



OAAS Gazette

Volume 21

August 2009

~ 2009 – 2010 OAAS Presidents' Messages ~

Hi everyone – Now that the 2009 Fair season is in full swing, I thought I'd share with you some excerpts from Garrison Keillor's article in the July, 2009 *National Geographic*. His "Rhubarb Tour" visited six state fairs in 2008.

"The big wheel whirls and the girls squeal and the bratwursts cook on the little steel rollers and the boys slouch around and keep checking their hair. It isn't the World's Columbian Exposition, the Aquarian Exposition, the Great Exhibition of the works of Industry of All Nations, the Exposition Universelle, the Gathering of the Tribes, or the Aspen Institute. It's just us, taking a break from digging potatoes."

"...through buildings where champion jams and jellies are displayed on tables draped with purple, blue, red, yellow ribbons, and also champion cakes (angel food, Bundt light, Bundt dark, chiffon, chocolate, chocolate chiffon, German chocolate, jelly roll, pound, spice, sponge, vegetable, or fruit) and pickles (beet, bean, bread-and-butter, cucumber sweet, dill without garlic, dill with garlic, peppers sweet, peppers hot, watermelon)."

"...the Ferris wheel...lifting you up above the honky-tonk, a nice breeze...and at the apex you look out across the gaudy uproar and the blinking lights, and then you zoom down for a close-up of a passing gang of farm boys in green letter jackets and then back up on the air. You tell your child that this Ferris wheel is the ride that, going back to childhood, you always saved for last, and so riding it fills you with nostalgia."

"The state fair, at heart, is an agricultural expo, and farming isn't about getting rich.... Farming is about work and about there being a Right Way and a Wrong Way to do it. You sit in the bleachers by the show ring and see this by the way the young women and men lead their immaculate cows clockwise around the grumpy, baggy-pants judge in the center. You and I may have no relatives left in farming, and our memory of the farm, if we have any, may be faint, but the livestock judging is meaningful to us – husbandry is what we do, even if we call it education or health care or management." "I'm sure we can all relate to these Fairtime images, whether from our own Fair or from a Fair we go to as an exhibitor or a visitor."

My message to you for this Fair season is simple – get out there, take a day trip or two and visit some different Fairs. There are over 220 Fairs in Ontario, and every one of them has something unique to offer. You might even get some good ideas that could be incorporated into your Fair's program! Don't forget to take the time to enjoy your own Fair as well – I've made it a ritual to take an hour off some time during my Fair weekend, take off the nametag, and walk around the fairgrounds like a spectator. The smiles you see on your patrons' faces may be the only pay you get for all the planning and organizing you've done to get ready for the Fair! Have a safe and happy Fair season!

Meredith Brophy, President – Agriculture

The 2009 fair season has begun and I have been privileged to attend 4 fair openings already. In addition, both my husband and I thoroughly enjoyed the Rockton Fair dinner theatre in March and the Ancaster Fair gala (dinner, carousel and big band) in May. What a special year I am having and there are so many more wonderful fair events that I am looking forward to. Many thanks for the invitations. I hope you also will be able to enjoy not only your own fair but others in your district and beyond.



We all work hard and volunteer many hours to our own fairs. There are many opportunities for neighbouring fairs to share volunteers, equipment, etc so that not only the fairs can grow and improve, but each volunteer can have some free time to enjoy the sights and sounds on the fairgrounds rather than being in the office or kitchen or at the admission gate full time. Please remember to recognize your volunteers with either the OAAS Service Diploma or with an OAAS Agricultural Accomplishment Award. Contact the OAAS office or website to obtain forms.

A wonderful part of most fairs is the agricultural awareness or education displays. In recent years with urban development growing and the agricultural areas shrinking, there is an increasing need for such displays. I have seen some wonderful ones in my travels this year and over the past 2 years. I probably shouldn't mention names, but Caledon, Teeswater, and Stratford come to mind. The children enjoy these "hands on" displays and learn a lot from them. I hope every fair strives to educate as well as entertain!

When the 2009 fairs are over, the district directors will be attending the OAAS Fall Board meetings. If anyone has questions or suggestions that should be discussed, let your district director know or give a member of the executive a call. We will be having a "visioning" session, with a facilitator, at these board meetings to further develop our strategic plan and your input is welcome. All the best to the fairs still to come in 2009!

Joanne Miller, President – Homecraft

OAAS COOKBOOKS UPDATE

The 2nd Edition of the OAAS Cookbook was released this past Spring, to the District Directors. Please remember to submit cookbook money to Directors ASAP.



If you have extra cookbooks or looking for more cookbooks, please let OAAS know.

CHECK US OUT
www.ontariofairs.com

Have you heard of legendry Canadian entertainer - James "Jimmie" Fax. (1854-1949). Jimmie Fax wrote and sang comic songs and from about 1880-1930 and appeared at local concerts, garden parties and church socials. He was very popular at Fall Fairs. If you have any scrapbooks with newspaper articles, posters, programs or photos etc., please contact eeaster@sympatico.ca



Ancaster Agricultural Society Launches New Fair Grounds in Style

On May 22nd 300 guests, members and volunteers of the Ancaster Agricultural Society celebrated the launching of their new fair grounds with an evening of "all things local" by hosting a Champagne and Carousels Gala.

During the cocktail hour guests enjoyed a horse drawn wagon ride around the new grounds, then upon entering the new facility they were greeted by committee members and offered a "special" martini from the ice bar.

The hall featured a full size Merry-Go-Round along with antique carousel horses with lots of colour and flowers arrangements.

Dinner which featured local food and wine was prepared and presented in style by The Ancaster Old Mill Restaurant.

The big band sound of "Swing Shift" provided music for dancing and easy listening.

Guests were able to have their pictures taken on the Merry-Go-Round as a memento of the occasion.

An evening to remember was created sight, sound and great food as politicians, community members and fair friends helped to celebrate the Society's new beginnings.

The members of Ancaster Agricultural Society wish to thank everyone that helped to make this event so special. Also, a special thank you to Worlds Finest Shows for bringing in and running the Merry-Go-Round, you made a dream come true.



Russell Roy's 'All Clean' 90 Minute Stand-Up
COMEDY NIGHT
AFFORDABLE FUNDRAISING FOR YOUR FAIR
Have fun & make money! Host a low risk & high profit special event for your Ag Society! \$10 per ticket 'door deal'. Only \$ 100 deposit.
Call today for availability!
www.comedynight.ca | 866 599 0053



IT'S A GIRL, Congratulations to our OAAS Secretary, Kathryn Lambert, and her husband Jason, on the safe arrival of Jocelyn Shirley Lambert, who arrived on June 13, 2009 at 8:06 a.m., weighing in at 8 lbs 7 oz (3.63 kgs). This future 4-H'er and Fair volunteer had her first meeting at the Royal York Hotel at the tender age of 3 weeks – she's making her mark already! We wish you all the best, Kathryn, Jason & Jocelyn!

From the OAAS Executive and Directors.

2010 Convention - February 18-20, Royal York Hotel, Toronto

WANTED: The Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAAS) is seeking a facilitator for an upcoming visioning session set to take place in October, 2009, resulting from a resolution that was presented at our annual meeting, February 2009, regarding the development of a strategic plan to determine the future of the OAAS.

If you are interested in applying for this position, or know of a facilitator who might wish to apply, please contact the OAAS by August 15, 2009.

OAAS WEBSITE ~ A NEW FEATURE ... FAIR DISCUSSION BOARD

The OAAS has established a discussion board on our new website for fairs to post or discuss any issues, comments, concerns, announcements etc.

OAAS would like to provide this service to all our members to help increase communication between fairs in Ontario.

This discussion board will be monitored to assure appropriate content is being posted.

Directions/instructions to login to the fair discussion board are as follows:



1. www.ontariofairs.com
2. Click on Fairs
3. Drop down menu, Discussion Board
4. Click on Enter Discussion Board
5. Username: fair
6. Password: discussion

*2010 Convention: February 18-20
Royal York Hotel, Toronto*

DON'T FORGET TO SEND YOUR FAIR PICTURES TO THE OAAS, TO POST ON OUR NEW WEBSITE.

**SEND YOUR PHOTOS TO:
oaas@bellnet.ca**



District #5 Judging School

Submitted by Ruth Wiggins, Homecraft Director District #5

District # 5 Roots, Fruits & Vegetables Judging School was held on Saturday, April 18, 2009 at the Knox Presbyterian Church in Acton. The judging school was graciously hosted by Acton Agricultural Society. There were 24 participants from across the district.

Marcia Stevers was the instructor for the judging school. Marcia went over should be in your judging kit. She gave an informative and interesting overview of the judging standards. Participants provided a variety of roots, fruits and vegetables for judging. Everyone had the opportunity to judge maple syrup and beans. Marica went over how to judge farm eggs at a fair since it is not covered in the judging standards book. It was noted that the eggs with Omega 3 imprinted on them probably would not win a prize at the fair. Everyone had a good laugh about it.

By the responses of the survey, participants learned how to word the items in their prize list, how to judge with consistency and more informed about what is required as an exhibitor. Everyone had a great day.



Thanks to Acton Agricultural Society for providing the morning coffee and muffins and hosting this event. This judging school would not have been possible without Acton's support. Also, thanks to Theresa Lockerbie for suggesting this type of judging school since District #5 hasn't had on in quite a while.

*Happy 50th Anniversary
Gerald & Joyce Kelly.*

*Joyce has been the past OAAS
Secretary and District 4 Director.*



**Looking for a guest speaker for your
OAAS District meetings ?**

OAFE is available to speak at District Annual meetings, on an expense recovery basis



www.ontariofairs.com

OAAS PAST PRESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION AWARD

Presented by Nothers Awards, London



Did you, or do you, have a secretary, treasurer or secretary/treasurer that has served your fair for at least 15 years? If so, the Past President Association of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies would like to hear from you.

An award has been established by Nothers of London, Ontario, to be presented to the secretary or treasurer who has shown extraordinary dedication and innovative leadership to the fair. This award is being given in memory of the late Leonard Patterson.

Fairs wishing to nominate someone for this award are asked to send their nominations, in writing, explain in detail why they feel this person is deserving of this honour. There is no special nomination form.

For inquiries please phone Betty Lester, 705-324-5644.

Entries must be received by December 1, 2009 and will be judged by selected panel of judges. Send all nominations to: Betty Lester, 84 Lester St. N., Lindsay, ON K9V 4K3.

EXTRA EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT !!!

The 2010 OAAS Convention Keynote
Speakers are confirmed,
see page 5 for more details.

The Future is Green

**C.A.F.E. 2009
November 18 - 21
83rd Annual Convention**

Our Host, PEI Association of Exhibitions, welcomes you to Charlottetown and the Delta Prince Edward Hotel

Registration information is now available on our website!
Hotel Information: Delta Prince Edward
18 Queen Street, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, C1A 8B9
Tel: 902-566-2222 | Fax: 902-566-1745
Toll-Free: 1-888-890-3222
Book soon - rooms are going fast!

Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions
Convention Information
www.canadian-fairs.ca

Photo courtesy of PEI Tourism - Real Experiences

Boast about your Fair's Agricultural Education

program. Enter the OAFE Award of Excellence in Agri-Food Education competition! A brochure, outlining criteria, will be mailed to your fair office. Information on the award will also be available on the volunteer webpage of the OAFE website, www.oafe.org. This competition is open to fairs holding a membership with Ontario Agri-Food Education (OAFE).

If you have any questions on the award, please do not hesitate to contact the OAFE office.

OAFE member fairs with an agricultural education program, are reminded to please contact the office with your teacher numbers, as soon as possible, to ensure safe timely delivery of your OAFE teacher resources. If you are an OAFE member fair with an ag awareness program, please contact the OAFE office to see what materials/assistance we can provide for you.

On behalf of Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc., I wish you the very best for your fair, may it be dry, warm and sunny!

Your OAFE contact for Fairs in Ontario

Lorna Wilson, Volunteer and Membership Coordinator,
Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc.

volunteer@oafe.org

905-878-1510 x 26

www.oafe.org



Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc.

www.oafe.org
www.farmsfoodfun.com

Lorna's Fair Tips:

- Utilize the great ideas in the update provided at the OAAS Convention!
- Take lots of pictures!
- Be Consumer Protection Smart!

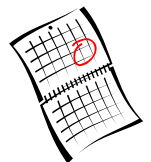
"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." General George S. Patton

WANTED: SHOWCASE PERFORMERS

OAAS is looking for possible Showcase Performers/Acts for the upcoming 2010 OAAS Convention, please contact the OAAS. OAAS will contact the performer with more information.

COMING THIS NOVEMBER ...

- 2010 OAAS Convention Registration pkg.
- OAAS Directory Information page
- OAAS Affiliation Fee Invoice
- Updated classes/rules for your 2010 prize book



ALL INFORMATION IS DUE BACK TO OAAS BY
DECEMBER 31, 2009.

2010 OAAS Convention !!

The OAAS is already making plans for February 18-20, our annual convention. Plan to attend.

AGM Keynote Speaker (Friday February 19, 2009) - Graham Knope is President of Eagle-Com, a television fundraising agency that has helped raise more than \$500 million for many international charitable organizations. Graham's pioneering approach and deep personal commitment to helping others has changed the nature of charitable giving in Canada and the U.S.

Graham will be sharing personal stories about what has inspired, helped and encouraged him over the past 20 years to achieve personal and professional success.

Closing Speaker (Saturday February 20, 2009) - "Empowering People" by Michael Froehlich, General Manager, York County Fair, Pennsylvania - This presentation is about quotes, words of wisdom, stories, management tips and techniques Michael has learned, developed and applied through his 30 years in the Fair and Exposition Industry. This presentation is designed for all levels of Fair personnel, volunteers, management and Board members.



EVENING & FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT SHOWCASE ACTS: Please send your suggestions to the OAAS by September 1st, for possible acts and performers at the 2010 OAAS Convention. OAAS is looking for entertainers, singers, performers, groups etc., who would like to be explored and discovered by the Ontario fair industry.

LIVE AUCTION & EVENING SHOWCASE is taking place on Thursday February 18th.

Summer Special at the Fairmont Royal York

You're important to us.
We appreciate your business each year, and we'd like to say thank you.
This summer, enjoy a special rate for all of your holiday plans.
\$109 per night, taxes, airport to city center.
(This rate is valid for stays from September 1-30, 2009.)
For more information or to book your Summer Hunter Getaway, call 416 360 2009 or email rty.reservations@fairmont.com

**Do you have a seminar or roundtable topic idea ??
Please share them with the OAAS – this is your convention too.**

Watch for the complete convention registration package in November, with more details regarding the 2010 OAAS Convention.



The OAAS Partnership Committee is looking for your involvement and support at the 2010 Convention.

For more information regarding possible partnership & participation, please contact the OAAS.

2009 Round Table Summaries

~ Complete summaries of ALL round table topics are posted on OAAS website ~

SECURITY: FENCE JUMPERS, OPEN DRINKING, INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

- Use security to police perimeters – ensure they are accessible, ie cut trees/brush down
- If someone is seen or caught – have them pay on the spot or escort them out
- Balance problem between lost admission and spending money on grounds
- Demo derby – drinking out of area – license area, provide adequate security; search and seizure for private property – may put up sign “may search”, but don’t do it
- Police cannot do bag checks
- Discussion of security guards and new law regarding licensing (August 2008) – must have at least 1 licensed supervisor
- Concern regarding people entering grounds drunk --- turn them away
- Ensure a limited timeline in beer garden – issues after events
- Pre-event walk-through with security and police – important to meet with everyone before the event regarding security, health issues, and policing
- Liquor control inspectors are required to identify themselves
- Question of security for non-fair functions (i.e. stag & does) etc.
- Some fairs have strict dry policy and avoid issues of drinking
- But is it better to have an area
- Volunteers/ staff need to be properly identified, i.e. shirts, badges, ID
- Hire a licensed security company (ISM, Tag, Gforce)
- Issue of excessive OPP presence
- OPP officers and auxiliary saves money
- Concern regarding municipal by-laws that limit events and require excessive security
- Efficient entry – multiple gates; check bags, attach wrist bands; limit in/out privileges
- Vandalism on barns – paintball
- Use of permanent marker on hands
- Use of fence with barb-wire on top – insurance and police okay
- Fairs switch security-members - interchange with another local fair to help each other out with security, a weekend apart
- Fencing is a great deterrent – use of temporary fence (i.e. Fast Fence) if grounds not fenced adequately

FOOD SAFETY AT YOUR FAIR (FOOD BOOTHS)

- To reduce bees and wasps – brown paper bags filled with air were hung by concessions
- To reduce flies – fly strips hung away from food
- Health boards check for – cutting boards, gloves, thermometers – ovens, fridges & freezers
- Check food service certifications – proper handling

FOOD SAFETY AT YOUR FAIR (FOOD BOOTHS) CONT'D

- Food handling course can be done on-line – 15 modules, written test at the health unit
- Important to have good relationship and work with local municipal health unit
- Fire department check on propane license
- Check extension and electrical hook-ups
- Safe food temperatures – fridge under 4C, chicken (cooked 78C), beef (cooked 74C)
- Danger zone – 4C to 60C
- Store raw food separate from cooked
- At the end of the day – all creamers, butter, relishes should be thrown out --- Do not put food back in large containers – better to be safe than sorry
- Pies – no cream pies – need to know where the pies came from
- Pie judging – retainer pies – check with health unit for rules regarding selling – donating
- Pie auction – is this allowed
- Pies on pie racks must be covered – cardboard cannot be used
- How do you best handle facilities to make sure the kitchen is clean, i.e. when you are renting the fair grounds

NEW MARKETING TOOLS: WEBSITES, TEXT MESSAGING, FACEBOOK

- What to put on website: admission map, schedule hours, prize book
- Keep navigation simple – too many pages are too difficult to go through
- Keep track of statistics – how many ‘hits’ on the site
- Using PDF’s on website – can be google searched
- Websites need to kept up-to-date ... ALL information needs to be checked
- Create more mailboxes
- Set up PayPal
- Ensure site is linked to county or town and other related organizations (i.e. OAAS, homecraft clubs, 4-H, livestock organizations)
- Advertise sponsors – provide web link to sponsors
- Should have more than one person familiar with updating website
- FaceBook / Twitter – great to invite people and provide info
- Good way to have people to fair
- User friendly

KEEPING YOUR BOARD MEETINGS INTERESTING

- Keep them short or a reasonable time length – who is responsible for time keeping
- Meetings should last no more than 1 ½ to 2 hours
- Social time should be after meeting – no redundant discussions
- What about meetings of the cliques? Should come – needs to be dealt with individually
- Everyone should have an opportunity to have a say
- Have committees discuss specific issues and bring back to general meeting
- Have committees submit written reports prior to meeting if possible
- Keep meeting on track or on agenda i.e. focussed – the chairman should have control
- Beating something to death – chairman should call the meeting to order and note
- Keep meeting on topic – no side meetings
- Executive should set agenda before meeting and distribute to all members
- Let secretary know you want item on the agenda
- Distribute minutes of last meeting well before meeting and include “to do” list at the end of the minutes
- If someone is late – should you review things that have already been discussed
- How many meetings should you have per year – some have general meetings every month
- Create committees to table hard to get done topics and bring the information back to the main board
- Try setting agendas and minutes to each topic (Major agenda: must get done / Minor agenda: if there is time)
- Must have tools at each meeting – Constitution & By-laws for new directors – have them sign something so they can't say they didn't know about them
- Motions that cause a lot of discussion needs to be table until end of meeting and if there is time to bring it back; otherwise put on agenda for next meeting
- Some meetings can be used as “brain storming” sessions instead of focussed agenda
- Bring in relevant speakers - schedule time for them to speak, leaving enough time to cover meeting topics
- Go round the table at end of meeting for last comments and concerns
- Have executive meeting prior to board meeting

VANDALISM: HOW TO PREVENT IT AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT WHEN IT HAPPENS

- Increase lighting
- Install security system, i.e. cameras – security alarms on buildings
- Have citizens or members on patrol when grounds not being used – “neighbourhood watch”
- If you have continuing trouble, call police and let them know so they can be more vigilant as well
- Don't give people a place to ‘gather’

VANDALISM: HOW TO PREVENT IT AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT WHEN IT HAPPENS CONT'D

- There is a new product by 3-M to spray on building – they someone spray paints, it can be cleaned off more easily
- Remove graffiti as soon after as it happens

ENCOURAGING SCHOOLS TO EXHIBIT AT YOUR FAIR

- Banners – have each school design their own using plastic table cloths / paper
- Have fair ambassador visit schools – talk about his/her experiences and the ag society
- Took suggestion cards into schools in spring to ask what they would like to see at the fair
- Education director goes to schools and gets them to make poster
- Be sure to include curriculum-related categories
- For fairs in summer or September, have schools do work and hand in June
- Don't forget the home schoolers
- Pumpkin seeds donated and given to schools – categories in fair book geared to showing the pumpkins that are grown
- Each week a section of the fair book is published in the local paper
- Teenagers – ensure you have categories for 10 to 12 and for boys and girls... keep changing classes
- Keep categories interesting (pet rocks, party hats, farm activities, pictures, duct tape, lego, milk posters, marshmallow castles, design CD cover, G8 summit, Olympics)
- Have school displays instead of competitions
- Have sections for both displays and competitions
- Have cover design competition
- Contact high school art teachers
- Colouring contest – set out; different age categories; enter into draw for prizes or fair passes
- Competition on YouTube to promote fair
- Presentation to parent council

RECRUITING AND KEEPING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS AND DIRECTORS

- Most volunteers come from family involvement
- Recruit from schools – 40 hour requirement for high school graduation; contact high school guidance office
- Put notices in papers, signs, advertising
- Assign to a junior director
- Assign new volunteers to program or section that they like or are interested in
- Keep them busy or involved throughout the year – e-mail chain
- Helping out in catering etc. – taking care of games – helping with parade – children's activity centre (10 kids per shift to run)
- Encouragement – listening to their ideas
- Offer volunteers food, tickets, rides or entrance passes as a ‘thank you’ – postcard to win something; bring it back as incentive
- Host an appreciation night for volunteers and exhibitors

FEATURING NEW SERVICE MEMBER:
OPEN AIR PROJECTION

Bringing Outdoor Movie Magic to your community!
Open Air Projections Inc. (OAP)- We are the BIG SCREEN professionals!!

These events can attract 1,000's of moviegoers from your local community. A great event for families, friends and neighbors of all ages.

Possibly the easiest event you will ever host. We will bring all the equipment, set up and run the show. The audience brings their own chairs and you provide the location.

OAP is the leader in outdoor movies and specialize in producing outdoor cinema events all across Ontario. We are committed to providing our clients with professional service and high quality event production. Our movie screens are the most versatile screens you will find on the market. The inflatable screens have revolutionized the outdoor cinema experience. These screens will add stature and excitement at your events. We can set up almost anywhere...the local park, the street, the beach, the track, the baseball field or event out on the water! The possibilities are endless.

The most popular style is the movie on the lawn, attracting many young families looking for something exciting and community based for the kids. As families look for summer events on a budget this is an easy way to attract them to your site. We have access to 1,000's of film titles from blockbuster feature to the old classics. But these events are not about the film titles. These events are about sitting out under the stars catching a great film with the family and neighbours.



It is all about the Open Air!

FEATURING NEW SERVICE MEMBER:
DIRTY DISHES

Dirty Dishes may sound like a mess of trouble, but au contraire, these three ladies will bring a shine to any space they fill. With their country, bluegrass, gospel sounds, Dirty Dishes bring a beautiful blend of voices and energy. Their sassy, dirty old jeans demeanor along with their tongue in cheek style and tight three part harmonies are contagiously appealing.

Wither you're looking for fun at your Summer BBQ, flair at your Fall Fair or something unique at Christmas, Dirty Dishes is guaranteed to make your event more fun than a barrel full of monkeys ...or something like that.



Check us out! www.dirty-dishes.ca

Dirty Dishes is proud to be new members of OAAS.
See you at the Fair!

Discover all the valuable OAAS Service members at: www.ontariofairs.com

Please invite any new service member to get involved with the Ontario fairs, contact OAAS.
(oaas@bellnet.ca)

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