



Serving Iowa Fairs Since 1907

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--- PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE ---

2024 CONFERENCE & ANNUAL MEETING

DECEMBER 13 - 15, 2024

**AIRPORT HOLIDAY INN CONFERENCE CENTER
6111 FLEUR DRIVE, DES MOINES, IOWA**

Conference Registration – Iowa Foyer

FRIDAY: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. SATURDAY: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. SUNDAY: 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Thank You Thank You Thank You

--- To the following Conference Sponsors ---

Action Theater/Impact Pro Wrestling – Artists & Attractions – Bobby Baker Entertainment

Campbell Concessions - Edwards Marketing

Evans United Shows - G.L. Berg & Associates - Grandstand Concerts

Iowa Communities Assurance Pool (ICAP)

Iowa Monster Arm Wrestling - Iowa Sound/Go Stagestruck - Luehrs' Ideal Rides

Prairie Event Supply - Scott Amusements

Spectrum Weather & Specialty Insurance - Thunder & Lightning Productions - Variety Attractions

Schedule is subject to Change. Updated October 22, 2024

FRIDAY - DECEMBER 13

10:30 a.m. - Iowa A

Association's Opening Business Meeting

Association President Jon Baltes will preside. Introductions, appointment of committees, and related business.
Open Forum discussion held after business meeting.

10:45 a.m. - Iowa A

Open Forum

AIF Host: Jon Baltes

This is a very popular workshop where topics come from those attending, involving discussion on the many aspects of the fair industry.

11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Associate Member Rooms/Courtyard Tables are open for business.

Note: Associate members may be available for business outside of the hours posted.

1:00 p.m. – Room 397

Conference Newcomer

AIF Host: Tom Barnes

First time attending the AIF Conference? This session will guide you through the 'ins and outs' of the Conference.

1:30 p.m. Workshops

Iowa B/C

Food Service Guidelines For Fairs

AIF Host: TBD

Presenter: **Julie Kraling**

Food and Consumer Safety Bureau,

Iowa Department of Inspections & Appeals

A review of current food service procedures, licensing and food safety guidelines.



Temporary Food Establishments

Iowa A

Alcohol Licensing & Sales

AIF Host: TBD

Presenters ...

Nate Bayer, Tiffiney Brown and Chuck Crabtree

Iowa Alcoholic Beverage Division

Licensing, beverage service practices and current laws pertaining to alcohol service will be covered.



Iowa D/E

What's on your mind?

AIF Host: TBD

This is a very popular workshop where topics come from those attending, involving discussion on the many aspects of the fair industry.



Westview Room

Livestock Auction at Your Fair

Live or Ribbon?

AIF Host: TBD

Presenters: **Monroe County Fair Board**

Livestock auctions, either live or ribbon, are part of most every county fair in Iowa. Just as every county fair does things differently from other fairs, livestock auctions also vary from county fair to county fair.



Monroe County Fair has a very successful livestock auction, and they will be sharing how they handle their auction, including the how's, the why's and the what's. Their ideas will bring up discussion and options from those attending this workshop.

2:30 p.m. - Meeting Room 396

Iowa Foundation for Agriculture Advancement Annual Meeting

3:00 p.m. Workshops

Iowa B/C

**Sales Tax Exempt Entity
for County Fairs**

AIF Host: Tom Barnes

Presenters from the Iowa Department of Revenue include:

- **Matt Bishop, Executive Officer**
- **Kristin Garner, Taxpayer Service Specialist**
- **Terry O'Neill, Taxpayer Service Specialist**

This workshop will focus on the procedures and rules that county fairs will need when using their sales tax exemption documents. Also included in this workshop will be the use of the sales tax exemption for AIF member Fairs as outlined in the Code of Iowa.



Iowa D/E

Fundamentals of Bookkeeping
Review of the Financial Activity of Your Fair

AIF Host: TBD

Presenter: Jessica Buchheit
Director of Accounting, Iowa State Fair

This workshop will include discussion on proper bookkeeping procedures for county fairs.

Jessica will take attendees through a fundamental knowledge and understanding of bookkeeping and accounting concepts, processes, methods, procedures, and controls a fair should utilize to perform bookkeeping efficiently and productively. She will also touch on best practices relating to oversight by your fair board.



4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Bar & The Speakeasy

HONKYTONK

Happy Hour

*Complimentary Beverages provided by Edwards Marketing,
Grandstand Concerts, Spectrum Weather Insurance and
Thunder & Lightning Productions*



*Stop in before the Awards Banquet to enjoy a cocktail and
fellowship with other AIF Fair and Associate members ...*



Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Silent auction items will be displayed in Iowa Foyer Area.

*Silent Auction results announced at 6:30 p.m.
just prior to the live auction.*

Silent Auction Closes at 4:00 p.m. Sharp!!

Awards Banquet - Iowa Hall

Honoring “Fairman of the Year”, Showman of the Year”, “Blue Ribbon Fairs”,
Hall of Fame Inductees and Scholarship Winners.

Doors Open @ 5:45 p.m.; Meal Served @ 6:00 p.m.

Member Recognition & Awards Program @ 7:00 p.m.

Ticket is required to for the meal – must be purchased prior to Conference

Meal ticket not required to attend the Member Recognition and Awards Program

2024 “BLUE RIBBON FAIR” AWARDS

Blue Ribbon Fair displays located in Iowa Foyer

Northwest District	O’Brien County Fair	Primghar
North Central District	Butler County Fair	Allison
Northeast District	Clayton County Fair	National
Southwest District	Audubon County Fair	Audubon
South Central District	Monroe County Fair	Albia
Southeast District	Des Moines County Fair	West Burlington

8:00 p.m. to 10:40 p.m. - Ballroom

Entertainment Showcasing - Showcasing Details on Page 10

8:30 p.m. – Room 397

Honoree Reception

All Conference attendees are invited to attend this reception honoring Jo Reynolds of Indianola, manager of the Warren County Fair and Iowa State Fair Board member, for her several years of service to IAFE (International Association of Fairs and Expositions), including serving as Chairman of the IAFE Board of Directors in 2024.

Also recognized at this reception will be Iowa State Fair Board members Gary McConnell (SE District) and Gary Van Aernam (SW District), who are retiring from the Board after many years of service to the Iowa State Fair.

Stop in and thank these dedicated fair folks for their service to the fair industry.

Posting Conference photos or comments to Social Media?

Tag #iowafairs in your posts.

SATURDAY - DECEMBER 14

7:00 a.m. – Room 397

Joint Board Meeting - Association Board and Iowa State Fair Board

8:00 a.m. - Ballroom South

Associate Members Breakfast & Business Meeting

(Ticket required to eat breakfast – must be purchased prior to Conference)

Special 'Thank You' to Luehrs Ideal Rides For Sponsoring the Associate Members Breakfast



8:30 a.m. - Iowa A -- Keynote Address

Sara Kunz

Survival & Resilience

Turn your obstacles into adventures with Joyful Resilience

You will be inspired by Sara's moving personal story of overcoming physical, mental, and emotional setbacks on her road to success. By tying in her own award-winning survivor stories, as well as others including her time as a primitive survivalist on the Discovery Channel, she speaks to the struggles we all face, and how to build the grit and grace needed to come through the other side.

Aloha! I'm Sara



Do you feel overwhelmed or burned out by the pressure and pace of modern life? What if you could cultivate a sense of adventure that transforms obstacles into opportunities for resilience and joy?

As an award-winning entrepreneur, 2x Discovery Channel Primitive Survivalist, and Trauma Survivor, I know how insensible and defeating life can feel. Sometimes we do our best just to feel like we're surviving. That's why I created the Joyful Resilience Framework - so we can solve modern problems with simple primitive solutions and thrive. Tech developments will never solve the human condition, which is why I reconnect you with your joyful spirit, a mindset of adventure, and the excitement of the journey ahead.

Through my Joyful Resilience Framework - the core of my speaking, coaching, and retreats - I help reconnect you to your sense of adventure so you can show up with excitement, courage, and authenticity.

If you want to show up with excitement, courage, and authenticity you don't just need grit, you need a balance of grit and grace. To thrive in life, you need to be connected to a social and physical ecosystem without sacrificing your unique needs and expression, what better teacher for that than nature? Whether I'm using principles from primitive survival to help you simplify and thrive in everyday life through my keynote speeches, taking you on an adventure via YouTube, or working with you directly through coaching and retreats, I make sure you have the gear and mindset needed to enjoy the hike of life.

Saturday continued...

10:00 a.m. - Meeting Room 292 -- Carnival Owners Meeting

10:00 a.m. - Meeting Room 396 -- Iowa Harness Horse Association Meeting

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Associate Member Rooms/Courtyard Tables are open for business.

Note: Associate members may be available for business outside of the hours posted.

11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Iowa A
Box Lunch Served

Ticket required. Lunch may be taken to other areas of the Conference Center.

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. - Ballroom

Associate Member Introductions & Non-Music Act Showcase

10:00 a.m. Workshops

Iowa A

Livestock Updates

Youth Shows, Check-in/Weigh-in Procedures,
& State of Iowa Livestock Show Regulations

AIF Host: TBD

Presenter: *Dr. Jeff Kaisand, State Veterinarian*



Dr Jeff will lead a discussion focusing on State of Iowa regulations relating to the exhibition of animals at a county fair, public health issues and concerns, proper animal presentations, responsibilities of a county fair and ethical practices by exhibitors and families. Input from attendees is welcomed and encouraged.



Iowa B/C

So, What Do Your Fairgoers Think?

AIF Host: TBD

Presenter: *Todd McDonald*

President, ATW Training Solutions, Urbandale



Are you looking for new ways to enhance your county fair's success and engagement? In this session, we will explore the power of feedback and data to drive meaningful growth for your fair. By understanding what your attendees, vendors, and exhibitors truly value, you can make informed decisions that lead to increased satisfaction and attendance.

Real-world examples from other county fairs that have successfully used surveys and feedback to make impactful changes will be shared. You'll learn a step-by-step process for developing a survey that gets the right information from your fairgoers and how to encourage participation. We'll also dive into how to effectively analyze the data you collect and, most importantly, how to turn that information into action.

Westview Room

Is Your Fair Ready For Paid Staff?

Panel Discussion

AIF Host: TBD

Panelists: *TBD*

This workshop will be comprised of interactive conversation focused on the need, the benefit and the liability of paid staff, both part time and full time. Paid staff brings another layer of governance to the fair board.



Iowa D/E



AIF Host: TBD

This workshop will feature an interactive discussion on three topics that are pertinent to Fairs. Each topic will have 20 minutes of discussion time. The host will start the discussion on each topic and then monitor the open discussion from workshop attendees.

Topics of discussion include:

- Food & Non-Food Vendors - Fees & Contracts
- Low-Cost Entertainment/Activities
- Fair Management Software

Saturday Afternoon Workshops – Times as Noted

1:30 p.m. - Iowa A

Insurance Basics

Panel Discussion

AIF Host: TBD

Panelists

Andrew Vandepopulier

Haas & Wilkerson Insurance, Kansas City, KS

Robert Holmes

Spectrum Weather & Specialty Insurance, Kearney, MO

This session will look at the various areas of risk a fair board has to deal with. These would include general liability, property, special events, coverage for entertainers, volunteers and other specialty insurance coverages.

The panel members will also discuss the rising costs of insurance coverage and what county fairs can do to hold their insurance costs as low as possible, and still maintain coverage to protect the fairs from financial difficulties due to property and liability claims.



1:30 p.m. - Iowa B/C

"Big Strategies for Small Budgets"

Manage and Market Like the Majors

AIF Host: TBD

Presenter: **Jeff Cole**, Vice President, Fairs.com

Today's fairs face the necessity of another evolution—one crucial not only for their prosperity but also for their very survival.

Modern fairgoers, like nearly all consumers today, expect to learn about events, engage with brands, and make purchases directly from their phones. Today's fairgoers not only want to discover events through social media but also expect to purchase and redeem tickets via their phones. With over 90% of Americans active on social media, failing to establish an online presence jeopardizes the viability of any fair. Outdated practices, such as buying wristbands with cash at local stores, no longer meet customer expectations. To thrive, fairs must provide a modern online experience that meets the demands and expectations of today's consumers.

Jeff will share several avenues county fairs can utilize that will improve marketing and the overall fairgoer experience.

1:30 p.m. - Iowa D/E

CARNIVALS AND COUNTY FAIRS

Panel Discussion

AIF Host: TBD

Panelists: **Andrew Schoendienst**, Luehrs' Ideal Rides
Rob Scott, Scott Amusements, **Greg Chiecko**, OABA



Open discussion with focus on all things carnival at your county fair. Some of the areas of focused discussion include contracts between a carnival and county fair, financial obligations, what a carnival needs to play a Fair, and what a Fair needs from a carnival.

1:30 p.m. – Westview Room

IAFE Member Benefits

AIF Host: TBD

Presenters: **Anna Wilson**, IAFE Membership Development Coordinator
Other Presenters TBD

This session will explore many of the IAFE member benefits, including



networking opportunities, annual convention & trade show, exhibits & educational materials, 'Fairs & Expos' magazine, annual Member Directory, many contests & member recognition opportunities and discounts/Insurance.

3:00 p.m. – Ballroom North

Sponsors, Partners, Supporters...

Whatever You Call Them, You Need Them!

AIF Host: TBD

Presenter: **Jen Puente CFE**, Saffire

We will break down some fundamentals of selling sponsorships, keeping them, and how to make them not scary! Plus, we will take time to share some of the best practices you are seeing at your Fair and how we can scale them to work for anyone. Bring your energy!

Jen Puente joined the Saffire team in December 2023 and carries with 20 years of sponsorship experience from the Wisconsin State Fair, which brings in over \$2m in annual sponsorship revenue.

3:00 p.m. – Ballroom South

Secretary/Managers' Workshop

AIF Host: Ashley Fitzgerald

This workshop will focus on the responsibilities of those people serving as the secretary and/or manager of their county fair. Both volunteer and paid secretary/managers are welcome.

Topics of discussion include board and committee meeting minutes, board correspondence, assisting board treasurer, meeting agendas, agent of the board and other areas of responsibility. Audience participation is encouraged.



Saturday continued ...



4:00 p.m. - Westview Room

SOCIAL & NETWORKING

Open to persons under 40 years of age that are actively involved with their fair.

AIF Host:

YPI Host: Jenn Dunn, Linn County Fair

Stop in and enjoy networking with your fellow colleagues...

The IAFE's Young Professionals (YP) is comprised of dozens of under 40-year-old fair industry leaders who are passionate about the progression and growth of fairs for the future. In addition to providing professional development, networking, and educational opportunities for its members, YP serves as a channel for idea sharing and furthering relationships among fair leaders across the U.S. and Canada.

6:00 p.m. - Iowa Hall

Social A' Fair & Auction

Food served from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Ticket required to eat at Social.

Silent Auction results announced at 6:30 p.m.

Live Auction starts at 6:45 p.m.



2024 Theme ...

Fair Friends' Fiesta

Social A'Fair Menu is a Fair Foodie Fest featuring 8 Food Stations....



Station 1: Taco Food Truck featuring Walking Tacos

Station 2: Nachos Tables (nachos with a variety of toppings)

Station 3: All American Food Truck with Corn Dogs, Hamburgers and Chicken Tenders

Station 4: Hot Beef Sundae Station 5: Lemonade Stand Station 6: Beer Tent Station 7: Popcorn

Station 8: Snack Shack Food Truck with Ice Cream Treats, Frosty Malts, Warm Cookies

All AIF members are encouraged to participate in the Auction.

8:30 p.m. - Room 397

AIF President's Reception

Hosts: AIF Board President Jon & Nadene Baltes

Meeting Rooms Available to Fair Boards

Rooms 298 and 398 are available for Fair Boards to use as a meeting location to discuss proposed entertainment, workshop ideas or any other business. Not required to reserve a time to use a room. Be courteous of others using the rooms.

All Persons attending Conference must register.

2024 Conference badges required for admission to all functions.

Cell phones are to be set to 'silence mode' or turned off during sessions and events.

'Resource Tables' located in Ballroom Foyer

Fairs are asked to share premium books, posters, advertising et al.

SUNDAY - DECEMBER 15

7:30 a.m. - Iowa B/C

All-Faiths Worship Service

Open to persons of all faiths. Service in memory of deceased Fair Board members.

Leroy Perkins, Wayne County, Minister

8:15 a.m. - Iowa A

Fairman's Breakfast

Ticket required - AIF Host: Mary Bolton

9:00 a.m. - Iowa A

The Basics of Succession Planning

Courtney Conkle, CFE -- General Manager of the Wyoming State Fair, Douglas Wyoming



Explore the core elements of successful succession planning, including talent identification, skill assessment, and mentorship programs tailored for various roles: full-time staff, part-time workers, fair time contributors, and volunteers. Implementation Strategies: Gain insights into practical implementation strategies. Delve into the importance of training programs, knowledge transfer mechanisms, and creating an inclusive environment that fosters growth and development. Navigating Turnover: Address the industry's turnover challenges head-on. Learn techniques to adapt your succession plans in the face of unexpected departures, ensuring organizational stability. Leaving an Enduring Legacy: Grasp the philosophy of leaving your organization in a better state. Explore methods to instill a culture of excellence, ensuring that every transition leaves the organization stronger, more capable, and poised for continuous success.

Courtney Conkle, Wyoming State Fair General Manager, is a dynamic leader in the world of fairs, known for her unwavering dedication to community engagement, youth development, and the celebration of agriculture. Courtney brings a wealth of experience and a passion for creating memorable experiences and shaping the leaders of tomorrow. Beyond her role at the Wyoming State Fair, Courtney is a Certified Business Succession Planner, a qualification she pursued in response to the challenges she observed in the sector— notably, high turnover rates and the frequent absence of structured onboarding or knowledge transfer processes.

Courtney's dedication to preserving the essence and heritage of the fair industry is pivotal to her approach. She champions the importance of capturing institutional knowledge as a means to maintain the unique culture and legacy of organizations while safeguarding their future.

10:30 a.m. - Iowa A

Association of Iowa Fairs Annual Meeting & State Agricultural Society Annual Meeting

Jon Baltes, AIF Board President, presiding

Darwin Gaudian, Iowa State Fair Board President, presiding

Attendance is required at both annual meetings.

— End of 2024 AIF Conference & Annual Meeting —

Next AIF Conference & Annual Meeting

December 12 to 14, 2025 at the Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines

2024 Entertainment Showcasing

2024 AIF Conference Entertainment Showcasing

Friday Evening – 7:50 p.m. to 10:40 p.m. - Ballroom

(schedule is subject to change)

7:50 p.m. -- Opening Remarks and Introductions

TIME	ACT	REPRESENTED BY	MUSIC GENRE	AGENCY WEBSITE	ARTIST SOCIAL MEDIA or YOUTUBE VIDEO
Order of appearance to be determined.	Vocal Explosion	Artists & Attractions Room 178	Variety	www.artistsandattractions.com	www.artistsandattractions.com/music#/mike-walker/
	Sebastian James	Bobby Baker Entertainment Room 182	Rock & Country Rock	www.bobbybakerentertainment.com/	www.sebastianjamesmusic.com
	Will King	Grandstand Concerts Room 160	Comedy & Parody Singer	www.grandstandconcerts.com	www.facebook.com/@willkingmusic/
	Cow Pop	Liz Gregory Productions Room 102	Classic Country & Classic Rock	www.gregorytalentandproductions.com	www.facebook.com/people/Cow-Pop/100085883168431/?_rdr
	Casey Muessigmann	Muessigmann Entertainment Room 112	Country & Southern Rock	www.caseymuessigmann.com/	www.caseymuessigmann.com/
	No Drinking on Grounds	Musentpro Entertainment Courtyard Table	Rock & Alternative Rock	www.musentpro.com	www.facebook.com/nodrinkingongrounds/
	The Girls Next Door	Stage West Productions Courtyard Table	Country, Gospel, Light Rock	www.stagewestentertainment.com	www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=FBXj7g8D6c8
	Jason Pritchett	Variety Attractions Room 358	Country	www.varietyattractons.com	www.facebook.com/jasonpritchettmusic/