



Illinois
Association
of
Agricultural
Fairs

December 2022

TentTalk

'Let's Have Fun' Is Convention Theme

Fairs are all about having fun and so is the 2023 IAAF Annual Convention, Jan. 20-22 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield.

We may not be able to guarantee mild weather, but we can guarantee, if you come, you will renew friendships, learn something new to have a better fair and come away with a renewed vision for making your fair the best. We also guarantee you'll have some fun playing games and winning a few prizes.

It all starts a networking opportunity at the preconvention "Let's Have Fun" hospitality event on Thursday evening. Then you will be challenged at the Friday afternoon "Let's Get Acquainted" with a special guest speaker, panel Q and A session on changes to help make your fair more successful and insights into what others did to make their fair more successful.

The Trade Show will open with free beer and popcorn on Friday afternoon at 3 p.m. There will be a full display by vendors with lots of new products and services being offered. Don't forget to visit those with hospitality rooms in the Holiday Inn Express as well as those throughout the Crowne Plaza.

You won't want to miss our Keynote convention speaker, Philip Nelson, for the Saturday morning breakfast and program. We will honor a new class of "Friends of Illinois County Fairs."

Philip lives in Seneca, Illinois and is a farmer, speaker, entrepreneur, father, husband and long-time fair participant. He served as Illinois Director of Agriculture and presi-



Phillip Nelson is keynote speaker on Saturday morning.

dent of the Illinois Farm Bureau. His topic is "How to Navigate Change in this Changing Environment." Nelson will be speaking at the Saturday morning breakfast. There is still time to order tickets if you haven't yet.

Here are a few of Philip's thoughts: "I started showing as a kid. Our home fair was the LaSalle County 4-H Show. That's where I learned discipline and how to take care of animals. Now, my kids are doing the same. My parents installed the work ethic in our dairy farm. County fairs were our vacation. I have a lot of fond memories of county fairs."

When he joins us for the breakfast session on January 21 at the IAAF Convention, he will share with you some insights into the challenges

that we must rise up to meet for the future, but also the opportunities before us that may not happen again for a generation or more.

All fair secretaries and treasurers will benefit from an opportunity to learn from Jennette Watkins and Tim Norman with the Illinois Department of Agriculture Bureau of County Fairs. They will offer suggestions on how to make your jobs (and theirs) easier. The session will be held following the Saturday morning breakfast.

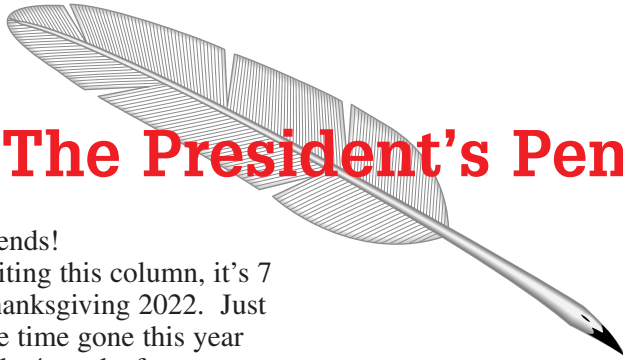
The popular Friday evening Showcase of fair entertainment will feature a great lineup of acts along with snacks, Prairie Farms Ice Cream and Illinois wine, courtesy of Tom & Pam Schahrer.

The Queen Pageant and Talent Contest both have great participation this year. Some 73 county fair queens will be vying to be crowned Miss Illinois County Fair on Sunday evening. The Talent Contest features junior and senior county fair winners on Saturday afternoon. Both events showcase some of Illinois' finest young talent.

Plan to have a Breakfast Sandwich on Sunday morning, courtesy of A Fantasy Amusements. You can enjoy this while participating in one of the many Roundtable discussions, sponsored by Edwards Marketing and Grandstand Entertainment. There will be 8 different topics to help you improve, market and have a successful fair in 2023.

Don't forget to attend the annual business meeting on Sunday at 11 a.m. Our big finale will be the queen pageant finals Sunday evening.

The President's Pen



Hello fair friends!

As I'm writing this column, it's 7 days until Thanksgiving 2022. Just where has the time gone this year and we're only 4 weeks from Christmas!

We are planning a great IAAF Convention for you in Springfield, January 20th – 22nd, 2023. The theme of the convention is "Let's have Fun". It will be like no other convention that we've had upping our game and do some things differently in 2023 and we hope that you'll be as excited as we are to have been planning it!

For those of you attending early and arriving on Thursday, January 19th, we have a get acquainted gathering that evening with food and drinks. The 3 Zones and the Pageant Directors put on a great evening and we all have a lot of great conversations on the 12th floor of the Crowne Plaza!

Friday at 1:30pm will begin our talks with a speaker and other discussions on what your fairs are doing then the trade show will open that afternoon at 3pm.

Saturday morning will begin with breakfast and our main speaker, Phillip Nelson, former IL Farm Bureau President, FFA State Officer, farmer and overall good guy, so be sure to get tickets in advance for that! The trade show is also having something new and the Sunday morning roundtables will be having some first-time topics. Friday night Showcasing acts are coming in strong with 2 stages! Prairie Farms Ice Cream will be on hand that night and some other surprises!

We'll then finish the weekend with the Queen Pageant prelims on Saturday afternoon and evening and the Queen Pageant Finals on Sunday afternoon and evening and crown the new IL State Fair Queen. 73 young ladies will be representing their counties for the crown. Good



Jill Hardesty

She has been such an intricate part of the state pageant for 13 years. Saturday night after the queen prelims, we'll have a reception for her in the lobby. Thank you Cathy, for a job well done. It's been a pleasure working with you!

As for myself, I simply cannot wait for IAAF Convention weekend! It's one of the most favorite times of the year for all of our fairs in Illinois. Please make sure you reserve your weekend reservations in and bring all of your Fairboard members. Everyone will walk away learning something that they can take back with them. That's what the convention is for!

Be sure and check out our new IAAF website (www.illinoiscounty-fairs.org). We've been working on updating and giving it a new look.

I wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

President

luck to all of you! Illinois County Fairs love their queens!

As you may have heard, our State Queen Director, Cathy Redshaw is stepping down after the pageant.

Dates to Remember

- **F & E Reports** due to IDOA by December 31
- **IAAF Convention, Springfield, IL**
Crowne Plaza January 20-22, 2023
- **Zone 5, Crown Plaza Springfield, Illinois**
March 3-5, 2023
- **Illinois State Fair**
August 10-20, 2022
- **County Fair Day**
August 11, 2023

Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs

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www.IllinoisCountyFairs.org

iaafoffice@illinoiscountyfairs.org

IAAF Office
71 West Fairview Lane
Springfield, IL 62711
815-692-2400



Queen Addisyn shows off the Brandt race car at the Illinois Sae Fair.

Illinois Will Host Zone 5

By Jill Hardesty
IAAF State President

In March 2023, Illinois will be the host of the Zone 5 meeting that is being scheduled for March 3-5, 2023 in Springfield, IL at the Crowne Plaza.

Stay tuned for more information. If you've never gone before, please consider doing so. There's so much to learn and new friends to make. We'll need everyone's help in planning for the meeting and showing our Illinois hospitality!

If you'd like to help us or have any ideas of table topics, fun or sightseeing in Springfield that we need to show off, please let any of the IAAF Board members know!

Busy '23 Legislative Season Is Expected

by Bridget Dougherty
IAAF Legislative Consultant

Hello IAAF Members! Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to everyone!

A new General Assembly will be sworn in on January 11, 2023 and we are looking forward to an exciting and busy legislative season.

Department of Agriculture Administrative Rule Change in Effect: IAAF worked with the Illinois Department of Agriculture to change a provision in the Department's administrative rules to benefit fairs. The requirement that rehabilitation reports and Declarations of Intent submitted to the Department be notarized has been removed. You no longer need to have a notary sign these documents.

General Election Results: Governor JB Pritzker was reelected to a second term as Illinois' Governor. In the Illinois House of Representatives, the Democrats gained a number of seats. House

Republican Leader Jim Durkin announced just after the election that he would not run for the leadership position again, and Representative Tony McCombie (R-Savannah) was elected as House Republican Leader. She will be the first woman to head the House Republican Caucus.

Also in news about the Illinois House, Representative Tim Butler (R-Springfield) announced his retirement. Representative Butler has been a friend of the fairs and we wish him well in his future endeavors.

In the Senate, Republican Leader Dan McConchie was challenged for his leadership position and was defeated by Senator John Curran (R-Downer's Grove).

Final Week of Veto Session and Lame Duck Session: The legislature will return for the final week of the 2022 Veto Session on November 29. We expect some legislative activity around the SAFE-T Act prior to it becoming law on January 1, 2023. The Act makes changes to certain criminal law provisions, including

the elimination of cash bail in Illinois, and it became an issue in the last election. We expect to see some language to clarify provisions pertaining to pre-trial release of persons charged with certain crimes.

The "lame duck" session is scheduled to convene on January 4, 2023. The term "lame duck" refers to those members who are not returning to the new General Assembly but can still vote on legislation before their term is up and the new General Assembly is sworn in.

Legislative Meet and Greet in Springfield: We are planning a legislative reception in Springfield during the spring. We will provide more information when the spring legisla-

Help Support IAAF Advocacy Fund

Please help support our Advocacy Fund to continue our legislative efforts. Checks of any amount can be sent to the IAAF at 71 W. Fair-view Lane, Springfield,

Schedule of Events for 2023 IAAF Convention

“Let’s Have Fun”

112th Annual Convention

Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs
Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn Express
Springfield Illinois

Schedule of Events for 2023 Convention

All events open only to registered guests with a convention badge.

Thursday, January 19, 2023

- 8:30-11 AM Queen Registration—*Plaza Lobby*
1-5:00 PM Registration Desk Open
1:00 PM Queen Pageant Rehearsal—*Ballroom*
4-6:00 PM Carnival Amusement Safety Board Mtg. — *Wintergarden, 14th floor*
8-11 PM “Let’s Have Fun” Pre-convention hospitality and fun—*Capital View 12th floor*
Sponsored by the Northern, Central and Southern Zones and the Miss Illinois County Fair Pageant Crew.

Friday, January 20, 2023

- 8:30 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal – *Ballroom*
8:00 AM Registration Counter Opens — *Plaza Lobby*
10:00 AM IAAF Board Meeting — *Lincoln Board Room*

1:30 PM **“Keeping Fun in Your Fair”**
Special Guest Speaker
“What did your fair do differently in 2022?”
Moderated by Bill Jennings, IAAF Director
— Plaza FG — 1st Floor

- 3:00 PM **Trade Show opens with a reception.**
Skinners Amusements hosting
— *Plaza A-E*
6:00 PM Trade Show closes for the day
4:00 PM Fairs and Exposition Fund Meeting
— *Capital VI - 3rd floor*
— *Jeannette Watkins, IDOA*
5:30 PM Audit Committee Meeting
— *Turquoise—2nd floor*

7:30 PM **Showcasing—Plaza H-J**
Drinks and Snacks Sponsored by
Burnham & Flower Insurance,
Illinois Wine by Tom & Pam
Schahrer, Ice Cream by Prairie Farms

MC: Kent Casson of Central
Illinois Farm Network.

Sound checks begin at 1:30 p.m.

Associates who have hospitality rooms may be hosting during other hours than those listed for the trade show.

Saturday, January 21, 2023

- 7:00 AM Registration Desk Opens—*Plaza Lobby*
8:30 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal—*Ballroom*
11:00 AM Trade Show & Associate Rooms open — *Plaza A-E*
1:00 PM Afternoon Queen Pageant Preliminaries—*Ballroom*
1:30 PM Jr. Talent Competition—*Plaza H-J*
2:00 PM Zone Officers Meeting—*Capital View, 12th floor*
2:45 PM Past Presidents Meeting—*Capital View, 12 floor*
4:30 PM Trade Show closes
5:15 PM Past State Queen Dinner—*Plaza F&G*
6:00 PM Sr. Talent Competition—*Plaza H-J*
6:00 PM Catholic Mass
— *Winter Garden, 14th floor*

- 7:00 PM Evening Queen Pageant Preliminaries — *Ballroom*
7:30 PM Registration Desk Closes

7:30 AM “The Eye Opening Breakfast” doors open. — *Plaza F&G*
Tickets Required
Sponsored by Luehrs Ideal Rides and Skinners Amusements
Special door prize for breakfast participants — \$50 Cash

7:45 AM **Breakfast**
Opening remarks:
IAAF President Jill Hardesty
Pledge of Allegiance
Color Guard by Springfield Boy Scout Troops
Invocation: Bill Redshaw

8:15 AM **All non ticket fair members and associates are welcome to join the meeting after breakfast.**

- 8:30 AM Welcome & committee appointments: Jill Hardesty, IAAF President
8:45 AM Presentation of “Friend of Illinois County Fair” Awards, Ron Meyer Drawing for “Early Bird” door prize
9:00 AM Remarks: Illinois Department of Agriculture
9:30 AM **Philip Nelsson Keynote Speaker,** presented by Luehrs Ideal Rides.
10:30 AM **Drawing**—All door prize winners must be present to win at the time of each drawing.
10:45 AM Secretaries and Treasurers Meeting — *Jeannette Watkins, IDOA—Plaza F&G*
Please visit the associate member rooms or trade show booths.

9:00 PM Reception for Cathy Redshaw; retiring Pageant Director

Associates who have hospitality rooms may host during other hours than those listed for the trade show.

Sunday, January 22, 2023

- 8:15 AM Protestant Worship - Bill Redshaw and Sharon Alderks — *Winter Garden-14th floor*
9:00 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal—*Ballroom*
8:50 AM Enjoy a Breakfast Sandwich and Coffee — *sponsored by A Fantasy Amusements*
8:30 AM Egyptian Colt Stakes — *Rosewood Dining Room*
9:00 AM Registration Desk Opens—*Plaza Lobby*
9:30 AM Queen Devotional & Farewell Luncheon for Retiring Queen, Abby Foster — *Plaza H-J, ticket required*

8:50 AM Enjoy a Breakfast Sandwich & Coffee — *sponsored by A Fantasy Amusements*

Convene for Round Tables—*Plaza F-G*
Sponsored by Edwards Marketing & Grandstand Concerts
— Moderated by Jill Hardesty & Dave Hake

- 9:15 AM Roundtables: First Session
• Grant Writing 101 — Mary Liz Wright
• Ideas for Sponsorship — Boone County Fair
• Offseason Rental — Doug Telford
• Weather Insurance — Robert Holmes
• Marketing Your Fair — Leon Edwards
• Best Practices for Grandstand Concerts — Casey Blakely
• Parliamentary Procedure — Nick Cotter
• Livestock Meeting — Tom Moore
10:00 AM Roundtables: Second Session (Same Agenda as First Session)
11:00 AM Annual IAAF Business Meeting — *Plaza F-G*

Please Register for Door Prizes
A Crowne Plaza Package for the 2023 IAAF Convention will be awarded.

Welcome - Jill Hardesty, IAAF President
Minutes
Introduction of Directors

Committee Reports:

- Secretary-Treasurer report - Charlyn Fargo Ware
- Audit Committee report - Gary Mielke
- Grievance Committee - Tom Moore
- Advocacy Report - Bridget Dougherty
- Legislative Committee - Bill Jennings

Old Business

Drawing for prizes donated by Swear Amusements and other prizes.
All door-prize winners must be present to win.

- 11:30 AM Queen Devotional & Farewell Luncheon—*Plaza H-J - ticket required*
4:00 PM Doors Open for Banquet—*Plaza A-J*
5:00 PM Banquet Served
6:30 PM Queen Pageant Finals — *Ballroom*
9:30 PM Reception for the new Queen — *Lobby and Rosewood Dining Room*

Monday, January 23, 2023

- 8:00 AM IAAF Directors And Spouses Breakfast—*Ruby Room*
9:00 AM IAAF Directors Meeting—*Ruby Room*

History of Fairs

From the IAFE library

Where and when the first fair was held is not known, however, evidence points to the existence of fairs as early as 500 BC.

Scripture records this in the book of Ezekiel: “Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the kinds of riches with silver, iron, tin and lead, they traded in thy fairs.” Ezekiel’s account of the destruction of Tyre, supposedly written about 588 BC, describes Tyre as an important market and fair center.

Fairs were commercial in character from the beginning. Merchants from distant countries would come together, bringing native wares to trade with one another, and even though it is not clearly explained in Ezekiel or in other biblical references, it is reasonable to assume that “fair” was the name given to the place at which early trading between foreign merchants was conducted.

It is equally clear that religious activity was companion to the commerce. The Latin word “feria” meaning holy day, would appear the logical root of the word “fair.” Each feria was a day when large numbers of people would assemble for worship. Worship in those early days was centered around temples in great cities,

(Continued on Page 7)

Some Fairs May Be Eligible for Grants

Happy Holidays Everyone!

The holidays are here and the New Year will be upon us very soon.

As I take a moment to reflect on this past year and my adventure of taking on this position with the Bureau of County Fairs and Horse Racing, I am feeling very blessed to have met so many wonderful fair people that have helped me through my first year and I want to thank you for all your patience, guidance, and cooperation. I truly appreciate all of you!

Regarding the \$3 million in funding through the Illinois Travel and Tourism Grant Program, the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) indicated that some county fairs may be eligible for a grant through this program.

The goal is to increase visitors from 50 miles away and increase local hotel bookings. For fairs attracting visitors from 50 miles or more held in com-

munities with a base of hotels and lodgings this could be worthy of an application.

Through a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), entities can apply for grants of up to \$100,000 for promotional funds. Applications will be accepted until December 12, 2022. To view the NOFO and apply for the grant, please visit illinois.gov/dceo and navigate to the Grant Opportunities page.

Lastly, the JCAR Admin rule has officially been changed eliminating the notary requirement on Rehab and Premium reports.

Below are the due dates for the remainder of this year.

- December 31: Declaration of Intent
- Due from APF's and F&E's. See 'Section 260.15 and Section 260.515'
- December 31: F&E Premium Fund Grand Summary Report &

Accompanying Reports/Receipts

• Due from F&E's...See 'Section 260.537

• F&E Penal Bond – Due from F&Es. See 'Section 260.525'

Note: On Page 3 of F&E Grand Summary, the 'F&E Financial Statement' section is to reflect same information as declared on previously submitted Declaration of Intention.

Note: Submit F&E Audit if available.

• December 31: 4-H report & justification

• Due in State 4-H Office prior to County Fair Office Due Date.

Please feel free to contact me at 217-524-0666 with any questions.

Wishing You a Blessed Holiday Season!

Jeannette Watkins
County Fair Administrator
Bureau of County Fairs & Horse Racing
Department of Agriculture

IAAF Library Relates History of Fairs

(Continued from Page 6)
including Ninevah, Athens, Rome and Mecca. These cities were also respected as the great commercial centers of the world. Fields adjacent to these temples were staked out for traders. Religious figures were placed about the fields in order to protect the traders and merchants.

During the early Christian era, the church took an active part in sponsoring fairs on feast days, and as a result, fairs came to be a source of revenue for the church. Possibly, our modern church bazaars possess some rudiments of these religious fairs.

This evolution, which blended religion and commerce, continued over time and moved into western Europe. Periodic gatherings brought together the producers of all types of commodities for the purpose of barter, exchange and, finally, outright sale. To this marketplace were added entertainment and other forms of activity thus, these primitive markets took on the aspect of fairs as we know them today.

In 1765, less than 300 years after Columbus finished his work in the New World, the first American fair was presented in Windsor, Nova Scotia. The same fair continues to operate today. In upper Canada, as Ontario was known in

early Confederation, a fair was held in 1792, sponsored by the Niagara Agricultural Society. As with Windsor, the Niagara Fair remains in operation today. In addition, many small fairs were held during the early 1700's in French Canada while under French rule.

Similarly, in the not-yet formed United States, a fair was chartered in York (Pennsylvania) in 1765 and it existed as a 2-day agricultural market.

The concept of the "county fair" however, organized by an agricultural society, was initiated by Elkanah Watson, a New England patriot and farmer. He earned the title, "Father of US agricultural fairs" by organizing the Berkshire Agricultural Society and creating an event (known then as a Cattle Show) in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in September 1811. It was not a market and was more than just an exhibit of animals – it was a competition, with prize money (\$70) paid for the best exhibits of oxen, cattle, swine and sheep.

Watson worked diligently for many years helping communities organize their own agricultural societies and their respective shows (fairs). By 1819, most counties in New England had organized their own agricultural societies and the movement was spreading into the other

states. The nineteenth century closed with almost every state and province having one or more agricultural fair or exhibition.

The core elements of those agricultural society events of the early 1800s - those early fairs – are at the heart of the agricultural fair in North America today. Competition for the best agricultural and domestic products of the county and/or community (or region or state), an annual celebrate for the community to come together, to share, to learn.

Today, about 2,000 fairs are held in North America each year. Additionally, agricultural fairs can be found throughout the United Kingdom, in Australia, Mexico and other countries. They provide industrial exhibits, demonstrations and competition aimed at the advancement of livestock, horticulture and agriculture with special emphasis placed on educational activities such as 4-H, FFA and similar youth development programs. Most fairs also provide exceptional educational activities to help today's consumer understand the importance of farming and the source of the food on their plate. While enjoying these high-minded pursuits, fair visitors are also able to see, hear, touch, smell and taste the richness and variety of what the world has to offer.

IN MEMORIAM

Kathleen Whitted, 72 of Cerro Gordo, passed away on Sept. 21, 2022. She was born on March 10, 1950 to Arthur “Buck” and Jean (Hughes) Whitted.

Kathy grew up on a farm and became involved in 4-H showing Milking Shorthorn cattle and sewing projects at the area fairs.

Kathy loved her Milking Shorthorns and was involved in the Piatt County Fair for over 40 years in several roles, including many as Dairy Superintendent. Kathy was also involved in the state Milking Shorthorn Association and never missed a State Fair.

Kathy is survived by her son Wade, 3 sisters and many nieces and nephews.

Richard Charles Tinsley, owner and operator of Tinsley Amusements and Pay Day Farm in High Hill, Missouri, passed away Oct. 25 at the age of 86. He dedicated his life to the carnival industry.

He was born Jan. 25, 1936 in St. Louis, the son of Lucy Agnes and Richard Henry Tinsley.

When Richard was a child, a pony was brought home, and this began his love for animals and the reason for so many ponies in High Hill.

When he became a teenager, he and his father built rides in their basement as a hobby. This was the beginning of the carnival.

After graduating from high school, Richard went to work for

Ted Sneed Manufacturing Hampton Rides, while he and his father expanded their carnival business. Richard owned and operated Tinsley’s Amusements, Inc, since 1965 along with Family Entertainment, Inc., and Play Day Farm.

Through the years, he has provided carnival services for several community, county and state fairs throughout the Midwest. He had a collection of carousels, antique cars and miniature trains.

Richard is survived by his partner, Sandy George, three siblings, and a host of nieces and nephews.

IAAF OFFICE
71 West Fairview Lane
Springfield, IL 62711

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Northern, Central and Southern Zone Meetings Were Well Attended with Lots of Activity



County fair queens joined in the balloon fun at the Northern Zone meeting.



A large contingent of County Fair Queens were at the Southern Zone meeting.



An added bonus to the zone meetings is winning one of the many door prizes. These are just a few of the many offerings.



Attendance was great at the Central Zone meeting held for the first time at the Morgan County Fairgrounds.



The food at the Pitstick Pavilion is always good.



Cathy Redshaw, Roger Brand and Queen Addisyn were at the Southern Zone meeting.



Funny Magic Guy Rob Thompson shows a trick to the Iroquois County Queen at the Northern Zone Meeting.

Address Corrections Are Needed

The IAAF office is in the process of updating the TentTalk mailing list.

If you have received this issue and no longer wish to receive future issues, please let us know. If you are responsible for your fair directors' listings, please forward any new address changes, and new board members or current directors who do not currently receive the issues of TentTalk.

The way the list is maintained makes it difficult to know who

should be deleted. Therefore, please forward any names that should be, or should have been, removed over the past several years.

We will check and if they still are on the list, they will be removed.

Please send all updates to: IAAFOffice@illinoiscountyfairs.org or to IAAF Office, c/o Charlyn Fargo Ware, Secretary, 71 West Fairview Lane, Springfield, IL 62711.

The Eye Opening Breakfast

Tickets may still be ordered for the Saturday morning IAAF breakfast. Tickets will be held for pickup at the registration desk.

Name: _____

County Fair or Associate: _____

Town: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Number of tickets: _____ @\$20/ticket = \$ _____ Due no later than Jan. 4th, 2022

Please send this request and check to:

IAAF, c/o Charlyn Fargo Ware, Secretary, 71 West Fairview Lane, Springfield, IL 62711