



Illinois
Association
of
Agricultural
Fairs

October 2018

TentTalk

Jay Harris Is Named Fair Person of Year

Jay Harris of Alexander has been active in the Morgan County Fair in Jacksonville since he was eight years old. He showed sheep as his 4-H project and loved to participate in the fair's various activities.

As an adult, Harris began volunteering at the fair working in the pavilion, selling tickets and helping with tractor pulls. As soon as he could, he became a board member and his involvement grew into helping prepare the grounds for the fair, becoming superintendent of the sheep show and helping with daily activities. He has served on the fair board 10 years, serving as vice president and for the past four years, president.

In his term as president, Harris has been instrumental in helping make significant improvement to the grounds including upgrades in electricity, drainage, renovations to the Grandstand, a new poultry building and improvements to the 4-H building.

"I wanted to make the grounds something Morgan County could be proud of and that the community could utilize all year round," said Harris. "But it wasn't just me. I worked with lots of great volunteers."

Harris has also strengthened relationships with local community organizations and has encouraged their involvement in the fair. The local Rotary Club partnered with the fair and built a pavilion that serves as a gathering place.

"Jay's ability to lead the fair board and all the other volunteers is apparent and his drive, dedication

and work ethic is contagious," said Tamara Robinson, fair secretary. "He deserves every bit of recognition he is getting."

Besides his work as Fair Board President, Harris helped bring back agriculture equipment to the Illinois State Fair, and he has served on the

Morgan County FSA County Committee for nine years. He is also a supporter of the 4-H Foundation.

"I believe in the positive impact that participating in 4-H has on youth," said Harris, who serves as vice president of the Morgan County 4-H Foundation.



Illinois County Fair Person of the Year Jay Harris is pictured with Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner during the Illinois State Fair and the special wooden plaque presented to him in honor of his years of service to the Morgan County Fair.

The President's Pen

Hello from southern Illinois.

We have had a wonderful year for our fairs, thanks to great weather and great support from our legislators. Our Illinois legislators, Gov. Rauner and the Illinois Department of Agriculture has granted \$54,000 to 94 Premium Fairs in the state for rehab for County fairgrounds.

We are so grateful.

The checks should be issued to fairs by November or December of this year. What a boost for our fairs!

This summer I got to travel to several of the county fairs in the state and enjoyed several livestock shows at the Fisher Community Fair, and Perry, Richland, Schuyler and Edwards county fairs.

I also had the opportunity to meet Gov. Rauner and present a plaque to him on behalf of all the fairs for his unparalleled support. We also want to thank Illinois Director of Agriculture Raymond Poe for his support.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everyone for the prayers,



James Walsh

our annual convention, Jan. 18-20 in January at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. Make plans now to attend and renew friendships.

President

concern and flowers the IAAF sent me while I was ill. One of the strengths of our organization is the incredible friendships that are made with other county fair people. I look forward to seeing everyone at

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

Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs

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Jill Hardesty (Central Zone)	Farmer City
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Jack Ratcliffe (Northern Zone)	Belvidere

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www.IllinoisCountyFairs.org

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Jacksonville, IL 62650
815-692-2400

Attend Your Fall Zone Meetings

The annual fall Zone meetings are here! Will you be attending? Please attend your respective IAAF Zone meetings this fall. They are:

Central Zone - October 28th at the Crowne Plaza, Springfield

Northern Zone - November 4th at Pitstick Pavillion, Ottawa

Southern Zone - November 11th at the Marion County Fairgrounds in

Salem.

Everyone learns something at these events and we welcome you to attend!

Come and see your queens, some vendors on site and some awesome entertainment available to book for your fair.

There will be plenty of friends there and a lot of things to discuss.

Plan on Attending Roundtable Discussions

Attention all fair board members!

You are cordially invited to attend the roundtable discussions that will be held at the IAAF State Convention in Springfield. A morning Breakfast sandwich and drink will be provided by our sponsor at the meeting. These sessions are so much more informative with everyone's input!

If you have a topic that you wish to be considered to be discussed, please contact Central Zone Director Jill Hardesty (jill.hardesty@frontier.com or cell phone 217-841-3487). She will also be at all three Zone meetings this fall asking for topics of discussion and moderators.

We'll see you in Springfield!

Innovations and Traditions Is Theme

You won't want to miss the 2019 IAAF Convention. We've got a theme certain to help you with your fair next summer – blending timeless traditions at your fair with new innovations.

Your attendance at the 2019 IAAF Conference is the first step toward creating a better fair. The programming, speakers and trade show will jump start you to success. The Saturday morning speaker is Mark Mayfield, comedian, speaker and former president of the National FFA. He was raised on a hog and cattle operation, taught high school agriculture, was the Farm Bureau's National Discussion Meet winner and lobbied for agriculture in Washington, D.C. He now travels the country speaking to groups. He is the author of several books and has shared the stage with Paul Newman, Peter Frampton, Colin Powell and Bob Newhart. You won't want to miss his presentation.

In addition to the Saturday morning breakfast, the Trade Show is shaping up to be bigger than ever. We're also making plans for the Friday evening Showcase, and Tom Schraher will be there proving that wine and ice cream really do go together. We've also got several new topics for our Sunday Roundtables.

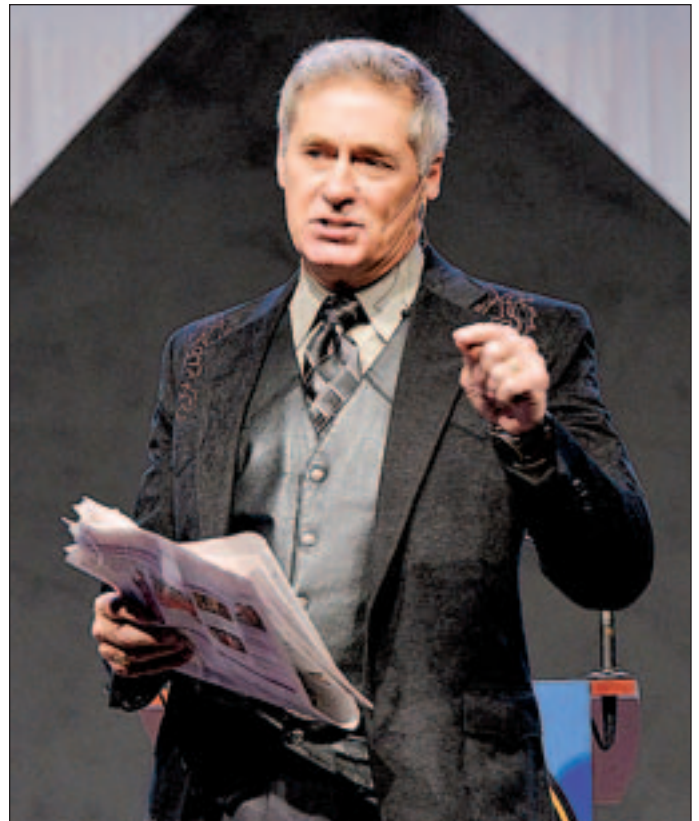
The dates for the 2019 convention are Jan. 18-20.

IAAF Membership and Convention packets will be sent out to a contact person at your fair or your associate business in mid-October. Included is renewal membership information and basic convention registration materials, including breakfast ticket requests and hotel reservation forms. Association packets also include sponsorship opportunities as well as trade show and Showcase opportunities. When returning the materials, please make sure that all contact information relating to names, addresses, email and website information is correct.

Thank you for your continued support of Illinois fairs.

If you have questions, be sure and contact me by email (charfarg@aol.com) or by cell, 217-553-1120.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in January!



Former National FFA President, agriculture lobbyist and comedian Mark Mayfield is the 2019 IAAF Convention speaker on Saturday morning. His presentation will invigorate you and help you become more involved in your county fair.

Summer Is Ending for Bureau of Fairs

Summer is ending, and the fair season is passing us by for another year. As I learned this year the job is never done. It just starts over for next year's fair.

I would like to thank all the fair boards and all the volunteers that make the Illinois County Fairs such a success each year.

At the County Fair Day at the Illinois State Fair this year, Jay Harris of Morgan County was named County Fair Person of the Year. Congrats to Jay.

As most of you know I came to the Bureau of County Fairs and Horse Racing this year. I was able to

attend some of the county fairs this year and meet a lot of you. I look forward to attending the state convention next year in January.

Reminder to the fairs of upcoming dates:

Premium Grand Summary Reports are due October 15th

Fairs & Expositions are due by December 31st

Fair Declarations of Intent are due December 31st

Remember that every fair is important. This is where we start new farmers or getting our young people interested in agriculture. Great Job!

Tim Norman
Bureau Staff
Tim Norman
217/785-0110

Kelly Beck
217/524-0106
Mike Foster
217/524-0666

Need Address Changes

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

If you are responsible for your fair directors' listings, please forward any new address changes.

Please send all updates to:
IAAFOffice@illinoiscountyfairs.org
or to IAAF Office, 1400 Mound Ave., Jacksonville, IL 62650.

There Were Lots of Activities and Events at Illinois County Fairs During Fair Season



Little Miss Okaville enjoyed the fair.



Washington County Fair in Nashville was the recipient of a grant for a new ticket booth for the Grandstand. The booth was partially funded through the Washington County Farm Bureau. The county farm bureau offers a Community Impact Grant, which helps fund projects in the county. The fair was grateful to be a recipient. In the picture, front, l-r, Denise McClay, Dave Hake and Roger Grete. Back, Jeff Jacobs, Ross Schomaker, Steve Launis, David Rybacki and state Rep. Charlie Meier.



Queen Samantha Haselbring with future queens.



IAAF members came out to support Rep. Tom Bennett at his recent fundraiser held in Gibson City. From left to right: Rick and Jill Hardesty, Margaret Vaughn, Rep. Bennett and Marv and Sharon Perzee. Thanks to all the IAAF members who for their generosity in supporting Rep. Bennett's event.



Governor Bruce Rauner was honored for his help in getting additional funding for Illinois County Fairs during the Menard County Fair in Petersburg.

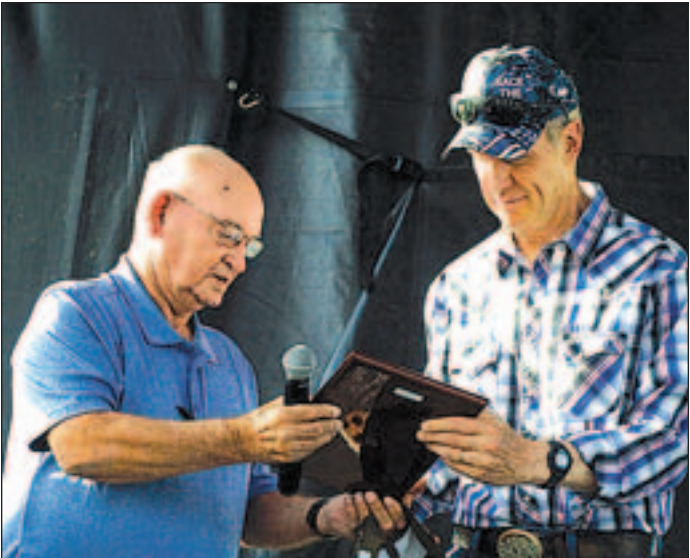
Fair Season Is the Best Time of the Year and We All Are Young Again!



Our Illinois County Fair Queens believe in celebrating the best of our United States of America.



Past IAAF president Bill Redshaw was honored at the Schuyler County Fair for his 50 years of service as a board member and volunteer. Illinois Agriculture Director Raymond Poe presented Redshaw with the award.



IAAF President James Walsh traveled to the Menard County Fair to give a plaque thanking Gov. Bruce Rauner for his help in securing an additional \$54,000 to Premium Fairs throughout the state. The IAAF and its members are very grateful.

Legislative Update by Margaret Vaughn

IAAF SEPT 2018 Update
by Margaret Vaughn

GOVERNOR AGREES TO ALLOW REHAB & \$5 MILLION in ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR PREMIUM FAIRS TO SPENT

After a press conference at the Capitol, letters from legislators, hearings, a personal meeting with the Governor (arranged by Rep. Bennett), months of lobbying, as well as an outpouring of support from IAAF members, the Governor's Office of Budget and Management finally agreed to reinstate that the \$1.6 million in Rehab funding for FY18.

Then in June, the Governor announced that the additional \$5 million which the General Assembly had appropriated to county fairs in the FY18 budget would also be allowed to be spent. This equates \$54,347.82 per premium fair.

This additional money can't be spent on prize money for agricultural competitions or purses, but can be used for any kind of operational expenses, rehab to the fair grounds, insurance, etc.

There is NO TIME LIMIT (it can be spread out over years) for when the money can be spent but you just must include HOW it was spent in your annual October reports to the Dept of Agriculture.

If you use it for rehab, you can include it in your rehab receipts which you submit to the state every June and you will be reimbursed for a portion of it. To make it easier for record keeping, IAAF recommends that you keep this additional funding in a separate bank account.

BUT WHEN WE WILL RECEIVE OUR FUNDING?

The Department of Agriculture recently finished processing the vouchers for the \$54 347.82 and had they are now at the Comptroller's office.

The Department of Agriculture is still working on the Rehab vouchers but hopes to have them to the

Comptroller's office shortly.

We have made tremendous progress since last January on these funding issues so please bear with us and continue to be patient.

Everything in government still has to go through a process, even after it gets the green light at the top and that is the point we are at right now.

We will continue to keep you informed and appreciate your support!

IAAF THANKS LEGISLATORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT

IAAF would like to thank the dozens of legislators who signed Rep. Bennett's letter urging the Governor to release the rehab funding and a special thanks to Rep. Mike Halpin (D-Rock Island), Rep. Steve Reick (R-Woodstock) for coming to our press conference; Sen. Chapin Rose (R-Mahomet) and Rep. Dan Burke (D-Chicago) for helping with the Comptroller's office over the spring; and House Minority Leader Jim Durkin (R-Western Springs) for making the reinstatement of the county fair funding a priority of his Caucus.

REP. TOM BENNETT RECEIVES 2018 IAAF LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Though IAAF greatly appreciates the support many individual legislators have given us, as well as the entire General Assembly for passing a budget with friendly to fairs, Rep. Tom Bennett (R-Gibson City) really lead the fight on our behalf this year.

He worked tirelessly for us (many times strategizing late nights and weekends) and never gave up. On July 18th at the Iroquois County Fair, Marv Perzee, Ken Tyrrell and Bill Redshaw presented Rep. Bennett with the 2018 IAAF Legislator of the Year Award.

AGREEMENT REACHED on CARNIVAL WORKER BACKGROUND CHECK BILL

SB 3240 which raises the penalties if background checks are not performed on carnival workers (meaning ride operators and assistants) was signed by the Governor and goes into effect in January. The bill does NOT expand the type or worker who needs a background check.



Crowns and queens at Illinois County Fair Day



Harris Honored

Gov. Bruce Rauner, Jay Harris and members of the Morgan County Fair Board and family members at County Fair Day at the Illinois State Fair.

County Fair Award Winners Recognized



Board member Bill Jennings, left, and Margaret Vaughn were on hand at County Fair Day to honor the county fair board members who were recognized for their many years of service to their fairs.

Congratulations to all the award winners . . . for their years of service to their county fairs.

Thanks to all for their dedication and commitment to our county fairs.

20 years—Rick Miller, Western Illinois Fair Association; Jim Curtin, Christian County Ag Fair

Association; Jeremy Wilson, Christian County Ag Fair Association; Curt Micenheimer, Christian County Ag Fair Association; Alan Fulk, Christian County Ag Fair Association; Kay Sprouls, Georgetown Ag Fair Association; Marty Pierceson, Whiteside County Central Ag Society; Rod Rumbold, Marshall-Putnam Fair Association; Joe Redshaw, Schuyler County Fair & Livestock Show; Bruce Wilson, Schuyler County Fair & Livestock Show; Lisa Schwarze, Monroe County Fair & Ag Association; Jay Nadler, Will County Fair Association;

30 years—Bill Clow, Richland County Farm & Fair Association; Richard Childers, Brown County Fair Association; Tom Parker, Brown County Fair Association; Richard Gowin, Jersey County Fair Association; Karen Mullins, Georgetown Ag Fair Association; Mark Brangenberg, Calhoun County Fair Association; Larry Wieneke, Calhoun County Fair Association; Steve Quillen, Schuyler County Fair & Livestock Show;

40 years—Ed Teefey, Brown County Fair Association; Mary Lou Wright, Edgar County Fair Association; Mike Blieler, Christian County Ag Fair Association; Paul Vock, Whiteside County Central Ag Society; Dan Heusinkveld, Whiteside County Central Ag Society; Ron Meyer, Will County Fair Association

IN MEMORIAM

Eddie Lacey, 83 of Mount Vernon died Sept. 13, 2018. He was born Nov. 14, 1934 in Jefferson County to the late Quentin McCullough and Maxine (Fox) Lacey. Eddie married Dorothy (Martin) Lacey on Oct. 21, 1956 in Sesser. In addition to his wife, Eddie is survived by his children, Rick (wife Marla) of Mount Vernon and daughter, Jennifer Morris of DuBois.

Eddie was a farmer at Green Hills Farm, where he was a second generation showman of Ayrshire cattle. He also worked as a jailer for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. He enjoyed racing Thoroughbred and Harness horses.

Randall Bunger, 69, of Belvidere, died June 24, 2018. Born July 28, 1948, son of Herbert and Alvina Boomgarden Bunger. His survived by his wife, Ruth (Roettger), whom he married July 25, 1970 in Pecatonica, and their children, John, Rosco and Adam.

Randy farmed all his life until early retirement due to a tractor accident. He was a member of Big Thunder Grange and served on the Boone County Fair Board. He was an active

member of the Belvidere Moose Club. His character can be traced back as far as his childhood where he nursed a sick calf back to health. He was the type of person who would drop everything if you needed him to help.

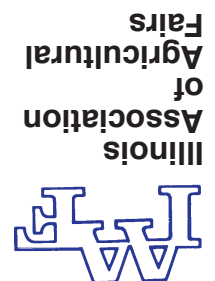
Lewis "Brum" R. DeGraff, 87, died Friday August 17, 2018. He was born May 23, 1931 in Freeport the son of Lewis W. and Flora (Russell) DeGraff. On June 16, 1957 he married Betty Young in Forreston. Lewis was a 1949 graduate of Forreston High School and in 1953 earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from Iowa State University. Upon graduation, Lewis returned home to work on the farm and later in the insurance business. His job titles included Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Illinois Beef Industry Council and Executive Vice President, Illinois Livestock Association.

Lewis' organizational affiliations included Trinity Lutheran Church, Lanark Masonic Lodge, Freeport Scottish Rite Bodies, Rockford Tebala Shrine, Carroll County Farm Bureau, Illinois Angus Association, American Angus Association and Northern

Illinois Angus Association.

His leadership activities included Carroll County Fair Beef Cattle Superintendent and President, Mid Continent Livestock Exposition Director, National Beef Promotion Advisory Committee Member, Carroll County Livestock Feeders Association President, Carroll County Agricultural Extension Council Chairman, Illinois Young Famers Advisory Council Vice Chairman, Iowa State University Judging Team Reunion Alumni Co-Chairman, Illinois Agricultural Legislative Breakfast Chairman, Northern Illinois Angus Association Director, Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs Public Relations Director, Illinois State Fair Auction Committee Member, Carroll County Fair President and Beef Superintendent, Jo-Carroll Shrine Club Director and American Royal Inter-collegiate Livestock Judging Contest Staff Official.

Lewis is survived by his wife Betty of Lanark, IL; daughter Deborah (Steve) Edwards of Salisbury, MO; brother David (Carol) DeGraff of Hot Springs Village, AR; and two sisters Lucia Griffith of Indianola, IA and Denise Lane of Farmington, IL.



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