



2022

ANNUAL REPORT





A MESSAGE FROM FAIR CEO & BOARD

Fair Friends,

2022 was our most successful Fair yet. We had record attendance, an incredible line-up on our main stage, and non-stop acts on all nine stages throughout the grounds. As always, our gardens and flowers provided a beautiful respite to the fun and excitement shared by all who enter our gates.

The Alaska State Fair is well-known as one of the best and most beautiful in the fair industry. We achieve this by embodying our mission and vision statement, providing a place for the Alaskan community to gather in a safe and dynamic environment, as well as producing a traditional state fair to educate and entertain fairgoers.

We are very proud of the award-winning Fair made possible by incredibly talented staff and hundreds of volunteers from the community; it takes each and every one.

The 2022 Fair, themed Experience the Wonder, featured sold-out concerts and events, giant vegetable records, and another year of record-setting proceeds from the youth livestock auction. Both our 2022 attendance and concert ticket sales continued their upward climb, indicating that Alaskans have returned with enthusiasm. We continue to encourage online ticket purchases to minimize the time spent in lines and maximize the time spent having fun.

The 2022 Fair took place Aug 19 – Sept 5 over an extended 14-day schedule. The three-weekend schedule continues to be well-received by fairgoers and vendors alike.

After the Fair, the return of other events, such as the 2022 Holiday Bazaar and Mighty Monster Boo Fest, was a welcome way to ease into winter. We were pleased to continue popular traditions like the Bright Up the Night holiday lights display, which drew community members to the fairgrounds throughout the darkest, coldest and snowiest months. Winter of 2022 was especially challenging for all of us, weather-wise, and proved to be especially challenging with wind and snow loads, the likes of which have not been seen for decades.

We are also proud to be a center for the Alaska community year-round. Some of the biggest events held on our grounds include the Great Alaska Air Show, featuring aviation events and activities hosted right on the grounds. The purple parking lot was even turned into a temporary runway for those landing to showcase their planes and helicopters at the event. We were also proud to once again host the Scottish Highland Games, which garners many new visitors from around the globe. We welcome hundreds of events like these throughout the grounds during the year.

We remained focused on forwarding the educational aspect of our mission, awarding scholarships annually to help five Alaska high school students pursue their higher education aspirations.

We are grateful and happy that everyone was able to join us at the Alaska State Fair in 2022. We hope the familiar end-of-summer tradition gave you joy and happiness, making memories for years to come. We look forward to celebrating with you in 2023!



Kristy Thom Bernier, Board President



Jerome Hertel, Former CEO



TOGETHER, WE WORK TOWARD...

FAIR STAFF

Jerome Hertel
Former CEO

Kirsten Mason
Finance Manager

Jerry Baker
*Administrative Services
Manager*

Kai Tantaros
Administrative Assistant

Suzy Crosby
Entertainment Manager

Chelsea Dischner
Entertainment Assistant

Sara Post
Events Coordinator

Rachel Schoonover
Vendor Manager

Lara Stanley
*Exhibits Supervisor
& Accounting Assistant*

Sheri Musgrave
*Facilities Rental
& Beverage Service Manager*

Larry Longnecker
*Grounds & Maintenance
Manager*

Chad Wallace
Grounds Supervisor

Donnie Leonard
Maintenance Technician

Randy Leonard
Maintenance Technician

Becky Myrvold
Head Gardener

Kyle Williams
Garden Assistant

Kelly Larson
*Director of Community
& Corporate Partnerships*

Melissa Keefe (MK)
*Director of Marketing &
Communications*

Anna Rowe
*Graphic Designer & Sign
Coordinator*

> OUR MISSION

Produce a traditional State Fair which educates and entertains Fairgoers; Provide stable finances through good business practices, statewide outreach, partnerships, and hosting a variety of community, cultural and business events.

> OUR VISION

Alaska State Fair Inc. provides a center for the Alaskan community to gather in a dynamic and safe atmosphere throughout the year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kristy Thom Bernier
President

Jason Ortiz
Vice-President

Sheron Patrick
Secretary

Aryne Randall
Treasurer

John Harkey
Director

Jon-Marc Petersen
Director

Cody Beus
Director





RETURNING WITH ENTHUSIASM

The 2022 Alaska State Fair, celebrating the theme Experience the Wonder, was certainly a wonderful experience. Despite the rainy days and cool temperatures, fairgoers came out in record numbers to enjoy the food, rides, entertainment, vendors, exhibits – and each other.

The AT&T Concert Series saw record attendance in 2022. Shaggy and Common Kings packed the theatre with 4,874 attendees while Lauren Daigle sold 4,255. The full line-up included: CAAMP, TobyMac, LeAnn Rimes, Dry Bar Comedy, Chris Janson, Blue Öyster Cult, Rise Against, Brothers Osborne, Barenaked Ladies, Chayce Beckham, and Darci Lynne.

We were thrilled with the talent at the 2022 Fair, from the headliner acts at the Borealis Theatre, to the Extreme Raptors show at the Don Sheldon Events Center, to the dozens of free-with-Fair-admission acts performing around the grounds.

102,595 Fair attendees visited the Extreme Raptors show, starring rescued birds unable to be rehabilitated back into the wild. The sold-out Demolition Derby and All Star Monster Trucks were as popular as ever, selling 2,200

and 6,695 tickets respectively. The Rodeo overflowed with action and excitement as more than 300 competitors were put to the test in double mugging, bareback riding, barrel racing and more.

We especially love to see the talents of our Alaska neighbors on display through our extensive exhibits department. Exhibit entries were up from 2021 in diverse categories including canning, art, beekeeping and, of course, the ever-popular giant vegetables!

Fun Fair Fact:
Our Facebook post about Alaska's Midnight Sun Great Pumpkin Weigh-Off reached over 1.6 million people!

A total of nine state records were set at the 2022 Fair, including a 2,147-pound pumpkin! Dale Marshall of Anchorage set a new state record with his 2,147-pound entry in the 16th Alaska's Midnight Sun Great Pumpkin Weigh-Off.

340,000
Fair Attendees
up 11.3%

Concert
Attendance
up 13.4%

Gate Admission
Revenue
up 19%

Numbers were up across the board: Attendance, revenue, concert tickets – even beer sales – saw double-digit percentage increases over 2021.

'21

While the annual Giant Cabbage Weigh-Off didn't produce any records, it was, as always, an exciting event to watch and participate in. The largest cabbage was 84.05 lbs, grown by Brian Shunskis from Salcha. A close second went to Keevan Dinkel of Wasilla with an 82.3 lb cabbage, and Carol Kenley of Palmer took third place with her cabbage weighing in at 67.9 lbs.

Fun Fair Fact:

The giant vegetables get picked up after the Fair by the Alaska Zoo and Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center to feed the animals.

In partnership with Mat-Su Food Bank, 13,000 lbs of food was collected for our neighbors in need. And vegetables from our exhibits and gardens never go to waste, but instead are used to benefit Kids Cupboard, the Alaska Zoo and the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center.

Fun Fair Fact:

Our beautiful gardens are not just full of flowers but also veggies that are harvested after the Fair. This year, the garden harvest was donated to Kids Cupboard.

Over 500 vendors participated in the 2022 Fair. We are proud to support so many local businesses, and value the benefits they offer the local economy in terms of providing jobs and bringing dollars into the community.

Giving back to our state is near and dear to our heart. We continued our recycling program, blowing away last year's collection total, thanks to the combined effort of volunteers, vendors and fairgoers.

Support for our youth continues to grow. With 91 animals up for auction, a new fundraising record was set at the 4-H and FFA Junior Market Livestock Auction last year. The amount raised at this event has more than tripled in the past ten years. A special thank you to our community of supporters, including Three Bears.

Fun Fair Fact:

Cardboard accounted for 86,000 pounds of our 2022 recyclable materials. Other materials included aluminum, plastic, paper and steel.

'22

2,147 lb Pumpkin sets new state record 4.7% larger

93,670 pounds of material recycled up 63%

\$419,957 raised at Livestock Auction up 19%





A CENTER FOR THE COMMUNITY

As we always say, the 14-day Fair is just one part of what we do. Throughout the year, we enjoy hosting events that bring the community together on the fairgrounds. In 2022, we hosted the Mighty Monster Boo Fest, which returned after a two-year hiatus, as well as Stallions of the North, Holiday Bazaar and Bright Up the Night light display.

We also provide facilities for other organizations to hold diverse events on our grounds, such as the Christmas Factory, Scottish Highland Games and Great Alaska Air Show!

FUELING FUTURES

We continued the Fair scholarship program, awarding scholarships to help Alaska high school students pursue their goals for higher education. “Educate” is a key part of the Alaska State Fair mission, and in 2022 we awarded a total of \$7,500 in scholarships to five students.

2022 Scholarship Recipients

1st Place – \$3,000 scholarship:
Anna DeVold of Soldotna

2nd Place – \$2,000 scholarship:
Peter Barela of Wasilla

3rd Place – \$1,500 scholarship:
Mykennan Rinella of Palmer

Honorable mention – \$500 scholarship:
Dane Harmon of Palmer

Honorable mention – \$500 scholarship:
Isabella Kershaw of Ketchikan



Fun Fair Fact:
More than half of the 70
Bright Up the Night light displays
were brand new in 2022!

DEEPENING OUR AGRICULTURAL ROOTS



Newly renovated Sjodin Barn was built in 1936 and relocated to Rebarcchek Farm in 2021.

REBARCCHek AGRICULTURAL PARK

Developed by original colony farmers Ray and Edna Rebarcchek, Rebarcchek Farm is one of the first colonist farms in the Mat-Su Valley and is on the National Register of Historic places. As owners of the remaining Rebarcchek property, the Fair is preserving the history of agriculture in Alaska and the Mat-Su Valley and providing land and hands-on agricultural education for youth and our community, creating sustainable Alaskan agriculture now and in the future.

We continue preservation efforts of the farm and are expanding educational opportunities to include annual community potato planting and harvest events, researching new crop initiatives, agricultural production research and experimentation, creating a “food forest”, and offering popular classes such as Introduction to Alaska Gardening, Starting a Backyard Flock, and Growing a Giant Cabbage.



ALASKA FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

In a nod to the Fair’s agricultural roots, the Alaska Farm Family of the Year was recognized at the 2022 Fair. This year’s title was awarded to Martha Merry, Amy Seitz and Jane Conway, owner-operators of Lancashire Farm in Soldotna.



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Bell a Vie
Dairy Queen

BRIGHT UP THE NIGHT

ConocoPhillips Alaska
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Credit Union

AARP
Lynden
Classic Country 100.9
MTA

Mat-Su Health Foundation
Channel 2 & CBS 5
Division of Agriculture

REBARCHEK AGRICULTURAL PARK

GRANTORS:

Alaska State Historic
Preservation Office
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Mat-Su Health Foundation
Murdock Charitable Trust
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PATRONS:

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Steve Brown
Rod Rongstad
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MEA
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Vannoy Electric

VOLUNTEERS:

Don Berberich
James Bonham
Richard Estelle
Sheri Hamming
Sharon Hein
Barbra Howard
Lydia Lester
Elena Prisekin
Fran Seager-Boss
Brenda Shelden
Milena, Orion & Siersha Sevigny
Josh Smith
Barbara Stanfill
Isaac Vaughn & family

IT TAKES EACH AND EVERY ONE

As a private nonprofit, we rely on the support of our generous and long-standing supporters. We are pleased to recognize and share our gratitude for these 2022 sponsors.



NEW AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

In 2022, we launched a new Ambassador Program to acknowledge and involve our loyal supporters and Fair enthusiasts. In the inaugural year, we selected three ambassadors who were honored at the 2022 Fair director's reception, and had the opportunity to represent the Fair, volunteer at various Fair events and enjoy the Fair from behind the scenes!

SPONSOR SHOUT-OUTS

► **Craig Taylor Equipment** *Sponsor since 2015*

Craig Taylor Equipment sponsors the Crowd Management Services' side-by-side/UTV vehicle units, as well as the Cattle Versatility Arena and our Farm Exhibits Building.

► **TOTE** *Sponsor since 2017*

TOTE donates the over-sea moves between the Port of Anchorage and the Port of Seattle for our containers bringing equipment and supplies for the Don Sheldon Events Center exhibits, lights displays for Bright Up the Night, and the tractors and trailers for the All Star Monster Truck shows.

► **Lynden Transport** *Sponsor since 2018*

Once our containers arrive in Anchorage, Lynden Transport donates the overland trailer/container moves between Anchorage and the fairgrounds in Palmer.



Aurora Montagne, Alicia Maddaloni and Kent Scheibl



2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 21
Stallions of the North

August 18 – September 4
2023 Alaska State Fair
themed “Beyond the Mountains”

October 21 – 22
Holiday Bazaar

October 28
Mighty Monster Boo Fest

(907) 745-4827
ALASKASTATEFAIR.ORG

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FREE PARKING!

General parking will be free for fairgoers at the 2023 and 2024 Fairs! Highway improvements along the Glenn Highway are scheduled for the next two years and may impede fairground traffic flow. By waiving the parking fee, we hope to relieve traffic congestion and provide for a better Fair experience by expediting parking. Free on-site general parking will be available in the purple, red, yellow and brown parking lots on a first-come, first-served basis each day of the Fair. Premier parking and camping will continue to be offered for a fee.

BUY EARLY AND SAVE

Fairgoers can purchase discounted admission tickets online through August 17! Other ways to save on admission include season passes, offering savings up to 72 percent, and the admission 6-Pack, which includes six transferrable tickets, good any day of the Fair. Visit alaskastatefair.org for details and to purchase.