



MAAF Newsletter



2020 Issue #3

May 10, 2020



Executive Director's Report - Barry W. Norris

Our March issue of the MAAF newsletter focused on the January conference and the early stages of planning for 2021. On March 12, Maine Governor Janet Mills announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19, and the resulting public health and safety measures have had a significant impact on our agricultural fairs.

March 18th we attended the first IAFE ZOOM meeting with state and provincial associations to discuss the impact of COVID-19 throughout the country, Canada and Australia. We have since forwarded all IAFE updates and critical information to all Maine fair presidents.

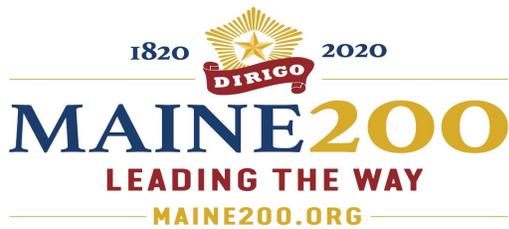
Shortly after, on April 4th, we began implementing Saturday morning video conference meetings (ZOOM) with fair presidents and/or their appointed representatives to discuss the impact of the virus on their individual fairs, and Maine fairs in general. Among the topics discussed have been:

- The CARES Act
- The critical nature of updating fair partners (carnivals/vendors/entertainment)
- Video auction possibilities for youth livestock
- Contacting Congressional representatives to inquire about federal monies to support fairs

We have been working with several different groups:

- MAAF IT committee members to develop a webinar for all fairs on how to hold a virtual fair.
- Maine Beef Producers representative Dana Brown, Dr. Colt Knight (UMaine Extension Livestock Specialist), and Sadee Mehuren (4-H Youth Development Professional) to facilitate youth auctions should fairs postpone their previously scheduled event.
- Maine Harness Racing staff regarding events surrounding the loss of race dates due to parimutuel fairs postponing.
- IAFE IT and YPI representatives who are working to put together a virtual Zone 1 meeting on May 21st. They have been in contact with, and encouraged by, Kathy Hunter, Zone 1 representative to the IAFE.

On May 2nd, we crafted and distributed a press release to update all Maine media outlets addressing the status of Maine agricultural fairs. We are living through very difficult times and difficult decisions have been made, and are continuing to be made, by our fair committees. Let us all strive to keep things as positive as possible by utilizing all the resources available to us.



Creating An Experience: Maine's Bicentennial

Thank you so much to all who have been working to create a very special bicentennial experience for their fairs. Many have shared their plans, and they sound amazing ! I am sure that there is a way that all your hard work will not be in vain - just looking for a way to "show off" everything to as many folks as possible. Junia

MAAF Scholarship Committee Update
By Hope Ricker, Committee Chairperson

The MAAF Scholarship Program was established in 2011. Fred Lunt, former Executive Director of the MAAF, held the winning 50/50 ticket during our January 2011 annual conference. With the monies he received, Fred established our scholarship fund, and the first scholarships were awarded in June of 2011. The purpose and intention of our scholarship program is to give recognition and financial assistance to graduating high school seniors who are pursuing a post-secondary education in an



agriculturally related field. Attention is given towards the applicant's involvement in one or more of Maine's agricultural fairs. This monetary award is given following the successful completion of the first semester and proof of enrollment for the following semester. In the past, the awards have been presented at high school graduations, awards ceremonies

and even a home schooler's graduation party. 2020 is proving to be a very innovative year for Maine schools, and may present challenges for our committee to present the awards. We will work with the recipients' schools to be sure that they are given the recognition that they deserve - whether it be a virtual ceremony, a live social distancing ceremony or even, as I recently learned, a graduation at a drive-in movie theater. The MAAF scholarship committee members are: MAAF board members Mike Timmons, Jeff Chadbourne and Hope Ricker; Junior Advisory board Charles Morrill, Jr.; and previous scholarship recipient and representing agricultural studies-Sadie Mehuren.

Fair Activity in the Off Season

Waterford World's Fair

Saturday, May 2, 2020
 5 - 6:30 PM

Baked Stuffed Haddock Dinner
 Includes potato, squash,
 coleslaw and dessert
 Waterford Fairgrounds
 Pre-order, please.

Email for more information:
waterfordworldsfair@gmail.com
 \$12 per person

May 10, 2020

Updated operating status of Maine agricultural fairs. Several Maine fairs have notified the MAAF that they will not be holding a fair in 2020.

The following fairs are still evaluating the status of their 2020 fair:

- Blue Hill
- Clinton
- Cumberland
- Farmington
- Fryeburg
- Piscataquis Valley
- Pittston
- Oxford
- Skowhegan
- Springfield

For ongoing current information, please check the MAAF website - www.maineairs.org

