



Illinois
Association
of
Agricultural
Fairs

October 2023

TentTalk

Donald Schrader Is Fair Person of Year

Don Schrader of Waterloo in Monroe County was named the 2023 County Fair Person of the Year at this year's County Fair Day at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

Schrader is a farmer and president of the Monroe County Fair Association and a 43-year member of the Monroe County Fair Board. Throughout that time, Schrader transformed the Monroe County Fair building new livestock barns to accommodate more exhibits, renovating the horse arena, constructing a new announcer stand, increasing bleacher seating to fit over 6,000 people, enhancing the Fine Arts Building with new flooring, tables and chairs. Schrader also was a recipient of the Illinois Master Farmer Program and the Paul Harris Fellow Award, given by the Waterloo Rotary Club for his service to the Monroe County Fair and community organizations.

The award was given to Don by Gov. J.B. Pritzker during the 2023 County Fair Day.

"What makes our Outstanding County Fair Person of the Year so outstanding is his generous heart and loving spirit," said Pritzker. "He opened his farm to the Make a Wish Foundation to grant a wish to a child who dreams of being a farmer."

Schrader also serves as president of the Monroe County Extension and 4-H Education Foundation, providing educational scholarships to 4-H members. He hosts day care center youth and kindergarten students at his farm to promote agriculture and sustainability. He is a 4-H and FFA alum and Hall of Famer.



Donald Schrader of Waterloo in Monroe County is pictured above receiving the 2023 County Fair Person of the Year award from Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker during ceremonies at the Illinois State Fair on County Fair Day. Schrader has served on the Monroe County Fair Association's Board of Directors for 43 years and currently serves as president of the board taking time of away from his farm to serve.

Don is known for empowering youth, giving back to the community and caring for the land.

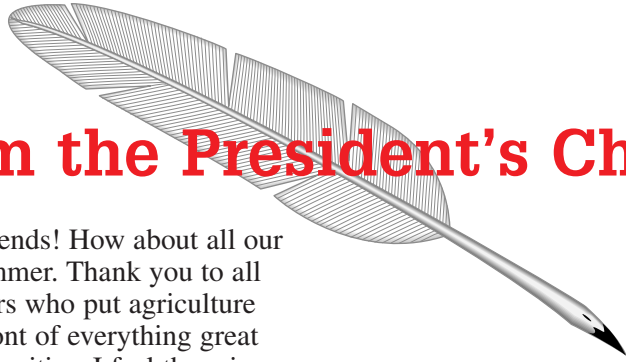
He got his start when his parents gave him a lamb when he was 9 years old and let him show it at the county fair. He still has sheep on his farm.

"I did not expect this award," said

Schrader. "I was stunned. I thank my family and the opportunity to serve. I have a lot to be thankful for."

He believes county fairs are important for the youth of today.

"County fairs give them training and preparation for the future. I'm glad to be a part of county fairs."



From the President's Chair:

Hello fair friends! How about all our fairs this summer. Thank you to all our volunteers who put agriculture in the forefront of everything great in our communities. I feel there is nothing greater than Illinois county fairs in the summer.

Plans are coming along for all three zone meetings this fall. There is a little shake up of the dates this year. First up is Sunday, November 5th is the Northern Zone at the Pitstick Pavilion in Ottawa. Don't forget it's Daylight Savings time that Sunday!

The Central Zone meeting has been moved to Saturday, November 11th, at Morgan County Fairgrounds in Jacksonville. There will be roundtables and a guest speaker with dinner served afterwards so stay tuned! The following day, Sunday, November 12th is the Southern Zone at the Marion County Fairgrounds in Salem.

Each of these zone meetings is a time for us to gather from a very busy summer and see all our fair queens and talk to the Department of Ag, converse with friends and make new acquaintances at the meetings. We hope you all will join in the zone meetings and take part in all the conversations!

In IAFE News: Registrations are now open for the IAFE Convention which is held this year in Salt Lake City, Utah. The dates are from November 26-29th. The theme, "Fairs RISE" was chosen for 2023. They will incorporate this theme into IAFE activities throughout the year. Each letter stands for something important to all of our fairs: R – Reunite I – Inspire S – Support E – Educate

Please go to <https://fairsandexpos.com/annual-convention/> to see all the information and registration and hotel information for bookings. I urge you to book NOW to get the closest rooms. You will not be disap-



Jill Hardesty

pointed if you go. There is always something for everyone and their trade show is second to none.

Your IAAF state board members have been working on the state

convention. The date for the state convention is January 12th – January 14th, 2024 in Springfield at the Crowne Plaza.

We have secured an awesome speaker for our Saturday morning breakfast that you won't want to miss at the convention. As you know, it takes many people to put the convention together, but all the pieces and parts are coming together. We will be asking many of you to help us with doors and general help, so if you can, please let any of the board know.

If you also know some of your local sponsors that would help us out with sponsorships, please let anyone on the state board know, and we will be more than happy to contact them for their help. The IAAF board has for years made every effort to provide an informative and successful convention. Our convention theme this year is "DO MORE IN '24!"

Let's see what we can do together, and I'll see you at the Zone meetings and the state convention in January!

Jill Hardesty

President

Dates to Remember

- **Grand Summary Report** due by October 15, 2023
- **Zone Meetings:**
 - Northern Zone, Nov. 5, 2023
 - Central Zone, Nov. 11, 2023
 - Southern Zone, Nov. 12, 2023

IAAF Dues paid by fairs, December 15, 2023

Queen Ads to Sandy Hoke December 15, 2023

Queen Banquet Ticket Orders to Tom Schahrer, December 15, 2023

• **IAAF Convention, Springfield, IL** Crowne Plaza January 12-14, 2024

• **County Fair Day** August 8, 2024

Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs

OFFICERS

President	Jill Hardesty, Farmer City
Vice President	David Hake, Hoyleton
Secretary/Treasurer	Charlyn Fargo Ware, Springfield
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Marcia Craig (Southern Zone)	Clay City
Kris Lowe (Southern Zone)	Carlyle
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www.IllinoisCountyFairs.org

iaafoffice@illinoiscountyfairs.org

IAAF Office

71 West Fairview Lane

Springfield, IL 62711

217-553-1120

Speaker Larry Berry Will Create Magic

You won't want to miss our Keynote Convention Speaker, Larry Berry. Berry, of Davenport, Fla., is sure to give you something to take home to your fairs that you won't forget.

He is currently president of Wizardy Enterprises and combines his skills as a presenter with magic and illusion making his presentations a memorable and informative experience.

Berry, a native of Decatur, IL, has served in a leadership role and as a trainer for Walt Disney Companies and has managed fairs and facilities in the state of Florida. He was manager of the Kissimmee Valley Livestock Show and Osceola County Fair in Kissimmee. His last fair in 2022 set a 78-year-record for revenue in admissions, concession revenue, carnival revenue and market sales.

Larry has presented for the National Apartment Association,

International Association of Fairs and Expos and Fortune 500 companies such as AT&T, Nations Bank, Walt Disney Companies, Jackson Hewett, Thomasville Furniture Industries and Bank of America. He has a passion for sharing information and helping others exceed and excel in whatever they do. He also is an accomplished author and has written for several national trade publications.

Berry will be the keynote speaker for the Saturday morning breakfast sharing "Creating the Magic".

"It doesn't matter if you are dealing with guests, sponsors, boards or your team, it's all about the experience. As a magician I create wonder and amazement which is one form of magic. On the other hand, as fair managers we too can create magic through experiences with a little creativity."



Larry Berry

He will give you tips on dealing with employees, volunteers and team members, help you create a magical visit for your guests and give you ideas for working with sponsors and vendors.

'Do More In '24' Is Convention Theme

You won't want to miss the 2024 IAAF Convention. We've got a theme certain to help you take your fair to the next level in 2024. Dates are January 12-14, 2024.

Your attendance at the 2024 IAAF Conference is the first step toward breathing new life into your fair and creating a better fair.

The programming, speakers and trade show will jump start you to success. The Saturday morning speaker is Larry Berry, magician and former fair manager. He grew up in Decatur, worked at Disney and will share with you how to bring the Disney magic to your fair. You won't want to miss his presentation.

In addition to the Saturday morning breakfast, the Trade Show is shaping up to be bigger than ever. We're also making plans for the Friday evening Showcase – with two stages – bigger than ever with plans for MORE entertainment after the Showcase.

As always we will have plenty of beer, wine and ice cream, thanks to our own Tom and Pam Schraher – to

go along with the extra music. We've also got several new topics for our Sunday Roundtables.

The dates for the 2024 convention are Jan. 12-14. Our queen contest will have 72 contestants, all doing their best to win the crown. Crowning of our 2024 Miss Illinois County Fair will be held Sunday evening.

IAAF Membership and Convention packets will be emailed to a contact person at your fair or your associate business in mid-October. Included will be a renewal membership information and basic convention registration materials, including breakfast ticket requests and hotel reservation forms.

Association packets also include sponsorship opportunities as well as trade show and Showcase opportunities. When returning the materials, please make sure that all contact information relating to names, addresses, email and website information is correct. Note that the IAAF office address is at 71 West Fairview, Springfield, IL.

Thank you for your continued

support of Illinois fairs. If you have questions, be sure and contact me by email (charfarg@aol.com) or by cell, 217-553-1120.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in January!

New Deadlines

In an effort to be more efficient at meeting deadlines, we are asking fairs to keep December 15, 2023 as an important deadline.

It's the time to make sure all queen ads are in to Sandy Hoke so the queen book can get printed on time.

It's the time to make sure you IAAF dues are paid to Charlyn Fargo Ware so your queen and talent show winner can compete in the 2024 convention activities.

It's the time to make sure you have your ticket requests for the queen banquet into Tom Schahrer. This year, both the fair president and the queen pageant director will need to sign the form so both know how many tickets are being ordered.

Crowds Continue to Flock to See Attractions at State's County Fairs in Summer 2023












A special Ribbon Cutting officially opened the gates for the 120th Annual Will County Fair. Jay Nadler, fair board president, is surrounded by the fairs' directors and staff who make sure everything runs on schedule.



An annual highlight of the Illinois State Fair's County Fair Day is the gathering of the County Fair Queens representing each county fair that participates in the IAAF Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Contest held in January at the Annual IAAF Convention. Here the queens are dressed in their full regalia for the once in a lifetime photo that commemorates each young lady's achievement.

The future of Illinois' County Fairs rests on the next generation of youngsters who will carry on the long history of county fairs in the state. Recognizing that reality, organizers of the Fairbury Fair have gone to extra lengths to make sure youngsters are welcomed to the fair and have a variety of things to whet their interests in addition to the plethora of carnival rides. The Fair's Kids' Day had some animals available to pet and see and ask questions about, including some draft horses (Clydesdales), a fishing pond, a corn play box, Rooster Crowing Contest, Kiddie Tractor Pul and more. A machinery exhibit had farmers present to answer kids' questions. The kids went to the various exhibits and could fill out the card pictured below by getting each item stamped and questions answered. Each kid also received a free hot dog as a prize.

I learned about these things at
The Fairbury Fair today!

 tractors		 Clydesdales	
 cows		 chickens	
 pigs		 puppies	
 fish farming		 Vegetables, fruits and flowers	
 goats		Tell the nice lady at the prize booth, something you learned today to get your last stamp!	

When you find something, be sure to get a stamp on your card. Take your card to the **booth under the grandstand** to get a prize when you are all done! **HAVE FUN!**



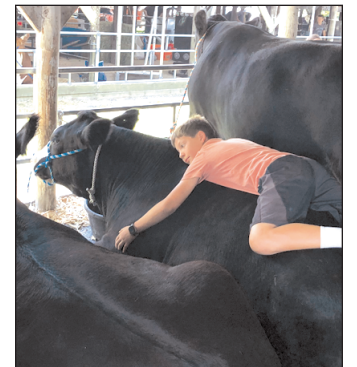
Queen Paige with Emmerson Horn at the Sangamon County Fair.



This whimsical sandwich was on exhibit at the McLean County Fair.



This young lady was able to pet a rescued possum on display at the Fairbury Fair by a wild animal rescue group.



This young Ford County Showman is either showing his affection for his animal or taking a quick nap prior to the judging.



This model rocketry entry in the Technological and Engineering category at the McLean County Fair won Best of Show honors.

It's Time to Send Rehabilitation Reports

Happy Fall Everyone!

It was so nice seeing such a big turnout at County Fair Day and hearing about how successful your 2023 fairs were despite the heat and floods.

You have proven once again that the long hard work hours that the many volunteers contribute can persevere over just about anything to provide a fun, successful fair for the community to enjoy.

I want to thank everyone for being so diligent this year in sending in their reports by the deadlines. This has had a tremendous impact on the turnaround time for your reimbursements. I'm happy to say the Rehabilitation Reports have been processed and payment authoriza-

tions have been sent to the Comptroller's office for payment.

Here is a list of the remaining 2023 important report dates:

October 15: Premium Fund Grand Summary Report & Accompanying Reports/Receipts
F & E Fairs: Fax: (217/524-6194) or send copies of Pages 1 & 2 of Grand Summary Report on or before October 15 for Recapitulation Report.

December 31: Declaration of Intent

December 31: F&E Premium Fund Grand Summary Report & Accompanying Reports/Receipts

December 31: 4-H report & justification: Due in State 4-H Office prior to County Fair Office Due

Date.

In closing, I would like to mention that this fair season was also met with some tragic events and illnesses. I, along with the entire staff of the Bureau of County Fairs and Horse Racing, would like you to know we are keeping all of our families and friends in our thoughts and prayers.

Please feel free to contact me at 217-524-0666 or by email at Jeannette.M.Watkins@illinois.gov with any questions.

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

Recognize 25 for Their Years of Service

Twenty-five stalwart county fair volunteers received 2023 County Fair Years of Service Recognition, presented by Gov. J.B. Pritzker at County Fair Day at the State Fair.

20 years

Jared Ruyle, Macoupin Co.
Glen Diekemper, Clinton Co.
Mike Diekemper, Clinton Co.
Mary Hutchison, Carroll Co.
Sally Phillips, Carroll Co.
Keith Engelkens, Carroll Co.
Allen Brackens, Carroll Co.
Steve Hollewell, Carroll Co.
Bryan Moore, Lawrence Co.
Josh Holmbeck, Marshall-Putnam Co.
Michelle Monier Searle, Marshall-Putnam Co.

30 years

Pam Barham, Champaign Co., Urbana
Paula Berlin, Vermillion Co., Georgetown
Larry Dannewitz, Dekalb Co., Sandwich
Jerry Jacobs, Carroll Co.
Brian Witt, Carroll Co.

40 years

Mike Yates, Union Co.
Ray Hutchison, Carroll Co.

Bill Schell, Carroll Co.
Dan Thompson, Pana Tri-County
50 years
Charlie Diekemper, Clinton Co.

Rich Diekemper, Clinton Co.,
Larry Breon, Kane Co.
Robert Hoge, Kane Co.
Irvin Brummel, Kane Co.

Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs Advocacy Fund Appeal

IAAF needs your continued financial support to help our advocacy efforts in Springfield!

Our lobbyist Bridget Dougherty has fought successfully to insure that county fairs funding was not cut and that funding was sent to fairs in a timely manner. Although the FY24 budget that the General Assembly passed recently, included funding for fairs, we are hoping it comes through. There is much work to be done to keep county fair funding going.

Please help us fight for your fair by donating to our advocacy fund.

Name of Fair or Organization: _____

Individual contact Name: _____

Email/Phone: _____

Amount of for IAAF Advocacy Fund Donation: _____

***Please make check payable to "IAAF" and mail to:
71 West Fairview Lane, Springfield, IL 62711***

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT & GENEROSITY

Legislative Consultant Tells of Activity

By **Bridget Dougherty, IAAF
Legislative Consultant
September 2023**

Hello IAAF Members! Hope that all of you are well and had a super successful 2023 fair season!

County Fair Day at the State Fair

We had a very successful County Fair Day at the State Fair on August 10, the opening day of the fair.

This was the first time that County Fair Day was held on the opening day of the State Fair and it was very exciting. The weather was perfect, and the event was packed full!

Governor JB Pritzker spoke about the importance of county fairs and honored long time fair volunteers. The Lieutenant Governor, Juliana Stratton, and Jerry Costello, the Director of the Department of Agriculture, also made presentations.

After the Governor's remarks, he spent some time meeting and taking pictures with county fair queens. We were also joined by local members of the General Assembly, Senator Steve McClure and Representative Wayne Rosenthal.

Upcoming Veto Session

The Illinois General Assembly will go into Veto Session on October 24 through 26 and November 7 through 9.

Veto Sessions are supposed to be confined to the legislature acting on the Governor's Veto action, but in recent years, Veto Session has become just like the regular session, where new bills and amendments are filed and heard in committees.

There may also be legislative action designed to address recent court rulings in Illinois, and possibly a supplemental appropriations bill.

The result is that anything can happen, so your government affairs team will be monitoring the action closely on behalf of the IAAF.

2024 Regular Session Calendar to be Released During Veto Session

The Veto Session is also the time that the regular session calendar is usually released. We are going into the second year of a two-year state legislative cycle, and it is an election year so we will see what the schedule looks like.

Your legislative team will provide

it to the IAAF Board as soon as it is released. The Board has voted to have another legislative reception event in Springfield in 2024, so once the calendar is released the Board will select the date and we will let you know the details. Hope everyone can attend.

IN MEMORIAM

Roger Brand, age 60, of Pinckneyville, IL, passed away on Saturday, April 29, 2023

Roger was born on September 12, 1962, in Pinckneyville Hospital, a son to Herman Theodore and Clara Margaret (Bathon) Brand.

On April 28, 1984, he married



Roger Brand

Meschelle Kocian in St. Bruno's Catholic Church, Pinckneyville, IL and she survives him. He worked as a self-employed florist and special event decorator for 39 years. Roger was a member of Nine Mile Baptist

Church, Tamaroa, IL, Purely Pinckneyville, and the Pinckneyville and DuQuoin Chamber of Commerce.

He designed the queen's float for the Pinckneyville Chamber of Commerce and was involved with the Mardi Gras parade for 50 years consecutively. Roger was part of the Miss Illinois – County Fair Pageant Crew, the Miss Illinois Scholarship Association, the Oakdale Homecoming. Roger was the Special Events Director of the DuQuoin State Fair, and for several years was associated with Miss Perry County Fair Pageant.

His joy in life was spending time with his family. His lifelong passion was floral design and special event design. Roger was part of 644 different weddings. He will be missed by all who knew and loved him, and never met a stranger.

Survivors include his wife of 39 years, Meschelle Brand of Pinckneyville, IL; one sister; Diane Marie Brand of DuQuoin, IL; several nieces, nephews and cousins; and many brothers in law and sisters in law.

Attend Your Fall Zone Meetings

The annual fall Zone meetings are here! Will you be attending? Please attend your respective IAAF Zone meetings this fall. They are:

Northern Zone - November 5th at Pitstick Pavillion, Ottawa

Central Zone - November 11th at Morgan Co. Fairgrounds, Jacksonville.

Southern Zone - November 12th

at the Marion County Fairgrounds in Salem.

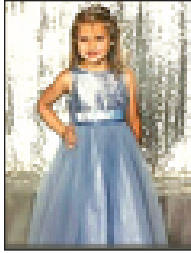
Everyone learns something at these events and we welcome you to attend!

Come and see your queens, some vendors on site and some awesome entertainment available to book for your fair.

IN MEMORIAM

Harper Layne Finn, 5, of Altamont, died at 6:49 p.m., Wednesday, August 2, 2023, at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

Harper Layne Finn was born on Friday, June 8th, 2018, in Hammond, Indiana, to Richard and Bethany (Stuckemeyer) Finn. The Finn family was devoted harness racers at Illinois county fairs.



Harper Finn

Harper loved life. She was a brave and adventurous princess who adored all things pink, wearing dresses and painting her nails. She also enjoyed running and playing outside with her brother and cousins and jumping in bouncy houses. In addition to her parents, she is survived by: her brother, Lincoln, Altamont; paternal grandmothers,

Lisa Tipsword, Effingham and Rikki Finn, Crete; maternal grandparents, Dean and Donna Stuckemeyer, Altamont; maternal great-grandfather, Leo Stuckemeyer, Altamont; aunts and uncles, Travis (Kara) Tipsword, Amie Tipsword and Amy (Brandon) West; and many cousins.

She was preceded in death by her paternal grandfather, Rick Finn; uncles, Glen Johnson III and Shane Finn.

Harold "Hoss" E. Dannewitz, of Sandwich, IL, passed away on July 13, 2023. He was born November 26, 1944 to Dale and Florence Dannewitz.

He married Ginger Phelper on October 9, 1965, and they have three children, Heath, Heather (Andrew) Delveaux and Gerrad (Laura) Dannewitz, one granddaughter, Avli Delveaux.

Harold served on many Boards

over the years, City Alderman, YMCA, Sandwich VFW Post #1486, Gertrude Rompf Memorial Society, and Sandwich Fair Association.

Harold worked for Commonwealth Edison and retired in 2000, but continued electrical expertise to upgrade the Sandwich Fairgrounds to what it is today, which always held a special place in Harold's heart. If you ever wanted to find him, you only had to go to the Sandwich Fairgrounds, because he was always somewhere there, it was his second home. Harold served in the US Army for a tour in Vietnam, (65-67). He was proud to be part of the 5/7 Airmobile Cavalry.

Harold is survived by his wife, Ginger, sons, Heath, Gerrad (Laura) Dannewitz, Daughter, Heather (Andrew) Delveaux and granddaughter, Avli Aryn Delveaux.

(Additional Memoriam on Page 7)

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