



OHIO FAIR MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

Fair News

April 2025



Training, Networking, Awards & More

“We are thrilled to bring the ‘You Make THE Difference’ program to our state,” said Howard L. Call, CFE OFMA Executive Director. “This initiative offers an unparalleled opportunity to strengthen our fair boards and, by extension, enrich the communities we serve.

With the support of Fairs.com and the expertise

of Ian Hill and The Changing Point team, we are poised to make a lasting impact.” Training Dates in Ohio are: April 9, 6:30PM - Franklin County Fairgrounds, April 10, 6:30PM - Auglaize County Fairgrounds, April 12, 2:00PM - Jackson County Fairgrounds, April 13, 5:00PM - Muskingum County Fairgrounds, April 14, 6:30PM - Wood County Fairgrounds, April 15, 6:30PM - Montgomery County Fairgrounds, April 16, 6:30PM - Summit County Fairgrounds

Register at: [OFMA You Make THE Difference](https://app.fairs.com/o/OFMA-fc20fe539f8848df) <https://app.fairs.com/o/OFMA-fc20fe539f8848df>



The Spring Meetings were attended by over 725 Fair Board members, family, guests and Greater Ohio Showman’s Members starting at Putman County Fairgrounds onto Wayne County Fairgrounds and then Muskingum County Fairgrounds and the final meeting at Fayette County Fairgrounds. Ohio Department of Agriculture Vet Group provided updates on Avian Flu, tagging and grooming standards, ODA Assistant Director David Miran provided ODA Rides, Financial Annual reports update and Fairs updates, Greater Ohio Showman provided updates on the H2B Cares Act Legislation, OSU Extension Jeff McCutcheon provided Extension updates and Frank Fraas OHHA provided the look ahead at the 2026 Fairs Racing Season. Packets of information along with the Fairs Passes were distributed from OHHA, ODA Vets office and OHHA. The OFMA officers provided update on the past 2025 100th Convention and looking forward at the 101st Annual Convention January 14-18.

Greater Ohio Showman Presented Achievement Awards to the following: *pictures inside* District Director of the Year **Kim Meyers** Lorain County Fair Board Member, Ohio Fair Managers 100th Anniversary Planning Group **Kim Meyers, Paul Harris & Howard Call CFE**, Best Fair 2024 **Fulton County Fair Board**, Special Appreciation Award for Services rendered to the Wayne County Fairboard **Ron Grosjean**, Fair Secretary of the Year **Bill Clark** Shelby County Fair, Lifetime Achievement Award **Doung Guinsler** Muskingum County Fair, Fair Director of the Year **Chris Jordan** Lorain County Fair, Concessions Manager of the Year **Scott Pritchard** Pickaway County Fair, Fair Manager of the Year **Ed Doenges** Auglaize County Fair Retired.

President Stanley Strode in coordination with the executive team has filled the Director at Large positions with **Adam Heffron** Ohio State Fair & Expo Center General Manager and **Kerry Taylor** Holmes County Fair Board Member. Their Bios are in this Edition Newsletter.

The **Ohio Fair Managers Board of Directors** has signed a 3 year agreement with **Howard L. Call** CFE as the Executive Director of the OFMA & **Fairway Electric Inc.** as the Management Company for OFMA.

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2026 Program Committee Planning

Deb Hukill Chairwoman

As the Ohio Fair Managers Program Committee looks to build the 2026 program, now is the time to throw those topics onto the deck for consideration.

The survey results from the 100th detailed a lot of likes and program details and those topics wishing to be covered again.

The Committee will look to bring in several professional presenters in addition to subject matter experts from those fairs with best performing topics to assist in helping you develop your programs and operations.

In addition your participation at the Director of Agriculture meeting on Friday Morning is important to show the Elected officials of Ohio that we are interested in the State of Ohio and its leadership.

An important segment of the program is the Ohio Fairs Hall of Fame and showcasing your fairs long time supporting board member of staff as well as those outstanding service members or community members who have led to significant contributions to your fair. Lets get those people and or businesses nominated.



DEB debhukill@gmail.com

A promotional graphic for the 2025 Ohio State Fair. On the left, a young child is hugging a large, white, fluffy mascot that looks like a stylized dog or bear. The background is blue. A large green speech bubble on the right contains the text "HEY OHIO!". Below this, the text "DON'T MISS THE 2025 OHIO STATE FAIR" is written in white, followed by "JULY 23 - AUGUST 3!" in green. At the bottom, there are two logos: the "Ohio THE HEART OF IT ALL." logo on the left and the "OHIO State Fair" logo on the right.

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JULY 23 - AUGUST 3!**

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Who Moves all the Stuff around the Convention SIGNES -SUPPLIES and MORE LOGISTICS ~ Alan Aichholz DD1

Hello everyone!!! We hope that everyone enjoyed our 100th Annual OFMA Convention, which we tried to make an informative, fun and unique experience for all!!!!

Our team places all of the signage, easels and other necessary items for the 4 days of the Convention, moves materials for the speakers & presenters and deliver anything else that is needed to wherever it needs to be, whether it is for Sessions, the Gala, the Hall-of-Fame Breakfast or the Annual Meeting on Sunday morning. This year for the 100th Junior Fair Day, attendees were given a very nice hand sized portfolio and our team, along with Junior Fair Chairman Roger Smith and his team, coordinated the delivery for this distribution.

Things were a little different from other years' Conventions with Friday evening's 'Night at the Fair' and Saturday morning's General Keynote Session being held in Exhibit Hall A of the Columbus Convention Center. The team had totes and tubs containing 3200 plus items for the games, 20 parcels, signage for the Hall as well as signage to help people navigate to the Hall and also moving needed items from the OFMA office for the announcement of the 2025 Ohio Fairs' Queen Session.

All of our Sessions, Trade Show booths and Saturday evening's Gala were in the Hyatt as they have been during past Conventions, so we were spread out a lot more.

The team for the 2026 Convention will include myself as Chairperson, Tom Higbie, Heath Ward and Kerry Taylor.

Alan Aichholz, District 1 Director
Ofma.distict1@gmail.com



Special Appreciation Award for Services rendered to the Wayne County Fair Ron Grosjean. Presented by GOSA President Bill Sterling



Best Fair 2024 Fulton County Fair Board Presented by Trent Bair GOSA Member

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2025 Junior Fair Conference Post Convention Newsletter

Roger Smith, Junior Fair Conference Chairman

Junior Fair Conference 2025 was a great success. A great speaker, a wide variety of sessions for junior fair board members to choose from and the crowning of the 2025 Ohio Fairs' Queen, it was a great weekend of activity.

On Friday evening, several fair boards from around the state gathered in the President's Hallway of the convention center for an evening of food, networking and fun. Coordinated by several extension educators, the junior fair board members got to know others from around the state and to cap off the evening, they enjoyed some line dancing in the hallway.

Saturday morning began with junior fair boards rolling into Columbus for the Saturday sessions. Over 960 youth from around the state of Ohio gathered along with 1400 Senior Fair Board members to listen to Cody Beck as he delivered the keynote address at the morning opening.

The naming of the 2025 Ohio Fairs' Queen followed, with the crowning of Amberly Szczerbiak from Fayette County.

The junior fair board members then spent the rest of Saturday attending their choices of over 30 educational sessions that were offered for them, helping prepare them for the upcoming fair season. Sessions ranged from topics that included opportunities on the Ohio State Junior Fair Board, community involvement through raising awareness of food needs in local areas, to dealing with challenging people. Sessions were coordinated by extension staff, other junior fair board members and willing volunteers. At the end of the day, it was time to head home, gather ideas with their fellow junior fair board members and put into practice some of the things they learned at the Junior Fair Conference. A big thank you goes out to everyone who worked to make this conference a huge success. **Save the Date for 2026 January 17 Saturday**



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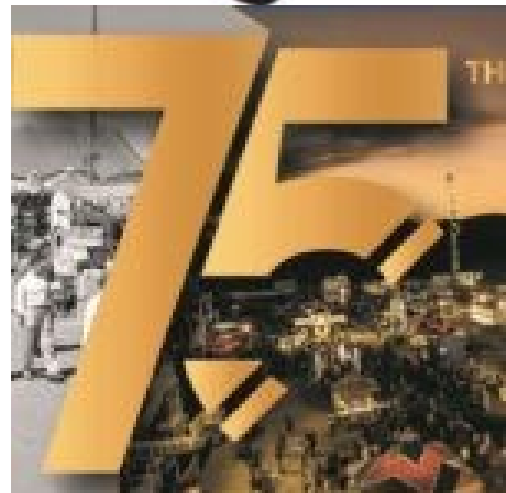
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Introducing ADAM HEFFRON

Ohio Fair Managers Association Director at Large

Executive Director of the Ohio Expo Center and State Fairgrounds.

Previously, Adam was the Executive Director of Alliant Energy Center, a facility attracting regional and international events, including the World Dairy Expo; large consumer shows, such as the Midwest Horse Fair; community events, such as the Dane County Fair; major concerts; and other conventions, meetings, festivals, and banquets.

Prior to his position with the Center, Adam was the Director of Facility Operations for Milwaukee World Festival, Inc., a corporation producing Summerfest, the World's largest nine-day music festival, as well as host to one hundred other events and festivals.

Previously, Adam was Chief Operations Officer of the Washington State Fair overseeing a 200-acre multiplex hosting over 160 annual events. There, he produced two annual fairs with attendance of more than 1.3 million guests while managing construction, trades, and hundreds of part-time facilities, transportation, parking, janitorial and agriculture department employees.

He was Director of Event Services at Wisconsin State Fair Park, tasked with building a new events department managing over three hundred events per year. Adam also developed and directed the Fair's in-house produced independent midway, SpinCity. Previously, Adam worked for over six years with Meet Minneapolis, the Official Visitors and Convention Association. As Director of Sales at the Minneapolis Convention Center, Adam managed the Minneapolis Convention Center's nine-member sales team and bid to secure international and national conventions.

Adam also worked as Event, Attraction and Group Sales Coordinator at the Minnesota State Fair, as well as managed the in-house produced independent midway and paid attractions. Prior to working in Minnesota, he was employed by the Ohio Expo Center and State Fair as Director of Rental Services where he worked alongside a team to enhance the Expo's financial position by developing the concessions, exhibits and event rental programs. He held management training positions with the Orange County Fair and Exposition, San Diego County Fair, and Calgary Stampede.

He has been active in various chambers of commerce, social and professional organizations such as Toastmasters International, Rotary Club of Madison, International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM), International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) and has served on several boards.



Introducing Kerry Taylor

Ohio Fair Managers Association Director at Large

Holmes County Fair Board Member

Kerry is a lifelong resident of Millersburg, Ohio having graduated from Kent State University and owns and operated Millersburg Electric a retail appliance store, electrical and generator contractor in Millersburg.

Kerry Joined the Holmes County Fair in 2001 as a board director and was their president for 19 years and oversaw the relocation to new fairgrounds in 2016, where over \$15 million in cash and in-kind dollars were raised toward the effort to move from the flood plain of Millersburg to a high and dry location west of Millersburg.

Kerry is a member of Millersburg Methodist Community Church, where he serves on administrative board, former Millersburg Volunteer Firefighter/EMT, served as fire chief from '97-2000.

His Main "hobby" is the Holmes County Fair and enjoys weekends camping at Long Lake Park near Loudonville and Enjoys golf, but not very good at it.

Kerry is Married to Denell and has three children and three grandchildren all previously or presently involved in 4H or FFA and brought animals to Holmes County Fair.



Kerry Taylor <kerry@millersburgelectric.com>

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Survey Questions and Answers

1. Who served the Food for the Friday Night BBQ: *Levy Foods, Exclusive Cater in the Building*
2. Why was the Junior Fair Meeting Saturday not in Battelle ? *The Planning committee wanted to extend the "Night at the Fair" with the rides and games on static display as a backdrop to Saturday Morning General session. The OFMA would have had to rent Battelle, pay for the staging, sound, lighting and projections again, a delta of extra cost of \$32,000 verses using the Hall setup, breaking the table seating down to theater only cost \$4500.*
3. What does the AV cost for the meeting rooms? *Cost to Encore with discounts is \$25,000*

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Fair Manager of the Year Ed Doenges Auglaize County Fair Retired Accepted by Auglaize County Fair Presented by Jennifer Ramsey, GOSA 2nd Vice President



Fair Secretary of the Year Bill Clark Shelby County Fair, Presented by Barry Hassinger GOSA Trustee

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***District Director of the Year Kim Meyers
Lorain County Fair Board Member .
Presented by GOSA Member Cory Gray***



***Ohio Fair Managers 100th Anniversary Planning
Group for Special Events, Kim Meyers, Paul Har-
ris, Howard Call, Paul Lease, Bob Dawson, Tom
Stocksdale, Presented by Bill Sterling & Randy
Kissel Past President GOSA***



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Concession Manager of the Year Scott Pritchard Pickaway County Fair Presented by Jennifer Ramsey, GOSA 2nd Vice President





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