



Illinois
Association
of
Agricultural
Fairs

May 2016

TentTalk

Queen Abby Addresses Legislature

Good Morning everyone! My name is Abby Foster and I am the Miss Illinois County Fair Queen 2016. I am currently a freshman at Ball State University where I am studying Elementary Education.

Although I am not entering a field of agriculture nor do I come from an agricultural background, it has played a key role in my life.

Four years ago I entered the Jr. Miss Vermilion county pageant and won. To this day I consider this experience to have greatly influenced me into becoming the person that stands before you today.

Whether it was learning about the everyday duties of a farmer or the hard work that 4-H members put in day in and day out, I found it all to be rather fascinating. The year of service and learning about agriculture I gained from being a Jr. Miss prompted me to compete for and be selected as Miss Vermilion County Fair Queen 2015.

I was fortunate enough again to spend not only a week at the Vermilion County Fair, but also six months representing agriculture in my county. Through this, I have broadened my knowledge that has and will continue to leave a positive impact in my life.

Over the last four years, I have bonded with many special people especially those of our future generations. As a future educator, this is something I hold very close to my heart.

The hard work and dedication put in by 4-H and FFA members is something that should not be overlooked. These programs and classes help each member strive for excellence, grow as individuals, and set a path for their future careers. That is why county fairs are so important!

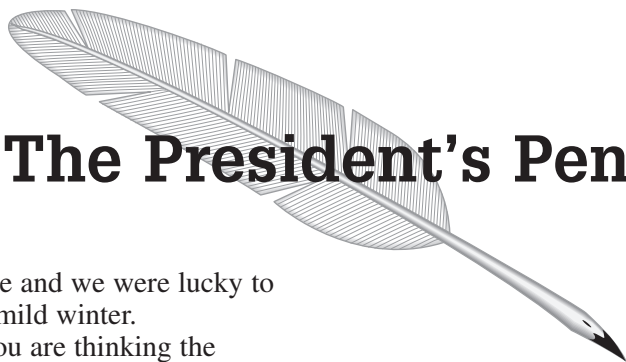
As I begin my year representing the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs as Miss Illinois County Fair Queen, I hope I can leave an impact on many people, of all ages, just like the fairs have impacted me.

Thank you all for your time and continued support of the Fairs throughout the state of Illinois. I am looking forward to hopefully seeing many of you out at your local fairs this summer and enjoying everything it has to offer. I can never thank you all enough for promoting something that means so much to not only me but many others in the state as well.



The Reigning Miss Illinois County Fair Queen is Abby Foster from Danville. She represented Vermilion County at the annual pageant held during the 106th Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs convention in January. As the 57th Miss Illinois County Fair Queen, Miss Foster will be the official hostess of the Illinois and DuQuoin State Fairs. She will also travel throughout the state this summer to promote county fairs and the state fairs. Abby is the daughter of Melany Morris and Jeff Foster. She attends Ball State University pursuing a degree in Elementary Education with a concentration in Psychology.

The President's Pen



Spring is here and we were lucky to have such a mild winter.

Most of you are thinking the upcoming planting season, and of course, we are thinking about our County Fairs. I hope your fair plans are nearly complete, but always know that you can call on the IAAF Board for help and or contacts.

Our convention was well attended, and was very informative to all those who attended. Round table discussions are always a great source of ideas, and the trade show is time for the vendors to show off what they have to offer to the County Fairs.

We are very fortunate to have so many active associates. We always come away with so many great ideas for our fairs just by talking and listening to other County Fair people. Friday night was our Showcase acts on the Plaza level. Free beer, wine and ice cream made it a fun evening for everyone. The Junior Division and Senior Division Talent contests were all held Saturday afternoon and evening.

The County Queens arrived on Thursday, and worked hard to prepare for the Queen Pageant and Banquet, which was held on Sunday night. Abby Foster from Vermilion County was crowned Queen at the close of another very successful pageant. Queen Abby is from Danville and attends Ball State University as a Freshman.

The IAAF Board was well represented on March 1 at the Ag Legislative Day, and the Legislative Reception later that evening. It was one of the best attended receptions by both County Fairs persons and Legislators that we have had in many years.

A special thanks to Margaret Vaughn, our IAAF Advocate, for organizing the event. We were very proud of Queen Abby Foster as she



Bill Redshaw of Rushville was elected President of the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs at the annual convention in January and will served for two years.

spoke to the Legislators from the Senate Floor. I would like to encourage you to stay in touch with your Legislators because there are a lot of important bills that will affect our County Fairs. Margaret will keep us up to date and let us know when and whom to contact.

A special thanks to all who attended the IAFE Zone 5 Meeting, this is always a great time and a wonderful learning experience.

Hope to see many of you this summer at your County Fair.

Sincerely,

President

Dates to Remember

- **County Fair Day, IL State Fair**
August 12, 2016
- **Talent Entries Due**
October 1, 2016
- **Central Zone Mtg, Springfield**
October 30, 2016
- **Northern Zone Mtg, Ottawa**
November 6, 2016
- **Southern Zone Mtg, Mt Vernon**
November 13, 2016
- **IAFE Convention, Las Vegas, NV**
Nov. 27-Dec. 1, 2016
- **IAAF Convention, Springfield, IL**
January 20-22, 2017
- **IAAF Zone 5, East Peoria, IL**
March 3-5, 2017

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www.IllinoisCountyFairs.org

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2016 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Abby Foster and Her Court

The newly crowned 2016 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen, Abby Foster, is flanked by her court (L to R): 3rd Runner up- Molly Holthaus from Christian County, 1st runner up- Peyton Gehrs from Madison County, Queen Abby Foster from Vermilion County, Retiring Queen Sadie Gassmann from Richland County, 2nd runner up- Stephanie Dearwester from Adams County and 4th runner up -Amy Loschen from Ford County. The following

non finalist awards were also presented: Ruby Crum Award to Samantha Jones from Mercer County, Best Non-Finalist in Personal Interview, to Nicole Chambliss from Tazewell County, Best Non-Finalist in Communication Skills to Callie Priebe from Perry County, Best Non-Finalist in Stage Presence to Danielle Strouss from Henry County, Best Non-Finalist in Beauty & Physique to Kelsey Lober from Williamson County.

Still No Decision on Fair Funding for 2015

Spring has arrived and with it, I would like to provide you with an update.

At this time, there is no change in funding decisions for your 2015 fairs. Without an FY 16 budget, funding is unknown. Likewise, funding for your upcoming fairs in 2016 is also unknown.

With that said, your Fiscal Year 2017 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017) Premium & Rehabilitation contracts are being held. As soon as we're given permission, we'll send them out to you via email and post them on our website. Please be advised that this may require a quick turnaround time.

The 2016 County Fair date listing continues to be updated on a weekly basis. The most up-to-date version is on our website; always check there for the most current information.

Horse racing at county fairs - There were only 174 nominations to the county fair racing circuit. This is 48% of what we received last year and unfortunately, implies that there will be a shortage of Illinois Conceived and Foaled (ICF) horses for your races.

The Bureau of County Fairs & Horse Racing, with the advice of the Standardbred Advisory Board, is providing several suggestions to assist you in filling your race cards

this summer. While these suggestions can be found on our standardbred website, please work with your Colt Association representative, or call our office with questions.

Most importantly, let's remember the reason we do what we do: County fairs are at the root of developing future generations of Illinois citizens who will become actively involved in Illinois' agriculture industry.

Rhonda Jachino
Acting Bureau Chief
County Fairs & Horse Racing
Rhonda.jachino@illinois.gov
217-782-4231

Honor 'Friends of Illinois County Fairs'



Pat and John Henninger

Director Poe (R) and Jeff Blomsness (L) congratulated Pat And John Henninger as they were awarded the "Friends of Illinois County Fairs." Many families have worked hard as volunteers at the Boone County Fair from the beginning. One of the longest serving families in the history of the fair has been the Henninger family. John has been a director for 37 years. He and his wife, Pat, have worked on the concessions committee for 18 years. John and Pat live in Garden Prairie, IL. In addition to their home and family life, work schedules and civic activities, they contribute countless hours to organizing, contracting and placing over 400 concessions at each year's fair.



Lois Meyer

IAAF President, Ron Meyer, joined Director Poe and Jeff Blomsness in honoring Lois Meyer as a surprised and most worthy recipient of the "Friends of Illinois County Fairs" crystal cookie jar award. Lois has served as a 50 year leader of the Manteno Best Pioneer 4-H Club, volunteer at both the Will and Kankakee County Fair for over five decades and as the Manteno tax assessor for 26 years in addition to her first priority of family, farm and church. In 2014, Lois, her husband Ron, and their family were selected as the Kankakee Daily Journal Fair Family of the Year. They were recognized as the fourth generation family of Manteno Township farmers and public servants raising the fifth generation in agriculture and volunteer work. Lois wears many hats but her extraordinary gift of organizational skills, attention to details and innovation have made her an invaluable asset to her family, farm and fair.



Michael "Magic Mike" Winters

Mike Winters was congratulated by his wife, Kim, Director Poe and Jeff Blomsness (sponsor of the award) as a 2016 "Friend of Illinois County Fairs." Magic Mike is a talented hypnotist, magician and comedy act. He has been a professional entertainer since 1988. For over 30 years Mike has been an associate member of the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs and has served as the opening act at the annual meeting many times. He leaves his audiences gasping in amazement as he makes the impossible possible. His humor is contagious. From the guillotine routine to card tricks, his talent keeps the audience in suspense and highly entertained.

Nominate Your Booster

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 107th Annual IAFE convention to be held next January. Your fair may nominate an individual to be recognized at the 2017 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 a 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. The forms may also be found on line at www.illinoiscountyfairs.org.

The committee uses the information to determine eligibility and for press releases. All entries must be submitted by September 1st. A fair may submit more than one worthy candidate for consideration.

Only one person or entity from any fair may receive the award in 2017. Any unselected candidates will be reconsidered in 2018 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. All fairs should also consider nominating worthy individuals for this award.

IDOA Announces New Fair Leadership

Agriculture Director Raymond Poe recently announced an organizational restructuring at the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA).

The Division of Fairs & Promotional Services will now house the bureaus of Illinois State Fair, DuQuoin State Fair, Business Services, and County Fairs & Horse Racing.

Previously, these bureaus operated independent of each other. This restructured division will allow better communication between the four bureaus and increase collaboration as they work towards their similar goals.

"Combining these already existing bureaus together in one cohesive unit will enhance efficiencies for the state of Illinois," said Director Poe. "Now all fair related activities will

be centered in one division, under the leadership of one manager. These bureaus are vital to the Department, and with good leadership these bureaus will thrive."

Director Poe named longtime IDOA employee, Kevin Gordon, as Division Manager of Fairs & Promotional Services. Gordon will oversee the management of all four bureaus. Gordon previously held the role of Illinois State Fair operations manager. He has worked alongside multiple fair managers and has been instrumental in the planning and execution of every Illinois State Fair since 2000.

Gordon's experience relating to the inner-workings of the fair, including his working relationship with vendors and agriculture commodity groups, will seamlessly



Kevin Gordon

Address Updates Are Needed

The IAAF office is in the process of updating the TentTalk mailing list.

If you have received this issue and no longer wish to receive future issues, please let us know. If you are responsible for your fair directors' listings, please forward any new address changes, and new board members or current directors who do not currently receive the issues of TentTalk.

The way the list is maintained

makes it difficult to know who should be deleted. Therefore, please forward any names that should be, or should have been, removed over the past several years.

We will check and if they still are on the list, they will be removed.

Please send all updates to:
IAAFOffice@illinoiscountyfairs.org
or to IAAF Office, 24510 E 1000 N Rd., Fairbury, IL 61739.

Watch Your Mailbox in Late May

Your summer IAAF packet should arrive by regular postal mail in late May.

This packet is sent to the person or address which the IAAF has on file for each member Illinois County Fair. It will include four universal passes that any of your fair people may use to attend any 2016 Illinois County Fair.

Please share them with each other and enjoy some of your areas finest showcasing of agriculture and fun. A

complete application form for the "Friend of Illinois County Fair" award will also be enclosed. Please see the accompanying story for information about this opportunity.

Rules and application forms for 2017 IAAF Talent contest will be available at
www.Illinoiscountyfairs.org.

The Queen Pageant rules and applications will be available at
www.Missillinoiscountyfair.com.

enhance his ability to run both the Illinois State Fair and DuQuoin State Fair.

Director Poe named Shawn Mayernick to work alongside Gordon as Assistant State Fair Manager in Springfield. Mayernick is the former Director of Business Partnerships for the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield.

Director Poe also named Tibretta Reiman, as the new Assistant Manager of the DuQuoin State Fair. Reiman is no stranger to special events or the DuQuoin State Fair.

She previously served as a member of the State Fair Advisory Board, the DuQuoin State Fair Non-Fair Event Advisory Committee, and most recently as the Development Director for Trails to Adventure Regional Tourism Development.

Bits & Pieces

"Rome was not built in a day, but they were laying bricks every hour."

—John Heywood

"Always remember that a fair is not really a board's fair. A fair is the people who attend it."

—Bob Williams, Wisconsin



Large group at reception

The IAAF Annual Legislative reception hosted a larger than normal group of state officials and legislators. The evening was a part of the AG Day Activities in Springfield on March 2nd. A special thank you to all of the fair people and OABA carnival friends who supported and attended the evening at Boones in Springfield.

Legislative Update by Margaret Vaughn

SPECIAL THANKS TO OABA MEMBERS FOR SUPPORT OF LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

On March 1st, IAAF topped off Ag Day at the Capitol with its Annual Legislative Reception which was held at Boone's Saloon.

There was a great turnout of legislators from both parties from all corners of the state.

IAAF would like to extend a special thanks to the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA) along with their following Carnivals and vendors who made contributions to help defray the cost of the reception: A Fantasy Amusement Co, Luehr's Ideal Rides, Alpine Amusement Co. Skinner Amusement Co., Swyear Amusements, C.D.A.C. Inc., Archway Amusement Co., George's Fun Food, Modern Midways, and North American Midway Entertainment

NO BUDGET TALKS

The four legislative leaders and Governor have not met together to discuss the Budget since early December and the first 3 months of 2016 were heavily concentrated on primary elections with the Speaker of the House having a serious opponent for the primaries, who was also indirectly sup-

ported by the Governor and there were also several very expensive legislative races that the Governor's supporters were very heavily involved in.

The Governor is still holding out for his "Turn About Agenda" before he agrees to pass a budget or otherwise he wants the Legislature to give him executive authority to make cuts and raid funds without going through the General Assembly which they are not willing to do.

Below is IAAF's watch list:

HB 4990- Rep Tim Butler (R-Springfield) /SB 2903 Sen. Bill Brady (R-Bloomington) - State/DuQuoin Fairground Foundation

Legislation has been introduced in both the House and Senate to create the Illinois State Fairgrounds Foundation under the authority of the Department of Agriculture as a mechanism to take in private donations for the State and DuQuoin Fairgrounds. The legislation creates a Board appointed by the Governor and Legislative Leaders to oversee the Foundation. Provides that any project, including but not limited to improvement, maintenance, and construction of infrastructure, that is funded in whole or in part by the Founda-

tion shall be considered a public work as defined by the Prevailing Wage Act but that the Procurement Code does not apply to procurement expenditures by the Illinois State Fairgrounds Foundation when only private funds are used.

HB 5758 – Sponsored by Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago) – Bullhook ban for elephants

Amends the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act. Provides that any person who houses, possesses, or is in direct contact with an elephant shall not use a bullhook, ankus, baseball bat, axe handle, pitchfork, or similar device designed to inflict pain for the purpose of training or controlling the behavior of an elephant or permit an employee, agent, or contractor to use a bullhook, ankus, baseball bat, axe handle, pitchfork, or similar device designed to inflict pain for the purpose of training or controlling the behavior of an elephant. Provides that any person who violates this provision shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$500 nor more than \$10,000 for each violation, and shall be subject to permit revocation under the Act. Provides that the Department of Natural Resources may adopt rules to enforce this prohibition.

Zone 5: 'Delivering a Royal Experience'

The 2016 IAFE Zone 5 meeting was held in Kansas City, Missouri at the Hyatt Country Club Plaza on March 4-6.

A delegation from Illinois included 20 attendees and 249 from all 5 Zone 5 states. Kickoff of the baseball theme weekend began with a Friday night "Big League" Hospitality room and dinner was on your own. It was a beautiful weekend and there were so many sights to see in the downtown area of Kansas City.

Saturday morning began with a continental breakfast followed by many useful workshops all morning, a fantastic lunch then concluded the day with more workshops. Topics included: Crisis Management Best Practices, Ag Education Programming at Your Fair, Animal Law, The Digital World of Ticketing, Let's talk Livestock and Social Media. Business 101 Planning was also presented by the IAFE institute of Fair Management as a for-credit course.

The Keynote Address for the evening session after dinner was from

the Director of Missouri Agriculture, Richard Fordyce. He'd just returned from an informative trip to Panama. The night ended with the Big League Hospitality Room.

Sunday included a Worship service, large breakfast and the Zone 5 Business meeting was held. Zone 5 Director, Jill Hardesty from Illinois, chaired the meeting. She told the group in the meeting that in 2017, the Zone 5 meeting would be in East Peoria, IL. March 3-5, 2017.

IAFE CEO Marla Calico was in attendance all weekend and she welcomed everyone to her home Zone and to Missouri. Director Hardesty told the audience how very happy she was with the turnout and we hoped everyone had a great time.

A special thank you went out to the Missouri State Fair folks for their great sponsorship efforts for the meeting. Door prizes were given out and the weekend was a complete success!

You'll be hearing more about the 2017 Zone 5 meeting in East Peoria next March. Please make plans to

join our Illinois delegation. We'll need everyone's help in putting on this event! If you've never been to a Zone 5 meeting, why not? You have a chance to learn so much more from the Midwest fairs and friends that will last a lifetime! Even if you are a smaller fair, there is still something to be learned! Should you have any questions about the IAFE or for your fair to join the IAFE, please ask! My email address is: jill.hardesty@frontier.com

Jill Hardesty, President Fisher Fair
IAAF Central Zone Director
IAFE Zone 5 Director 2015-2017

Meet Your New IAAF President

The IAAF President for 2016-2017 is Bill Redshaw. Bill is from Rushville in Schuyler County and has served on the Schuyler County Fair Board since 1968.

He served as the fair's president for 13 years. He began attending the IAAF Conventions with his father, Leslie Redshaw, when he was 13 years old which was when the convention was held in downtown Springfield.

Bill is a veteran of the Vietnam War. He owned and operated Rushville Truck Lines for 35 years and his wife, Cathy, owned her own jewelry store for 29 years. The Redshaws and their son, Joe, own and operate two Dairy Queens.

He is an Elder of the Rushville First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ and has served on the Ministry committee for Illinois and Wisconsin.

He is the President of the Schuyler County Fire District and the Chaplain of the Rushville Fire Department. Bill was involved in law enforcement for many years and is currently the Schuyler County Sheriff.

Bill and Cathy have been married 50 years and have two children, Leslie, a Registered Nurse from Quincy and Joe, owner of Redshaw Insurance Agency in Rushville.



The senior division State IAAF Talent Contest Winner was Alex Zebutis representing DuPage County with a Harry Potter tribute piano solo. He was congratulated by State Queen Sadie for outperforming 34 other acts to win first place.



Scott County's, Avery Wyatt, age 7, from Pittsfield was congratulated by Queen Sadie for winning the Junior Talent Competition at the convention with a spunky Spanish jazz dance routine. Miss Wyatt beat out 35 other entries. 2nd place went to Grace Lenaghan from the Kane County Fair and 3rd place was awarded to Julia Ringhausen from the Calhoun County Fair.

IN MEMORIAM

Dorothy M. Abbott, 88, of Morrison, IL, died December 22, 2015 at Resthave Home in Morrison. Dorothy worked as a secretary at the Stone Insurance Agency in Rock Falls. She spent 25 years in the admissions office at Morrison Community Hospital. After her retirement, she enjoyed working at jewelry stores in Morrison, Sterling and Clinton, IA. Dorothy traveled to every Illinois county fair in Illinois with her husband. She was a vital helper giving behind-the-scenes support to running both the Treasurer and Publicity offices at the White-side County Fair when her husband held those positions, as well as the annual state convention and banquet of the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs during Ed's 13 year tenure as the IAAF Sec./Treas. The couple also served as docents at the Morrison Historical Society. Dorothy is survived by, Ed, her husband of 60 years, of Morrison and two daughters-Susan (Jerry) Gidel of Chicago and Jan (Brett) Landow of Louisville, Ky.

Bill Williams, 74, of Henry, IL died September 6, 2015. Bill was a current member of the Marshall-Putnam Fair Board serving for thirteen years. He served on many com-

mittees including grounds rental where he will always be remembered for his huge grin and that twinkle in his eye as he welcomed visitors to the fairgrounds. He had served in the U.S. Army and was also a member of the Henry American Legion as well as the City of Henry Events Committee. Bill and his wife, Pat, could often be found taking in the sporting events of their grandchildren. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Williams of Henry and son, Beau (Jenni) Williams also of Henry, and his three grandchildren: Carson, Teagan, and Bella.

Linda Warmoth-Shelton, 65, of Rochester, IL died April 4, 2016. Linda was the Sales and Catering Director at the Holiday Inn East and moved on to be the Vice President of Sales and Marketing at the Crowne Plaza for many years. She was always a great supporter of the IAAF and helped to make the annual conventions a real success. Linda was named a "Friend of Illinois County Fairs" in 2005. Linda was a social butterfly and will be missed by many. She is survived by her husband, Michael, her step-sons: Alan Shelton (Tracy Dobbins), Tony (Amy) Shelton and Matthew (Julie) Shelton.

Richard "Bud" McAllister, 78, of Lacon, IL, died January 14, 2016. He had served 26 years as a member of the Marshall-Putnam Fair Board. Bud served on various committees and for several years he helped with the mowing of the grounds. His main contribution to the fair was manning the walk-through-gate to the fair's track and infield. The gate was known to many as "Bud's Gate". Helping man the gate were his two grandsons of whom he was very proud. Prior to becoming a board member, Bud dedicated many years to the horse track and his pride of the track continued through the years. Bud was a retired park ranger from the Marshall County Conservation Area for Illinois DNR for over 30 years and had served our country in the Army. Bud is survived by his wife, Renee; and a step-daughter, Dawn; his two grandsons, Ethan and Evan.

Larry Colver, 78, of Capron, IL died December 22, 2015. He served as the Boone County Fair Treasurer for 20 years. Larry was a farmer. He was very active with the Grange at the local, state, and national levels.. He had served on the Boone Co FS Board. Colver is survived by his wife, Emalee and children: Todd Hegge and Trea Pearson.

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