

Arkansas Fair Managers Association

Newsletter: June 2025

2026 Arkansas Fair Managers Convention

December 10-13, 2025

A Country Christmas At The AFMA

Please note we have had to change our convention date for the 2026 AFMA Convention. We will once again be at the **Hot Springs Convention Center**. The timing should be great. Christmas in the air, bright lights, jingle bells ringing, carolers singing, sale signs in every window and the AFMA Convention taking place at **134 Convention Boulevard, Hot Springs, Arkansas**.

Our purpose is to promote and support Arkansas fairs, to provide AFMA members with beneficial information and to hold an annual educationally-oriented convention and special meetings. We want to prepare you for the 2026 fairs in Arkansas.

Your participation will be the success of the Arkansas Fair Managers convention. If you have an idea, share it with us, **NOW!!!** We will consider your request but must finalize at our July 2025 meeting.

Andrea Vogt
Decorating Committee Chairman

Hello Arkansas Fairs!! So much is going on right now with fair season ramping up all across the State. In the midst of that, the AFMA Board is working diligently to bring you this year's convention. Our theme for 2026 will be **A Country Christmas At The AFMA**. We can't wait to see each and every one of you there. We are hoping that you walk into the convention this year and are transported right back to the Christmases of old where family gathered and celebrated. Think stockings hung by the fireside and every kid looking forward to peppermint sticks and oranges the next day. We are asking each county to bring an ornament for the **"Tree of Fairs."** After the tree is decorated, we have discussed auctioning it off as a fundraiser. Someone will go home with a fully decorated tree. We can't wait to see all of you again and hope you each have a wonderful and successful 2025 fair season.

We hope each fair will consider decorating a table to coincide with our **Country Christmas** theme. The decorated tables definitely add to the décor of the facility. We will also recognize the winning county with the People's Choice Award. Thank you in advance for your participation!!

As your fair season begins, think about the dedicated volunteers you work with. **REMEMBER**, we need you to send in your nomination for the **Hall of Fame, Charles Smith Memorial Award, Lloyd Dunaway Award, Workhorse Award, and the Mary Louise Fiser Family Award**. The guidelines are listed on the AFMA website: www.arkansasfairmanagers.com. The deadline for receiving the nominations is October 15, 2025.

The AFMA Board of Directors will have three positions to fill at the 2026 AFMA Convention. AFMA Board member Scharidi Barber has fulfilled a term. Karen Baker has completed a five year term, and Lacie Beason, with one year left, resigned. Resumes may be sent at anytime, but the deadline will be October 15, 2025. Resumes can be sent to the AFMA Secretary, Carolyn Wynn, 10757 St Hwy 54 East, Star City AR 71667. You must be in good standing with your local fair, providing a letter to that effect by convention.

We want to remind the youth of the fair industry that we need their participation with the convention activities. **BECOME A YOUTH AMBASSADOR!!!** The program is accepting applications from individuals who wish to be a part of the program. We are looking for Youth, 12-18 years old, demonstrating good communication, leadership, and organization skills. You must complete an application, which can be found on the AFMA website: www.arkansasfairmanagers.com.

The deadline for receiving application will be October 15, 2025.

Registration will remain at \$45 per delegate. \$50 is late registration after November 20, 2025. Youth, 18 and under, will remain at \$10. Associate membership is \$100. **REGISTRATION** will be online with the capability of paying by debit or credit cards. We will activate it in October. At this time, the banquet tickets will remain the same \$45. Turf will no longer be the catering service. Levy Catering will take over in November, at which time we should receive a price list. **REMEMBER YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE A REGISTRATION FORM IN THE MAIL**

The tradeshow committee is working hard to have a great tradeshow. If you are interested or know someone who might be interested in having booth space, please let us know. The booth space is 10x10 with a table, two chairs and signage. Each booth space will be responsible for their own electricity with the convention center. The booth will cost \$150, not requiring you to be an associate member. For those who wish to be an associate member, dues are an additional \$100. Associate members will be listed in the convention directory.

Seminar Committee

Scharidi Barber & Trent Taylor

Hello everyone,

We hope you've kicked off your summer with a bang! We're thrilled to be preparing an outstanding convention packed with seminars designed to contribute directly to your fair's success.

This year, we're adding a new twist we believe will be a game-changer: the **AFMA is becoming your one-stop hub for essential county & district fair certifications!**

Imagine having a single, convenient place each year to gain crucial credentials like:

- * **ServSafe Food Certification**
- * **NPIP Tester's License**
- * **EIA Verifier (Coggins)**

We're even exploring deeper certifications that will further benefit you and your fair. Our goal is to make it easier than ever for you and your fair board members to acquire the qualifications needed to run a successful event.

In addition to these new certification opportunities, we're also working to improve our regular lineup of seminars. You can expect valuable sessions on topics like:

- * Options for awards
- * Best methods for security
- * Optimizing ticket sales and parking
- * Department of Labor updates
- * And more!

As always, we value your input! If you have suggestions for seminars or certifications you'd like to see offered, please email them to sbarber@asfg.net.

Sincerely,

Scharidi & Trent

The AFMA is once again wanting to auction off a **T-Shirt Quilt**. Ms. Sue Miller has offered to make the quilt again. If you remember, Ms. Sue did a beautiful job on the quilt she made last year, which brought \$1300. We need your help. **T-shirts!!!** If you don't have a 2026 fair shirt, any year will do. In order to have the quilt by our 2026 Convention date of December 10-13, 2025, we need them by September 1, 2025. We hope you will participate!!

As you can see, your AFMA Board is diligently working to make this a successful convention. We have only given you a summary of things to happen in December. We are considering other activities like an Ugly Sweater Contest, Pie (or dessert) Auction, Bingo, 50/50 drawings, Arkansas talent showcase, and several give-a-ways during the convention. Watch our website: arkansasfairmanagers.com for more information.

REMEMBER, your AFMA Board is here to serve you. Let us hear from you if you have suggestions or questions. Our next meeting date will be in July at which time we must try to finalize our convention plans.