

New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs, Inc. 2019 Convention

The 131st annual New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs Convention at the Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center in Rochester, NY was held January 18-21, 2019. Forty (40) Fairs attended as well as many Associate Members of the Association. Over 700 individuals were in attendance. President Scott Christian, Essex County Fair, Westport, NY welcomed everyone to the Convention.

Saturday's keynote speakers were Aaron Alejandro "Live Your Brand" and Sunday's speakers Mark Mayfield presenting "Momma Told Me There'd Be Days Like This".

A variety of breakout sessions continued throughout the four-day event and delegates enjoyed Ag Trivia, the Interactive Game Show Experience, hosted by Martha Bush of the Cortland County Junior Fair.

The auction to benefit the Scholarship program grows in saleable items and attendance each year. The Auction proceeds will fund scholarships for students pursuing continuing education programs. Funds raised are in excess of \$13,000.00.

The 50/50 Raffle was won by Mike Reese of the Chemung County Fair. Proceeds from the raffle also benefit the Scholarship fund.

The Trade Show was held on January 19 & 20 and included 80 vendors and attractions. The "Little Red Wagon Parade" with its theme "Fairy Tales" was again a tremendous success during the conference.

The Association's "Hall of Fame" Award was presented to NYSAAF Past President Gerry Elthrop from the Herkimer County Fair in Frankfort, NY.

New York State Showpeople's Association awards were presented to R. Harry Booth of the Washington County Fair as "Fair Person of the Year"; "Show Person of the Year" was awarded to Kevin Fritschler, American Fireworks & Manufacturing; "Workhorse of the Year" went to Jerome Wakefield, also of American Fireworks & Manufacturing.

The Officers for 2019 are as follows; Nick Pelham, CVFM of the Steuben County Fair, Bath, NY will serve as President of the NYSAAF for 2019. First Vice President, Jason Lawrence, Chenango County Fair, Norwich, NY, Second Vice President Edward Rossley, Delaware County Fair, Walton, NY, Third Vice President John Craft, Columbia County Fair, Chatham, NY, Treasurer, Jane Luskin, Schaghitcoke Fair, Schaghitcoke, NY and Russell Marquart, CFE, Executive Secretary, Elma, NY.

District Directors are:

District 1	Andy Imperati, Dutchess County Fair, Rhinebeck, NY
District 2	Julia Reynolds, Washington County Fair, Greenwich, NY
District 3	Bridget Brown, Essex County Fair, Westport, NY
District 4	Bruce Fox – Boonville-Oneida County Fair, Boonville, NY
District 5	Joseph Kolka, Otsego County Fair, Morris, NY
District 6	Richard Freligh, Seneca County Fair, Waterloo, NY

District 7 Sheila FitzSimmons – Hemlock Fair, Hemlock, NY
District 8 Nell Fellows, Cattaraugus County Fair, Little Valley, NY
NY State Fair Troy Waffner, Director, Syracuse, NY
Associate Directors Jeff Lloyd, Utica, NY
Joseph Sofo, Jr., Auburn, NY

Showcase acts included The Davisson Brother Band, presented by Variety Attractions, The Magic of Chris Yantek, presented by the Cincinnati Circus.

2020 Convention dates are January 17 – 20, at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY

For more information on NYSAAF Fairs & Convention contact Russell Marquart, CFE, Executive Secretary at nysaaf@gmail.com or visit our website at www.nyfairs.org.

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