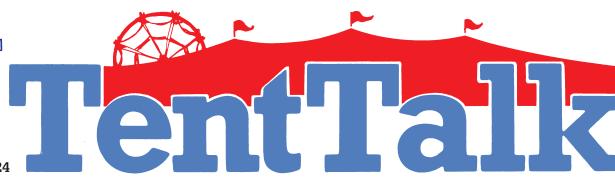


Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs

December 2024



Speaker Has Four Decades Experience

Mike Bradley, keynote speaker for the 2025 IAAF Convention, got his start with county fairs with Russet baked potatoes – selling his grandmother's baked potatoes at the local fair in LA county, Calif.

"Grandma represented one of the local political parties," said Bradley. "Selling baked potatoes at the fair was one of the ways they raised money."

LA County, which includes Pomona, is an intensive agriculture area.

"My job was to fix the baked potatoes up for customers," he said. "I was only 6-years-old when I started. Some would order them plain; some would want them with everything – butter, sour cream, chives, you name it. It was fun."

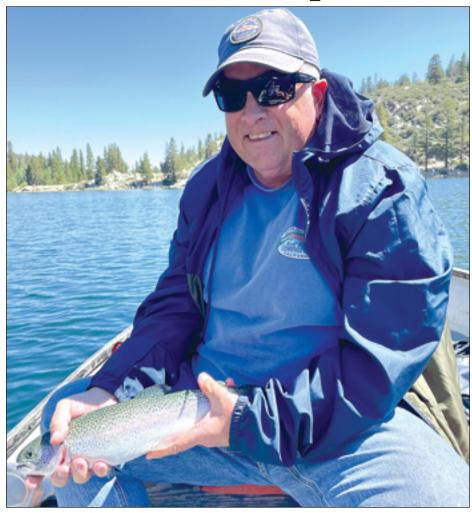
From there, Bradley signed up for 4-H and FFA and focused heavily on all kinds of livestock – cattle, hogs, sheep, ducks, chickens, rabbits, goats, horses. He even had a racing pigeon project.

He recalls one of his proudest moments at the fair was entering a lemon meringue pie and winning Best of Show.

His love for agriculture prompted him to apply, attend and graduate from California Polytech State.

"They called it the ag university," he said. "At Cal Poly, students learned by doing. It was very handson educationally, plus all the formal stuff."

He continued to be a part of the local fair where he started selling baked potatoes, then went on to become assistant manager of the California State Fair for 20 years.



Keynote speaker Mike Bradley will share four decades of county fair experience with 2025 Convention attendees on Saturday morning.

Bradley, in keeping with the 2025 Convention theme of "Rockin' It Forward", will share his vast fair experience – and his crystal ball for the future – at the Saturday morning breakfast on Jan. 18.

"2035 isn't very far away but I think you'll see some changes, and fairs will be different," said Bradley.

"I think you'll definitely see technology play a bigger role. We may not see the livestock shows or the lemon meringue pies but new experiences and opportunities for a more diverse population."

He'll share his reasons for that as well as what he sees for 2050.

(Continued on Page 3)

The President's Pen

Hi Everyone,

Fall is here and winter is coming. That means it is time for zone meetings and the January convention.

I attended the Central Zone meeting on Saturday, Nov. 2 and the Northern Zone meeting on Sunday, Nov. 3. A week later, I attended the Southern Zone meeting on Sunday, Nov. 10. All zone meetings were well attended. The Queen contestants were also there practicing mock interviews.

January brings cold weather so that means it's convention time. This year's theme is "Rockin' It Forward." We have many new changes this year. We have switched to bar-coded badges. There will be people scanning the badges at the doors, so this will give us a better idea how many people are attending the different events. Please be sure you have your Fair dues and registration submitted by Dec. 15. We will once again have round table discussions on Sunday morning with

new topics. The convention dates are Jan. 17-19, 2025 at the Crowne Plaza.

I hope to see everyone at the Convention. I also hope everyone goes back with a few ideas or thoughts on



David Hake

how you can improve your fair.

In closing, good luck to the queen contestants! I also hope it is a little warmer than last year. See you at the convention.

Until we meet again, Yours truly



President

Zone 5 Conference Is Set

IAFE Zone 5 Conference Wichita, Kansas February 28 – March 2, 2025

"Follow the Yellow Brick Road" and step into the magical world of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE).

Join the Kansas State Fair team, February 28-March 2, along with up to 300 state and county fair professionals from five Midwest states: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. It's always a great time and opportunity to learn new ideas during these conferences and we invite you to attend.

The conference and hotel reservations are at the Mariott Wichita, 9100 East Corporate Hills Drive in Wichita, KS 67207. The group hotel rate is \$127.00 per night and reservation deadline is February 6, 2025.

Won't you join the Illinois delegation and "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" to Kansas?

Should you have any further questions, please contact Jill Hardesty, IAAF Past State President at jillsie1@gmail.com or cell phone 217-841-3487. More information will be available very soon.

If you are interested, please let me know and I'll pass further information along as soon as it's available to us.

Dates to Remember

- IAAF Dues paid by Fairs due December 15, 2024
- Queen Ads to Sandy Hoke, December 15, 2024
- Queen Banquet Ticket Orders to Tom Schahrer, December 15, 2024
 - **December 31:** Declaration of Intent
 - **F & E Reports** due to IDOA by December 31
- **IAAF Convention, Springfield, IL** Crowne Plaza January 17-19, 2025
- County Fair Day: Aug. 7, 2025

Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs

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- 'Rockin' It Forward' Is 2025 Theme

(Continued from Page 1)
"By 2050, I think you'll see vastly different fairs, but that's a surprise
I will share on Saturday morning
with the group."

Bradley will also be speaking Friday afternoon at the 1:30 afternoon session.

"When you go to Disneyland, the experience begins in the parking lot – it doesn't wait until you get in the park. There is a lot of buildup before you get there. You can create the worst experience or the best. We'll talk about making it the best – right from the start."

Tickets for the breakfast are \$20 and must be purchased in advance.

You won't want to miss this year's Showcase Friday evening. It will start at 7 p.m.

This year's headline, closing act is Dirty Grass Soul. There will be two stages again and plans for seven bands for your enjoyment and to give you an idea for a band to bring to your fair. As always, we will have plenty of beer, wine and ice cream, thanks to our own Tom and Pam Schahrer – to go along with the extra music.

On Saturday afternoon and evening, you won't want to miss the Junior and Senior Talent Shows.

New Roundtable topics are planned for Sunday morning. And Sunday evening, we will crown a new Miss Illinois County Fair Queen. So far, there are 74 queens vying for the coveted crown.

Dates for the 2025 convention are Jan. 17-19.



One of the highlights of the annual convention is the Showcasing event where county fair entertainment directors are exposed to new talent to entertain those fair

attendees who enjoy grandstand entertainment. The Dirty Grass Soul group will be the closing act of Friday's Evening's Showcasing Event that features seven bands.

IAAF Membership and Convention packets have been emailed to a contact person at your fair or your associate business. Included are 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 all contact information relating to names, addresses, email and website information is included. This year, they will be mailed to Terri Quinn, 15824 N. 1650th St., Chrisman, IL 61924. You can also pay online at www.illinoiscountyfairs.org.

Thank you for your continued support of Illinois fairs. If you have questions, email at iaafsecretary@gmail.com or call 217-553-1120.

Looking forward to a great convention in January and seeing all of you.

IAAF Has New User Friendly Website

Updates and changes:

The IAAF has a new look to its Website that we hope is easier to navigate and more informative.

Terri Quinn, assistant secretary, has headed up this project.

"I call it more user friendly," said Quinn. "E-Tix has led the charge." Terri will be able to make changes in a timelier manner and keep it more up-to-date.

The address is the same – www.illinoiscountyfairs.org.

Let us know what you think or if you have any suggestions.

There will be new badges at the IAAF convention, which will allow us to track the attendance in all the

different events. They're sponsored by I-6, a company who specializes in conventions and concerts.

"I think everyone will like the new look," said Terri. "We're Rockin' It Forward with new technology and changes."

Zone Meetings Allow Sharing of Ideas

Thanks to everyone who attended and planned the recent Central, Northern and Southern Zone Meetings. They were well attended and gave a wonderful chance to talk and share ideas with other fairs.

Thanks also to the queens (and many parents) who attended the zone meetings.

Meteorologist Robert Holmes with Spectrum Weather Insurance spoke at the Central Zone on Nov. 2, held at the Morgan County Fairgrounds in Jacksonville. Holmes began his career as a meteorologist at the Space Science and Engineering Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During that time, he made nine trips to Antarctica for field research, earned awards form the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Navy and published several research papers. In 1999, he was honored with the naming o the Antarctic geographical feature, "Holmes Ridge" by the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 2011, he formed Spectrum Weather and Specialty Insurance. He is also a graduate of the IAFE Institute for Fair Management and in 2023 was named the inaugural Associate of the Year by the IAFE.

Choosing the right weather insurance for your fair can be complicated. Holmes explained to Central Zone members the different types of insurance available to fairs including Rain Parameters, steeped coverage, which is relatively new; Heat Index Coverage; Adverse Weather coverage; Event Cancellation Coverage, Rain Insurance and All Cause Coverage.

Holmes explained that some types of weather insurance can help offset a negative impact on expected revenues. Different types of insurance also require different purchase times, some 30 to 45 days in advance while others are 7-10 days in advance.

"Research your options and make the best informed decision for your fair," said Holmes.

At the Northern Zone meeting, held at the Pitstick Pavilion on Nov. 3, Jeannette Watkins thanked fairs for getting reports in on time which helps the Ag Department have a quicker turnaround to get checks sent out.

"We had very few complications this year," she said. "We hope you'll be seeing premium reimbursements in the near future."

Cindi Mielke, Northern Zone sec-



Meterologist Robert Holmes explained how fairs can determine how to buy the right kind of weather insurance.

retary, is sending a survey to the Northern Zone fairs to see what they would like to see at future meetings in the hopes of increasing attendance.

Northern Zone's entertainment was "The Magic of Mike DiDomenico" presented by Variety Attractions.

The Southern Zone meeting was held at the Marion Co. fairgrounds on Nov. 10.

Few Changes in Legislators

by Bridget Dougherty
IAAF Legislative ConsultantNo
Hello IAAF Members. Hope all are
well.

Now that the General Election is over, the Illinois General Assembly met for its veto session from November 12 – 14 and November 19 – 21. Governor Pritzker did not veto any legislation this year so it is unclear whether the legislature will meet for all six scheduled days.

The House and Senate will release the lame duck and spring session calendars during the veto session. The "lame duck" session is the few days that the current General Assembly will meet prior to the new (104th) General Assembly being sworn and seated. The 104th General Assembly will be sworn in

on Wednesday, January 8, 2025. We will provide the Board of IAAF with all calendars as they are released.

There were no changes to the makeup of Illinois' congressional delegation. There was also little change in the makeup of the Illinois legislature: no seats were flipped from republican to Democratic or vice versa. There will be a few new faces due to retirements, but the partisan composition of the Illinois House and Senate will remain the same.

Donald J. Trump will be sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, 2025.

We continue to advance proposals for the equitable funding of county fairs among key decisionmakers in the legislature.

2025 Roundtables Offer Education

We've got some educational and fun Round Tables planned for Sunday morning that you won't want to miss.

Thanks to Todd Cotter and Dave Hake for rounding these up. Roundtables start at 9:15 am and are repeated at 10 a.m. Here's the lineup:

Volunteers of All Ages -

Recruitment

More For Your Buck – Promoting your fair

Wildcard – Anything goes

Out of the Box – Agriculture education & community involvement

Help Us Help You – Sponsorship Come One, Come All – Entertainment & attractions

Computer Age – Online entries & software

Livestock Meeting

Queen Natalie Evans Represents Illinois

Queen Natalie Evans has had a fabulous year visting fairs, showing cattle and promoting agriculture to anyone who would listen. In a recent Q and A, Natalie shares some highlights.

What was most fun about your year as Illinois County Fair queen?

"Honestly, all of it was fun. If I had to choose something that stands out, it was at Brown County. I couldn't go to the pageant because I was already scheduled at other fairs, but they still wanted me to come. So I went to the Open 4-H show and Junior Beef Show and got to hand out ribbons with the Brown County queen. It was a different side of a fair to see and it was a lot of fun."

What was your favorite food? "Corn dogs are always my favorite – with mustard and ketchup of course. Best meal was in Greene County at the Brass Door."

What was hardest about your year as Miss Illinois County Fair queen?

"Juggling school – being 4-1/2 hours away and having to plan around that – figuring the schedule out. Summer was easier, but during school, it made it harder."

What was the funniest thing?
"We laughed so much this year.
But I can remember at the queen interviews in McLean County,
Sandy (Hoke) and I were sitting there and the Little Miss's came up and talked to us and we laughed and

laughed. They were so adorable."

What would you tell your younger self about this year?

"I would tell my younger self to go into this with a great mindset – that it was going to be a great year, which it was. Yes, it was chaotic and



Rock climbing is not for the faint of heart as Queen Natalie learned.

stressful at times but I would tell myself to remember it was going to be so much fun. And it was. I would also tell myself the friends and family that came out of this would make everything worth it."



Bag races are also difficult to master with no training.



Queen Natalie enjoys a carriage ride.



Queen Natalie enjoys a perk as does Governor Pritzker as they sample an ice cream treat.

Schedule of Events for 2025 IAAF Convention

"Rockin' It Forward"

114th Annual Convention

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

Schedule of Events for 2025 Convention

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

Thursday, January 16, 2025

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. — Winter Garden, 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

Friday, January 17, 2025

8:00 AM Registration Desk Opens
—Plaza Lobby

8:30 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal – Ballroom

10:00 AM IAAF Board Meeting

—Lincoln Board Room

1:30 PM Opening Session "First Impressions"

Special Guest Mike Bradley

Remarks by Illinois FFA President

"What did your fair do differently in 2024?"
 Moderated by Bill Jennings, IAAF Director
 — Plaza FG — 1st Floor

3:00 PM	Trade Show opens with a reception. Skinners Amusements Host of Trade Show and Sponsors of Trade Show Snacks — Plaza A-E
6:00 PM	Trade Show closes for the day
4:00 PM	Fairs and Exposition Fund Meeting — Capital VI - 3rd floor

5:30 PM — Jeannette Watkins, IDOA Audit Committee Meeting — Turquoise—2nd floor

7:00 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.

Farm Network.
Next Thing Smokin'
Bordertwon & Co.
Silver Lake Band
Will King
Rook Richards
Chase McDanile
Dirty Grass Band

Sound checks begin at 3:00 p.m.

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

Saturday, January 18, 2025

7:00 AM Registration Desk Opens—*Plaza Lobby*

7:30 AM Looking to the Future" Breakfast doors open. — Plaza F&G
Tickets Required
Sponsored by Luehrs Ideal Rides
Special door prize for breakfast participants — \$50 Cash

7:45 AM	Opening remarks: IAAF President Dave Hake
	Color Gurd: Abraham Lincoln Council
	Scout Troop
	Pledge of Allegiance:
	Queen Natalie Evans
	Invocation
8:15 AM	All non-ticket fair members and associates are welcome to join the meeting after breakfast.
8:30 AM	Welcome David Hake, IAAF President

David Hake, 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 Mike Bradley, Keynote Speaker,

presented by Luehrs Ideal Rides.

8:30 AM Queen Pageant Rehearsal—*Ballroom*10:30 AM Drawing — All door prize winners must be preent to win at the time of each drawing.

10:45 AM Secretaries and Treasuruers Meeting —Jeannette Watkins, IDOA

— Plaza F&G

11:00 AM Trade Show and Associate Rooms
open — Plaza A-E

Skinners Amusements Host of Trade Show and Sponsors of Trade Show Snacks. Trade Show & Box Lunches sponsored by Grandstand Concerts

Afternoon Queen Pageant

1:00 PM

8:15 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

1:00 PM

	Preliminaries—Ballroom
1:30 PM	Jr. Talent Competition—Plaza H-J
2:00 PM	Past Presidents Meeting—Capital
	View, 12 floor
3:30 PM	All Zones Meeting —Capital View,
	12th Floor
4:00 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
8:00 PM	Registration Desk Closes

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

Sunday, January 19, 2025

—Winter Garden-14th floor

Protestant Worship -

Queen Pageant Rehearsal—Ballroom
Enjoy a Breakfast Sandwich & Coffee —sponsored by A Fantasy Amusements
Convene for Round Tables-Plaza F-G Sponsored by Edwards Marketing, Grandstand Concerts and Illinois Tractor Pulling Association — Moderated by David Hake & Todd Cotter
Roundtables: First Session • Vounteers of All Ages — Recruitment More for Your Buck — Promoting our Fair Wildcard — Anything goes Out of the Box — Agriculture education & community involvement Help Us Help You - Sponsorship Come One, Come All - Entertainment & Attractions Computer Age — Online entries & softwaare Livestock Meeting

Please Register for Door Prizes

A Crowne Plaza Package for the 2026 IAAF Convention will be awarded.

Welcome — Dave Hake, 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 Doughtery

• Legislative Committee - Bill Jennings

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

4:00 PM
5:00 PM
6:30 PM
9:30 PM
Reception for the new Queen
—Lobby and Rosewood Dining Room
Monday, January 20, 2025
8:00 AM
IAAF Directors And Spouses
Breakfast — Ruby Room
1AAF Directors Meeting—Ruby Room
9:00 AM

Nominate a Volunteer

Does your fair have a dedicated volunteer or a community person who is a true county fair booster?

The "Friends of Illinois County Fairs" awards program will honor a group of recipients at the 101st Annual IAAF convention to be held next January. Your fair may nominate an individual to be recognized at the 2011 IAAF Convention.

A nominee must be a supporter in some manner of Illinois county fairs. They need not be an officer, a board member or a superintendent of your fair. However, they must be dedicated to the support, promotion, and innovative operation of a fair or fairs. This is a way to recognize the unsung stars of county fairs.

All Illinois fairs should consider nominating a candidate. The nomination form will be included in the summer IAAF packet mailed to each fair near the end of May. A fair may submit more than one worthy candidate for consideration. Only one person from any fair may receive the award in 2011. Any unselected candidates will be reconsidered in 2012 without reapplying.

The IAAF "Friend of County Fair Award" program is sponsored by Jeff Blomsness of North American Midway Entertainment.

Note: Please do not confuse this award with the "Illinois County Fair Person" Award presented by the Illinois Department of Agriculture at the State Fair's County Fair Day. They are two different awards.

Information for "The Illinois County Fair Person" award will come from the Bureau of County Fairs.

Roundtables: Second Session

Annual Business Meeting

-Capital View, 12th floor

–Plaza F-G

(Same Agenda as First Session)

Illinois Standardbred Association



A good crowd at the Northern Zone Meeting heard lots of ideas to help their fairs, were able to renew acqain-

tanes and meet new ones. and also were treated to a special presentation by Magician Mike DiDomenico.

Watkins: Important Dates

Happy Holidays Everyone!

As the 2024 fair season ends and the holidays fast approach, I would like to take a moment to reflect on how blessed I am to be a part of this county fair community. I am thankful that I have been able to work with people who truly care about their county fairs and the future of agriculture, and I look forward to working with the new members.

If your fair has a new secretary or treasurer, please make every effort to encourage them to attend the secretary/treasurer's meeting in January at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. This informational meeting will give them the knowledge they need to be successful in their new role on your county fair board.

Here is a list of the remaining 2024 important report dates:

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.

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

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

New Deadlines

In an effort to be more efficient at meeting deadlines, we are asking fairs to keep December 15, 2024 as an important one.

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 your IAAF dues are paid so your queen and talent show winner can compete in the 2025 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.

Updating Mailing List

The IAAF contines to update the TentTalk mailing list. Please forward new names or names that should be removed.

Please send all updates to: IAAF Office@illinois-countyfairs.org or to IAAF Office, i71 West Fairview Lane, Springfield, IL 61711.

The	Eve	$\mathbf{O}_{\mathbf{I}}$	pening	B	rea	kfast
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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, 2025		
Please send this request and check to: IAAF, c/o Charlyn Fargo Ware, Secretary, 71 West Fairview Lane, Springfield, IL 62711				

IN MEMORIAM

Kevin G. Kampwerth, age 64, of Carlyle, Illinois passed away on Sunday, October 6, 2024.

He was born on June 18, 1960, in Breese, Illinois to Roland and Rose Mary Kampwerth. Kevin married LuAlice Holland, the love of his life, on September 17, 1983. Their daughter, Whitney Holland Kampwerth, was born on April 4, 1989, and she married John Luebbers on June 7, 2014.

Kevin had a deep passion for agriculture and took great pleasure in his days working on the farm. He was a lifelong tractor puller and loved restoring the antique tractors in his collection. His most recent pull with "Ole Heavy," crowned him one of Clinton County Farm Bureau's "Kings of Clinton County."

He enjoyed experiencing new things with his family, traveling to many different places all over the world. Those memories will be some of the greatest gifts he has ever given his wife, daughter and son-in-law. He was the first official employee of Huels Oil Company and worked proudly for 43 years. He

was there for it all and was considered part of the Huels family.

He was a past Chairman of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative Board and served the membership as a trustee for 26 years. He was appointed to the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors where he was recently elected treasurer. Kevin was a member of the Clinton County Fair Board for 29 years and was elected President in 2005 and 2017.

He was a lifelong Knights of Columbus member, working many bingo nights and scrambling thousands of eggs for Sunday breakfast. Kevin was the embodiment of hardwork, dedication and generosity. Random acts of kindness weren't random for Kevin, they were routine.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Rose Mary Kampwerth; his in-laws, Harvey and Mabel Holland; and a brother-in-law, Charles Holland. He is survived by his treasured wife, LuAlice Kampwerth, cherished daughter, Whitney Kampwerth Luebbers and his "favorite son-in-



2023 Clinton County Fair Queen, Audrey Moran, asked Kevin Kampwerth to escort her on stage when it came time to relinquish her crown.

law" and best friend, John Luebbers. He is also survived by his father, Roland Kampwerth, his sister Donna (Kenny) Henrichs, his brothers, Mark (Joyce) Kampwerth, Dale (Cindy) Kampwerth, Roland Kampwerth, Jr., Dean (Lisa) Kampwerth; his in-laws, Harvey and Janet Holland, Mark and Jean Holland, and Marsha Holland.

IAAF OFFICE 71 West Fairview Lane SprIngfield, IL 62711

> Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs



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