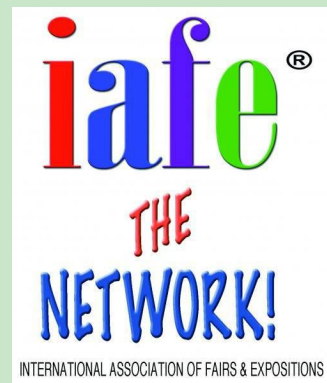




## MAAF NEWSLETTER

## CONFERENCE 2024 !



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year ! 2023 was a year that started out “wet,” but gradually dried up - much to the relief of the early fairs ! We saw record numbers through the gates as many fairs offered new entertainment as well as welcoming back their veteran vendors.

I want to thank Liz Chaisson for her work with our queens and princesses breakfast. This will surely be a special part of our conference.

Maine fairs have some big changes coming this year with some of our fairs changing their times and dates. Again this year, Springfield will lead the season off running from June 13th-16th, followed by Pittston June 20th-23rd, Monmouth June 26th-29th and Union July 7th-10th. Everyone else follows as listed on the website.\* Please note the changes.

I look forward to seeing you at our conference in a few weeks, and most of all thank you for all your hard work that helps to make our fairs outstanding in the country. I say “country” because Northern Maine Fair and Blue Hill Fair were honored at the December IAFE (International Association of Fairs & Expositions) Conference in Salt Lake City for their outstanding programs in agriculture. “Little Lumberjacks at the Fair” and “Charlotte’s Web” were recognized for excellence in their agricultural programs, with Northern Maine receiving the prestigious Judges Choice Award. They will be attending the conference, and I encourage you to chat with them about their experiences at the IAFE in Utah. Congratulations to Shawn and Erik! Barry



## “WHAT'S NEW” AT THE 2024 MAAF CONFERENCE BREAKFAST WITH THE FAIR QUEENS & PRINCESSES!



Meet our fair queens and princesses for breakfast at 8:30 AM Sunday Morning. 2014 Rising Star recipient Liz Chaisson from Pittston Fair will be coordinating this event. Please make sure that your fair has contacted Liz to notify her how many will be attending both the Saturday evening banquet and the Sunday morning breakfast as she puts together the final arrangements. Looking forward to seeing everyone. A special thanks to Liz for coordinating this event. Liz may be reached at: [lizard3303@aol.com](mailto:lizard3303@aol.com) and 207-446-1262.

## **NEW FOOD TRUCK AT THE MAAF CONFERENCE!**

Fields Fields Blueberries from Dresden (logo is on their website) will be joining our two veteran food providers - Pinky D's from Lisbon and Fat Guys from Greene - to offer delicious luncheon selections. \* Fat Guys will be on-site for Friday lunch as well.

Fields Fields specializes in their dessert offerings, and is known for their hot, wild blueberry crisp. Fresh off the event - First Night 2023 - Rockport's Holiday on the Harbor, this yummy truck was also seen at the 2023 Common Ground Country Fair. Perhaps you enjoyed one of the 3,000 blueberry crisps that they served up. By the way, Fields Fields was awarded the Best Farm to Table food vendor at the CGCF this year.



## **WELCOME TO HOMETOWN TICKETING OUR NEW CONFERENCE PARTNER!**

Our new conference format includes name tags preprinted for all fair goers. Your name tags with lanyards will all be available for pick up at the conference registration desk located at the entrance to the Trade Show.

## **PHOTO OPPS!**

2024 MAAF Conference photography courtesy of Rachel Andrews Damon, Fryeburg Fair, at the same location as in 2023. Our "easy to find" MAAF green backdrop will be in the hotel hallway. Make sure to set aside a time for your group to meet with Rachel.



FMI: [randrewsdamon@gmail.com](mailto:randrewsdamon@gmail.com)  
P.S. Thanks, Rachel!

## MESSAGE FOR THE EXHIBITION HALL WORKSHOP ATTENDEES FROM JUNIA & RAYMA



The 2023 session was well attended and resulted in the listening of several 2023 suggestions from those present. I am asking those who will be joining us on Friday morning at 10:30 AM to share the following:

1. What did you try, based on our 2023 gathering, and did you “tweak’ it to fit your own fair?
2. Share a hand-out that you may use in your hall: Maine Dairy, Maine Potato, Recipes, etc. and please how to find these and bring a few to share.
3. Do you have a local person who comes to give a talk in your hall ? Who? What organization, i.e. historian, author, artists, chef, crafter, etc.? Looking forward to seeing you in a few weeks.



## MAAF FOUNDATION \$\$\$ RAISED

All monies raised during the 50/50 raffle and the MAAF auction will all go directly to the MAAF Foundation. Foundation board members will be present to chat with you during the conference at the 50/50 table.

## MAINE AGRICULTURAL TRADES SHOW JANUARY 9-11, 2024

Maine Agricultural Trade Show, January 9-11, Augusta Civic Center. There is NO admission fee to the show, and the times are Tuesday 9-5pm, Wednesday 9-6pm and Thursday 9-3pm. Our 2024 MAAF ag challenge banner will be on display. “Meet Our Farmers” is the theme for the coming year.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The January-February issue is designed to share as much up-to-date information on the 2024 MAAF Conference as possible. Look for the March-April issue to share the photographs of the conference as well as the annual award winners - Rising Star, MAAF Agricultural Award and Katie Damren Award.



**MAAF 2024 CONFERENCE  
INFO & PROGRAM  
JANUARY 26, 27 & 28  
SHERATON SABLE OAKS  
SOUTH PORTLAND, ME**

**FAIRS RISE  
REUNITE, INSPIRE, SUPPORT, EDUCATE**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 25**

MAAF Board arrives on site  
3:00-7:00 PM Trade Show set-up  
Casco Bay Ball Room

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 26**

7:00-9:00 AM Trade Show set up continues Casco Bay Ball Room

9:00 AM Registration Opens  
Follow signs to the Trade Show Area

9:30 AM Trade Show Opens  
Casco Bay Ball Room  
Auction items will be on display  
All proceeds will benefit the Foundation

9:30-11:00 AM Race Directors Meeting  
Salon A  
Open to all that are interested in Harness Racing

10:00 AM-11:00 AM Livestock Superintendents - State Vet  
Salon B

10:30-11:30 AM 2023 Exhibition Hall rep-cap  
Salon C  
This session will be recorded and placed on the website  
at the end of the conference

11:30-12:30 PM Registration Desk Closed for lunch  
Will re-open at 12:30PM until 2:00PM

1:00-2:00 PM Fairs Helping Fairs Session  
Portland/So. Portland Room  
Session will be Moderated by Erik Fitch, General Mgr. Blue Hill Fair and Neil Yeaton,  
Secretary Farmington Fair

Both are also on the MAAF Board  
NOTE: This will be continued after the Annual Meeting  
from 4:15 PM on  
Who Should Attend?

Anyone involved in the areas described below  
How can we help each other in joint purchasing,  
advertising, sharing resources, etc. while having a cocktail

1:00-4:00 PM Pulling Commission  
With superintendents and affiliate groups and  
anyone interested in pulling  
Salon A&B

1:45-2:30 PM MAAF Board Meeting  
Salon D &E  
Open to All

2:45-4:30 PM Annual Meeting  
Salon D& E  
Welcome: President G. David Byras Jr.  
Agenda to be posted and available prior meeting

4:30 PM Fairs Helping Fairs continued  
Hospitality Room

4:00-5:00 PM Registration Desk Open  
Entrance to the Trade Show  
Follow the signs to sign in.

5:00 PM Trade Show Closes.

7:00 PM Auction  
Salons D&E  
Proceeds go the MAAF Foundation

8:00 PM Variety Show Case with 2 stages  
Salons D&E

??PM - 11:00 PM Dance  
Salons D&E

## **SATURDAY, JANUARY 27**

6:30-8:30 AM Breakfast Buffet

7:30-8:45 AM Fair President's Breakfast  
Portland Room

8:00-12:00 PM Registration Desk Open Follow Signage

9:00-9:15 AM Opening Remarks: President Byras  
Salon D&E  
Deputy Commissioner McBrady MDACF

9:30 AM Trade Show Opens  
Casco Ball Room

9:30-11:00 AM - VOLUNTEERS: PLANS, PITFALLS, BEST PRACTICES  
Salon D  
Presenter: Marla J. Calico CFE President & CEO IAFE

9:30 AM - Fairs of all sizes rely upon volunteers. How are fairs of  
different sizes motivating, retaining, finding, training volunteers?  
Why should your fair create a formal volunteer "hiring,"

training, and firing process?

9:30-10:30 AM - Fair Secretary/Treasurers  
Salon C

Everything you need to know about Stipends.

Presented by Missy Jordan

NOTE: This session will be recorded and posted to the  
MAAF Website after the conference.

9:30-11:30 AM - Maine Assoc. of Livestock Exhibitors  
Salon A&B

Lunch 11:00-12:30 PM

1:00-2:30 PM - Delivering Impactful Ag Education Programs at Fairs

Presenter: Ray Allison, CFE Chief Development and  
Strategy Office, Indiana State Fair

This interactive workshop will explain why Ag Education matters, discuss the role fairs should play in teaching consumers about the food they eat, and highlight unique and innovative educational programs that can be delivered both on-site and virtually. The session will include a live Zoom connection to the virtual learning studio at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

3:00-4:00 PM - Fountain of Youth - 40 Years Old and Under!!!

Hospitality Room

Moderator Melissa Jordan

Fair enthusiasts gather to meet & share ideas  
over a beverage

3:00PM - Trade Show Closes

Please network with other fairs in the Hospitality Room  
prior to the Banquet.

5:30 PM - Banquet - Grand Ball Room

5:30 PM - Special Presentation(s)

MAAF Contest Awards

Rising Star Award

Catherine Damren Distinguished Service Award

6:15 PM - Banquet and Guest Speaker

Marla Calico, President & CEO

International Association of Fairs and Expositions

Marla is passionate about agricultural fairs and the people who make them happen. She's often referred to as "The Fair Chick." Her role as the President and CEO of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions is the culmination of a life spent involved with fairs – as an exhibitor, a visitor, volunteer, employee and manager.

8:00 PM - Closing and adjourn until dance at

8:30 PM - Music by the Hurricane Mountain Band

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28**

6:30-9:00 AM - Breakfast Buffet

8:30 AM - Have breakfast with all the  
Fair Queens and Princesses

10:00 AM - Conference Committee Meeting  
Cape Elizabeth Room

Thank you for attending the 2024 Conference.

See you next year - save the dates -  
MAFF Annual Conference January 24-26, 2025

2024 Zone 1 Meeting May 16-18  
Sheraton Hotel, Springfield, MA

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