructuring and rebranding of our organization, I organize volunteers for the Grandstands and various events throughout the Fair, I am also involved with coordinating vendors, creating fundraisers and assisting with marketing efforts. Outside of Fair week, I have led the project to bring Floral Hall, a Historical Building on the grounds, back to use as an event space utilized for weddings and private events. During my tenure, I have worked closely with the Ontario County Fair on various projects and attend the NYSAAF Convention annually. This year, I will be the first Board Member in my organization to receive an IAFE Grant and attend the Zone 1 Meeting. Outside of the Fair, I am involved with the American Legion Auxiliary for Post 120, Palmyra NY and am one of the Coordinators for Palmyra Canal Town Days. I am the owner of a small event planning business in the Rochester Market and also own Sign Dreamers of the Finger Lakes, a local yard card sign business.

In my spare time, I spend a lot of time at local tractor pulls with my partner, Andy Pieters; oftentimes bringing us to local fairs around NYS. When not at a tractor pull or fair we are often in the Adirondacks, enjoying some of NYS finest scenery.



## **2022 New Associate Members**

**OA Finance, LLC**  
Mark Walker  
839 NE Woods Chapel Road  
Lee Summit, MO 64113  
816-581-0033  
Email: [Mark@OAFinance.net](mailto:Mark@OAFinance.net)  
Equipment & Finance

**Moose Joose Slush**  
Jody Conklin  
135 Creekwood Drive  
Mooresville, 28117  
704-609-8494  
Email: [codyscarts@gmail.com](mailto:codyscarts@gmail.com)  
Frozen Slushes

**Entertainment One Rentals**  
John Myers  
433 Lower Main Street  
Hudson Falls, NY 12839  
518-421-8048  
[john@e1rentals.com](mailto:john@e1rentals.com)  
Book Agency

## NYS Showpeoples Christmas Party



### Dates to Remember

- March 15 ..... State Passes go on-sale for 2022 Fair season
- April 6-8..... IAFE Management Conference  
Phoenix, AZ
- April 12..... IAFE CyberSeminar –  
“Guest Experience Starts BEFORE They Enter Your Gates” - FREE
- April 13..... IAFE CyberSeminar – IFM #203 – Human Resources II
- April 27 ..... IAFE CyberSeminar - GBAC Certification - FREE
- April 28 ..... IAFE CyberSeminar -  
Americans with Disabilities Update, Trends (Including Service Animals)
- May 4..... IAFE CyberSeminar –  
Let’s Talk Camping and Glamping on Your Fairgrounds - FREE
- May 11..... IAFE CyberSeminar – IFM #121 – Sponsorship
- May 12-14..... Combined Florida Federation,  
IAFE Zone 1 & Zone 2 Meeting- Naples, FL
- May 18 ..... IAFE Cyber Seminar – Weather Safety - FREE
- September 14..... IAFE CyberSeminar – IFM# 101 – Business Planning
- September 15..... Carnival and Fairs – Protecting the Tradition  
While Making the Presentation Contemporary - FREE
- October 7, 8, 9 ..... Fair Managers Meeting  
Horseheads, NY
- October 8 ..... NYSAAF Board of Directors Meeting  
Horseheads, NY
- November 27-30 ..... 131<sup>st</sup> Annual IAFE Convention & Trade Show  
Indianapolis, IN

## 2022 NY Fairs Pass Available

An official New State Fairs Pass is available for \$100.00. The pass is good at all NYSAAF member Fairs and the New York State Fair. The pass admits the person named and one companion plus parking where available. Applications and a complete list of member fairs is available at [www.nyfairs.org](http://www.nyfairs.org).

## Fair Managers Meeting Save the Date

President Mike Reese has set the date for the Fall Fair Managers Meeting. The Meeting will take place at the Hilton Garden Inn, 35 Arnot Road, Horseheads, NY. The dates for the meeting are October 7-9. Additional information with regard to the program and activities will be send out at a later date. In the meantime, save the Date and plan to join in.

## Hall of Fame 2022



**Andy Imperati, Dutchess County Fair, Gary Newkirk, CFE Ulster County Fair**



**Carol Sweeney, Oswego County Fair**



**Fran Tepper, CFE – Retired Monroe County Fair**

### Department of Agriculture Announcement

“The Department of Agriculture has issued an order to ban all live fowl shows and exhibitions in New York State.....”

Fairs have been sent the complete announcement via email which was forwarded to All Fairs on March 25,2022. Please check your email for this Important information.

## Scholarship Information

### Calling all New York State Fairs and Show People!

Lets get the word out.

We have up to ten scholarships of \$1,500 each. Yes \$1,500 each to give to students that submit completed applications. Key word here is completed as outlined in the application instructions.

Please contact your local schools, Cornell/4H clubs, any and all kids that have been connected to your fair.

These are our future leaders in our agricultural fairs. Lets help them along their journey!

Applications must be received by the second Friday in April. The clock is ticking.

#### Please note:

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.

Thank you for your support.

Regards

John Craft

Scholarship Coordinator

## Finding Joy

In 2020, we all had to reimagine our lives and our businesses to stay afloat. We struggled, we adapted and we moved forward. What other options did we have? What did we learn from this pandemic year? We learned about loss. We learned how to be resilient. We learned how to take care of the people we care most about and to appreciate them even when we had to spend every waking moment with them. We learned that together, we can move mountains.

So, we spent months creating a safety plan, acquiring the necessary items to fulfill said safety plan, fixing everything that was eaten, broken or graffitied during the past year and in the blink of an eye, it was over.

At the time, it felt like the longest 5 days of my life. We were short staffed. Of course, we had rain! People had forgotten how to do things that once were as easy as learning to ride a bike.

Every day, there were struggles. Physically, I wasn't sure my body could take it. I lost 10 pounds in one week. But mentally, I struggled. The People came and were so gracious that we were finally giving them something to do but the worry over whether it was enough, were they entertained, was the wait in line too long? Were we going to be able to make these people happy with what we had to offer was taking its toll on me?

I was having trouble finding the joy that had come so easily in the past. I went through the motions; I did my job.

I honestly cannot remember the trigger. It might have been the screaming patron who wanted her money back. It could have been the baby emu that was hurt and had to be evacuated. It could have been standing outside the gate for hours in the hot sun selling tickets, but I found myself needing to take a moment.

So, I went to the baby animal area where the littlest children hang out. And there I found the little girl silently staring into a cage. She appeared to be about three years old.

I got down on my knees and struck up a conversation. She just wanted to touch a bunny. So, I went into the cage and I picked up one of the bunnies and brought it out to her. She was hesitant at first, but I could see with the look on her face that she so desperately wanted to touch the bunny I was holding.

Within a minute, her hand was out and she was petting the bunny in my arms. The smile on her face, the look in her eye was pure, unadulterated joy. As she danced around and squealed with delight, it was in that moment, at least for a little while anyway, I found my joy. I remembered the reason that we put ourselves through this hell every year. For the joy of the children.

Submitted by Amy Anderson - Altamont Fair

## Congratulations IAFE Institute of Fair Management Awards Recipients



Holly Smyczynski - Erie County Fair



Jen Flinton - Saratoga County Fair

MEMBER

**iafe**<sup>®</sup>

THE NETWORK!

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FAIRS & EXPOSITIONS

**IAFE Zone #1,  
Zone #2 and Florida  
Federation of Fairs  
Meeting**

**May 12-14, 2022-  
Naples Florida**

## Convention Wrap-Up and Thank You

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 or visit our website at [www.nyfairs.org](http://www.nyfairs.org).

## Thank You

The 133rd Annual Convention of the New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc. was held January 14-17, 2022 at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY. On behalf of the Officers and the Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to extend sincere thanks to each of you for your participation and cooperation. You have made it possible for us to once again experience a successful Convention. We hope you enjoyed the Convention and we wish you a successful 2022 season!

### **All Officers, Directors and Committees of the Association**

### **All Associate Members who participated**

**Scholarship Auction:** All fairs, individuals and associate members who participated, contributed and purchased auction items. The Auction Committee, Auctioneer Todd Jantzi and all those who helped with the auction.

### **President's Reception and Hospitality Room:**

Chenango County Fair County Fair Board of Directors and Staff and Sponsors

**Past Presidents' Reception on Saturday** – Sponsored by The Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center and Visit Rochester

**Signs:** Supplied by the Dutchess County Fair, Andy Imperati

**Saturday & Sunday Breakfast, Banquet, Saturday Buffet:** NYS Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc., Lewis County Fair, Saratoga County Fair and Variety Attractions.

**Door Prizes:** All those donating door prizes; Board and Staff members of the Chenango County Fair and friends for ducks and distributing prizes.

**Memorial Service & Display:** Dr. Marilyn Trainor

**Showcase Acts:** WailOn, Tribute to Waylon Jennings & Classic County, Murphy presented by Klein's Entertainment, LLC, and the Rylee Lum Band

**Emcees:** Jeff Williams and Nick Pelham, CVFM

**Personnel from:**

Visit Rochester – Amanda Fox, and Alicia Gazda  
NICA – represented by Jessica Gottsche  
New York Showpeople's Association – Jeff Lloyd, President  
OABA – represented by Debbie Powers

**Speakers:**

William Stainton  
Alicia Shoults, Ohio State Fair, IAFE Speaker  
Bill Ogg, CFE, Nebraska State Fair, sponsored by the Erie County Fair  
**Breakout Sessions:** All speakers and facilitators

**Sponsors:**

**Gold Plus Sponsor:** Amusements of America, Dreamland Amusements, Erie County Fair, McGown Allied Specialty Insurance, Powers Great American Midways, Strates Shows.

**Bronze Sponsor:** Lewis County Fair, Saratoga County Fair, Variety Attractions, Inc, Visit Rochester

**Contributing Sponsors:** Afton Fair, Automated Cash Technologies, Boxall's Concessions, Coleman Bros. Shows, Herkimer County Fair, Seneca County Fair, The Corner Grill.

**Acknowledgements:**

**Badges & Tickets:** The Fair Publishing House; Visit Rochester.

**Lanyards:** Zutter Design, Washington Mills, NY

**Sound:** Lloyd Sound Inc.

**Audio-Visual:** CMI Communications

**President's Plaque:** Don Peck

**Hall of Fame Plaques:** Andy Imperati

**Trade Show:** Northeast Decorating, Bill Newman; Otsego County Fair, Lisa Jones & Staff and our Trade Show participants.

**Trade Show Luncheon Coupons**

Sponsored by NYS Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc. & The Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center

**Refreshment Breaks:** Upstate Milk Cooperative & Valley Beverages (Pepsi)

**Staff of:** The Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center and the Hyatt Regency Rochester.

**Sale of 50/50 Tickets:** Pauline Bunce, Chairperson, and all those who sold tickets.

**Registration Desk:** Norma Saville, Ida Williams Kathy Elthorp and the Visit Rochester staff ; Jane Luskin, Treasurer; Recording Staff: Lauren Delaney, Saratoga County Fair.

**For all those who helped to make the convention a success, we truly appreciate it.**

## ***New York State Showpeoples Awards***



**Showperson of the Year Debbie Powers**



**Fairperson of the Year Jessica Underberg, CFE**



**Workhorse of the Year Virtual Fair Committee**

## Convention Scrapbook



# Convention Scrapbook

