



Illinois
Association
of
Agricultural
Fairs

May 2018

TentTalk

Samantha Hasselbring Is Fair Queen

What a great 108th IAAF convention we had in January with more than 3,000 in attendance and the crowning of Miss Samantha Hasselbring of Iroquois County as the new Illinois County Fair Queen.

Thanks to our sponsors, associate members, trade show exhibitors and fairgoers who attended. We are grateful for the support of Red Frog Events, Luehrs Ideal Rides, Allied Specialty Insurance, Illinois Tractor Pulling Association, Swyear Amusements, A Fantasy Amusement Co., DRS Skinner Amusements, Regalia Mfg Co., and Bobby Braun/Braun Events.

From the Showcase to the Talent Show to the Trade Show and Queen Coronation, it was a weekend to remember – fun, education and renewal of friendships. Our convention theme, Blue Ribbon Success, was true for our convention and will be for your fairs this summer.

Keynote speaker Aaron Alejandro reminded us to live our fairs, live our brand. He shared how his upbringing helped shape the man he is today and the success he's had as the executive director of the Texas FFA Foundation. Aaron was raised at Cal Farley's Boys Ranch just outside of Amarillo, Texas. As a promising youth in the midst of what could have been less than promising circumstances, Aaron learned quickly the importance of a positive attitude.

"If agriculture has taught me one thing, if you want to know what the future is, grow it," Alejandro challenged fairgoers.

Samantha Hasselbring of Cissna Park was crowned the 59th Miss Illinois county Fair Queen by Illinois Director of Agriculture Raymond Poe and Illinois County Fair Association President Bill Redshaw. She represented Iroquois County. Hasselbring, 19, is currently attending Parkland College majoring in elementary education.

"The feeling is indescribable," said Hasselbring, after being crowned. "You never think it's going to happen. It's a dream come true." Hasselbring grew up on a family farm where her father raises cattle and her mother is a teacher.

Her goal as the 2018 Illinois County Fair Queen is to be a voice for agriculture. "I want to show how important agriculture is," she said. "I'm the first from my county to be the county fair queen. I'm so proud to say I'm from Iroquois County."

Hasselbring will be a summer employee of the Department of Agriculture. She will travel to about 30 county fairs and will be the official hostess of the Illinois State Fair in Springfield and the DuQuoin State Fair in



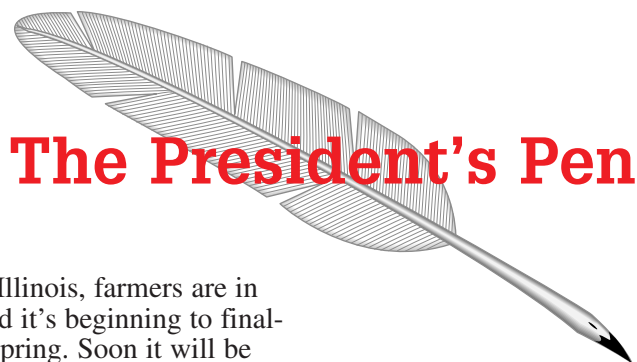
2018 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Samantha Hasselbring was named Miss Illinois County Fair Queen at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield on

DuQuoin. Hasselbring's main duty is to emphasize the importance of agriculture and county fairs to Illinois. Please contact her or Cathy Redshaw for any special events at your fair this summer.

Kylar Craig of Richland County was named the first runner up, Emily Kuberski of Perry County, was named the second runner up, Meg Meeker of Logan County, was named third runner up, and Heather Simpson of Georgetown Fair in Vermillion County, was named 4th runner up

The top 15 finalists were: Becca Fisher of Henry County; Gracie Richardson of Morgan County; Danielle Scheetz of Hancock County; Danielle Rondeau of Western Illinois Fair; Kylar Craig of Richland County; Morgan Wright of Vermillion County; Meg Meeker of Logan

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The President's Pen

In southern Illinois, farmers are in the fields and it's beginning to finally feel like spring. Soon it will be time for county fairs to open their gates for the season.

I hope you all have your County Fair schedules booked and are making plans for a successful fair.

The State Convention was an enormous success. Thanks to all of you for attending and participating. Our tradeshow was sold out, and we hope we continue to enjoy growth from networking with our vendors and county fair members. Our Queen pageant had 70 contestants and was a wonderful evening for the finals. The Talent Show had fewer entries but the quality of those participating was great. Showcasing was Friday night with slushies, wine and ice cream and great bands to listen to and book for your fair. I hope everyone went home with ideas for "Blue Ribbon Success".

Thanks to Margaret Vaughn,

—Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

County; Samantha Hasselbring of Iroquois County; Carson Goff of Tazewell County; Maria Lueken of Effingham County; Colleen Nichols of Macoupin County; Grace Keller of Lake County; Heather Simpson of Georgetown Fair; Emily Kuberski of Perry County and Juliana Fray of Pike County.

Non-finalist awards went to: Madison Cowell of Cass County, Ruby Crum Memorial Award; Alexis Benson of Marshall-Putnam, Best personal interview; Brianna Legner of Bureau County, Best in Communication Skills; Meghan Ingram of Edgar County, Best in Stage Presence; Mikayla Stanfield, Best in Beauty and Physique competition.

A new award this year went to Peighton Parks of White County, People's Choice Award Winner.



James Walsh

IAAF Advocate and her team of volunteers who helped get our Premium funding released. It was because of your generous support through the IAAF legislative fund that we were able to remind the representatives and senators of the impact that County Fairs make on our economy. A special thanks to Ken Tyrrell, Marvin Perzee, Tom & Sandy Moore and all who attended the Legislative Reception and visited legislators on Ag Legislative Day. We also had a group attend and speak at a special press conference that Margaret set up. Contacting our legislators makes a difference, and we are so appreciative that you are willing to do that.

Queen Samantha spoke very eloquently on the Senate Floor and was introduced to the House of Representatives. She had her picture taken with 800 FFA members who attended the Ag Legislative Day and enjoyed tagging along with them as they presented baskets of products made in Illinois and lunch to each of their Representatives and Senators.

The IAAF also was well represented at Queen Samantha's reception, sponsored by her home county of Iroquois on Sunday, April 15. Rep. Tom Bennett attended and spoke at the reception.

I hope to visit many of your fairs this summer. Wishing you all a wonderful County Fair Season.

James T Walsh
President

Dates to Remember

- **County Fair Day, IL State Fair**
August 10, 2018
- **Talent Entries Due**
October 1, 2018
- **Central Zone Mtg, Springfield**
October 28, 2018
- **Northern Zone Mtg, Ottawa**
November 4, 2018
- **Southern Zone Mtg, DuQuoin**
November 11, 2018
- **IAFE Convention, San Antonio, TX**
Nov. 22-28, 2018
- **IAAF Convention, Springfield, IL**
January 18-20, 2019

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www.IllinoisCountyFairs.org

iaafoffice@illinoiscountyfairs.org
IAAF Office
1400 Mound Ave.
Jacksonville, IL 62650
815-692-2400



2018 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Samantha Hasselbring and Queen Runnersup

2018 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Samantha Hasselbring and her Court: First Runner-up, Kyler Craig of Richland County, Second Runner-up, Emily Kuberski of Perry County, Third Runner-up, Meg Meeker of Logan County and Fourth Runner-up, Heather Simpson of Gerogetown Fair in Vermillion County.

Time to Nominate Your Special Volunteers

It is time for all Illinois Fairs to consider recognizing some special volunteers at their fairs.

There is the opportunity to nominate an individual for the honor of the title of "County Fair Person of the Year."

This award is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Agriculture and is presented at County Fair Day during the State Fair. Watch for more news about this as you receive your County Fair Day information.

On each day of the State Fair, The

Illinois State Fair Museum honors an individual as the "Illinoisan of the Day."

This honor is presented to individuals who are making a difference in their community and show a true Illinois spirit through hard work and a dedication to helping others.

Please consider nominating someone from your fair for this recognition. More information and entry forms will soon be available at www.statefairmuseum.org.

At the annual IAAF Convention

in January, the IAAF recognizes a select group of individuals as "Friends of Illinois County Fairs." These are individuals who have helped the local county fairs as volunteers, as vendors or as supporters in a manner that really needs some recognition and expressions of gratitude. The applications may be found at www.illinoiscountyfairs.org.

NOTE: All of the above recognitions are different and require different application forms.

Tim Norman Is New Fair Bureau Chief

The Department of Agriculture Bureau of County Fairs and Horse Racing is honored to be a part of all the county fairs getting ready to take place throughout our great state.

The bureau has had some changes in the office in last couple of months. The bureau lost Rhonda Jachino and Gina Merano. Rhonda retired this year. Congrats and good luck in her future endeavors. Gina has moved to a different bureau in the Department of Agriculture.

The department is proud to announce the great addition of Tim Norman as the Bureau Chief of County Fairs and Horse Racing and Michael Foster working in County Fairs.

Here is a little of Tim's history and what he brings to the department.

Mr. Norman has had agriculture in his heart all his life. He started in 4-H thru his school years. Then moved to the processing side of the industry with pork and beef. As well as spending time dealing with farm commodities. Mr. Norman has been deeply involved in the breeding of Standard-bred for many years. He is excited about entering a chapter with the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of County Fairs and Horse Racing.

The bureau would like to remind everyone of an upcoming reporting deadline. Please be sure to get your reports to us on or before the deadline. Rehabilitation Report is due on

June 30, 2018. The department is aware of the talk about not getting rehab money this year.

We would like to remind all the fairs to file all reports for rehab work that you completed for this year. This report still plays a part in coming years and the amount of rehab money your fairs can received in future years.

The Department of Agriculture is looking forward to a great summer of fairs. Remember your county fairs are places where family, friends, neighbors, and most of all it's a fundamental stepping stone in the development of future generations of citizens who become actively involved in Illinois agriculture.



Carolyn Vandever, third from right, accepted the Friend of Illinois County Fair on behalf of her late husband, Russell, who was honored at the 108th Annual

Convention for his years of dedicated service. Pictured with her are members of the Marion County Fair Board who were in attendance to honor Russell.

Honor 'Friends of Illinois County Fairs'

Two fair families received the "Friend of Illinois County Fair" award at this year's 108th annual convention of the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs.

The Friend of Illinois County Fair award was posthumously awarded to the late **Russell Vandever of Kinmundy**. His wife, Carolyn, accepted on his behalf.

Russell was honored for his many years of dedicated service to the Marion County Fair and the IAAF Board of Directors. Russell was the Marion County Fair secretary.

He also was a valuable queen committee chair for the IAAF board of directors, serving with quiet dignity and diligently working to solve problems. Russell always was ready to lend a helping hand where needed.

Russell was also a member of the Illinois Tractor Pullers Association and was an avid puller. He and his family traveled to many fairs across the state in search of that first-place trophy and blue ribbon.

In the community, Russell was a member of the Pleasant Grove Methodist Church, Soil and Water Conservation Board and Kinmundy-Alma and South Central school

board. In 2016, he was named "Illinoisian of the Day" at the Illinois State Fair.

Bill and Mary Johnson of Fantasy Amusement Co. in Prospect Heights also received the award. Bill started in the amusement business when he was 11.

At the age of 25, he purchased his first ride and in 1985, he began Fantasy Amusement Co. He and his wife, Mary, started going to fairs with 8 rides, a few games and a popcorn wagon.

Now Fantasy Amusements has over 40 rides, games and concessions. Their motto for more than 33 years has been "Safe Clean Family Fun for Everyone."

Bill and Mary have been active members and supporters of the IAAF as sponsors and trade show participants. Bill is past president of the Showmen's League of America and past director of the Outdoor Amusement Business.

Mary also volunteers at Shedd Aquarium in Chicago and often swims with the dolphins.



Bill Johnson of Fantasy Amusements, center, accepted the Friend of Illinois County Fairs award at the 108th Annual IAAF Convention. He is pictured with Ed Dame and Director of Agriculture Raymond Poe.



First place in the Junior Talent Division of the IAAF Talent Show competition held January 20 through January xx were this talented dance group above of Meara Seelbach, Laney Teeter and Eliana Wilson of Sangamon County.

First place in the Senior Division of the IAAF Talent Show went to Corey Barlow, left, of McHenry County for a vocal solo.

Talent Shows Winners

The Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs held its 108th annual convention at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Illinois January 20th thru 21st, 2018.

One of the highlights of the 108th annual convention is the Talent Show competition. Winners of this year's competition include:

Senior Division:

First place in the senior division went to Corey Barlow of McHenry County for a vocal solo;

Second place to Madalyn Schmitt of Ford County;

Third place to Lexi Bergschneider of Sangamon County;

Fourth place to Jenna Zumbahlen of Jasper County

Fifth place to Megan Schippert of Iroquois County.

Junior Division:

First place --

Meara Seelbach, Laney Teeter and Eliana Wilson of Sangamon County

for a dance routine; Second place to Lilly Nowak of DuPage County;

Third place to Olivia Novak and Karissa Brown of Kendall County;

Fourth place to Scarlet Potter of Morgan County

Fifth place to Jaycee Bates of Scott County.

It's time to think about the 2019 IAAF Talent Competition. Forms for the 2019 Queen Pageant and Talent Competition are posted on the IAAF website --

www.illinoiscountyfairs.org under the Convention tab. Entries must be submitted by October 1st. Please share this information with your fair's Talent Chair. Entries are due Oct. 1, 2018.

The Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Pageant entry information and applications form may be found at www.missillinoiscountyfair.com. Entries are due Oct. 1, 2018.

IN MEMORIAM

Ronald D. "Ron" Engstrom, 69 of New Boston, Ill., died Jan. 15, 2018.

Ron was born March 2, 1948 in Ottumwa, Iowa, to Jack W. and Velma (McClung) Engstrom. He was a graduate of Ottumwa High School and of Augustana College, where he sang in the Augustana Choir. He married Diane Wagler Lueth on February 13, 2011.

Ron had worked at the Rock Island Clerk's Office, Downing's Dairy, Swiss Valley Farms, Northwood Dairy Sales and Regalia Manufacturing. Ron also served on the Rock Island County Fair Board.

Ron is survived by his wife, Diane and her children and grandchildren.



Large Group at Reception

The IAAF Annual Legislative reception was well attended. Pictured above are, left to right, seated, Sen. Kyle McCarter (R-Lebanon), Margaret Vaughn, Rep. Allen Skillicorn (R-Crystal Lake); standing: Phil Hartke, Dave Hake, Tom Moore, Rep. Tom Bennett (R-Gibson City), Rep. John Cavaletto (R-Salem), Bill Jennings, Rep. Bob Pritchard (R-Sycamore), Charlie Kennell, Ken Tyrrell

Legislative Update by Margaret Vaughn

IAAF April 2018 Update by Margaret Vaughn

IAAF LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION A SUCCESS

Thanks to all the fair folks who came out to join us for this year's Annual IAAF Legislative Reception at Saputo's on Feb. 28th.

We also greatly appreciate the generous financial support Fantasy Amusements, Luehrs Ideal Rides, North American Midway Amusements and Skinner Amusements provided for the reception.

COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE RELEASING FINALLY PREMI- UM REIMBURSEMENTS

Rep. Dan Burke (D-Chicago) set up a meeting with IAAF to meet with the Comptroller's Office on Ag Day to discuss releasing the rehab reimbursements.

Special thanks to Ken Tyrrell, Marv Perzee, Jack and Laura Radcliffe, who joined me at the meeting.

While there was initially a mix-up on whether the Comptroller's office

had received the vouchers, after continual prodding by Rep. Tom Bennett (R-Gibson City) and myself, along with a press release sent out by the Boone County Fair, which resulted in great news coverage, the money was finally released on April 19th.

We would also like to recognize, Sen. Cristina Castro (D-Elgin) who got the original ball rolling on the Comptroller's office on this back in February.

IAAF & LEGISLATORS CALL on GOVERNOR to RELEASE REHAB MONEY

Rep. Tom Bennett (R-Gibson City) has been leading the fight on this for us and sent a letter to the Governor back in February, signed by 34 other legislators, calling on the release of the \$1.4 million in Rehab and funds for horseracing at the count fairs.

On March 8th IAAF teamed up with legislators from both parties and held a Statehouse Press Conference to urge Governor to

release the money.

About a week after the press conference, Marv Perzee and Rep. Tom Bennett met with Governor Rauner personally to discuss the issue and we are continuing to fight for these funds.

AGREEMENT REACHED on CARNIVAL WORKER BACK- GROUND CHECK BILL

Sen. Tom Bennett (D-Champaign) introduced legislation in the form of SB 3240 which would have expanded the background check requirement to anyone who works in any capacity at a carnival or fair, which would have had a huge detrimental impact on county fairs from both a logistical as well as financial perspective.

Instead I worked on an amendment which Sen. Bennett agreed to that would not expand the background check requirement, but rather keep it to just ride operators and instead increase the fines and penalties if the background checks are not performed.

Queen Samantha Addresses Legislature

In 2012, my older brother Dane received the honor of being named the 2012 FFA Illinois Star Farmer.

After he accomplished that honor, I never thought anyone could take his place as my parent's "golden" child. But little did he know that a few years later, his little sister would be named Miss Illinois County Fair Queen and finally steal the coveted spot of the "golden child".

My name is Samantha Hasselbring, and I am your newly crowned 2018 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen. I am currently studying elementary education and plan to receive my master's degree through Millikin University.

A few years ago, I was a FFA member who attended Ag Legislative Day representing my home chapter of Cissna Park. It is such a privilege to be back not only representing my local FFA chapter but the entire state of Illinois.

This past summer, I entered my first pageant and was crowned the 2017 Miss Iroquois County Fair. Little did I know, that experience would change my views of agriculture and fairs dramatically. I had always attended and brought projects throughout the years as a 4-H member to my local county fair.

I thought I knew everything about the Iroquois County Fair, but I was wrong. Spending an entire week immersed in 4-H, agriculture, and my community was enlightening.



2018 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Samantha Hasselbring

I explored every inch of the fair grounds and handed out so many ribbons that I probably could've done it in my sleep.

I learned about the true impact of my county fair, and how many people loved and appreciated it as much as I did. I cannot wait to experience this same feeling at the Illinois State Fair this summer!

My experiences through FFA, 4-H, and growing up on a family farm has greatly impacted me. They have taught me how to lose gracefully, win humbly, and has instilled a work ethic in me that

I will carry for a lifetime. To the people here today, you know how important agriculture is to the state of Illinois.

With over 72,000 farms encompassing 75% of the total land usage in Illinois, we are the nation's second leading exporter of both soybeans and feed grains.

Not to mention, Illinois is the fourth leading livestock producer in the United States. Hopefully, in the future, some of the FFA members here today will contribute to Illinois agricultural statistics.

As a spokesperson for Illinois agriculture, I cannot wait to travel the state of Illinois and educate people on not only agriculture, but the importance of county fairs. At the state pageant, one of the questions the judges asked me was what legacy I would want to leave if I were to be chosen as the Miss Illinois County Fair Queen. I answered that I wanted to be remembered as the queen that used my skills to promote agriculture throughout the state.

So, I ask you the same question. What kind of legacy do you want to leave? In closing, I hope to see many of you at your local fairs, and I would like to invite you to the Illinois State Fair August 9th-19th and the DuQuoin State Fair August 24th-September 3rd.

Thank you for having me today, and I hope you enjoy the rest of your day at Ag Legislative Day.

IAFE Is in San Antonio November 25-28

"FIRST IMPRESSIONS" is the theme for this year's IAFE Conference and Trade Show which will be held in San Antonio.

The event will be held from November 25-28th. Those of you who have attended IAFE know that all attendees leave with many new impressions of how to make their fair better and perhaps even fantastic.

Part of this experience comes from other fairs sharing their success stories via various contests. If your fair is an IAFE member, please consider submitting your unique experience of success in one or more of over 50 different categories.

The categories include various communication categories from advertising, websites social media, and other new technologies. There is a contest called "Agriculture Awards" which relates to how fairs successfully promote agriculture and agriculture competitions in unique and innovative ways.

Another contest area with 15 divisions recognizes various other awards, exhibits and contests which fairs do-- Like a "Create on the Spot" contest or special participatory contests. There are classes of competition for sponsorship, inauguration, sponsorship innovation, and sponsorship continuity. To make

these contests even more meaningful and useful, most have sub-categories for fairs of various sizes.

Those attending will also have the opportunity and the thrill of a lifetime as they experience an unreal group of speakers, a fantastic trade show and an opportunity to network with other fair-minded people from all over North America.

Entry information for any of the contests and conference registration is available at www.fairsandexpos.com.

(Note contest winners do not have to be represented to win but attendance at the convention is encouraged.)



Ask Governor to Release Rehab Funds

IAAF officials and legislators held a Statehouse Press Conference March 8 to call on Governor Bruce Rauner to release fair rehab funds. Those attending are pictured above, left to right, Rep. Mike Halpin (D-Rock Island), Rep. Steven Reick (R-Woodstock), Sandy Moore, Marvin Perzee, Rita Williams (Mercer County Fair), Margaret Vaughn, Rep. Tom Bennett (R-Gibson City), Tom Moore and Ken Tyrrell.



**Illinois
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IAAF OFFICE
1400 Mound Ave.
Jacksonville, IL 62650

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