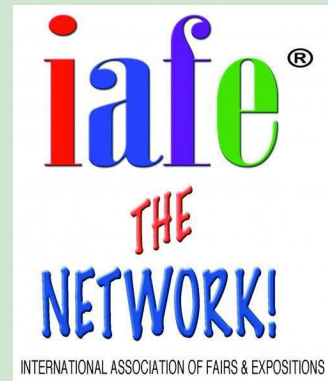




MAAF NEWSLETTER

SEPT 2023

Issue #5



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I would like to start by congratulating our fairs for their positive attitudes in dealing with the unusual amounts of rain that we have been having this summer.

President David Byras has been visiting many fairs this season. Starting with Springfield, he has traveled all across the state, and just recently met with the folks at Washington County-Pembroke as they showed off their new livestock barns and other improvements.

Congratulations to Abigail Michaud and Chris McGrail of the Bangor State Fair and their agricultural support team (led by the Caron family - Jesse, Corinna, Ashton and Abby of the Casa Cattle Company of Corinna, Maine) for showcasing for our Maine fairgoers an extraordinary livestock exposition. Looking forward to what 2024 will bring !



I have watched as fairs have created new areas of ag education - Ossipee Fair and their ag education farmer village - while others have expanded on previous hands-on displays - Northern Maine Fair's Lil' Lumberjacks at the Fair. Continuing to follow E.B. White's story *Charlotte's Web*, Blue Hill Fair is welcoming lambs to join with Wilbur and Charlotte in their barn. FMI: look on the Blue Hill Fair Facebook page.

The MAAF Conference Committee has been working to complete plans for the upcoming 2024 January conference. Watch for more information in the coming months. Remember - the MAAF conference does **not** have a registration fee and those who attend are welcome at all workshops and presentations. Our host hotel will again be the Sable Oaks, South Portland, and the actual conference dates are January 26, 27 and 28, 2024.

As we close out the 2023 fair season, I look back at how far we have come from the year of COVID-19 and no fairs. Everyone of you have done a tremendous job at bringing your fairs back, and I congratulate all of you for your hard work and determination. Barry

**THESE SHOES WILL BE HARD TO FILL
GLENDA BARKER, EXHIBITION HALL
SUPERINTENDENT - FARMINGTON FAIR**



The person in charge of the exhibition hall at a Maine agricultural fair needs to squeeze every last minute out of a 24 hour day as they prepare to showcase everything from tating to tomatoes, fruits to flowers, and paintings to parsley . **Glenda Barker** has managed to do just this for over thirty years.

Working as a volunteer under John Edgely for the two years prior to his retirement, Glenda was responsible for scheduling vendors and fair help. Upon John's retirement, Glenda was then voted in as the new superintendent of the hall . Over the past three decades, Glenda had been responsible for an exhibition hall that is a showpiece of the fair. Located in a spacious two-story building in the center of the fairgrounds, the Farmington Fair Exhibition Hall introduces the fairgoer to the many aspects of rural Maine living. For example, the 2023 Farmington Fair Premium Book lists exhibits, departments, classes and lots over a space of 37 pages. The list of premiums begin with Grange exhibits and the final entries are for the decorated pumpkin contest. *Each* of these entered items are listed in a class that requires a volunteer to carefully enter it in the correct category, a volunteer to insure that the placement of the item within the hall is accurate and of course a judge to determine the quality and subsequent premium to be awarded. The person responsible for making sure that there are the necessary number of volunteers, judges, ribbons,etc is Glenda Barker.

Since being elected to the Farmington Fair board of trustees in December of 2003, Glenda has taken up other fair jobs such as: contacting vendors, setting up booths, taking entries, running a ticket booth, interviewing and selecting hall employees, and negotiating advertisement contracts for outside the pulling ring. Glenda is often to be found just inside the entrance to her hall where she can answer just about any question posed to her, and it also places her in close proximity to the Farmington Grange "cafe" area where some tasty treats can be purchased by hungry fairgoers.

Other interests that have occupied Glenda through the years when she is not at the fair include a private catering business, working at the Mount Blue High School Cafeteria, membership in both Extension and the Grange, and a ballot clerk for the town of Chesterville.

Glenda's family includes 7 children, 16 grandchildren and many great grandchildren.

Congratulations and thank you to **Glenda Barker** for her tireless work for the Farmington Fair. For certain, these shoes will be hard to fill!



MAAF CONFERENCE JANUARY 26-28 2024

Save the dates. Sheraton Sable Oakes, S. Portland, ME
More details coming in future e-newsletters!
Make sure everyone at your fair is receiving these publications - SHARE!

2023 MAAF AGRICULTURAL AWARD CONTEST "CREATING AN EXPERIENCE: MAINE ON MY PLATE"

The 2023 Ag Challenge is pleased to introduce you to two members of our judging panel.

Raye's Mustard. Award winning, small batch crafted stone ground gourmet mustard. Family owned with over 123 years of family history, Raye's Mustard Mill is the last remaining traditional stone ground mustard mill in North America." At the turn of the last century, Raye's Mustard Mill was built to supply mustard to the two dozen or so sardine canneries in Eastport, Maine, and countless others along the coast of Maine. Four generations of the Raye family have owned and operated Raye's Mustard beginning with J. Wesley Raye, who founded the business in 1900 and ran it until his death in 1948. His son H. Wadsworth Raye was at the helm for the next four decades until passing the torch to his son Donald and later his daughter Nancy. Current owners Karen and Kevin Raye bought the business in 2005.

Karen and Kevin work closely together providing direction, stewardship and a vision for the future. Together they have grown the business while honoring and maintaining Raye's unique authenticity, brand essence and historic legacy.

Allagash Brewery. In 1995, Rob Tod opened a brewery calling it Allagash Brewing Company. He wanted to start with one beer, and one beer only: a Belgian-style wheat beer called Allagash White. In 1998, Allagash White won its first Gold medal at the World Beer Cup. More recognition followed in 2002 winning a second gold medal, this time at the Great American Beer Festival. Jason Perkins, a dedicated brewer from Vermont, joined the Allagash team in 1999, and more beers joined the list. Allagash has a history of encouraging everyone inside the company to submit ideas for a new pilot beer, and more favorites joined the ever growing list. As Allagash continued to expand, Rob made the pledge that by 2021 they would be using one million pounds of Maine-grown grain per year. This was to give their Maine growing and malting partners something to bank on and build out longer-term projects, knowing the demand would still be there. Allagash continues to receive national and international recognition for their products as well as their commitment to community and the environment.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR LATE SUMMER FAIRS & WHAT TO LOOK FOR!

Windsor Fair- August 27-September 4 Located between the prolific apple orchards of Lincoln and Knox counties, it just seems perfect that Windsor Fair would welcome the return of the Miss Windsor Fair Apple Queen competition. Thursday evening , August 31 at 6 pm is the coronation date and time for contestants to compete for the title.

Blue Hill Fair - August 31 - September 4 The USDA is bringing their new rain and soil trailer to Blue Hill Fair. The Pork Chop Revue comes to us from Florida, and you may have seen them on America's Got Talent. Charlotte, Templeton and Wilbur will be welcoming some new friends in their barn, and our llamas and alpacas are dressed and ready for the Costume party. Don't miss the sweet little goats in our new goat playground.

Harmony Free Fair - September 2 - September 5 Look who's turning 75 this year ! The Harmony Patriarch's Club is celebrating their 75th Labor Day Fair. Congratulations to Bella Carrier for creating the winning poster for this special year. It is outstanding !! (P.S. You can also purchase a t-shirt with her design on it.)

Clinton Lions Fair - September 7 - September 10 It's Christmas at the fair!! Look for all the Christmas themed entries in the Clinton Fair parade on Saturday, September 9th.. Starting at 10:00 AM this street parade is outstanding ! Put it on your calendar !!

Litchfield Fair - September 8 - September 10 Returning again this year is the award winning Wheeler's Wee Farmers. Our interactive learning center for children will be open to teach children of all ages about the origin of the many fruits and vegetables that grow in Maine . Learn about the hard work that goes into farming as well as the great rewards that can be achieved with what we do as farmers.

Oxford County Fair - September 13 - September 16 Mark your calendar to be at the Oxford County Fair on September 13th to learn the winners of the King Arthur Baking Contest. It's all about the Banana Cinnamon Bundt Cake or perhaps you would prefer the Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cookies. Deadline for entries was August 15th but the winners will be on display!

New Portland Lions Fair - September 15 - September 17 This fair truly is "Fun for the whole family". From enjoying the eel races and the frog races (bring your own frog) to the petting zoo, and then how about the Mud Run or perhaps the Truck Pull/Demolition Derby? Not to mention that their fair food is quite tasty!

Farmington Fair - September 17 - September 23 High Flyers Cornhole and RAVE X will both be flying high at the fair this year. Bags will fly at 2pm on Sunday for the cornhole tournament and RAVE X OUTER LIMITS FREESTYLE TOUR bikes will be flying on

Thursday evening at 7pm in front of the grandstand.

Common Ground Fair - September 22 - September 24 MOFGA will once again host hundreds of presentations covering a wide range of technical, practical and policy matters focusing on agriculture. Local, national and international organizations will be onsite at the fair emphasizing sustainable living and local economies , while highlighting organic agriculture ...plus the vendor menus of amazingly delicious foods will tempt everyone's palate.

Cumberland Fair - September 24 - September 30 Mark your calendars for Wednesday September 27th to watch the NEW International Ox Pull. Returning again to the Cumberland fairgrounds, having completed the first half of the competition (July 28th) at the Big Ex in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, Canada, teams will now compete in the Canadian Head Yoke vs. American Neck Yoke 3 foot Canadian style pull. Bring your whole family - this event will take your breath away !!

Fryeburg Fair October 1 - October 8 Maine's Blue Ribbon Classic returns to once again feature the best of farming traditions, exhibits, competitions and so much more. Make sure that you visit the Fryeburg Fair Farm Museum, and while you are there tasting some of the delicious foods cooked on the woodstove in Loretta's Kitchen, make time to congratulate the new curator, Erlon Jones. Following in the footsteps of his parents, who were the previous curators, Erlon is a treasure to have in the museum as his vast knowledge about Yankee agriculture (and especially each and every item in the museum) makes him a true treasure to have on site.

THE BIG E SEPTEMBER 15 - OCTOBER 1, 2023

The Eastern States Exposition is organized as a not-for-profit educational institution under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Its governing body is a volunteer Board of Trustees consisting of representatives from each of the six New England states. The State of Maine is represented by 24 regular trustees who, combined with representatives from all six of the New England states , provide valuable advocacy and build connections on behalf of Eastern States Exposition.

The Maine regular trustees are Judith Ballard, Seth Bradstreet, Elizabeth Bullard, Robert Cameron, Roderick Carr, James Dill, Karen Foster, Clark Granger, Robert Hammond, David Kent, Katherine Kugelman, Fredrick Lunt, Donald Marean, Norman Martin, Bill McFarland, Sawin Millett, Barry W. Norris, Jon Olson, Heidi Palmer, Robert Phillips, Robert Spear, Sherri Thornton, Lynwood Winslow & Robin Zinchuk. Maine is also represented by Honorary Trustees, Emeritus Trustees and Ex Officio Trustees.

MAINE DAY at The Big E is always celebrated on the first Saturday of the event (Saturday, September 16, 2023) and everyone is invited to come and explore the Maine Building and its extraordinary offerings. The theme for 2023 is REAL BIG.

REAL BIG
BIG RIDES. REAL THRILLS.
BIG ANIMALS. REAL TRADITION.
BIG FOOD. REAL DELICIOUS.
BIG EVERYTHING AT THE BIG E

REAL VALUE

IRELAND'S DINGLE PENINSULA SHOWCASE
The finest Irish crystal, jewelry, linens, pottery and gifts direct from Dingle! Sip your favorites at the Dingle Whiskey Bar. Music and more.

HALFWAY TO ST PATRICK'S DAY
Sponsored by Air Lingus
Wear your green as we celebrate throughout the grounds with Irish music dancing, contests and more.

CIRCUS SPECTACULAR: BEYOND BELIEF
An out of this world show! Daily at 1, 4, and 7pm.

COLLECTOR CAR LIVE
Sept. 17, Court of Honor Lawn.
New this year—Muscle Car Mania—View one-of-a-kind muscle cars on display 8am-5pm. Join us for a conversation with Mike Brisson, Wayne Carros and special guests from 12:30-2pm on the Court of Honor Stage, sponsored by MattressFirm.

ESE MUSEUM
Step into The Big E's exciting past with exhibits that include The Thrill of It All: History of Auto Thrill Shows at The Big E, The Story of Somerton Music Tent, and much more!

ROAMING RAILROAD
Take a ride on this trackless train and explore the excitement of The Big E.

SHOP THE OFFICIAL BIG E MERCHANDISE STORE

THE BIG E Avenue of States | Court of Honor Visitors Center East

IAFE 2023 CONVENTION & TRADE SHOW

NOVEMBER 26-19, 2023 SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

The 2023 Annual IAFE Conference will focus on FAIRS RISE - Reunite, Inspire, Support, Educate. Several of our Maine fair folks are planning to attend. If you have any questions or requests for them to research at the conference, please contact any of the MAAF board members.



MAAF FOUNDATION FROM HOPE RICKER

The MAAF Foundation is incorporated in the State of Maine as a non-profit and recognized as exempt from Federal Taxation under Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Service.

Mission Statement: The MAAF Foundation is organized to establish and support educational, charitable and literacy activities in the advancement and improvement of agriculture science, fairs, expositions and shows.

Officers and Board Members - President-Hope Ricker, Secretary-Sarah Perkins, Treasurer-Tom Foster; Board Members - Peter Connell, Sadee Mehuren

Funding Sources - MAAF Scholarship Fund transferred to MAAF Foundation Sale of 50/50 tickets and Auction proceeds at Conference; Individual/Corporate donations

In the future, it is the intent of the Foundation to write grants to secure funding for Ag Education and hopefully secure Corporate Donations. It is the hope of the Foundation to not only grant Scholarships to graduating Seniors, but also to grant Scholarships to Fair members to attend the IAFE Zone 1 Convention and related Ag education events. Work is continuing (slowly) to develop a LOGO, website and promotional materials for the foundation as well as updated applications for scholarships/grants.



MAINE AGRICULTURAL FAIRS 101 4H - YOUTH MARKET AUCTIONS

Welcome to a new section of our MAAF newsletter! Our focus for this issue is an event held in seven(7) Maine agricultural fairs throughout the summer. Although similar in title, each fair has their own special approach to the event.

4-H / Youth Market Auctions

What are these auctions? An opportunity for Maine young people to offer for sale, during a Maine agricultural fair, through an auction process, a variety of animals that they have raised. Some



auctions are exclusively for 4-H members, while others include youth through the age of 21 years old.

Where are these auctions held? On the fairgrounds. Day and time vary and are determined by each fair.

Who is the overall person in charge? Does every Maine ag fair offer a 4-H/Youth Market auction? (See list at the end)

What commodities are auctioned off? Beef, sheep, pigs, meat birds and laying hens.

Who is the auctioneer? Maine agricultural fairs are fortunate to have the support of two outstanding Maine auction houses.

Tilton's Auction of Corinth. Jeff Tilton continues to donate his services as auctioneer for several of the fair youth market auctions. He offers a folksy approach to the auction as he introduces each youth (and their animals) to the prospective buyers gathered around the ring.

Folsom Auctions of Raymond. Northern Maine Fair uses the services of father-and-son auctioneer team Dale and Matt Folsom. Based in Raymond, their company, Folsom Auctions, started more than 50 years ago in Aroostook County. Dale has been involved in the Baby Beef Auction for 40 plus years, and has only missed one auction since 1980. Folsom Auctions also donates the services of their auctioneers.

What are other expenses that this event could incur? Event publicity, Market auction judge, ribbons, award banners, buyer snacks/reception.

Who is responsible for the costs? Responsibility is covered by a combination of the individual fair/ youth fundraising/private donations. Each fair should have a partnership with the youth that allows for payment of all costs.

Who attends these events? Sellers/youth *personally* approach businesses, individuals, family and friends to attend and support their efforts. *Soliciting buyers begins early in the year and continues right up until the gavel falls. Lots of effort.

Who can bid on the animals ? Anyone who registers and receives a bid number.

How does a buyer learn about the animals up for auction prior to the event? Fairs offer an auction line-up information sheet that outlines what animals are being offered, the weight and who raised them (short bio), the cost incurred raising the animal and any future ag plans for the young person . A bio could include : My name is XXXX , and I have been involved with 4-H for X years. I attend/am a graduate of XX school and will be attending XX this fall to study Animal Science. My goals include learning more about raising and showing XX, and I plan to use the profits from my project to put towards buying feed for this coming winter and to save for my college.

How are the animals sold? With the exception of the poultry, all animals are sold by the pound. All poultry is sold by the bird.

Who receives the money for the animal ? ALL monies raised by the sale of the individual animal are presented to the youth who raised it. There is NO fee, NO commission, NO added expenses.

What should a prospective buyer bring to the auction? It varies by the fair - a chair, their friends and family, a positive attitude, a desire to support local youth working in agriculture, and your checkbook \$. Note: Often several buyers will decide to purchase a steer "together" and split the cost. Beef steers can weigh over 1,000 pounds, and the end bid may seem out of reach for a single buyer. However, preplanning with family/friends can result in the purchase of a high quality animal for a "budget friendly" price.

What are buyer gifts? Buyer gifts are a "thank you" from the seller to the buyer that show appreciation for offering the high bid on the animal. Each seller delivers a variety of items (often in a small tote or basket) to express their gratitude for the support shown.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

After I buy an auction animal, what are the next steps?

*Pay the event coordinator. Check with the youth owner about arrangements made for trucking to a slaughter house , and a previously set up date for slaughter and processing. * This process is referred to as “getting a slot” for the animal - most often taken care of by the event coordinator or youth. After paying the youth for the animal, there are additional costs to the buyer - slaughter and processing. Often the processor will walk the buyer through the process of choosing how to cut and wrap the animal. *Buyers can use their purchase as a business tax write-off .501(c)3. This is a non profit event.*

What is involved in bringing an animal to the auction?

Youth raise the animals, then show and sell them at auction at the fair. This process instills valuable life lessons. For example, the dedication it takes to feed and care for cattle, the pride of bringing the animals to the sale, and the financial costs and value returned when the animal sells. Participants learn about earning money, and many use what they earn for college or put some back into next year’s steer. “The skills these kids are learning stay with them,” said Lynwood Winslow, Northern Maine Fair president. “They are the agricultural leaders of tomorrow.”

Do some larger fairs limit the number of animals that are in the auction? If so, why?

Yes. Some Maine fairs with a larger local youth/4-H membership may choose to set a limit on the number of animals allowed in their auction. A reason for this is that should there be a limited number of buyers the animals towards the end of the line-up historically receive a lower bid. Limiting the number of animals is intended to “level the playing field”.



**SENSORY DAYS
SOMETHING TO CONSIDER**

Sensory days are created for adults and families of children, teenagers and young adults with disabilities including intellectual disabilities, autism, sensory processing disorders and other cognitive disabilities. Often the environment during Sensory Days will be a time that offers a reduction in loud sounds or announcements, fewer bright flashing lights and quiet break areas throughout your fairgrounds. These modifications are made to offer a more welcoming atmosphere for guests who may struggle with environmental triggers that are present in many of our fairs.

SENSORY DAY

WHEN: Monday, October 2, 2023 - 11AM to 9PM

WHAT: An opportunity for a more sensory sensitive experience to the Topsfield Fair for families who have family members with autism or sensory processing disorders.

- **VENDORS:** Will have no flashing lights, music, or announcements
- **KIDDIE LAND:** Will have no flashing lights, music, or announcements.
- **SOUND:** On stages and entertainment (Racing Pigs, Bike Stunt Show, Essex County Farmyard) will be lowered.
- **ANNOUNCEMENTS ON GROUNDS:** Limited and volume turned down.



IAFE ZONE 1 MEETING 2024 MAY 16-18, 2024 SPRINGFIELD, MA

The 2024 Zone 1 Meeting will tentatively be held
May 16-18 in Springfield, MA at the following property:
Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel, 1 Monarch Pl, Springfield, MA 01144

The 2025 Zone 1 Meeting will be co-sponsored by Maine & NH

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