

# OAAAS GAZETTE

| Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies |

## Greetings from OAAAS President Beth Howell-Vervaecke



The passion our agricultural Society volunteers have regarding supporting agriculture in our communities and the desire to bring our communities together is what drives our societies to continue hosting events, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. This year is no exception, maybe even more necessary to show we as humans wish to re-engage in social connections and to come to our fairs to learn new things about agriculture. We have seen a great surge in growing local, trying something creative, be it food based or artistic, and wanting to show it off with pride at our fairs. The OAAAS board would like to thank Minister Hardeman, Minister Thompson, and Minister MacLeod for the financial support of our agricultural societies. This support shows their dedication to helping our agricultural societies carry on the long history of promoting agriculture.

During this reopening phase many will be able to fulfill the tradition of hosting our annual fairs. We have seen varied events from virtual fairs to drive in meals to socially distanced events which helped keep our agricultural societies engaged with their communities.

With the ever-changing dynamic of public health protocols, our agricultural societies were and still are finding ways to bring the much-needed spirit of working together into our municipalities across the province.

Our Manager Vince Brennan has been tirelessly working with



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OMAFRA and the various ministries to be our voice in both provincial and federal government. For that, we as a board of the OAAS wish to thank him for all the webinars, outreach to our agricultural societies and encouragement to our board to continue the great work we do.

Over the summer our board has been working on our future. Our mentor, Erik Lockhart, has been able to work virtually with the board to help us successfully navigate through our next strategic plan. We have a strong plan for the future of the OAAS and wish to thank him for being able to concisely provide us with guidance that will be easy to follow with actionable goals.

Our board committees have been meeting routinely working on areas in governance and youth programming as well as our value-added programs like First Impressions/ Strategic planning which has offered programs for agricultural societies looking to build their futures. We wish to stay engaged with our membership and this has been a great way, even virtually, to provide this.

The convention committees are also busy at work! With Kathryn as our lead, they have taken the phenomenal energy from our virtual convention, offered in the spring of 2021 and have great plans for what we will be able to offer our delegates in 2022 at our “homecoming convention”. We feel that this convention will bring a much-needed spark for our agricultural societies to rekindle the friendships and share the “good news” stories we all have about our agricultural societies working through the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay tuned for the updates as they will be starting before you know it!

With the provincial government’s announcement for step 3 allowing us all to meet and attend outdoor events again, the board of the OAAS gave a great cheer. We knew then that our agricultural societies would be feverishly working to bring something in the form of a fair to our communities as a way to celebrate the harvest, our creativity, and our pride in workmanship as we have always done.

I am excited to meet with the board in October and hear about the events that were held in their various districts and see everyone again... finally in person at convention!

*Teamwork makes our Ag Societies stronger*

*Beth*

**Volunteers**

Our volunteers are getting older.  
 This comes to mind as I receive yet another message about a dear volunteer who is suffering.  
 Our volunteers are getting older.  
 So what do we do when they are gone?  
 How will we cope?  
 Who will have the years of knowledge stored in their minds?  
 Our volunteers are getting older.  
 Who will replace them?  
 How will our event go on without them?  
 Our volunteers are getting older.  
 When do we tell them it is unsafe to do certain tasks?  
 How do we tell them it is time for them to step back?  
 Our volunteers are getting older.  
 Treasure them and learn from them while you can.

Lorna Wilson  
 Country Heritage Agricultural Society

**Birdhouse fundraising project**

Fundraising in the middle of a world-wide pandemic is not a comfortable situation. The usual techniques for fundraising have to be discarded and new methods sought for each community. At times fundraising opportunities just fall into your lap because of the conditions people are in.

In the Bayfield community, a birdhouse fundraising project was brought forward by one of the Directors of the **Bayfield Agricultural Society** who became the intermediary between two of our seasoned members. Both of these members have had major changes in their lives and birdhouse making and painting became their way to deal with it.

One of these folks had taken up residence in a local retirement home so her medical needs could be better managed. She was always very active and found residential life was not as stimulating as she would like. Her cousin, who visits her regularly, thought resuming painting might be an excellent creative pastime and provide a rewarding experience; however, finding things to paint became a challenge.



The other member had just moved into a 55+ community townhouse complex with his wife from a hobby farm not far away. He found not doing things as in the past frustrating and so he would go back to his workshop at his farm to tinker away his time. When told about the need for something that could be painted, he came up with the idea of painting birdhouses that he would make with scraps. And so, the project began!

He would make birdhouses; they would be taken to the lady for painting and then he would seal them for outdoor use. The challenge then was what to do with this growing number of birdhouses that were covered with painted birds, other wildlife, outdoor scenes, and landscapes. The two decided to donate them to their church and their Agricultural Society.

Currently over \$1000 has been raised by the Bayfield Ag Society so far from the generosity of two people who needed something fulfilling and worthwhile to spend time on. As the weather is getting colder the two have gotten together to plan what they might diversify into for the winter months. Talk is that bird feeders are possibly the next project.

One of our Directors is going through cancer treatments, and he decided to join the project and began building a different style of birdhouse to keep busy as his treatments progress. Some others on the Board are picking up discarded wood from building sites, with permission, and delivering to the two men for their wood stock. The availability of the birdhouses has been advertised online throughout the village. One person wanted all the birdhouses with one particular bird painted on them since it was his favourite. Another brought her grandchildren to choose a birdhouse because she wanted them to have a reminder of the fair which she has enjoyed since her youth. Another wanted one for decoration as a reminder of both the builder and painter and insisted that both sign the house. The houses became a link between the people and the fair or Society. Three people who are all going through major changes in their lives have connected with the common bond of helping organizations in their community. Covid or not, they are not letting a little pandemic put a roadblock into supporting fundraising for their favourite causes or curtail what each of them needs to do to fill their time with valuable activity. The Ag Society absolutely feels blessed that it has such generous, talented, and thoughtful members who are helping it get through these very unusual times. (Fall 2020)

Submitted by Doug Yeo



# THANK YOU CONVENTION SPONSORS 2021

## Supreme Champion Sponsors

- Egg Farmers of Ontario
- The Co-operators

## Reserve Champion Sponsors

- Canadian National Exhibition (CNE)
- Encore Promotional Products Inc.
- Kingston & District Agricultural Society
- Spot On Entertainment
- The Capital Fair

## White Ribbon Sponsors

- Delta Power Equipment
- District #1, OAAS
- District #13, OAAS
- Huron Tractor
- Iron Bridge Agricultural Society
- Neil Guthrie
- OAAS Past Presidents' Association
- Quality Seeds Ltd.
- Utensil.ca

## Yellow Ribbon Sponsors

- Bayfield Agricultural Society
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- District #5, OAAS
- District #6, OAAS
- District #7, OAAS
- Doug Yeo
- Forest Agricultural Society
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- International Association of Fairs and Expositions
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- Robertson Amusements Ltd.
- Stone Picker Brewery
- Thornbury Village Cider House and Brewery
- Vankleek Hill Agricultural Society

## Friends of the Fair Sponsors

- |   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Brussels Agricultural Society             | • Embro & Zorra Agricultural Society  | • Judy McFaul                             |
| • Campbellford-Seymour Agricultural Society | • Erin Agricultural Society           | • Metcalfe Agricultural Society           |
| • Clarence Pinkey                           | • Feversham Agricultural Society      | • Liz O'Gorman-Smit                       |
| • Country Fair Baking Contest               | • Flos (Elmvale) Agricultural Society | • Ridgetown District Agricultural Society |
| • District #5, OAAS                         | • Heather Owens                       | • Russell Agricultural Society            |
| • District #9, OAAS                         | • Heatwave Blacksmithing              | • Stormont Agricultural Society           |
| • Ilderton Agricultural Society             | • Hymers Agricultural Society         | • Sylvia Parr                             |
| • Dundalk Agricultural Society              | • Huron Central Agricultural Society  | • Toronto Zoo                             |
| • District #3, OAAS                         |                                       | • Vince & Bev Brennan                     |
| • District #4, OAAS                         |                                       | • Wellesley North East Hope Fall Fair     |





**FEVERSHAM**

**AGRICULTURAL**

**SOCIETY**

The Feversham Agricultural Society held its first Fall Fair in 1867 (the same year that Canada became a country). In 2017, the Fair (and this great nation) shared the honour of celebrating 150 years! It is always held in September (two weekends after Labour Day), and its goal is to encourage an awareness of agriculture and improve the quality of life for people living in the area.

The jam-packed event starts with a Friday evening concert featuring local talent, as well as a Junior and Senior Ambassador contest. Saturday begins with a parade featuring many local floats, bands, classic cars, horses, and lots of families. The day continues with live music, local vendors, livestock shows, antiques displays, programs for children, and an antique tractor pull. The Farmer Olympics, which are also held during the Fair, are always a highlight (*and we have it on good authority that this event has been excluded from the traditional Olympics because it would be unfair to dominate the competition*)! Sunday starts with a truck pull followed by the field tractor pull. Food booths offer many tasty options and are on site throughout the weekend. It's a very busy and exciting time for the entire community!



Membership of the Feversham Agricultural Society comes from several communities including Feversham, Maxwell, McInyre, and Badjeros (and they are always looking for new volunteers). If you are new to the area or have some extra time on your hands, you are welcome to join their team! Visit their [website](#), email [feversham.ag.society@gmail.com](mailto:feversham.ag.society@gmail.com) or call Karen (519-922-2360) or Joanne (519-922-2585) to find out more. Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm.

**TRILLIUM GRANT WILL ALLOW FOR INSTALL OF ACCESSIBLE BLEACHERS**

Dignitaries that attended the Official Opening of the 165th Bayfield Community Fair on Aug. 20 were l-r: Bluewater Mayor Paul Klopp, Central Huron Mayor Jim Ginn, Vince Brennan, manager of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies; MPP Lisa Thompson, Senator Rob Black, BAS President Pamela Stanley and MP Ben Lobb. (Photo by Doug Yeo)

Earlier this year, the **Bayfield Agricultural Society (BAS)** received a **\$31,400** Resilient Communities Fund grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) to install three accessible bleachers in Agricultural Park in the village. On Friday, Aug. 21, MPP Lisa Thompson and OTF volunteer Emma Bartz, were there for the opening night of the Society’s annual fair.

“Over the years Ontario Trillium Foundation grants, and the newly created Resilient Communities Fund, have helped a lot of organizations accomplish a great deal of their goals and objectives. However, this grant to the Bayfield Agricultural Society is especially pleasing, important, and indeed, timely,” said Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson. “It is yet another step towards getting us all back together safely.”

Safety equipment was also provided for volunteers and visitors to the annual agricultural fair organized by the BAS. Consisting of masks, shields and sanitizing stations, this equipment will be used for this year’s fair, which ran from Aug. 20-22. The new bleachers, which will be arriving soon, will provide improved accessibility for everyone for the events that take place in the park for years to come. The Resilient Communities Fund was created to help non-profit organizations rebound and recover from the impacts of COVID-19.



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“The effect of this Ontario Trillium Foundation grant is huge,” said President of the BAS, Pamela Stanley. “This grant has given our Society the opportunity to have a safe fair experience but a long-term benefit of greater accessibility for visitors at events in our park. Our park has always been a community park and now becomes more welcoming to all.”

The BAS is aiming to make this multi-purpose park more accessible for activities, whether sports activities or the fair. Anyone who may want to inquire about using the park for an event is asked to please visit the BAS website at: [www.bayfieldfair.ca](http://www.bayfieldfair.ca)

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s leading granting foundations. Last year, nearly \$112 million was invested into 1,384 community projects and partnerships to build healthy and vibrant communities and strengthen the impact of Ontario’s non-profit sector. In 2020-21, OTF supported Ontario’s economic recovery by helping non-profit organizations rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Visit [otf.ca](http://otf.ca) to learn more.

## THE LEN & IDA PATTERSON MEMORIAL AWARD

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Len & Ida Patterson Memorial Award will be presented at the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies Convention in February 2022.

The deserving winner will receive a plaque and a monetary award from  
**Encore Promotional Products Inc. – Award Sponsor**

Leonard Patterson worked for Nothers for several years and made many contacts and friends at Ontario fairs. He volunteered and worked diligently on the Board of Mount Forest Fair, as well as for District #10, where he served as their Director on the OAAS board and was elected OAAS President in 1986.

*This award is presented annually to a Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary-Treasurer, dedicated Fair volunteer, or an individual who has worked at the District Level.*

*The candidate must have served for at least ten years, showing extraordinary dedication and innovative leadership.*

***Deadline: December 31, 2021***

Please send your nomination to:  
 OAAS Past Presidents' Association,  
 C/O Bev Fry, 270 Sideroad 30, R.R. #1  
 Ripley, Ontario N0G 2R0 Phone #519-395-5732  
 Email: [bjfry@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:bjfry@hurontel.on.ca)

If you have any questions about the nomination procedure contact Bev Fry.

There is no special nomination form but guidelines are included.  
 Please submit in writing, explaining in detail why you feel your candidate is deserving of this honour.

If previously nominated, please re-apply with an updated profile.

**“NEW FOR 2022”**

**Guidelines for the Len & Ida Patterson Memorial Award**

**Name of Nominating organization / person:**

**Contact’s Phone/E-mail:**

**Name of Nominee (person you want to nominate for the award):**

**Nominee’s Phone/Email:**

Nominators are encouraged to submit an outline explaining why this person should be recognized as an extraordinary volunteer with their local Agricultural Society / Ontario Fair / OAAS.

The following guidelines are provided to help the committee make its final selection:

- Shows extraordinary dedication & innovative leadership
- Provides inspiration and motivation to others
- Recognized as a positive role model through example, mentoring and education
- Consistently displays leadership qualities
- Promotes and supports the Ontario Fair industry
- Demonstrates vision, innovation or creativity
- Advocates positive changes

How does the Nominee provide inspiration and motivation to others?

How has the Nominee been a positive role model through example, mentoring and education?

How does the Nominee consistently display leadership qualities?

How does the Nominee promote and support Agricultural Fairs, improved opportunities and choices in the community?

How does the Nominee demonstrate vision, innovation or creativity?

How has the Nominee demonstrated that he /she advocates for positive changes in the Ontario Fair industry?



# Recognize your volunteers with OAAS Awards



Meritorious Service Award

Accomplishment Award

Years of Service Accomplishment Award

For complete information please click on the link below

<https://www.ontarioagsocieties.com/agricultural-society-info/forms>

\* \* \* \* \*



2022 Convention: February 17th-19th,

At the Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel & Suites and  
Conference Centre

## Provincial Highlights & Information

- **Provincial Competitions**

Since not all fairs will be able to compete in the District and Provincial Competitions again this year, the OAAS Board made the decision in April to cancel the OAAS Competitions at the 2022 Convention.

Watch for some **new** information coming shortly regarding a couple new competitions

- **Delay Judges' Requirements deadline until January 1, 2023**

With the continued public health stipulations due to the pandemic, we don't expect that any judging schools will be held before the fall. Because of this, the OAAS will again modify the "*Requirements for OAAS Certified & Apprentice Judges Policy*" and update the December 31, 2021 deadline to January 1, 2023, so Judges don't need to worry about recertifying during the pandemic

- **The OAAS Board approved that the 2021 Agricultural Society membership** fee be the same as was paid in 2019 if paid by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. If the fee is not paid, a 20% interest charge will apply. OAAS will be sending each Agricultural Society an invoice with the account due.

- **NEW**: Watch for announcement of a new OAAS Youth Scholarship Program

- **NEW**: DUUO and The Co-operators "*New Vendor Online Insurance Program*" - more information about this program is coming soon.

Vendor insurance is an extremely important element of risk management and the OAAS is working with DUUO and The Co-operators to make this affordable simple-to-use insurance available for our agricultural societies and their fairs and events.

- Information will be coming out shortly around Convention registrations and sponsorship opportunities.

- District Annual General Meetings will be starting in late October - please watch for more details.

- Elections for Provincial Directors will be held at the AGMS for the following Districts – 2, 5, 8, 11, 12, 14

- District Board and District Director Roles and Responsibilities Appendix E [click here](#)

- Roles and Responsibilities of a Provincial Director - Appendix D [click here](#)

- What Makes a Successful (Great) Board Member? Appendix F [click here](#)

# SEEKING SUBMISSIONS

## OAAS 175th Agricultural Society Historical Photo Display



[www.ontarioagsocieties.com](http://www.ontarioagsocieties.com)

### Rules and Guidelines:

1. Competition is open to all Agricultural Societies in good standing.
2. Only one photo image entry is permitted for each Agricultural Society.
3. Photo entry can be in black and white or colour.
4. Photo must be an 8 x 10 image.
5. The photo is to be a collage of images of your Agricultural Society and its activities.
6. The photo must have the age of the Agricultural Society prominently surmounted on the collage and the name of the Agricultural Society is to be surmounted on the bottom of the photo.

### Entry Due Date:

All entries in digital JPEG or PDF format must be received by Dec. 1, 2021

Entries to be sent to Kathryn Lambert, [convention@oaasfairs.com](mailto:convention@oaasfairs.com)

# OAAS 175<sup>th</sup> Celebrations

The pandemic has been credited for many major negative changes in our lives, but it has allowed the Ontario Agricultural Societies to continue celebrating the OAAS's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Those attending the upcoming 2022 Convention will see some of the historical artifacts of the OAAS and Ag Societies. This year there will be another competition for the districts to produce a 60 second promotional tape with the theme "Visit your local fair". Last year the videos were all so unique and promoted the individuality of each District. This year the focus is on marketing the fair experience. Districts, this is your chance to dust off your marketing skills. Another photo experience is being offered to all Ag Societies in creating a collage of images surmounted with the age and name of the Ag Society. The OAAS uses the number of years an Ag Society has been incorporated as its age. This photo opportunity will be a great way to get a free registration for the 2023 Convention.

History is told in so many means: the written form, pictures, artifacts, or verbal formats. The OAAS has been active in becoming a warehouse for the history of Ontario Ag Societies on its website. Send in your pictures from the past, include posters advertising your fairs, short histories chronicling the changes that have occurred or short videos that have been taken. This year there will be a promotion to get some of the verbal stories of memories of Ag Societies or the OAAS recorded for future generations to hear firsthand. In addition, there will be a compilation of stories of the winners of the quilt competitions put together. The history of our Ag Societies is being carefully collected and being made available to everyone.

The OAAS has always had a commitment to support Ag Societies and does that in an excellent way through its annual Convention. There are times an organization needs to reflect as to what it has done and the successes it has had. By celebrating its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the OAAS has been able to display the massive changes that have occurred and how it has been able to adapt and embrace the challenges faced. Join with the OAAS in reminiscing about the past and celebrating the present. See you at the 2022 Convention.



This photo, c 1900, shows nurses manning the hospital tent at Queen's Park Fairgrounds, and the arena.



**Current statistics for 2021 - Ontario Agricultural Societies' Fairs**

- 21% held/are holding traditional or modified traditional fairs
- 15 % held/are holding a hybrid fair– a combination of in-person and virtual events
- 18% held/are holding virtual fairs – i.e., homecraft and agricultural (including livestock) exhibits/competitions
- 10% held/are holding other events instead of their traditional fair – i.e., Farmers’ Markets, laneway, home, or business decorating displays/ competitions, drive thru dinners, fun days, horse shows, drive thru fairs, parades, photo contests
- 29% cancelled their fair and didn’t hold any events
- 7% - unknown status – they didn’t submit information and/or their website/social media wasn’t updated to allow us to determine if they were holding a fair



**2021 OAAS Executive, and Provincial Board of Directors**

|                      |                       |  |                         |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| President            | Beth Howell-Vervaecke | <a href="mailto:beth@oaasfairs.com">beth@oaasfairs.com</a>                   |                         |
| 1st Vice             | Liz O’Gorman-Smit     | <a href="mailto:liz@oaasfairs.com">liz@oaasfairs.com</a>                     |                         |
| 2nd Vice             | Glen Syme             | <a href="mailto:glen@oaasfairs.com">glen@oaasfairs.com</a>                   |                         |
| Past Pres            | Brian Slaughter       | <a href="mailto:bswillowlane2@gmail.com">bswillowlane2@gmail.com</a>         |                         |
| Provincial Directors |                       |  |                         |
| District 1           | Valerie Allen         | <a href="mailto:valeriea@oaasfairs.com">valeriea@oaasfairs.com</a>           |                         |
| District 2           | Angie Robinson        | <a href="mailto:angie@oaasfairs.com">angie@oaasfairs.com</a>                 | term is up for election |
| District 3           | Heather Owens         | <a href="mailto:heathero@oaasfairs.com">heathero@oaasfairs.com</a>           | member at large         |
| District 4           | Andrew Iceton         | <a href="mailto:andrew@oaasfairs.com">andrew@oaasfairs.com</a>               |                         |
| District 5           | Linda Murray          | <a href="mailto:linda@oaasfairs.com">linda@oaasfairs.com</a>                 | term is up for election |
| District 6           | Heather Dillon        | <a href="mailto:farmmond@gmail.com">farmmond@gmail.com</a>                   |                         |
| District 7           | Andrew Taylor         | <a href="mailto:andrewt@oaasfairs.com">andrewt@oaasfairs.com</a>             |                         |
| District 8           | Bart Scherpenzeel     | <a href="mailto:btdscherpenzeel@wightman.ca">btdscherpenzeel@wightman.ca</a> | term is up for election |
| District 9           | Grace Mullen          | <a href="mailto:gracem@oaasfairs.com">gracem@oaasfairs.com</a>               |                         |
| District 10          | Mike Dupuis           | <a href="mailto:mike@oaasfairs.com">mike@oaasfairs.com</a>                   |                         |
| District 11          | Carol Cann            | <a href="mailto:carolfairholme@gmail.com">carolfairholme@gmail.com</a>       | term is up for election |
| District 12          | open                  |  | open                    |
| District 13          | Lauren Armstrong      | <a href="mailto:lauren@oaasfairs.com">lauren@oaasfairs.com</a>               |                         |
| District 14          | Leonard Riopel        | <a href="mailto:leonard@oaasfairs.com">leonard@oaasfairs.com</a>             | term is up for election |
| District 15          | Randy Creighton       | <a href="mailto:randy@oaasfairs.com">randy@oaasfairs.com</a>                 |                         |

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