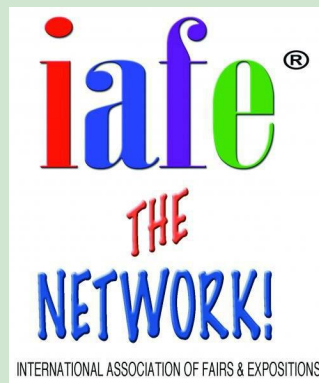




MAAF NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER
2024

Issue #6



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE BARRY W. NORRIS

Well, the fair season is behind us for another year. In my travels all of the fairs were a success this year, weather being a factor to some but over all I'm real proud of the events that were on display. Hearing great feed back from the "Meet Our Farmer" programs that many of the fairs participated in. Great work keeping the fair goers engaged in agricultural. Can't wait for the 2025 program.

Update on the "Cares Act", it seems the committee has taken a new approach in an attempt in getting this before Congress. The group was in D.C. meeting with policy makers rather than the legislators. Thanks to the OABA and the IAFE for keeping this issue in the forefront.

Remember the January conference runs from the 24th - 26th with activities each day. The MAAF board meeting will be on Thursday the 23rd. at 7:00 PM for anyone wishing to attend. **EXCITING NEWS:** Your MAAF board has been working hard keeping attendee costs down. Room rate at Sable Oaks's will be \$119. plus, tax and banquet tickets will be \$40. Remember the conference is FREE. The conference program and schedule will be published the second week of December.

As a reminder, the Zone 1 meeting (hosted by Maine and New Hampshire) is scheduled for May 1st-4th 2025. It's looking like the program is on point and the event will be ending at the Hopkinton Fair grounds with a BBQ. Please mark your calendar and support this event.

On December 31st IAFE President and CEO Marla Calico will be retiring. I would like thank her for her influence not only on the fair communities nationally, but here in the State of Maine. We have been blessed with her wisdom many times at our conferences, she even had a helicopter ride over Fryeburg fair and participated in the memorable skillet toss. Hopefully she'll return to Maine in her retirement and visit some of our fairs. Good luck and God speed, Marla. - **Barry**





MEET OUR FARMERS & SHOP WITH THEM!



The MAAF Agricultural Challenge Theme for 2024 has been Meet Our Farmers. Our newsletter has introduced you to women farmers, farm families, farm stands, farmers markets and a wide variety of other opportunities to meet our amazing Maine farmers. You have seen that our Maine farmers are busy year round, and when the holidays arrive these farmers often expand to offer Christmas trees, cider/apples, homemade fudge, maple syrup and so much more. You may have had an opportunity to meet some of our farmers in person as they

offered workshops at Maine agricultural fairs this past fair season. Perhaps your local farmers will be setting up at a nearby Holiday Craft Fair...

As you make your gift lists, consider shopping with a farmer - either purchasing a product, or perhaps a gift certificate. Enjoy the holidays and we look forward to seeing you at the fairs in 2025!





SAVE THE DATES & IMPORTANT INFO!

December 1-4, 2024 [IAFE Annual Convention and Trade Show](#), Building On Strong Foundations, Phoenix, AZ

NOTE: There will be eleven attendees traveling from Maine to attend the IAFE Convention in Tucson, Arizona. One member from Blue Hill Fair, two members from Fryeburg Fair, four members from Harmony Free Fair, one member from Skowhegan Fair, 2 members from Union Fair and two members from Waterford World's Fair. We are looking forward to sharing our Maine programs while also learning from others across the country.

January 14-16, 2025 - [Maine Agricultural Trade Show](#), Augusta, ME

January 24 - 26, 2025 - [MAAF](#) Annual Conference, Sable Oaks, Portland, ME - A full conference schedule will be sent out in early December

Please contact [Liz Chaisson](#) ASAP if you are the contact for your fair for information on the Fair Queens and Princesses Sunday morning breakfast at the January conference.

We will be updating displays for the [2025 MAAF Conference](#). Please email [Erik Fitch](#) three pictures representing your fair this season to be compiled for our annual "showcasing of fairs" held during the banquet.

[Rising Star application](#) from fairs - deadline January 1st.

May 1-4, 2025 - [IAFE Zone 1 Conference](#) - Concord, NH. Watch for more information.

Please send the following info and photos to [Junia](#) to update the January MAAF conference displays - contact info and photos for Demo derby, Mud Runs, Rock Crawl and Woodsmen's Day/Lumberjack Roundup events.

MAAF BOARD OF DIRECTOR OPENINGS

The following openings for the



MAAF Board of Directors are as follows:

Second Vice President
Director (3 year term)
Director (3 year term)

Here is the [Nomination form](#)

THESE SHOES WILL BE HARD TO FILL HOWARD HATCH FRYEBURG FAIR'S FIRE TOWER



“Back in the day” residents of rural communities were known for their commitment to each other, for their resiliency, hard work and common sense. This section of our final 2024 MAAF newsletter combines two of our usual features - history and an outstanding fair member - to highlight an unusual aspect of the Fryeburg fairgrounds.

Should you travel to the Fryeburg fairgrounds, and enter through the Blue Gate (aka the Livestock Gate), head towards the Natural Resource

center and there - you may be greeted by Howard R. Hatch. Most likely he will be seated on a bench, located at the base of the tower sharing memories of the involvement of his family from the early 1900's through to Howard's position as the supervisor of the replica of the Kearsarge (North) fire tower. The tower, with its tall steeple proudly keeping watch over the White Mountain National Forest, draws you to its base, and Howard keeps you there with his voluminous knowledge of the history of the citizens who made the commitment to put public safety front and center for the surrounding towns.

Neal Crouse, Howard's grandfather, was a volunteer for a total of 41 years and also worked for the Forest Service as a warden from 1929 - 1961. In 1934, Neal also worked as a supervisor with the CCC. The family's commitment continued on with Fred A. Hatch as warden (1961-1971) and then to Harold (1972-1985) and Howard who worked for the Forest Service from 1961-1994. The days of volunteers manning the local fire lookout tower volunteer have dwindled. Out of over 100 fire towers there are only 55 remaining, and of those only two are considered active. Helicopters and drones have taken the place of the lookout but taking a tour around the tower will introduce you to the complex, scientific nature of the role of the fire wardens.

Start your tour sitting next to Howard, who will explain the critical nature of the responsibilities of the fire lookout. Mostly men held this position, but during WWII women stepped up to fill the role and keep their towns and villages safe from fire. Browse through the photo albums that share the challenges, tragedies and fire stops that were made possible by these men and women. Take a peek inside the Forest Warden box (cache) aka "The Box" whose contents were selected during the CCC years to outfit an eight man crew. As Howard explained the purpose behind each tool, he also pointed out the map that highlighted every fire tower in Maine.

Walk up the steep flight of stairs, past a life-sized statue of Smokey Bear and enter the second level/platform of the tower. Located in the center of the floor is the Osborne Range Finder. Looking similar to a giant compass, this device was used by fire lookouts to plot a directional bearing to sighted smoke in order to alert fire crews to a wildland land fire. The fire crew would see a lightning strike/smoke plume, plot it and then watch it for 3-5 days. Originally invented in 1840 by Sir Francis Ronalds to help combat fires in London, it was redesigned in the early 1900's by William Osborne, a United States Forest Service employee in Portland, Oregon. Many of these Osborne fire finders were manufactured from 1920 through 1935, and deemed critical pieces of equipment for all fire towers. Another use for this piece of equipment was in search and rescue operations using two-way radios and using the radio in the tower as the base to plot a location. The glass windows that surround the room are made with metal sash to insure that the glass panes would not blow out during high winds.

Across the room is a crank telephone, connected to a party line. While you are standing there, sign the guest book and take a quick peek, if the weather is clear, to search for Portland Harbor. As you stand with Howard, and hear of the many responsibilities for the person on duty, he will explain that the usual time shift was 3-5 days. He will explain Hazardous Duty Pay and the USFS pay scale - assuming that you were on staff, and not a volunteer. The tower that you are standing in is a replica built in 2009 by Fryeburg Fair, with a face lift in 2012.

Now, pause and remember reading on the ground level of the tower the newspaper coverage of the Great Fire of 1947. In 1947, Maine suffered its largest fire fighting disaster in modern history. After over 90 consecutive days of record breaking high temperatures and drought, many small wildfires started and spread out of control. Fires ranged from Portland, York County and Wells, across the state and including 17,188 acres on Mount Desert Island. Statewide over 220,000 acres burned, 1,070 homes were destroyed, 2,500 people were left homeless and 16 people were declared dead. Gusty winds drove flames across nine communities, destroying and seriously damaging four more. Maine's forest fire control division learned new ways to fight fires including improved radio communications and the creation of state of the art equipment. Maine fire wardens and volunteer/career fire departments agreed to open fire towers that had been closed for the season.

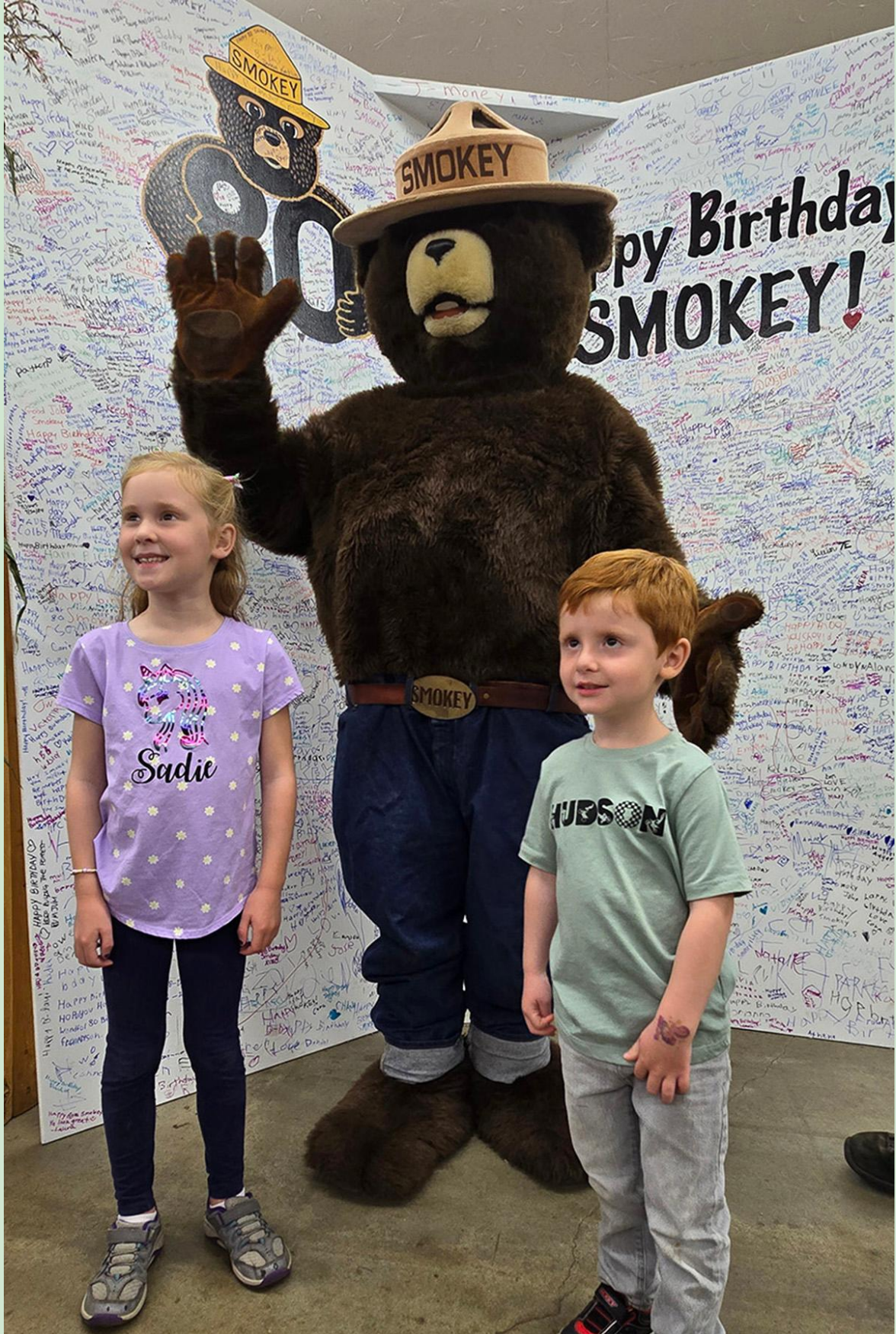
Overall the role of the Maine fire towers was critical in observing and tracking the destructive path of these fires.

So, thank you Howard R. Hatch, for your years of active fire service to Maine, her forests and families. Thank you for your years of diligently gathering, cataloging, labeling and capturing the essence of life in a Maine fire tower. Thank you for recreating the atmosphere and the starkness of the position, and the importance of the commitment. Thank you for welcoming guests, alongside your fellow team members Kenny Corrock and Charlie Birch, and taking countless hours to introduce folks to the critical nature of the job. For sure, “Your firefighter boots will be hard to fill!”

** Museums reflect what was important, unique and necessary in a community. There is often a sense of commonality throughout the presentation. Previously, we highlighted the Dover-Foxcroft Fire Department Museum showcasing firefighting equipment from the late 1800's to present day. In the 2025 newsletters, we will introduce you to the Moxie Museum on the Union Fairgrounds, the Oxford Fair museum, the Cumberland Fair and Farm Museum “area” and the Windsor Historical Society area on the Windsor Fairgrounds.



Fryeburg Fair's Fire Tower Crew - Charlie Birch, Steve Salo, Kenny Corrock & Howard Hatch-Superintendent



MAAF FOUNDATION END OF YEAR CHARITABLE DONATIONS EDITORIAL COMMENT: JUNIA NORRIS

As 2024 comes to a close, many Maine charitable *non-profit* organizations are reaching out to remind their

members/supporters of the important nature of their work. The academic scholarships that are offered through the MAAF Foundation provide a much needed boost to young men and women who are choosing to pursue a career in agriculture. Let me take you back for a look at the history of this scholarship program - back to the year that Fred Lunt generously donated the winnings from his 50-50 ticket; back to the many years that Katie Damen and Roger Hoffses stood beside the "golden ticket drum" and gratefully placed your tickets inside; back to the years that the crew of "pink ladies" made the long drive from Dover Foxcroft to sell 50-50 tickets during the Windsor Fair harness races; and to countless volunteers who sat at a table in the hallway at Sable Oaks next to Hope Ricker as she encouraged you to buy tickets and, recently, to bid high and often at the MAAF auction. Everyone of these fair folks knew the importance of helping Maine students to achieve their goals in studying agriculture. As an elementary school teacher for close to 50 years now, I have seen the impact that receiving a scholarship has on a senior in high school, especially one who has been a member of our fair family. I encourage you to support the work of the MAAF Foundation this season by sending your donation to:

MAAF Foundation
 % Hope Ricker
 8 Caston Road
 Pittston, Maine 04345

Thank you for your time.



LIBRARY PAST MAAF E-NEWSLETTER ISSUES

[2020-July/August](#)
[2020-September/October](#)
[2020-November/December](#)
[2021-January/February](#)
[2021-March/April](#)
[2021-May/June](#)
[2021-July/August](#)
[2021-September/October](#)
[2021-September/October](#)
[Addendum](#)
[2021-November/December](#)

[2022-January](#)
[2022-February](#)
[2022-March/April](#)
[2022-May/June](#)
[2022-July/August](#)
[2022-September/October](#)
[2022-November/December](#)
[2023-January](#)
[2023-March](#)
[2023-May](#)
[2023-July](#)
[2023-September](#)
[2023-November/December](#)

[2024-January/February](#)
[2024-March/April](#)
[2024 May/June](#)
[2024 July/August](#)
[2024 September/October](#)

Forward to your Friends so they can receive the MAAF Newsletter! New subscribers CLICK HERE!



[Subscribe to the MAAF Newsletter!](#)



MAAF | PO Box 786 | Augusta, ME 04332 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!