

As of 12/15/24
WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FAIRS
ANNUAL CONVENTION
JANUARY 5-8, 2025
CHULA VISTA RESORT, WISCONSIN DELLS, WI

Registered convention attendees are invited to attend all of the events listed in the program. Your convention badge is required for these events, so be sure to wear it while attending the convention. If you have any questions about our programmed events, please be sure to ask our Registration Desk. They are here to help. Enjoy the convention!

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2025

7:00-9:00 AM BREAKFAST BUFFET
Main Floor

10:30-11:15 AM FAIREST REGISTRATION
Convention Center Lobby

12:00-3:00 PM FAIREST SCRAPBOOKS ON DISPLAY
Grand Ballroom

The Fairest of the Fairs Contestants have brought scrapbooks highlighting their local fairest reign. There will be multiple times in the program to view them and maybe borrow some ideas.

2:00-8:00 PM CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN
Grand Ballroom Lobby

2:15-3:15 PM FAIREST COORDINATOR NETWORKING
Grand Ballroom

This is an opportunity for coordinators to share ideas and network.

3:30-5:00 PM MEET THE CONTESTANTS
Grand Ballroom

Come and watch the Fairest of the Fairs Contestants introduce themselves and answer an impromptu fair question.

4:30-5:00 PM SESSION #1
FIRST TIME ATTENDEE GATHERING
Upper Dells

If it's your first time attending our convention, we'll give you an overview of the convention. Our group loves to share and network, so give us a chance to welcome you to convention!

5:30-6:30 PM SESSION #2
BRIGHT IDEAS WITH DEB GEGARE
Upper Dells

Many fair members have shared their bright ideas with Deb over the years. She will share these ideas, new and improved for you to possibly start at your fair.

5:30-6:30 PM SESSION #3
501(c)3 FOR DUMMIES (the FAIR, FOUNDATION & FRIENDS OF THE FAIR edition)
Riverview South

By request, we are following up with another session on 501(c)3s at this year's convention. Do you need to establish a "Nonprofit Corporation" to run your fair, a "Foundation" to fund capital improvements, a "Friends of the Fair" group to support operational expenses, an "Umbrella Organization" to oversee it all, or perhaps something entirely different?

Why would I need to create a 501(c)3? - Do you need more than one 501(c)3?

- What documents go into creating and maintaining a 501(c)3 and how they help define your corporation?

- How long does it take to set up a 501(c)3?

- How much does it cost to start and maintain a 501(c)3?
- Why should your board evaluate your 501(c)3 documents each year?
- And more, if time permits.

It's a big topic to discuss in a short amount of time, so have your questions ready and we can all learn together.

6:30-8:00 PM CARNIVAL NIGHT

Grand Ballroom

This reception is sponsored by members of the carnival industry. Enjoy free food and beverages while socializing with our carnival members. In addition, a 50/50 raffle will be held with proceeds going back to WAF to help with our evening receptions.

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025

7:00-9:00 AM GRAND BUFFET BREAKFAST

Main Floor

7:00-9:00 AM GRAND BUFFET BREAKFAST

Upper Dells

8:00 AM-4:00 PM REGISTRATION DESK OPEN

Photo/Media Judging Open

8:30-9:30 AM SESSION #4

WE ARE FAMILY

Riverview South

Back by popular demand, here is your opportunity to get to know as many fair family members as possible in a short time. We are going "speed dating". Whether you are a first time attendee or a life-long convention attendee there is something you can learn from another fair person. Come join the fun and share memories.

9:00 AM-1:00 PM Trade Show Set-up – *Ballrooms A-I*

10:00 AM SPECIAL PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Grand Ballroom

Join us for fun activities to get our convention attendees fired up for the start of convention. Bring your fairs decorated centerpiece and vote for your favorite.

10:30 AM CONVENTION KICK-OFF

Grand Ballroom

Let's get our convention underway with a few fair stories, awards, welcome from special guests and a keynote address.

Every Person Has a Fair Story Contest Winners Presentation sponsored by the Mid-West Farm Report. Presentation of Legislative Champions and Associate of the Year .

Keynote Speaker Ian Hill

Ian Hill - Humanitarian, Business Leader, Award-Winning Social Innovator, and World Record Breaker. Ian Hill is celebrated for his tireless efforts in building stronger communities. Ian has worked with hundreds of fairs, agricultural societies, 4-H groups, and rodeo leaders across North America, helping them continue their valuable work in strengthening communities and promoting agricultural heritage.

His work has always centered on creating spaces where people can come together, connect, and grow—values closely aligned with the Wisconsin Association of Fairs' mission of fostering community through local fairs and events.

12:30-1:30 PM SESSION #5

PREPARE TO RESPOND

Upper Dells

Is your fair proactive or reactive to emergencies and hazards? Do you have an emergency plan for both before and after emergencies happen? What do to before and after severe weather hits? How do you avoid public threats that may not be seen as a threat? These and many other questions will be addressed as we focus on the safety and hazards on the grounds and how you deal with those unexpected happenings.

12:30-1:30 PM SESSION #6

AG EDUCATION AND PROMOTING YOUR FAIR

Grand Ballroom

Join Kelsey Henderson, our WI FOTF, as she unveils the exciting new educational materials to help bring your fair to the classroom. Learn about the fresh approach and share your insights on what you'd like to see from WAF in terms of promotional and educational tools in the future. Join us to inspire the next generation of fair enthusiasts and complete your fair resource toolbox!

1:00-4:00 PM FAIREST CONTESTANT SCRAPBOOKS

ON DISPLAY – *Ballrooms A-I*

The Fairest of the Fairs Contestants have brought scrapbooks highlighting their local fairest reign. There will be multiple times in the program to view them and maybe borrow some ideas.

1:00-4:00 PM TRADE SHOW OPEN

Ballrooms A-I

Come and network with our Associate Members in the trade show. Then when you are done in the trade show, be sure to visit the Associates in Vendor Row in the condos. They are great Fair partners for us, so be sure to visit as many as you can.

4:00 PM CHEESE RECEPTION & VIEWING OF FAIREST AUCTION ITEMS

Riverview Rooms

Join us for snacks, beer and soda, including Wisconsin's favorite, cheese. Then, view the items our Fairest of the Fairs Contestants have brought to donate to our auction.

5:00 PM AUCTION

Riverview Rooms

Bid high and bid often on these amazing Fairest of the Fairs auction items. Proceeds first go back to the Fairest of the Fairs Program, and to offset convention expenses to keep your registration fees low.

7:00 PM SHOWCASE OF ENTERTAINMENT

Riverview Rooms

Enjoy tonight's entertainment from our Associate Members. We are excited to share these talented groups with you. We hope one or more of them will be invited to play your fair.

(Immediately following the auction)

- ◆ Mike Walker-Lasting Impressions
(Artists & Attractions)
- ◆ Half Twisted-Half Knot
(Half Twisted-Half Knot)
- ◆ VIDEO-Tons of Foam
(G.L. Berg Entertainment)
- ◆ Minor Mischief
(G.L. Berg Entertainment)
- ◆ VIDEO-The Stars of Brew City Wrestling
- ◆ Tyler Richton and the High Bank Boys
(Variety Attractions)
- ◆ Sound, Lights & Video—*Sosonic*

FOLLOWING SHOWCASE

TIME TO SOCIALIZE: Take this time to Visit our Associate Members on Vendor Row. You are also welcome to stay and network in the Riverview Rooms following the showcase.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025

- 6:30-9:00 AM GRAND BUFFET BREAKFAST**
Main Floor
- 7:00-9:00 AM GRAND BUFFET BREAKFAST**
Upper Dells
- 8:00AM-4:00 PM REGISTRATION DESK OPEN**
Photo/Media Judging Open
- 8:00-9:30 AM SESSION #7**
DATCP AG UPDATE & NETWORKING
Riverview South
Join Dr. Konkle, WI DATCP Veterinarian for an update on Animal Health Update along with Bernie O'Rourke and Jason Hausler, UW Extension and Debbie Gegare, Fairs Coordinator, WI DATCP as the panel to address any questions regarding fairs.
- 8:30-9:30 AM SESSION #8**
STRUCTURED FOR SUCCESS
Grand Ballroom
Discover the reasons behind common organizational challenges: engaging volunteers, leadership that resists change, the uphill battle of recruiting board members, and stagnant progress. If these issues resonate with your organization, the root cause may be your structure. This session uses a straightforward sports analogy to help you identify and place the right people in the right roles.
- 8:30-9:30 AM SESSION #9**
FAIREST COORDINATORS
Laguna
Q&A with the WAF Fairest Committee and local fairest coordinators.
- 9:30-11:00 AM COFFEE BREAK**
Grand Ballroom Lobby
- 10:00-11:30 AM SESSION #10**
RECRUITING & RETAINING VOLUNTEERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY with Ian Hill
Grand Ballroom
In today's dynamic environment, attracting and keeping dedicated volunteers is crucial for the success of fairs and community events. This session will explore modern strategies to engage volunteers effectively, leveraging technology and understanding evolving motivations to build a committed volunteer base.
- 11:30AM-12:00PM ASSOCIATE MEMBER MEETING**
Ballrooms A-I
All Associate Members are invited to attend a short member meeting to provide feedback on the convention.
- 12:00-3:00 PM TRADE SHOW – *Ballrooms A-I***
Come and network with our Associate Members in the trade show. Then when you are done in the trade show, be sure to visit the Associates in Vendor Row in the condos. They are great Fair partners for us so be sure to visit as many as you can.
- 12:00-3:00 PM FAIREST CONTESTANT SCRAPBOOKS**
ON DISPLAY – *Ballrooms A-I*
The Fairest of the Fairs Contestants have brought scrapbooks highlighting their local fairest reign. There will be multiple times in the program to view them and maybe borrow some ideas.

1:00-2:00 PM ICE CREAM BREAK IN TRADE SHOW

12:30-1:30 PM SESSION #11: WI DATCP FAIRS COORDINATOR UPDATE

Upper Dells

Deb Gegare, Fairs Coordinator for the WI DATCP, will give an update from the office including ATCP 160, judges, and SharePoint.

**1:30-4:30 PM UW EXTENSION
ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS**

Aztec

For those members that would like some time to talk to Jason Hausler and staff about UW Extensions partnership with your fair, can sign up for one-on-one sessions. Sign up forms will be available at registration desk.

**2:00-4:00 PM DATCP WITH DEB GEGARE
ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS**

Laguna

For those members that would like a little more assistance with SharePoint, you can sign up for a one-on-one session.

**1:30-3:00 PM SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS
RECEIVED**

Riverview South

Have an item for our Silent Auction? Now is the time to bring them to Riverview South so the committee can have time to organize for the silent auction. All Member Fairs and Associates are invited to bring donated items.

**3:00-4:30 PM FAIREST PRELIMINARIES
*Grand Ballroom***

Contestants will present a 30 second Radio Advertisement and answer an impromptu question on stage in front of our convention attendees.

**3:00-5:00 PM SILENT AUCTION OPEN FOR BIDS
*Riverview South***

View the items and, if you find an item or two you like, make a bid. Bids will be open again from 6:00-7:00 pm.

**6:00-7:00 PM PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION
*Riverview Rooms***

Join us for a night of free soda and beer and feast on a taco bar.

**6:00-7:00 PM SILENT AUCTION FINAL HOUR
*Riverview Rooms***

Keep bidding! The silent auction closes at 7:00 pm. Thank you for your support!

**7:00 PM SHOWCASE OF ENTERTAINMENT
*Riverview Rooms***

Enjoy tonight's entertainment from our Associate Members. We are excited to share these talented groups with you. We hope one or more of them will be invited to play your fair.
(Immediately following the auction)

- ◆ Mixtape
(ACA Music & Entertainment)
- ◆ VIDEO-The Stars of Brew City Wrestling
- ◆ The Now
(The Now)
- ◆ VIDEO-Tons of Foam
(GL Berg Entertainment)
- ◆ Hypnotized: The Music of Fleetwood Mac
(Impact Music Group)

- ◆ The Supertramp Tribute
(Impact Music Group)
- ◆ Sound, Lights & Video—Sosonic

FOLLOWING SHOWCASE

TIME TO SOCIALIZE: Take this time to Visit our Associate Members on Vendor Row. You are also welcome to stay and network in the Riverview Rooms following the showcase.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025

6:30-9:00 AM GRAND BUFFET BREAKFAST
Main Buffet

7:00-9:00 AM GRAND BUFFET BREAKFAST
Upper Dells

8:00 AM-4:00 PM REGISTRATION DESK OPEN

8:30 AM ASSOCIATION BUSINESS MEETING
Grand Ballroom

All Fair and Associate Members are invited to attend our Annual Business Meeting. We'll share highlights from this past year and plans for 2025.

- Call to order
President, Mary Check, IFMG
- America the Beautiful
Kelsey Henderson
- President's Report
President, Mary Check, IFMG
- Roll Call of Fairs/Financial Report
Ex Director, Jayme Buttke, CFE, IFMG
- Wisconsin State Fair Report
Shari Black, CFE, CEO/Exec Director
- WI DATCP Report of 2024 Fairs
Debbie Gegare, Fairs Coordinator
- Presentation of Legislative Champions
- Zone 4 Update, jill Albanese, CFE
- Committee Reports by Chairperson
 - Fairest of the Fairs
Tonya Dvorak &
Kelsey Henderson
 - Auction – Chris Engebretsen
 - Audit – Bill Marohl
 - Credentials – Liz Cook
 - Ed/Spec Projects – jill Albanese, CFE
 - Legislative – Jessica Klumpp, CFE
 - Premium – Mary Check, IFMG
 - Resolutions/Award– Denise Zirbel
 - Showcase – Jaime Kwiatkowski, CFE
 - Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment
- Photo & Media Winners Announced
- Bob William Ag Fair Grants Winners Announced

10:30AM-12:00PM SESSION #12

EXPANDING YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE: SPONSORSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND COLLABORATIONS with Ian Hill

Grand Ballroom

Do you need a “Foundation”, a “Friend of the Fair” Organization or a Expanding your fair’s reach and impact requires strategic relationships with sponsors, partners, and collaborators. This session will provide insights into building and maintaining these relationships to enhance resources and community engagement.

12:00-1:30 PM REFRESHMENT BREAK

Grand Lobby

Cookies

12:15-1:15 PM SESSION #13

MAKE IT-TAKE IT

Upper Dells

Join us as we “mustard up” some fun Make it-Take it ideas for your Fair. This will be a fast-paced workshop on how to create a new Make it-Take it activity from start to finish.

12:15-1:15 PM SESSION #14

ENERGIZING YOUR BRAND & WHY IT MATTERS!

Grand Ballroom

Does your logo match your brand? What about the fonts you are using? Or the colors? Believe it or not – it all matters! We will go through a few easy steps on elevating your brand as well as dive into the new Wisconsin Association of Fairs logo, which was proudly reimaged by Team Saffire! This will be a fun, light-hearted way to wrap up convention!

1:30-2:30 PM DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 1 – *Grand Ballroom*

Dale Christiansen & Rhonda Klement

District 2—*Riverview North*

Jackie Kumm & Linda Degner

District 3—*Riverview South*

Amy Olson & Liz Cook

District 4—*Upper Dells*

Mary Check & Eileen Walsh-Grzenia

2:45-4:30 PM FAIREST SCRAPBOOKS ON DISPLAY

Grand Ballroom

The Fairest of the Fairs Contestants have brought scrapbooks highlighting their local fairest reign. There will be multiple times in the program to view them and maybe borrow some ideas.

4:30-8:30 PM AWARDS BANQUET & FAIREST OF THE FAIRS FINALS

Ballrooms A-I

Join us as we wrap up the 2025 convention. We are excited to recognize award winners and select the 2025 WI Fairest of the Fairs. Separate banquet ticket is required.

AFTER BANQUET CELEBRATE & CONGRATULATE SOCIAL

Grand Ballroom

Come and introduce yourself to the 2025 Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs and congratulate our award winners. Join us for cake as we conclude our convention.

WAF COMMITTEE MEETINGS SCHEDULE

Committee meetings are open to those appointed to serve on the committee by WAF Board.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2025

- 9:00 AM Board Meeting**
Executive Board Room

- 9:00 AM Fairest Committee Meeting**
Sierra Vista

- 11:00 AM Special Projects Committee Meeting**
Grand Ballroom

- 8:30 PM Credentials Committee Meeting**
Grand Ballroom

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025

- 1:45 PM Showcase Committee Meeting**
Riverview North

- 2:00 PM Auction Committee Meeting**
Riverview South

- 2:30 PM Resolutions & Awards Committee Mtg**
Aztec

- 2:30 PM Premiums Committee Mtg**
Upper Dells

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025

- 12:00 PM Legislative Committee Meeting**
Laguna