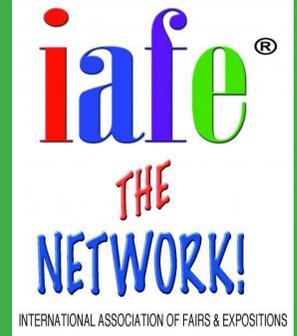




MAAF NEWSLETTER

2021 - ISSUE #3

RISING STARS



RISING STARS The First Ten Years

In the fall of 2010, Maine's agricultural fairs were presented with an opportunity to recognize a young person or persons (40 years or younger) from their fair family who had gone above and beyond the call of duty. This program, begun during the presidency of Bill McFarland of Windsor and encouraged by Kathryn Hunter of Topsham, was a first for our organization. Presented with several outstanding candidates, the board chose two young men, nominated by the Houlton Fair, as the first recipients of this award. The qualifications for Rising Star have been updated throughout the years to include the answers to the following questions:

1. How has the nominee gone above and beyond the call of duty for her or his fair, or fair community as a whole?
2. What sets the nominee apart from other young people?
3. Give an example of how the nominee has made a positive impact at a fair or on a fair community.
4. What participation, involvement or leadership roles has the nominee held at the fair or within the fair community?



The MAAF committee members tasked to select the Rising Star recipient are as follows:

1. The two previous Rising Star recipients;
2. The current president of MAAF;
3. A MAAF director – chosen by the president; and
4. A member of the MAAF Junior Advisory board – chosen by the president.

As we prepared to recognize the first ten years of Rising Star recipients, we asked each winner to submit a brief biography of their time spent with fairs, and a reflection on what an impact fairs have had on their lives. The passion and enthusiasm shared by these men and women – all of whom have gone on to make significant contributions to Maine agriculture and the Maine fair experience – is humbling. Many of them look back at those who mentored them, often times family members who set the bar high for them to follow. Some have chosen the field of agriculture as their career, while others are working hard in their “home” fairs to improve and expand established programs for youth. Each photo that you see shows a confident, positive person who, as a youngster, began their fair involvement through the invitation of someone who believed in the mission of our Maine agricultural fairs - to promote good fellowship, agricultural education and cooperation among all Maine fairs.

It is my privilege, and my great pleasure, to introduce to you The Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs Rising Stars 2010-2020.

2010 – NICK CRANE, HOULTON FAIR

Nick has been involved with the Houlton Fair since he began showing cattle at a young age. Starting at five years old, he was always available to help his dad and grandfather when they needed an extra hand in the livestock area. Being a part of the livestock area just seemed to be a natural fit for Nick, and when he had a chance to join with his longtime friend, Jeff McCarthy, and be the team that was in charge of Houlton's livestock program, he stepped up. Nick has always had a special relationship with the 4-H'ers. Watching and guiding them as they learned to show livestock has helped him, in his role as fair president, better meet their needs throughout the fair. An important role model/mentor for Nick has always been his dad. As Nick got older, he realized how important it was to have someone to show younger fair folks the "right way" to do things, and he has tried to pass these lessons on to his own children.



Nick says, "2020 has been a difficult year for our fair, and for all the fairs in Maine. I am looking at different ways to guide the Houlton Fair back to our agricultural roots. Our fair is held during the planting and growing seasons in Aroostook County. I look over at the big field on our fairgrounds and have begun to consider developing a demonstration area. An opportunity to showcase how we work the ground, what equipment we use, how we determine what to plant. We have the opportunity to introduce our fairgoers to the beginning steps of Northern Maine's agricultural season. What needs to happen in order to insure a successful harvest. This project, when it begins, will need volunteers of all ages to make it successful. I invite anyone who is interested to get in touch with me. I'm sure that we can find the perfect spot for everyone!"

Nick is the president of Houlton Fair and co-owner of Aroostook Milling Company. He and wife Amanda have three children - Patrick, Carter and Baylee.



2011 – JESSICA (BLACKSTONE) WINSLOW

Jessica earned her BS from the University of Maine at Presque Isle in 2004 and works at UMPI as a Professional Academic Advisor & Primary Designated School Official

She has been on the Board of Directors of the Northern Maine Fair since 2010. She continues to be heavily involved with the Northern Maine Fair by overseeing Lil Farmer's, the Ag Exhibition Hall, 4H/FFA Day as well as Music and Entertainment. Jessica's favorite thing to do is spend time with her very large family. She also loves spending time at the Kneeland Family Camp she and her husband purchased from her grandmother in 2020. "I am extremely grateful that the Northern Maine Fair has given me the opportunity to express my love for agriculture education through the development of Lil' Farmer's at the Fair and my involvement with FFA and the Exhibition Hall. The



love of the fair and its agriculture mission by the other board members is what motivated me to get involved with the Fair Association and it is also what keeps me involved 10 years later."

2012 – MEG HALL - FARMINGTON FAIR

My name is Meg Hall and I was a recipient of the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs Rising Star Award eight years ago in 2012. At the time of this award, I was the youngest superintendent a fair had ever appointed. At just 17 years old, I was named the beef superintendent of the Skowhegan State Fair. As a teenager, this was certainly a daunting proposal at the time and I was quick to question if I was the right person for the position. However, I accepted the challenge and I knew, this was in my blood. My grandfather, Dick Hall, had been the pulling superintendent at Blue Hill Fair and Fryeburg Fair for as long as I can remember, and was the pulling superintendent at Farmington Fair for many many years. My dad, Randy Hall, is the President of Farmington Fair and the Beef Superintendent at Fryeburg Fair. Needless to say, I had some pretty great mentors in my corner if I ever needed help.



Being in the superintendent's position helped me discover that I truly enjoyed all aspects of fairs as both an exhibitor and from a fair management point of view. Prior to this position I had only exhibited and did not understand the legwork involved in making the fairs possible. I have shown cattle my whole life, from the local to national levels. When I was younger, showing consisted of beef and dairy cattle, with the occasional market lamb, but as I got older my passion for showing beef cattle outweighed the others. Exhibiting cattle outside of Maine also gave me insight on how other places manage their fairs as well, no matter the competition level. When I was a freshman at the University of Connecticut, I was able to intern in the Department of Agriculture at Eastern States Exposition. This opportunity really helped me grow as a member of the fair association community.

As time has gone on and I have grown into an adult, my career responsibilities have taken me away from the superintendent position however you can still find me very involved in the agricultural fairs in other capacities. Whether it be giving demonstrations for 4-H clubs, offering a lending hand to the next generation of kids at a show, or just helping ring side wherever I can! If a fair is going on, you'll definitely see me there.

It has been a lifelong goal of mine to give back to agriculture. The career I have chosen is one that will allow me to give back to the agricultural community, the way it has given me so many opportunities growing up. I recently began a new career as a Consumer Protection Inspector for the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. This position entails working in State inspected slaughterhouses to ensure meat being sourced to the public is safe to consume and represents

the quality our market expects. Before starting for the State of Maine, I spent 5 years working as a veterinarian technician following earning my degree at the University of Connecticut.

Today, my fiance, Jesse Kelley and I live in Albion with our two dogs, Bode (a two year old Australian Shepard) and Barley, our 5 month old Golden Retriever. Jesse is fellow livestock exhibitor, and has reconnected me with my Dairy roots (my dad is a 7th generation dairy farmer) as we raise a herd of Brown Swiss and Guernsey show heifers. However don't be fooled, I've snuck a Hereford heifer calf into the mix as well.



2013 – ANDREA HALEY - OSSIPEE VALLEY FAIR



Andrea says, “Since both my parents were involved with the fair, they are my most influential mentors. They encouraged me to join 4-H, which I did starting with the gardening program than moved into the dairy club, where I was able to attend many fairs and the Big E with my heifers. They supported me throughout college, giving me a good work ethic, and are still my go to for their input.”

Andrea received her BS in criminal justice. She is now working as a Manager at Ultra Beauty in South Portland.



2014 – ELIZABETH (LIZ) CHAISSON - PITTSOON FAIR



“I received this award six years ago. In 2014, I was awarded the Rising Star Award from the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs! At the time, I was shocked that I was receiving it to be honest! Being the Director of the Maine Strawberry Pageant now for 15 years and what I have done with the pageant each year, is something I am pretty darned proud of! It’s right up there as one of the MOST REWARDING things I have ever done! When I was in my early 20s, Norma Beaulieu asked me if I wanted to do it. I literally had NO idea what I was getting myself into! I had NEVER done a pageant before! I knew I loved the fair when I was little and our hometown so I thought I’d give it a shot! The past few years I have thought about stepping down and letting someone else take it over. My own growing kiddos are taking up more and more of my free time! The pageant takes hours and hours of year round work! Each year comes around and I go for one more year. Missing the fair this year due to Covid and obviously in turn the pageant year and experience has got me missing it big time. Over the years, there have been many many girls that have gone through our fair and pageant system. Some starting as early as five-years old and right up through the age limit of 20! These girls have

become like family to me! I see many of them as adults now, many with families of their own and little girls of the own that are starting to follow in mom’s footsteps, and it brings me such joy! I LOVE that our pageant stays true to the values of letting girls from all walks of life do something and be something more! Lifting them up when maybe all they have ever felt in life is down! Instilling in them that they ARE worth everything and can do anything they set their mind to! That what’s on the inside means way more than what could ever be shown from the outside! Introducing some of the girls to the agricultural aspect that they didn’t know a thing about beforehand and showing them what it means and that being a part of a community and giving back is what it’s all about! This particular award is given each year to a younger generation fair member who goes above and beyond showing their dedication to the agricultural community! Receiving this award meant a lot to me then and even more today! Missing my girls and my fair family!”



2015 – MARILYN HUNTER - TOPSHAM FAIR



Marilyn is a board member and the director of Entertainment and Marketing, manages fair website, Facebook page, premium book and brochure.

Marilyn works at Sandelin Pre-Cast and Foundations in Topsham. Marilyn was born and raised in Topsham and began attending Topsham Fair as a baby. She lives in Topsham with her husband, Mac, and daughter, Julia. “I started helping at the Topsham Fair in 2004. Many members of my family have helped at the fair at different points along the way, going back several generations. Showcasing local agriculture and helping put on our town’s largest event is a joy. It’s exciting and it motivates me to keep thinking of new ideas and working hard to make our event a success. I absolutely love hearing

people’s stories about their favorite parts of our fair and seeing my friends and neighbors having fun.

Receiving the rising star award made me feel very proud. The fact that someone had noticed how much work and effort I put into the fair just made me feel so good. We have about twenty other people just like myself on the board and volunteering and all our efforts together have made a difference. Since receiving the rising star award I’ve started taking notes of ways to foster and sustain a board with active and motivated participants in hope our fair will have a bright future.”



2016 – KEISHA (BENSON) FLINT - PISCATIQUE FAIR



Keisha is a fair director and responsible for the Miss Maple Pageant. She also works as the manager of The Mill Inn and Café in Dover-Foxcroft.

“The Piscataquis Valley Fair has been a huge part of my life since I was very young which I very much enjoyed. When I became an adult and joined as a fair member I was able to participate and volunteer in helping a lot more. Being a part of the fair has really pulled me out of my own comfort zone and helped me in many ways with public interactions.

Now that I am grown and have a daughter of my own it is enjoyable to teach her all of the ways to help the community by volunteering at the fair. I am so grateful to all of the people that have come into my life through this endeavor and look forward to all the years to come.”



2017 – ARTHUR ADAMS - FRYEBURG FAIR

Arthur Adams is the Camping Supervisor at Fryeburg Fair. He is also a local tax practitioner and part of a family that is heavily involved with the Fair. His father, Terry Adams, is the Treasurer and his brother,

Charlie, works in the buildings and grounds department. The Adams family also owns T & A Accounting on Main Street in Fryeburg.



Arthur says, “I love the community that comes from all of us working together for such a worthy goal. When the Fair starts, and everything comes together, I get such a sense of accomplishment. Working with people is what I love the most. The smells and sounds of the Fair always bring nostalgia as well. When I think of the Fair, I think of good people, community, adventure, learning, and Food!”



2018 – CHARLES MORRILL - OSSISPEE VALLEY FAIR

Charlie is currently in his 3rd term as 1st Vice president of OVAS (Ossipee Valley Agricultural Society) as well as a Junior Advisory member of the MAAF. Charlie says, “It is a great honor working beside Bill Jones, our OVAS President. As an active member of OVAS, I work hard along with my fellow members striving to make the ‘friendliest of fairs’ great. 2020 has certainly been a trying time this year for me, my family, the community and OVAS but we have been making the best of it. We have come up with several events to help us get through the year without our



fair. We have hosted pull events and a SMDGA show. We also held our First Annual Trunk & Treat for our community which was a huge success. We were very strict with following CDC guidelines for these events. We are currently getting ready for our Christmas parade and tree auction. I sit on the five-year planning committee, the Executive Committee and Publicity Committee. I’ve been working alongside my wife, Ashley Morrill (the new Agricultural Demonstration Department Head for OVAS) on planning next year’s events. I am also the assistant for winter rentals for the fair grounds. After all of this I still find time to work full-time as a carpenter, working jobs from Mt. Washington Valley to the seacoast. Somehow I also make time for my wife and my two kids. They always have my back and help me with my crazy schedule. With all the late night calls, texts, emails, meetings, or having to run to the fairgrounds for a problem that needs my attention, they always stand with me and help. We really missed showing the goats at the Maine fairs this year. Hope 2021 is a better year for all of the Maine fairs.”



2019 – JASMANE HANSON PISCATAQUIS VALLEY FAIR



Jasmane is a Fair director working in a wide variety of roles - kids games, ice cream shack, and the garden tractor pulls. She is the warehouse manager at Dave's World in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine.

"The fair has played a huge part in my life since I was a young child. I look forward to it each year. The best part of the fair is the smiles on all the kids faces each day. The fair is a place that a kid gets to be a kid. Goofy, loud, happy and excited all at the same time. They get to see all the different animals, tractors, cars, rides and so much more all in one place. The agricultural side of the fair is so important in the world today. Agriculture seems to be dwindling but I grew up in an agricultural world and hope to share that with kids each year at the fair. I enjoy the outdoors and showing kids how they can have so much fun being outside! The fair has become more and more of my life and I hope to continue to bring those smiles to childrens faces for many years to come."

