

**WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FAIRS (WAF) ANNUAL CONVENTION SCHEDULE  
AS OF DECEMBER 26, 2023**

**WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FAIRS  
ANNUAL CONVENTION  
JANUARY 7-10, 2024  
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 7, 2024**

**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.

**4:45-5:15 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  
CHIT CHAT HOUR**  
*Upper Dells*

Looking for a space to connect with fellow fair members and network, here is the spot. No structured meeting, just a room to socialize.

**5:30-6:30 PM SESSION #3  
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS INITIATIVE**  
*Laguna*

All those under age 40 are invited to join a fun interactive networking session with fellow peers.

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**5:30-6:30 PM SESSION #4  
BRIGHT IDEAS WITH DEB GEGARE  
*Riverview South***  
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.

**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 8, 2024**

**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 #5  
WHAT'S NEW IN 4H?  
*Riverview South***  
Join a conversation with Extension to learn about new initiatives in 4-H and how Fairs provide an important opportunity for 4-H members to realize their full potential. Jessica Jens, WI 4-H State Program Leader, and Jason Hausler, Extension's Liaison to the WI Association of Fairs, will be on hand to share information and engage in conversation.

**8:30-9:30 AM SESSION #6  
RE-THINK EVERYTHING  
*Grand Ballroom***  
This presentation may change your mind on everything you have ever done, from marketing, sponsorships, entertainment buying, venue layout, and partnerships. What if every change resulted in more income, less expense and more value for your clients. Can you imagine if every solution to every problem resulted in more revenue by simply fixing the problem. This presentation will challenge you to look at things through a different lens and to look at it from another angle and discover buried treasures right beneath our noses. Presented by Kyle Palmer, Artists and Attractions.

**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.

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**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

Welcome by WI Secretary of Agriculture—Randy Romanski

IAFE Update by Chair, Jo Reynolds

Associate of the Year Presentation

Keynote Speaker Marcy Heim

*CULTIVATING JOY AND GENEROSITY! SHINE ON!*

*Joy and generosity will fuel your fair and is even more critical in Cultivating the Next Century. Marcy Heim, CEO, The Artful Asker, lives to inspire generosity and transformation. For 30+ years, Marcy has coached leadership teams, boards, and fundraisers with tools to increase major giving, volunteer engagement, and joy. You will sing! You will have fun! You will learn how to grab onto your passion.*

**12:30-1:30 PM SESSION #7**

**MENT-A-MINUTE**

***Upper Dells***

WAF will have Mentors, (those who have been in the fair industry for years), available to share their knowledge with Mentees (those that have been in the industry for less than 5 years), in a speed-dating format. This is a great networking opportunity for all!

**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 then to offset convention expenses to keep your registration fees low.

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**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)*

- ◆ Wire and Nail  
(ACA Music & Entertainment)
- ◆ John Cassidy Comedy Magic  
(Artists & Attractions)
- ◆ VIDEO-Dangerous Feats of Comedy  
(Artists & Attractions)
- ◆ Feudin' Hillbillies  
(Variety Attractions)
- ◆ VIDEO-HypnoFX with Jerry Frasier  
(G.L. Berg Entertainment)
- ◆ Jake Hoot  
(Klein's Entertainment)
- ◆ 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 9, 2024**

**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

**8:00-9:00 AM SESSION #8**  
**DATCP AG UPDATE**  
***Riverview South***  
Join Dr. Konkle, WI DATCP Veterinarian, for an update on Animal Health Update, Terminals shows, etc.

**9:30-10:30 AM SESSION #9**  
**FAMILY STAGE SHOWCASE OF ENTERTAINMENT**  
***Grand Ballroom***  
Looking for family stage acts for your fair? Brad Weston, The Dollipops and Lew-E's Comedy Circus to Showcase. Acts selected were part of the Showcase Application process.

**9:30-10:30 AM SESSION #10**  
**AG NETWORKING**  
***Riverview South***  
Discussion on all things Ag at your fair. Where are you finding judges, what type of show guidelines does your fair have in place, and anything else agricultural.

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- 9:30-10:30 AM SESSION #11**  
**BUILDING STRONG FAIR RELATIONSHIPS**  
*Upper Dells*  
Do you have good relationships with vendors, exhibitors, concessionaires, and carnivals? They are all valuable assets to our fair and building good relationships are crucial to your fairs success. Join Jo Reynolds, CFE, Warrens County Fair and the IAFE Chair, as she shares ways we can be good partners in our industry thus creating a strong fair foundation for years to come.
- 10:30-11:00 AM COFFEE BREAK**  
*Grand Ballroom Lobby*
- 10:30-11:00 AM ASSOCIATE MEMBER MEETING**  
*Ballrooms A-I*  
All Associate Members are invited to attend a short member meeting to provide feedback on the convention.
- 11:00AM-12:00 PM SESSION #12**  
**ASK FOR ANYTHING ARTFULLY! WHAT YOU SAY TO GET AN INSPIRED "YES"**  
*Grand Ballroom*  
Celebrating traditions and cultivating beneficial partnerships may lead to gifts of time, money, leadership, and talent. But you have to ASK! What if you had a 3-sentence recipe to make an ask? What EXACTLY do you say? Get crystal CLEAR on how to write and speak an ask - for anything! You may rock at creating traditions and relationships, but the gifts of service and support come from a clear ask confidently delivered. Learn how to do it with Marcy Heim.
- 12:00-1:00 PM BOOK SIGNING**  
*Grand Ballroom*  
Marcie Heim will be available to sell and sign books following her presentation.
- 12:00-1:00 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.
- 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**

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**1:00-2:00 PM SESSION #13: WI DATCP FAIRS COORDINATOR UPDATE**

***Upper Dells***

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

**2:00-4:00 PM DATCP WITH DEB GEGARE**

**ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS**

***Aztec***

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

**3:00-4:00 PM SESSION #14  
NETWORKING SESSION**

***Upper Dells***

Have a hot topic we haven't yet covered in workshops? Join us for an open mic networking session with your questions for fellow members.

**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.

**3:30-4:30 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 the 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)*

- ◆ Adam Calvert Music  
(Adam Cavert Music)
- ◆ VIDEO-HypnoFX with Jerry Frasier  
(G.L. Berg Entertainment)
- ◆ Classic Alice  
(ACA Music & Entertainment)
- ◆ Minor Mischief  
(G.L. Berg Entertainment)
- ◆ The Dweebs  
(The Dweebs)
- ◆ VIDEO-Dangerous Feats of Comedy  
(Artists & Attractions)
- ◆ Eli Alger & Faster Horses

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(Artists & 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.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024**

**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
- America the Beautiful  
Sharlene Swedlund
- President's Report  
President, Mary Check
- Roll Call of Fairs/Financial Report  
Exe Director, Jayme Buttke, CFE
- Wisconsin State Fair Report  
Shari Black, CFE, CEO/Exec Director
- WI DATCP Report of 2023 Fairs  
Debbie Gegare, Fairs Coordinator
- Zone 4 Update, Scott Kozelka
- Committee Reports by Chairperson
  - Fairest of the Fairs  
Tonya Dvorak &  
Sharlene Swedlund
  - Auction – Chris Engebretsen
  - Audit – Bill Marohl
  - Credentials – Liz Cook
  - Ed/Spec Projects – Richelle Kastenson
  - Legislative – Jessica Klumpp, CFE
  - Premium – Mary Check
  - Resolutions/Award– Denise Zirbel
  - Showcase – Jaime Kwiatkowski, CFE
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment
- Photo & Media Winners Announced
- Bob William Ag Fair Grants Winners Announced

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**10:30-11:30 AM DISTRICT MEETINGS**

District 1 – *Grand Ballroom*  
Dale Christiansen & Rhonda Klement  
District 2—*Upper Dells*  
Jackie Kumm & Linda Degner  
District 3—*Riverview South*  
Amy Olson & Liz Cook  
District 4—*Riverview North*  
Amy Listle & Mary Check

**10:30-11:30 AM SESSION #15: FAIREST COORDINATORS**

***Laguna***  
Q&A with the WAF Fairest Committee and local fairest coordinators.

**12:00-1:00 PM SESSION #16**

**501(c)3 FOR DUMMIES  
(the FAIR'S, FOUNDATIONS & FRIENDS OF THE FAIRS edition)  
*Riverview South***

Do you need a "Foundation", a "Friend of the Fair" Organization or a Corporation for your Fair? Come and learn about how to create documents for your corporation: a Mission Statement, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Exhibits. Learn the role of each type of document and how it plays in defining your corporation.

We will cover filling out the paperwork (online forms) for the State of Wisconsin and the IRS, what to watch out for, what order items should be submitted, and how long the process will take. It's a big topic to discuss in a short amount of time, so have your questions ready and we can all learn together.

**12:00-1:00 PM SESSION #17  
NIFTY & THRIFTY FOR UNDER 50  
*Riverview North***

No budget, no problem. Join Jill Albanese, WSF, and Linda Degner, Washburn County, Fair for this hands-on workshop that is the last stop for amazing displays.

**12:00-1:00 PM SESSION #18  
CARNIVAL NETWORKING  
*Grand Ballroom***

This session will allow fairs to network and ask Shari Black, CEO, WI State Fair, questions about the carnival industry. The Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA), is a trade organization for rides, games and food within the carnival industry, of which Shari is a Board Member. Shari has over 25 years of experience working with both small and large carnivals and she will touch on how fairs can help lobby with OABA on labor issues, share ideas on setting deadlines for marketing, discuss trends she sees and discuss anything else carnival driven.

**12:45-1:00 PM REFRESHMENT BREAK  
*Grand Lobby*  
Cookies**



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**1:15-2:45 PM SESSION #19**

**YOUR BOARD DOES WHAT AND HOW DO YOU DO THAT!?!?!?**

***Grand Ballroom***

Learn how Fairs are structured and the differences between grounds ownership, insurance, staffing, budgeting and more! We will start as a larger group and then break into different segments to deep dive into the topics you want to learn about. Presented by WAF Board of Directors.

**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 2024 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.

**Please mark your calendars to join us  
January 5-8, 2025  
for our next convention here at the Chula Vista Resort.**