



MAAF NEWSLETTER

2020 - ISSUE #6

NOVEMBER 2020



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT Barry W. Norris



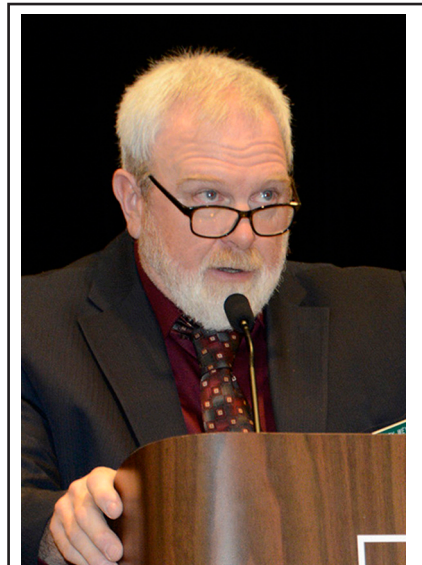
*Barry W. Norris
Executive Director*

As we enter the fall season, I want to take a moment to recognize the fairs who took the COVID-19 crisis summer months to:

- Work** on their fairgrounds with beautification projects and upgrading their infrastructure;
- Support** local food and craft vendors who have provided vital support to each fair for years;
- Design**, create and implement a virtual fair;
- Partner** with local livestock leaders to offer 4-H /Youth auctions in several locations statewide; and
- Retool** longstanding events to conform to statewide protocols in order to offer fairgoers a semblance of normalcy.

Congratulations to all who faced the challenges and continued to put forth a fair presence in your community!

In Maine, I have been working with industry leaders and OTBs to draft a sports wagering bill. On a national level, the Maine Congressional delegation has offered support for the Agricultural Fairs Rescue Act (HR7883) which,



*Rusty Weymouth
MAAF President
rweymouth@mainstream.us
Piscataquis Valley Fair
President & active member for
38 years.*

"My favorite part of the fair, the motorized events! Our whole family is involved in this part of the fair, starting as little kids with the pedal tractor pulls, then garden tractors, farm tractors and more."



*Mike Timmons
MAAF First Vice President
mjtimmmons942@aol.com
Started coming to Cumberland Fair at 13 years old; served 15 years as fair president; Director of harness racing Chairman of the Maine Harness Racing Commission
"My favorite part of the fair is 4-H. The leaders and kids. I had a great 4-H leader, Bob Stiles, and he helped me become involved with the fair. When kids join 4-H they are a part of the fair activity and gradually take on more and more responsibility. Also, I really enjoy our Exhibition Hall. Carolyn Small and her group work hard every year to showcase so many aspects of agriculture. I consider her hall in the top group of our Maine fair exhibition halls. "*

when passed, will "establish a program at the USDA to make available grants to states that will provide support to agricultural fairs for losses sustained by fairs due to COVID-19." The outlook for this legislation is promising, and I encourage you to contact your senators and representatives to further promote its passage. Thank you for all your support as we work to make the best decisions possible for our fair families.

MAAF 2021 CONFERENCE - SAVE THE DATE

**Saturday, January 23, 2021
(Snow date-January 24)
at the Senator Inn and Spa,
284 Western Avenue, Augusta, ME
Gathering at 11:00 AM, Lunch at noon
followed by speaker (TBA)
Annual Meeting at 2 PM**

Due to current COVID-19 protocols, the number of attendees are limited to 80. Meeting available by livestream. Preliminary planning includes an opportunity for those interested in the open board positions to meet with the nominating committee.

Hot Lunch Buffet
\$24/person includes taxes and gratuity
Sautéed Chicken Breast in a White Wine Cream Sauce
Senator Meatloaf with gravy
Five Grain Rice Medley, Maple Carrots
Cole Slaw & Potato Salad
Pickles & Olives
Caesar Salad & Chef's Choice Bread
Dessert Bakery Squares
Carrabassett Coffee, Milk or Iced Tea



2020 RISING STAR AWARD

The 2020 Rising Star Award nominations must be received by January 1, 2021. Please consider nominating a young person that has been outstanding in their commitment and service to your fair. Refer to the nomination form on the MAAF website for more information. The Rising Star recipients from 2010 through 2019 will be recognized in the January issue of the MAAF newsletter.



MAAF BOARD OPENINGS - APPLY!

There are two board openings to be voted on during the annual meeting. One position represents a pari-mutuel fair, and the second position represents a non pari-mutuel fair. Please refer to the nomination form on the MAAF website for more information.



IAFE 2021 CONFERENCE GOES VIRTUAL

“It is with saddened hearts that we announce the cancellation of the 2020 Annual IAFE Convention” was the recent posting from the IAFE headquarters. However, the convention will be available virtually, offering virtual networking and educational opportunities. This will be easy to watch / participate on any computer and most mobile devices. The new slogan is IAFE 2020: Virtual Vision and will be live between November 30th and December 1st. More information is available on the IAFE website - www.fairsandexpos.com.



FRYEBURG'S VIRTUAL FAIR 2020 - A CHANGE OF PLAN

In early spring, Fryeburg Fair, along with many other fairs across the country, speculated that we may not be able to hold the Fair. We talked about how we could fill the void and keep our Fryeburg Fair fans engaged.

A few of us attended a webinar about virtual fairs and began researching how this could work. The webinar was sponsored by the IAFE, and Clay County Agricultural Fair in Florida who had conducted a virtual fair event themselves. We attended several other online meetings and seminars about virtual events before going forward.

A committee was formed and we met regularly to review ideas that were gained from research. We asked departments to get involved. Together we developed a vision and it began taking shape.

The Fair invested in some additional software to create and edit videos as well as a graphic program for the many contests, vendor marketplace displays and Facebook posts.

Notices went out to all our department heads and our vendors describing our plan and asking them for their participation. Many departments sent in videos of demonstrations, tours of their departments and educational videos explaining preparation, processes, or judging of their events.

We began creating content and contest graphics, entry forms, promotional materials, virtual vendor marketplace graphics and displays, searching for and editing past video footage, creating and editing new video footage of personal interviews with fair associates, exhibitors, vendors, competitors and demonstrators. Many hours were spent on all aspects of this virtual event.

During the week of the virtual fair we set up a control center to schedule and monitor posts and contests and to respond to the public. Our virtual fair turned out great and viewers were very receptive and appreciative. It was a valuable learning experience for all who were involved. We gained some great material especially video footage which will benefit the fair in the future. Stay safe and be well. David Andrews, General Superintendent, Fryeburg Fair



Fryeburg's Virtual Fair continues to be available for viewing on their website www.fryeburgfair.org & Facebook page!



COMMON GROUND'S VIRTUAL FAIR

COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR



CELEBRATE RURAL LIVING WITH MOFGA
SEPTEMBER 25, 26 & 27, 2020
UNITY, MAINE
GATES OPEN AT 9:00 AM
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
P.O. Box 170, Unity, Maine 04988 • 207-568-4142 • mofga.org
Illustration by Jay Gosselin • Printed by Granite County Publishing Company

The Maine Organic Farmers & Gardeners' Common Ground Fair, with headquarters in Unity, Maine, designed, created and presented a Virtual Agricultural Fair on September 25, 26 and 27. "Celebrating Rural Living at Home" was their slogan. Throughout the three days of the fair, music and diverse workshops focusing on organic farming techniques were live streamed. Great news - these workshops continue to be available for viewing on their website at www.fair.mofga.org!



Common Ground offers a map for virtual viewers to use to find areas of interest - still available at www.fair.mofga.org

