

2011 CONFERENCE & ANNUAL MEETING

"A FAIR - FAMILY REUNION"



Serving Iowa Fairs Since 1907
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The Association of Iowa Fairs enjoyed another great turnout for its 2011 Conference and Annual Meeting held on December 9 - 11, at the Holiday Inn Airport in Des Moines. Representatives from the 106 fairs in Iowa, plus representatives of the 150 plus associate members converged onto the Conference Center for a weekend of learning, sharing and fun. Final attendance tally for the Conference showed just over 1,400 people registered for the event.

The opening business meeting of the Association was held on Friday morning, followed by the very popular session "Open Forum". The ever-popular entertainment showcase was featured Friday afternoon.

Workshops that were featured Friday afternoon included; "Marketing Basics", presented by Lori Chappell, Marketing Director of the Iowa State Fair; "Property Insurance, Is Your Fairgrounds Covered?", presented by Amy Hatten-Blaskovich (Underwriting Coordinator) and Megan Roth (Communications Coordinator), Iowa Communities Assurance Pool; and "Who We Are, What We Do", moderated by AIF Directors.

The annual Awards Banquet was held Friday evening, followed by a reception for all AIF member Fairs hosted by ICAP.

The Saturday schedule was packed with workshops, a breakfast meeting for A.I.F. associate members and a non-stage showcase highlighting associate members that specialize in grounds attractions, suppliers and other non-music type of entertainment. Saturday opened with Gary Berg's keynote address, "Simple Truths", proved to be one of the highlights of Conference, as evidenced by the enthusiastic response from a full room of attendees.



Conference Meetings Held

Business meetings held during the Conference included the Association's Annual Meeting, the Iowa State Agricultural Society Annual Meeting, Carnival members' meeting, Iowa Horse Racing Association meeting, Iowa Foundation for Agriculture Advancement meeting and A.I.F. Associate Member Breakfast & Business Meeting.

Saturday workshops and seminars included "2012 Fair Ideas" hosted by Arlette Hollister; "Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail, Part II" presented by Jim Lester, Wright County Emergency Management Coordinator and Tricia Rosendahl, Manager, Wright County Fair; "F.S.Q.A. Training for Livestock Exhibitors" presented by Mike Anderson, I.S.U. Extension Youth Campus Director, Livestock Specialist; "VIP Program for Your Fair" presented by Deb & Louie Zumbach, Linn County Fair; "Tracking Fair Entries" presented by Deb Brown & Haley Hansen, Franklin County, and Sue Barnes, Howard County; "Concessions and Fairs, a Partnership" presented by Kevin McGrath, owner of The Best Around Concessions. One of the Saturday workshops, "Rookie Status", featured a discussion on IAFE's 'Young Professionals Initiative' moderated by Jenn Dunn, Linn County Fair.

Saturday evening featured the very popular "Social A'Fair and Auction". This included a social and supper attended by over 600 Association members. The auction had 143 items donated from member fairs and associates. The proceeds from the auction are used for expenses that are incurred by the Association in its efforts to secure legislation that benefits the fair industry in Iowa. This year the auction raised just over \$28,000. Following the Social and Auction was the "President's Reception", hosted by 2011 A.I.F. Board President Darwin Gaudian and his wife Jan, and members of the O'Brien County Fair Board.

Sunday morning started out with a church service dedicated to deceased fair board members in Iowa followed by the popular "Fairman's Breakfast".

Four 'sharing workshops' were held on Saturday & Sunday. These sessions featured a panel of persons with expertise in the topic subject. These panelists gave a brief overview of their opinions on the topic with the bulk of the session being an open discussion by those in attendance.

- "Race Tracks and Motorsports Events" with panelists Tim Holt, Hamilton County, Denny Bell, Buchanan County and Shawn Van Engelenhoven, Mahaska County
- "The ABCs of a Fair Board" was an interactive discussion on the operation and purpose of a county fair board. Discussion points were methods of operation, committee structure, board member responsibilities and ethics. This workshop was moderated by the A.I.F. Board Executive Committee
- "Livestock Shows – What is the Future?" where discussion items included State of Iowa regulations proper animal presentations and showing, new trends in livestock production, responsibilities of a county fair and ethical practices by exhibitors and families. Panelists for this workshop were Clint McDonald ISU Extension Beef Program Specialist and Mike Anderson, I.S.U. Extension Youth Campus Director, Livestock Specialist
- "Short Takes" which was an open discussion on unique events or activities Fairs have that increase attendance. Areas of discussion included special themed days, targeting specific age groups, contests and ticket promotions, to name a few. This workshop was hosted by A.I.F. Board members.

2011 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Gene Pitzen, Stacyville
Mitchell County Fair



John Droste, Waverly
Bremer County Fair



Don Greiman, Garner
North Iowa Fair & Iowa State Fair



Presenting the Hall of Fame Award is Darwin Gaudian, 2011 A.I.F. President (left), to (top to bottom) Gene Pitzen, Stacyville; John Droste, Waverly; Don Greiman, Garner.

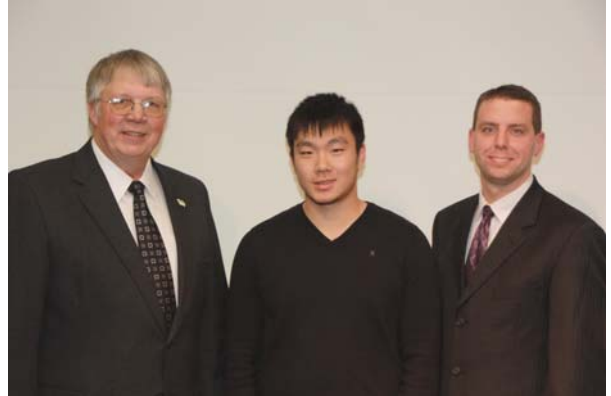
SPOUSES' ACTIVITIES

On Friday afternoon Bette Dryer, of Bette Dryer Catering, Des Moines shared her "Quick Cooking Secrets".



Another spouse activity was held on Saturday. Deb Straight, Harrison County and Carol Cain, Clinton County offered free mini-manicures and hand massages.

Scholarship Presented At Awards Banquet



Colin Nahkunst of Sidney was presented with a \$1000 college scholarship, courtesy of Staats Custom Awards of Mt. Pleasant Iowa, and the Association of Iowa Fairs.

Pictured are (left) Darwin Gaudian, 2011 A.I.F. President, Colin Nahkunst, and (right) Andy Zinkle, General Manager of Staats.

ASSOCIATION BOARD ELECTIONS

Jim Mohr elected Board President

Association directors elected to the Board include Kerry Scheidegger of Rockwell City in Calhoun County, Tricia Rosendahl of Eagle Grove in Wright County, Joe Yedlik of Walker in Jones County, John Straight of Coon Rapids in Carroll County, Mark Droste of Tracy in Marion County, and Jim Sloan of Eldon in Wapello County.

The 2012 officers of the Association Board will find Jim Mohr of Coon Rapids serving as President, Joe Yedlik of Walker serving as 1st Vice President and Jo Reynolds of Indianola serving as 2nd Vice President. Past President is Darwin Gaudian of Primghar. Tom & Sue Barnes of Cresco serve as the AIF's Executive Director and Executive Secretary/Treasurer, respectively.

Visit www.iowafairs.com

The A.I.F.'s website is updated as often as needed to keep everyone up to date on changes with the A.I.F.'s membership. Membership listings for both Fairs and Associates can be downloaded from the website. One more reason why the website is important to all members.

The "Members Only" site is full of information for member fairs. A user ID and password is needed to access this area of the website. Contact the A.I.F. office for instructions on getting an ID and password.

Leo Overland Showman of the Year



Loghoppers Chainsaw Carving, Quincy Illinois was honored with the "Leo Overland Showman of the Year" award. Accepting the award is RD Conrad (center) and Ron Conrad (right). Presenting the award is Darwin Gaudian (left), 2011 A.I.F. President.

"FAIRMAN OF THE YEAR"



"Fairman of the Year" was presented to CW Thomas, of the Guthrie County Fair in Guthrie Center. Presenting the award is Darwin Gaudian (left), 2011 A.I.F. President.

Iowa State Fair Board Elections

Iowa State Fair Board directors were also elected during the State Agricultural Society meeting, held during the Conference. Those elected as Directors to the Board include Bill Neubrand of Le Mars, Alan Brown of Hampton, John Harms of Monticello, CW Thomas of Guthrie Center, Randy Brown of Osceola, and Gary McConnell of Bloomfield.

President of the Iowa State Fair Board for 2012 will be Gary McConnell of Bloomfield. Alan Brown of Hampton will serve as Vice President and James Romer of Ames will be Board Treasurer. Gary Slater is the Secretary/Manager of the Iowa State Fair.

2012 A.I.F. Spring District Meetings

District business meeting will follow the meal. Meeting details are sent out to fairs in each district by the District Secretary.

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Saturday evening, March 17, 2012

Hosts: Marcus Fair Board

Marcus Community Center, 319 N. Main Street, Marcus
Social starts at 5:00 p.m. -- Meal at 6:00 p.m.

NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

Sunday afternoon – March 25, 2012

Hosts: Boone County Fair Board

Boone County Fairgrounds, Boone

Social starts at 1:00 p.m. -- Meal at 1:30 p.m.

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

Sunday afternoon – March 11, 2012

Hosts: Winneshiek County Fair Board

Winneshiek County Fairgrounds, Decorah

Social starts at 1:00 p.m. -- Meal at 1:30 p.m.

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Saturday evening – March 24, 2012

Hosts: Westfair Fair Board

Treynor Community Center

11 West Main Street, Treynor Iowa

Social starts at 5:30 p.m. -- Meal at 6:00 p.m.

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

Sunday afternoon – March 18, 2012

Hosts: Lucas County Fair Board

Carpenter Hall, 1215 Court Avenue, Chariton

Social starts at 1:30 p.m. -- Meal at 1:45 p.m.

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Saturday evening --- March 10, 2012

Hosts: Davis County Fair Board

Davis County Fairgrounds, Bloomfield

Social starts at 6:00 p.m. -- Meal at 6:30 p.m.

District meetings dates and locations could change.

Future A.I.F. Conference & Annual Meeting Dates:

December 7 - 9, 2012

December 13 - 15, 2013

December 12 - 14, 2014

December 11 - 13, 2015

Conference for these years will be held at the Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines

... FROM THE OFFICE ...

2011 offered up several challenges year for our Fairs. While the economic news was brighter the effects of the downturn a couple years ago were still on the minds of everyone. However, despite some hot weather issues in July, our Fairs reported a positive year, with very good attendance and an overall very good year. Marketing, or getting the word out, is vital and our fairs did a very good job. Your Fair is important to your community and it is truly a great family educational and entertainment venue. Congratulations to all members for their effort, especially to the hundreds of volunteers that help make the fair industry as strong as it is.

Again the 2011 Conference was a big success. The sessions were very well attended and the 'sharing workshops' were very popular. Some tweaking here and there with the schedule proved to popular will all. All in all, all members were pleased with it. I am always amazed, and very much pleased, with the participation and the great attendance. Registrations were again over 1,400 people, which was great.

I would like to extend our appreciation to all our Associate members for their part in making the fair industry in Iowa as successful as it is. They are an important part of our Fairs and we certainly could not be without our associate members.

The cooperation the A.I.F. receives from all of its members, both fairs and associate members, which unite for this great event is truly humbling. The one-on-one networking between fair folks is a very important aspect of the Conference. I hope everyone got some great ideas for your own fair or festival.

It's Auction Time!!!



The fun auction on Saturday evening featured 143 items donated from member fairs and associates. The proceeds from the auction are used for expenses that are incurred by the Association in its legislation efforts that benefit the fair industry in Iowa. This year the auction raised just over \$28,000.

"AMAZING FAIR RACE"



(L to R)- Alison Holten, Mighty Howard County Fair; Steve Fritchen, Jefferson County Fair; Dean Kluss, Wright County Fair.

A new event, "The Amazing Fair Race", is a team-building activity for fair boards while they searched through the Conference Center trying to find and learn more about Associate Members. Each fair board was given one playing sheet that contained interesting facts about the AIF's Associate Members. Fairs were challenged to work together to get as many answers to the questions on the playing sheet and signatures/room numbers as possible by 4:30 PM on Saturday. Monetary awards were given to the top 3 Fairs with the winners announced at the Social 'A' Fair.

- 1st place and \$300 went to the Wright County Fair, Eagle Grove
- 2nd place and \$200 went to the Jefferson County Fair, Fairfield
- 3rd place and \$100 went to the Mighty Howard County Fair, Cresco

Sue & I certainly look forward to the Conference every year. It is indeed a lot of work, but seeing all of our extended "fair family" is something we look forward to and certainly deem as one of the year's highlights.

Again this year your A.I.F. Board will be hosting a breakfast social for all the legislators and staff at the State Capitol. This will take place on Thursday March 29, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The Board will be meeting with legislators concerning the state funding and other legislation that is beneficial to the fair industry in Iowa. All fairs are invited to attend this special event. Your help is needed as you are asked to contact your legislators and ask their support on all of the legislation the Association sponsors.

As usual our 2012 calendar is full of traveling, including the spring district meetings and the I.A.F.E. Zone 5 meeting in Peoria. Sue & I will also be attending a 3-day meeting in Springfield Missouri in May for all State & Provincial executives, hosted by IAFE. And not too far down the 2012 fair season will be upon us. A highlight of our summer is the tour of Fairs, so it won't be long before Sue & I will be hitting the highways and back roads of Iowa traveling to fairs and festivals. 2012 looks to be another busy year. We hope to see you soon.

Tom Barnes, Executive Director

--- 2011 BLUE RIBBON FAIRS ---



Benton County Fair, Vinton – NE District



Central Iowa Fair, Marshalltown – NC District



Cherokee County Fair, Cherokee – NW District



Westfair, Council Bluffs – SW District



Warren County Fair, Indianola – SC District



Davis County Fair, Bloomfield – SE District



Conference Scenes ...



More Conference Scenes ...



More Conference Scenes ...

