

**81st ANNUAL CONVENTION
Missouri Association of Fairs & Festivals**

**MARGARITAVILLE IS A NON-SMOKING FACILITY
PLEASE OBSERVE THIS IN THE TRADE SHOW,
LOBBY AREA, AND ALL OTHER PUBLIC AREAS**

**CONVENTION NAME TAGS ARE REQUIRED FOR ENTRY
INTO ALL MEETING ROOMS, TRADE SHOW,
AND OTHER CONVENTION AREAS.**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026

1 pm MoFairs BOARD MEETING - Windgate 60/61 (6th Floor)
President Dr. Katie Siegel - Bonne County Fair

5 / 7 pm Convention registration open - Paradise Ballroom Foyer (6th Floor)
All convention registration packets will be available.
Name tags are required for all events.
Convention ribbons by Charles Doyle - *Fair Publishing House*

7 pm / 9 pm Early Bird Mixer - Vendors & Fairs - Windgate Hall (5th Floor) (NEW)
D.J. Dave Lewis & Trivia for Prizes
Pizza & Beer - Drink Coupon
Trade show hosted by Sam Huey - *Stoddard County Fair & Rayburn Snell - NEMO Fair*

Sponsored by

Associates and Fairs may pick up convention packets.

Friday, FEBRUARY 6, 2026

9 am / 6 pm General convention registration open -
Paradise Ballroom Foyer (6th Floor)
All convention registration packets will be available.
Name tags required for all events.
Convention ribbons by Charles Doyle - *Fair Publishing House*

8:30 am WARM-UP COFFEE & PASTRIES BREAK - Lobby (NEW)
Sponsored by

9:00 am Convention Welcome -
Windgate 62, 63, 64 (6th Floor)
by President Dr. Katie Siegel, Boone County Fair

9:00 am MoFairs CONVENTION OPENING SESSION -
Windgate 62, 63, 64 (6th Floor)
President Dr. Katie Siegel presiding over annual business meeting

10:00 am Carnival Operators meeting -
Windgate 62, 63, 64 (6th Floor)
Hosted by Jon Gifford - *Jones & Company Carnival / Missouri State Fire Marshall*
An open meeting with
Carnival Operators, Fairs, Festivals

10:00 am / 12:00 pm General Session - You Make a Difference NEW
Ian Hill - You Make A Difference

11 am / 12 noon MoFairs PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST -
Leeward 74, 75 (7th Floor)
Contest Coordinator Shala Reynolds *NEMO Fair*
Contest awards will be presented following the contest

12:15 pm PAST PRESIDENTS' MEETING - Windgate 60, 61
Hosted by Past President Mike Heflin - Washington County Fair

12:30 pm MoFairs PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST - Parasol 11 (7th Floor)
Open to the public
No one admitted after a speech begins.

1 pm MISSOURI STATE FAIR COMMISSION MEETING
Nautical Wheeler (7th Floor)
Hosted by Jason Moore - Missouri State Fair

1 pm Associates display and hospitality rooms open
Associate room numbers published in convention booklet
and posted by registration desk (6th Floor)
provided by *Tinsley's Amusements*

1 pm / 5 pm Convention Trade Show - Windgate Hall (5th Floor)
Hosted by Sam Huey & Rayburn Snell

1 pm / 5 pm silent auction open - Windgate Hall (5th Floor) **NEW**
Hosted by Dr. Katie Siegel - *Boone Co. Fair*
& Dan Colt - *Nodaway Co. Fair*
Bidding will conclude at 5 pm Saturday

1 pm VARIETY SHOWCASE - Windgate 62, 63, 64
Lights & Sound by G&R Productions

2:30 pm ICE CREAM BREAK - Trade Show Area
Sponsored by
Hosted by Stoddard County Fair

**3 pm MoFairs PUBLIC SPEAKING AWARD
& SPEECH PRESENTATION**
Presented in Windgate 62, 63, 64
Upon completion of Contest during Variety Showcase

3:30 -4:30pm Breakout Sessions

Aaron Owen, CEO, Ozark Empire Fair

Session: "Beyond the Fair: Maximizing Your Fairgrounds Year-Round"

Aaron Owen was named CEO in 2022 of the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds and Event Center in Springfield, MO after being the General Manager of Ozark Empire Fairgrounds and Event Center since June of 2012. Grew up in the Dairy business in 4-H and FFA. Held every office in his FFA Chapter. Received State Farmer Degree and American Farmer Degree.

Aaron owns and operates a purebred Simmental and Angus cow calf beef cattle operation with his family. Aaron was on the American Simmental National Board, one year as their publication Chairmen and One year as their chairmen. Aaron is currently serving on the American Simmental Foundation Board, Springfield Sports Commission Board

Session Incorporating Wine at Your Fair 🍷

Jim Anderson, Executive Director of the Missouri Wine & Grape Board
He shares insights on bringing wine experiences to your fairgrounds! With over 25 years leading Missouri's wine industry—now home to 130 + wineries—Jim will explore how fairs can enhance agritourism, engage visitors, and boost local economic impact.

5 pm Convention registration, Trade Show and Silent Auction closes for day

5:30 pm Cocktail Hour For Purchased Tables - Cash Bar

Paradise B & C (6th Floor)

MUST HAVE A TICKET FOR BANQUET

6 pm MoFairs SHOWCASE BANQUET - Paradise B & C (6th Floor)
Sponsored by
Hosted by MoFairs President Dr. Katie Siegel Bonne County Fair

6:25 pm Associate members attending banquet may have introductions
from the stage promoting their product or service.

7 pm MoFairs BENEFIT AUCTION
with Auctioneer Byron Wheeler --Wheeler Livestock Auction

7:45 pm Entertainment Showcase of TALENT
*Emcee: Vincent Shelby - MoFairs
*Producers: Delisa Spurgeon – Stagewest Entertainment
Dan Smith – Dan Smith Agency
Frank Moyer – AME Inc.
* Production Sound, Lights, and Staging
Rick Braggs – MB Systems
* Video Screen – Bill Wyatt – Shawnee LED Services
* Video Production - Austin Heflin - MoFairs

SCHEDULED TO APPEAR

10 pm The showcase acts and entertainers will be available in their
Agents' and Associate Hospitality Rooms for convention attendees
to meet and greet.

10 pm 'OPEN MIC' - Windgate 62, 63, 64
Lights & Sound by G&R Productions
Open to Any Act that is a Registered Associate in the Trade Show
or represented by a Registered Associate. First come, first serve basis.
\$10 fee for a 15 minute spot. Open Mic until 12 midnight.
Sign-up with Delisa Spurgeon, Stagewest Entertainment

Saturday, FEBRUARY 7, 2026

8 :30 am WARM-UP COFFEE BREAK - Lobby
Sponsored by

9 am / 12 pm Convention registration - Paradise Ballroom Foyer (6th Floor)

9 am / 10 am MoFairs associate business session -
Windgate 62, 63, 64 (6th Floor)
Session hosted by: DeLisa Spurgeon - Associate Director
Kyle Palmer - *Artists & Attractions*
Jon Gifford - *Jones and Company Carnival*
Dan Smith - Dan Smith Agency

9:00 / 9:45 am MoFairs Educational Sessions
Hosted by Judi Baldwin, Dan Colt, Sam Huey
6 individual sessions presented by industry peers.
50 minute sessions of various topics will be presented.

Finding & Keeping Your Midway Provider
Tim Casper & Cody Casper - PBJ Happy Days; Room 74-75

Session: I've Got a Question, Do You Have An Answer? A Round Table Discussion

Bryan K. Schulz IFMG, CFE General Manager Kansas State Fair

I've Got a Question, Do You Have an Answer? is an interactive round-table discussion designed to connect professionals through open conversation, shared experiences, and collective problem-solving. This session invites participants to bring their most pressing questions—big or small—related to operations, leadership, event management, policy, or daily challenges in the Fair industry.

Rather than a traditional presentation, this format encourages dynamic dialogue among peers. Attendees will exchange ideas, compare approaches, and explore real-world solutions together. Whether you're seeking advice, offering expertise, or simply listening and learning, this session provides a collaborative environment where every voice contributes to the discussion.

Join us for a lively, engaging conversation where curiosity is encouraged, challenges are tackled from multiple perspectives, and everyone walks away with practical insights they can apply immediately.

10:00 / 10:45 am MoFairs Educational Sessions

Session: "Beyond Basic Rain Insurance: Weather coverage options other than the traditional rain insurance".

Robert Holmes - *Spectrum Weather Insurance*;

Description: During this session, we will discuss relatively new weather insurance options that may be a better choice for your fair or event than the traditional rain insurance. We will present options for heat index and adverse weather, as well as coverage for event cancellation/curtailment. If you have been purchasing the same coverage year after year, then this session will enlighten you on other, and perhaps better, weather coverage options.

Session: "Promoting Your Fair the Right Way: Social Media Dos and Don'ts"

Kari Mergen, Marketing Director, Missouri State Fair

Cierra Monsees, Public Relations Specialist, Missouri State Fair

Kari Mergen serves as the Marketing Director for the Missouri State Fair, where she oversees strategic planning, creative development, media relations, advertising, and social media engagement. A former high school English and journalism teacher, Kari brings an educator's perspective to fair marketing—combining storytelling, community connection, and innovation to promote Missouri's largest annual event. With more than a decade of experience leading the Fair's marketing efforts, she is passionate about helping local fairs strengthen their outreach and connect authentically with their audiences.

Cierra Monsees serves as the Public Relations Specialist for the Missouri State Fair, where she assists with social media, content creation, event planning, graphic design, website oversight and media/sponsor relations. Cierra celebrated her tenth Fair at the 2025 Missouri State Fair, bringing firsthand knowledge about what it takes to communicate effectively with diverse audiences during the Fair and off-season. Her experience has given her a deep understanding of the "do's and don'ts" of Fair promotion in the ever-evolving world of social media. Cierra loves sharing her insights and real-world strategies with other Fairs that drive engagement and excitement for the Fair year after year.

Session: Plays That Pay: The Proven Fair Success Playbook

Scott Hillyer, CEO of Fairs.com, the fastest-growing marketing and ticketing company in the fair industry.

A data-driven look at what really fuels fair success. With over 150 fairs and fairground events on the platform, Fairs.com has gathered insights from ticketing transactions, social media marketing performance, and direct customer surveys. This session will dig into the questions fair leaders ask most often: What really draws the crowds in? How do we stretch our marketing budget in smart ways? How can we get the most out of limited staff and resources? Backed by real data and experience serving fairs nationwide, Scott will share practical strategies that turn analytics into actionable growth.

11:30 am CONVENTION REGISTRATION CLOSSES

11:45 am MoFairs Showcase lunch - Paradise B & C (6th Floor)
Sponsored by

12:15 pm IAFE UPDATES - Bryan Schulz IAFE Zone 5 President

12:15 pm PAST PRESIDENTS' SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION
Past Presidents
Judy Baldwin, El Dorado Springs Picnic
& Julian Bub, Washington County Fair
Presenting the 2025 Scholarship Winner

12:25 pm Entertainment Showcase OF TALENT

*Emcee: Vincent Shelby
*Producers: Delisa Spurgeon – Stagewest Entertainment
Dan Smith – Dan Smith Agency
Frank Moyer – AME Inc.
*Production Sound, Lights, and Staging
Rick Braggs – MB Systems
*Video Screen – Bill Wyatt – Shawnee LED Services
*Video Production – Austin Heflin - MoFairs

SCHEDULED TO APPEAR

1:30pm / 5 pm MoFairs silent auction opens - Windgate Hall (5th Floor) **NEW**
Hosted by Dr. Katie Siegel & Dan Colt
Bidding will conclude at 5 pm
Benefit auction items will be displayed as well.

1 pm Associates display and hospitality rooms open
Associate room numbers listed in convention booklet and on
lobby board provided by *Tinsley's Amusements*

1 pm / 5 pm MoFairs Convention Trade Show
Windgate Hall (5th Floor)
Hosted by Rayburn Snell & Sam Huey

1:30 pm / 2:30 pm SO WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM !!! - Parasol II (7th Floor)
An expert panel will help you problem solve
Fairs and Festivals of all sizes will come together to share successes, discuss challenges, and seek solutions in an open Q & A
session.

1:30 pm VARIETY SHOWCASE - Windgate 62, 63, 64
Lights & Sound by G&R Productions

SCHEDULED TO APPEAR

2:30 pm MoFairs Board meeting - Windgate 60, 61 (6th Floor)

2:30 pm ICE CREAM BREAK - Trade Show Area
Sponsored by
Hosted by Stoddard County Fair

4 pm / 5 pm Wine & Cheese Reception - Trade Show Area
Sponsored by Missouri Wines & Missouri State Fair

5 pm MoFairs Silent Auction closes
Winning bids will be announced by Dr. Katie Siegel & Dan Colt

5-6 pm Cocktail Hour for Purchased Tables

6 pm MoFairs Showcase Banquet - Paradise B & C (6th Floor)
Sponsored by

Hosted by MoFairs President Dr.Katie Siegel

7 pm MoFairs Benefit Auction
Byron Wheeler- Auctioneer

7:45 pm Entertainment Showcase of Talent
* Emcee: Vincent Shelby
*Producers: Delisa Spurgeon – Stagewest Entertainment
Dan Smith – Dan Smith Agency
Frank Moyer – AME Inc.
*Production Sound, Lights, and Staging
Rick Braggs– MB Systems
* Video Screen – Bill Wyatt – Shawnee LED Services
* Video Production - Austin Heflin - MoFairs

SCHEDULED TO APPEAR

10 pm Entertainer meet & greets in various Agents' hospitality rooms

10 pm 'OPEN MIC' - Windgate 62, 63, 64
Lights & Sound by G&R Productions
Open to Any Act that is a Registered Associate in the Trade Show
or represented by a Registered Associate. First come, first serve basis.
\$10 fee for a 15 minute spot. Open Mic until 12 midnight.
Sign-up with Delisa Spurgeon, Stagewest Entertainment

Sunday, FEBRUARY 8, 2026

8:30 am MoFairs Convention Friendship Breakfast
- Paradise B & C (6th Floor)

Sponsored by

Hosted by your incoming MoFairs President

9:30 am MORNING ENTERTAINMENT

MUSIC BINGO

DRAWINGS & Adjourn

**Thank You for Attending the 81th Annual
Missouri Fairs & Festivals Convention**

Good Luck This Year! • We're Here To Help!