

Roundtable Summary

1. Ideas for Celebrating Fair Milestones:

- Planning should begin a least two years before milestone
- Put together a time frame to work with
- Heritage component important to keep in mind
- Use of period customs
- History book on fair
- Bring back former presidents, ambassadors, board members
- Fashion show using wedding dresses of the time period
- Homecoming weekend
- Special music
- Theme
- RCMP musical ride
- Use local journalism to assist with getting out stories relating to history of fair
- Coincide with other community celebrations
- Archives – open them to public viewing
- Booth at fair with local memorabilia of fair's history
- Apply for special grants to assist with celebrating of the history
- Fireworks
- Beard growing competition
- Floats in locals events
- Barn dance and New Years Dance to kick-off celebration
- Brainstorming meeting with various groups that are connected to history
- Fundraising particular to celebration
- Pick a specific project on grounds to do (i.e. front gates, building re-dedication
- Cookbook
- Have memorabilia to give away
- Bigger name entertainment
- Cake to give to participants
- Use local school children to help with celebrations
- Tie in with other community events, plowing match
- Marketing fair and milestone for community

- Birthday bash for community
- BBQ with involvement from community including youth
- Oldest resident of community to be invited for opening and other events for the fair
- Bagpipe in fair ambassadors/Executive
- Refurbish fair gates and sell placards to place in gate entrance
- Antique display
- Thrashing display using Heritage Associations
- Volunteers are an important part of celebrations
- Use the milestone as a fundraising tool selling plaques on a special trophy
- Raise Awareness early

2. How can OAAS help to promote your fair:

- Website is a great tool but presently it is not up-to-date and information is old or incorrect. **As website is an OAAS tool it is important that they see the importance and need to put it as a priority for up keep.**
- Directory – great tool again needs to be accurate (more needed for local areas as it is a great promotion)
- Flyer is ok but not as good as full directory
- Need for good flow of information OAAS and it's members and vice versa
- Connections needed between fair and OAAS and various other links
- A link needs to be established between OAAS and Ontario Tourism market
- Provincial Campaign needs to be established with leadership from the OAAS but buy in from local fairs. Local fairs will need to commit with time, power and financial backing.
- Establish communication between OAAS and other government agencies.
- Work with local municipalities on the Economic Growth that the fairs brings to the community. OAAS could provide tools to local fairs that will assist them with this task
- Promote through various Heritage agencies

- Some form of traveling show that could go between fairs and be set up and left. (large trailer of some sort)

3. Working with and instructing judges:

- Each section to look after own judges
- Homecraft secretary should be in charge of details regarding getting judges
- Pay a flat rate to judges for cattle, sheep and other livestock
- Have refreshments available for judges
- Judge appreciation night
- Make sure to inform judges what you want from them (letter prior to fair outlining this is a great idea)\
- Make sure that volunteers working with judges understand their role
- Make sure judges know the field that they are judging
- Keep area closed while judging in happening
- Judging schools in district often
- Make sure judges can not identify the person who has made crafts
- Speak and ask questions to judges before they began there work
- Book and prize list need to be accurate for judging
- Judges should comment if needed on the entry tag
- Make sure that contract with judge contains all necessary information regarding time of arrival, compensation etc
- Rules have to be followed as you have presented them
- How long can a judge be used ? is there a need for a max
- 2 years mentioned by most fairs
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4. Attracting new exhibitors:

- Prize lists out early
- Revamping of classes and increase prize money
- Utilize local fabric stores and craft stores as a place to locate new exhibitors
- Send preliminary lists to feed stores
- Get into schools early and had out youth specific lists

- Word of mouth still number one way to get information out
- Award night with pot-luck dinner for exhibitors and use time to give money out
- Adding classes for those with special needs
- Public awareness is important
- Use businesses to get information out
- BIA
- Sponsors
- Forms out early
- Listen to exhibitors and use information from them
- Suggestion box
- Pay out prizes quickly
- Appreciation of individuals is important
- Getting information out to new families in the area
- Use mail outs
- Send out information for 3-5 years before removing from mailing lists

5. Baby Shows:

- Make sure you have enough sections; longest toes, eyelashes, most hair, least hair, curliest hair; red cheeks etc
- Have age and sex categories
- Make sure that every baby is given a gift
- Have Teddy Bear Clinic and parade as part of baby or the lead up to the baby show
- Play area for children along with a good and clean baby changing area
- Baby show can become very large with having between 50 and 100 babies
- Avoid using language such as “best baby”
- Prizes are often donated when prize is given, recipient is given an addressed stamped thank you card to send to the gift donor
- Baby show to be held on Family or Children’s Day
- Gifts for babies is an excellent idea
- Remember to get permission from care givers before taxing
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6. Parking Solutions – what to do when your fair is landlocked:

- Have township provide signs that are needed for no parking, street closed etc
- Have an area for over-sized vehicles
- If individuals have parking passes make sure staff on gates are aware of all passes in use
- Easier to ask for forgiveness
- Have an officer to help sort out problems
- Encourage people to walk
- Neighbor charges for parking
- Have a location for bus parking
- Shuttles are a good idea
- Hay wagon for transportation also has some insurance issues
- Parking needs to be supervised
- Beer tent can have an impact on parking issues – have clear guidelines for parking attendants regarding drinking and driving
- Purchasing of rail lines or other land for parking needs to be looked at for various fairs
- Parking restrictions need to be carried due to emergency access
- Encourage local individuals to use vacant land for parking
- Good communication within parking lot so that parking is fast and safe
- Handicap parking on grounds is important

7. Trillium Grants for Fairs:

- Lot's of paper work
- Only for inside changes of a building not building a new one
- Deadlines March/July/November of each year
- Visit website
- Important that fair is actively fundraising
- Farm Credit – Agri-Spirit Grant
- Eligibility non-profit
- Apply to local office
- Writing guidelines on web
- Use their language

- Get to know staff and build relationship
- Volunteers hours are important and need to be recorded
- Before you apply contact office to see if your request would even be considered
- Trillium may even pay for cost of painting bleachers/stands
- A lot of Creative Writing
- Must be registered as charity or incorporated as non-profit
- Two-levels; up to \$15,000 and over \$15,000
- www.trilliumfoundation.org – good tips and examples
- Fit into their priorities; 1. enhance success of students, 2. enhance healthier/physically active Ontario, 3. enhance employment for families, 4. provide be more effective for volunteers that are engaged in the community
- Areas to Target; 1. Arts and Culture, 2. Environment i.e. green program and recycling, 3. Human and Social Services, 4. Sports and Recreation i.e. healthier Ontario
- Granting Priorities; 1. Enhancement to community spaces, 2. Energy efficiency, 3. Greening Initiatives, 4. Innovative Technology
- Grants can be spread over a 5 year period
- Capital projects only 1 year

8. Creating a workable emergency plan for your fair:

- Have an emergency response team that will take the lead in an emergency
- Co-ordinate with community and county response team
- Evacuation plan for major emergency
- Talk about plans with all members
- Signage is important
- Lost child shut done gate
- Have one spot were lost children should come to
- Involve all community emergency organizations
- Have an proactive plan in place
- Talk plan over with all individuals with fair
- Radio's are important for plan
- Good connection with emergency services in your area are important.

- Make sure emergency vehicles had direct routes to events on grounds
- Make sure all directors know how to use fire extinguishers
- 911 marked in clear spots
- First aid kits marked well and placed in central area

9. Fair Themes: How do you use your Fair Theme?

- Decorating contests for local home and businesses
- Scare crow contest
- All green as a theme
- Make advertisements specific to themes
- Use the theme through all programs and classes
- Environment theme can be crossed over to various community events
- On grounds specific to theme i.e. decorating large hay bale
- Have contests to pick theme
- Have junior directors pick it
- Make sure books has theme ideas throughout it
- Before end of school year work with them on theme specific education
- Logo contest
- Base it on other community events
- Mascot
- Bee at the fair
- Theme as cover of material coming out of the fair
- Decorate all building to match theme
- Catch phrase relating to theme
- Parade should incorporate theme in floats
- Gift bags decorated with theme
- Get 4-H involved
- Advertisement to match theme
- Game show using theme
- Photography to utilize theme
- Demonstrations relating to theme activities

10. Low cost activities for youth at your fair:

- Greased Pig contest by Junior Farmers
- Lawn tractor pull of teenager drivers
- Blindfolded lawn tractor slalom – two person team, driver blindfolded, partner using microphone from sidelines
- Bike racers – categories divided by age or weight
- Dropping labeled beanbags from a height (pole, cherry picker) into held dollar store buckets – prizes donated by local dollar store
- Bouncy rides – inflatable
- Bale roll, several coloured popsicle sticks, numbered are inserted into round bale of straw, prizes donated by dollar store set out on table (or loonies) number of prizes controlled – roll out bale partially, kids can come back and prizes remaining – try again-roll out bale further
- Log sawing contest, bale throwing, nail hammering, farmer Olympics, do you have it in you to be a farmer?
- Army obstacle run (ask local contingent to set up)
- Junior contests in homecraft. Special teen section, with one or two sections from each class (baking, sewing, crafts) taken from their sections but open to teens only
- Complementary pass to fair for volunteers assistance at outside or/and fundraising activities of the fair
- Twoonie night more affordable for youth, include with price for unlimited rides at midway
- Battle of the bands
- Races and other youth activities-potato sack race, 4 people on a plank, egg and spoon, toothpick and lifesaver
- Invite rural children to sponsor and work with calves (other animals as well – 4-H on local farms-animals is property of farmer but cared for by child)
- Tug of war for teens (age separation?)
- “Fear Factor” Jell-O, mud etc
- Air band competition
- Family dance – split so underage cannot get booze
- Get youth on the fair board
- Value ideas, no matter how wild. “If you shoot it down it will never fly”
- Junior fair board members responsible for and put on one event

- “Survivor” farm edition
- Reptiles
- Events for Junior Ambassador at convention
- Allow youth to think up their own activities
- One day/night where one amount allows unlimited access to rides (Conklin yes, others no)
- Car stereo competition – use decibel reader
- Remote control car races
- Stilt race
- Go-cart race
- Informational display of cow varieties, sheep, etc (not enough farmers for competition in the area)
- Friday high school parade competitions between schools (rooms, grades)
- Hay bale race
- Sack race
- Duck tank for teachers
- Scholarship based on volunteers hours at fair and fair related activities
- From a young representative let the kids make up their own activities and run them – with an adult overseer
- Will games local electronics or software shop sponsoring
- Pedal pull, bag races, one legged
- Sumo wrestlers
- Scavenger hunt

11. Recording and calculating volunteer hours:

- Have individuals sheets that directors are given at each AGM and then asked to keep track of hours and return when full to secretary
- Volunteers hours kept in office and directors are asked to fill when in office with volunteer hours
- Committee chairs keep track of hours and submit them monthly
- Secretary keeps track of hours
- At each board meeting secretary ask for estimate of hours from each board member
- Email hours weekly to fair office

12. Something New that worked for you:

- Celebrated sports teams at fair and other special events
- Themes
- Community harvest (not market)
- Fireworks
- Rooster crowing
- Sunflower seed spitting
- Place cards about fair at restaurants
- Idol contests (good MC needed)
- Demolition Derby (big)
- Home depot looked after bird kits
- Send ambassador to school classes
- 700 pea plants given out to schools , 50 returned by students that had not been part of fair prior to this
- Bicycle draws

13. Developing a Junior Ambassador Program:

- Junior ambassadors who come to convention are like a fish out of water
- If enough junior ambassadors perhaps could a workshop just for them
- Ages discussed 13 – 15 and 9 – 12
- Judging tell a story about yourself and interview
- Must have chaperone with them at all times
- Find out what fairs have a junior ambassador and encourage them to attend convention
- Make sure junior ambassadors have specific responsibilities
- Tiara should be smaller to not take away from Senior Ambassador
- One fair has junior ambassador promote a specific event at the fair
- Have separate pageant for junior so their friends can support it

- Go into schools to research and promote program
- Promote the program to teachers
- Have Sr. ambassador visit and promote to schools
- Suggested instead of ages could use grades as criteria
- Could create a display board on yourself or a scrapbook
- Could have meeting prior to judging to prepare maybe hold a carwash to promote program
- Must be utilized at the fair (promoting the fair and community)
- Have junior ambassador speak at public schools
- Have Sr. ambassador speak to future junior ambassadors
- Incorporate 4-H and other young clubs in order to pick a Junior Ambassador
- Recruitment look for youth outside of immediate community – bigger number of contestants
- Speak to schools and explore opportunities for this to work
- Junior ambassadors encourage them to become senior ambassadors – more comfortable and outgoing.
- Always have a chaperone with junior ambassadors as young children need guidance, safety and support
- Less rules and regulations will increase involvement of youth
- Scholarship program for youth
- Question to look at – does junior program deter from senior program
- Encourage fun
- Ambassador program encourages life skills learning and personal development
- Form specific committee than devote time to this program as support is so important for it to work and continue
- Again encourage both males and females
- Maintain separation from junior and senior program in all areas including what prizes are given out
- Maybe have junior competition more casual for two reasons; 1. if fun more likely to take part in senior program, 2. because we are rural fairs

14. How to encourage youth to join your fair board:

- Have meetings fun
- Freedom to organize events
- Willing to take risks
- Want to educate agriculture awareness
- Up dated web site is needed to attract youth
- Face book meetings
- Liaison with main meetings
- Need own budget
- Problem that can make this difficult; fair timing all headed off to school or summer jobs, voting age, transportation issues to meetings etc
- Implement junior board meeting using a link to main meetings
- Support needed from all involved with fair
- Advertise specific responsibilities for youth
- Join with other students groups and make links
- Work with schools and put programs together
- Have connection with executive and a youth rep
- Advertise in schools for youth
- Mentoring program for youth
- Youth have their own meetings
- Have youth staff a information booth they could decorate and work on interacting with those coming to the fair
- Youth day at fair
- BMX competition
- Sometimes board members must realize we need fresh ideas and let the youth be in charge of an event to change with new ideas
- Reading your way to the fair involve youth
- Do not give them grunt jobs make sure you give them important work
- 4-H involvement very important
- Entertainment should attract youth
- Make them feel comfortable
- Affirm the youth and the work they do for you
- Don't overwhelm them give them time to learn the ropes of the fair

15. Keeping your prize book current;

- Make sure direction of committee is clear
- Separate committee for prize book
- Advertising as part of book
- Committee changes need to come from chair of various committee with sign offs before book goes to print
- Binding?
- Advertising revenue can pay for book
- Make it look professional
- Create and maintain image so you look credible
- Print separate one for children that can be given out at schools
- No theme in book so it can be used again with very little changes
- Mail out of prize is important
- Schools are becoming less committed to assisting some local fairs with getting information out to students will need to look at other options
- No entries in a class remove it from book and put in a new class
- Be willing to make changes as they are needed and suggested by others

16. Ontario Fairs – “A snapshot in Time”

- Past presidents used this time to sell book.

17. OAAS sponsored competitions (cookies, quilts etc):

- Machine quilt instruction not specific – 48” x 48”
- Measure perimeter 48”? 192 clarified by attendee – rules ok
- Posters, prize money should be for local fair and district
- Quilts not right size should not go to district
- Bread recipe must accompany for proof of 60%
- New competition rules should be mailed out to judges as well
- Double the competition rules pages and label one set to be given to homecraft department

- Suggestion different competitions might be better eg. Change to fruit cake because of freshness of bread or cookies when they get here
- “new rules” for machine quilts competition should have been red flagged so fairs would be aware
- New Rules should be announced at fall and spring meetings so this can go to district meetings
- District director’s needs to keep judges list updated. Making sure judges are qualified to judge. Have they had any updating?

18. Does your fair have a grievance policy for exhibitors?

- Have the fairs at the table had a policy some did not know
- Policy should be written in book and then placed in hall
- Have a specific committee that would look at procedure
- Make sure that procedure is clear
- Written grievance within 2 weeks of fair with a \$25.00 deposit to the secretary
- Written grievance to board with 72 hours of fair closing

19. What changes are impacting homecraft at your fair:

- Long arm quilting making sure that classes are included in fairs
- Culinary arts
- Need to make changes yearly so that this will attract new exhibitors
- Need to be willing to change to attract new ethnic groups
- Take a chance and bring in new groups with new ideas
- Change with times
- Have a entire section on environmental or recycled items in your fair book
- Continuous demo going on during fair i.e. scrap booking, cooking clay work etc
- Cooking for children
- More additions to include diabetic cooking, low fat, non-gluten etc
- Quilting 3 categories; long arm, machine, hand
- Advance list is important and should be out 6 months before fair

- Create a measuring tape on the back of your book
- Cost of ingredients continue to increase so prizes need to change
-