

# 2015 Antrim County Fair Annual Report

## *Antrim County Fair Mission Statement*

*The Antrim County Fair provides an important annual outlet for education, exhibition and demonstration of agriculture, home economics, science and art. It is a recreation based outlet for county residents and visitors to share and display their hobbies and interests with a special emphasis on youth. Its goal is to provide a fun and educational experience for all.*

We continue to develop programs and find organizations that bring education and entertainment to Fair Week. Our website ([www.antrimcountyfair.com](http://www.antrimcountyfair.com)) and Facebook page have been improved and have reached hundreds of new viewers.

### **Highlights from 2015:**

5K Trail Run	Educational Demonstrations
BINGO	Horse Pull
Cake Walk	Ice Cream Social
Children's activities including a tractor pull, table games, crafts, bouncy barn and sandbox	Jaws of Life and Smoke House
Concession Stand	Local Fire Departments
Covered Wagon Rides	New Contests
DNR	Pony Rides
Dunk Tank	Sheriff Department
	Silent Auction
	Square Dancing

As always, Antrim County 4-H members displayed many projects and participated in competitive livestock shows. MSU Extension and 4-H have continued to be important partners with the Antrim County Fair.

In 2015, our kitchen/concession stand added new menu items including the very popular walking tacos. Farm Bureau members also continued to add meal options which directly benefit the Antrim County Fair.

We received a matching grant of \$3,900.00 from County Fairs Capital Improvement fund through the MDARD which allowed us to complete the upgrades to the electricity by Consumer's Energy.

We continued the successful 5K Trail Run/Walk; making improvements to the course and adding computer generated results. A short story and selfie contest were added and proved to be very popular. The very popular Ice Cream Social was supported by Alden Downtown Association. All of these events generated funds which will go to continue supporting the Fair and creating new events for all participants.

### **Plans for 2016:**

- Finalized our 5-year plan – to be adopted
- Continue to network with Antrim County communities and local organizations
- Add a Cook-Off consisting of pork, a side, beverage, rolls and desserts provided by the Fair.
- Enlarge arena for a bigger, better Horse Show.

The Antrim County Fair continues to grow and add contests and events for participation of the public.



## Antrim County Fair Board

### Officers

Crystal Swain, President (2018)  
Teresa Cole, Vice President (2018)  
Danielle Thompson, Treasurer (2017)  
Lois Nachazel, Secretary (2017)

### Trustees

Lillian Bartholomew (LHM)  
Ed Nachazel (2017)  
Jennifer Rhodes (2018)  
Brian Robinson (2016)  
Mike Sizen (2017)  
Jim Veenstra (LHM)  
Inga Waldrep (2017)

LHM=Lifetime Honorary Member

### 2016 Youth Trustees

Riley Fillmore  
Dana Nachazel  
Sarah Swain

### Ex-Officio Members

Cindy Garwood  
4H Program Coordinator  
  
Karen Bargy  
Antrim County Commissioner

## 2016 Fair Highlights

Free Admission  
Free Parking  
Free Kids Games  
Food Booths Open Daily

Exhibit Hall, Small Animal Barn, and  
Large Animal Barn Open All Day

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### THURSDAY

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#### SENIOR CITIZEN APPRECIATION

Horse Show  
Caring For Your Horse  
Activity Tent  
Ice Cream Social  
Bingo  
Poultry Show

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### FRIDAY

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#### VETERAN'S APPRECIATION

Flag Raising & Veteran's Tribute  
Large Livestock Judging  
Rabbit Show  
Contest Winners Announced  
4H Market Livestock Auction

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### SATURDAY

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#### FAMILY HERITAGE DAY

5K Run/Walk  
Pancake Breakfast  
Kids Games  
Pork Restaurant Cook-Off  
Lego Build & Race  
Dog Show  
Silent Auction  
Horse Pull & 50/50 Raffle

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### SUNDAY

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#### WORSHIP DAY

Exhibits Close

# Antrim County Fair



2016 Artwork by Elliott Willson

**Homemade or Homegrown  
Since 1979**

**August 11-13, 2016  
Craven Park, Bellaire**

P.O. Box 223, Mancelona, MI 49659

AntrimCountyFair.com

Like us on Facebook

## Homegrown Since 1979

The Antrim County Fair has a long history of providing families with the opportunity for wholesome entertainment, family education, and the chance to exhibit what children and adults alike have learned about livestock, horticulture, crafts and more.

Over the years, our fair has remained small by design, catering to families who appreciate the flavor of a truly hometown fair. It is our intention to expand and improve the fair in this vein, offering events which attract visitors to celebrate agriculture, hand-crafted items, locally grown market animals, and entertainment which encourages the interaction of families. The Antrim County Fair is focused on bringing youth and families together to showcase their talents in art, homemaking, crafting, animal science, horsemanship, and raising livestock.

In a typical year, dozens of exhibitors from the county participate in the fair. Some will be new to our fair and some have years – even decades of experience. They range in age from one year old to mature adults. Our participants are often also volunteers, helping to staff the welcome booth, oversee the exhibit hall and animal barns, supervise games, and prepare the grounds for the Fair.

The Fair Board proudly boasts that this event is free to the public. There is no fee for parking or admission. The games planned for children are free to play. Only a few events, such as the popular Cake Walk, require a small purchase, just 25 cents to play for a chance to win donated baked goods. The Saturday Pancake Breakfast is by donation. Purchasing food is the primary expense of attending the fair - and is completely optional.

While the Fair is often associated with 4H programs in the county, anyone can exhibit at the Antrim County Fair. Many of the families involved are 4H families, it's true, however, there are also many individuals who choose to display items in the exhibit hall or showcase their skills with pets, livestock, and horses. The only classes or events which require 4H participation are the judging and sale of livestock in the 4H Livestock Auction.



## Our Funding

The Fair would not be possible as it exists today without the strong annual support of the Antrim County Board of Commissioners. It is through the generous appropriation of these funds that we are able to provide free admission, entertainment and maintenance for the Fair and Fairgrounds.

In addition to these funds, the Fair Board sells ads in its annual Fair Book, a limited number of banners to be displayed on the grounds during Fair Week, and the opportunity to sponsor special events, such as the 5K Run/Walk, the Horse Pull, Horse Show, and Dog Show. The Silent Auction, and this year's Restaurant Cook-Off will provide additional revenue.

The Fair Board also annually receives numerous generous donations of money, prizes, food and even propane!

A committee of the Fair Board is currently planning for the long-term future of the fair, outlining what facility and maintenance improvements will have priority in the near future, and what fund-raising and grant-writing efforts would be required to fund these goals.

The Fair Board is working with a grant writing specialist, who already has successfully secured grants to assist with electrical and concession improvements, and more grant applications are under way.

While the 4H Livestock Auction is a fund-raiser as well, those proceeds benefit the MSU Extension office 4-H programs and helps offset the expenses associated with marketing the animals and providing trophies and ribbons for market livestock projects.

## Grounds Improvements

The Fair Board has used its limited resources to continue to make improvements to the Fairgrounds. Over the years, it has been important to the Fair Board that the buildings be painted, the grounds be kept clean during Fair Week, and the food booths and bath house are clean and in working order for guests of the Fair.

While many improvements, from clearing trees to adding water lines have been achieved in recent years,



the Fair Board's main focus has been improvement of overall electrical service to the fairgrounds.

With improved electrical service to the grounds, the Fair Board is now able to continue to enhance concession stand operations, and, over the long term, offer electrical service for other purposes, all of which will help build revenue for the fair.

## The Future of the Fair

The Antrim County Fair is unlike any other. It truly captures the spirit of days gone by. Although exhibitors are as connected to social media as any group of youths, the emphasis during Fair Week is on their rabbits and chickens and family activities.

The goal of the Fair Board each year is to grow the fair, to fill the barns, while utilizing the Fairgrounds to its maximum potential. The Fair Board feels there is still room to grow at the current site with some modest changes and improvements. It is only possible with your continued support.

The Fair Board is actively engaged in inviting more people to participate in the fair as exhibitors. The Fair Board also is making additional efforts to reach out to the community for support, and encouraging many more people to come and experience the Fair. While several hundred people walk the grounds during fair week each



year, the Fair Board feels that the local community could be a much stronger presence.

The 5K Run/Walk has been enormously successful in attracting new faces to our fair.

The 2016 schedule is filled with dozens of things to entice young families. We've added a Lego Build and Race event this year, as well as a Pork Cook-Off featuring area restaurants. Promotions for the Fair are an area of focus that is continuing to grow.

We appreciate your support, and the support of our many volunteers, to continue offering this traditional family event.

## **4-H and County Fairs – A Long County Tradition**

### **Maudie Ritt, 4-H Leader**

The 4-H program is a great youth program to be involved in as we reach the end of this century. Actually, 4-H has been in Antrim County for 60 years! That's when the first 4-H Livestock Show was held, later known as the 4-H Summer Show and even later as the Antrim County Farm and Family Fair.

The year was 1936 when 4-H was first established in the county under the direction of Orville Walker, District 4-H Agent and Kenneth Ousterhout, County Agricultural Agent who later became Assistant Director of the State 4-H Youth Program. Walter Kirkpatrick arrived in 1938 and greatly influenced the 4-H program for the next thirty years as County Extension Director. The fair was held in the early years, as it is today, at the back end of Craven Park on County property. The whole park was originally the location of the County Fair in the late 1800's and early 1900's. There was a horse race track around the entire park at that time, part of which is visible yet today.

By 1938, the County Fair had dissolved and the 4-H program started its exhibitions on that site. In 1949, the County traded the property to the Village of Bellaire for a piece near the airport. At that time there was an agreement that the 4-H program would continue to use the area for its 4-H exhibitions and, in 1951, the first building project took place. The block building was built by 4-H leaders and was used for storage of the 4-H bus and the 4-H lunch stand during the 4-H show. Soon there was a need for an exhibit pavilion and the 4-H leaders, working together, built it under the direction of Karl Larson, County Extension Director, 1968-1973.

In 1979, much interest was shown by County residents to become a state recognized County Fair again. With the help of Burt Stanley, County Extension Director, Maudie Ritt, 4-H Program Assistant and the 4-H Council, the papers were filed and the work began! The 4-H program expanded and non-4-H youth and adults were able to exhibit their handmade or homegrown items. More space was needed for displays and an expanded one-day affair was now a three to four-day County Fair. An open County Fair needed to be held for three years before it could be state certified and supported by the Michigan Department of Agriculture. During that three year period, the county 4-H program financed and administered the fair and, in 1982 that goal was reached.

A need developed for another exhibit pavilion, a show ring, bleachers, and a livestock barn. With the help of 4-H leaders; a newly formed fair board, under the direction of Robert Ricksgers; the Bellaire Lions Club; local excavators; and Michigan Youth Corps, sponsored by the Antrim County Conservation District; these projects were all completed. Since the County Fair was certified by the Michigan Department of Agriculture, it qualified for financial assistance in erecting the permanent structures.

The area is presently used for 4-H clinics, day programs and 4-H club meetings besides the annual fair days. Today's youth are very fortunate to have the expansion of the past years at the fairgrounds.

The 4-H program is only as strong as its 4-H Volunteer Leaders who are the backbone of the program. Support of our 4-H leadership and support by the communities is essential to its continuation as a viable, youth-serving organization. Antrim County has been very supportive of our 4-H program and I'm sure will continue to be into the next millennium.

## **2016 Antrim County Fair Sponsors**

- 4Front Credit Union
- Alden State Bank
- All Lakes
- American Waste
- Auto Value Bellaire
- B&B Outdoor Furnaces
- Bargy's Farm
- Bellaire Animal Hospital
- Bellaire Barbers
- Bellaire Conservation Club
- C&K Inc.
- Chain O' Lakes Auto Body
- Dave's Collision
- David Land Construction
- Derrer Oil
- DiRosa Welding
- East Jordan Family Health Center
- Ellsworth Farmers Exchange
- Evan's Contracting
- Fahl Forest
- Family Fare
- Farm Bureau Insurance
- Ferguson
- Guy Dean Insurance
- Holton Window Cleaner
- Kat's Eye
- King Orchards
- Kitchen Farms
- Korthase Brothers
- Lakeshore Auto Sales & Service
- Land Services
- Living Stone House
- Mancelona Ironmen
- Mancelona Veterinary Hospital
- Matt's Underground
- More Please
- Mortensen Funeral Home
- North Country Veterinary Services
- Northern Bear Country
- Northern Tile
- Northern Tree Transplanting
- NuStar Insurance
- Otherside Irrigation/Construction
- R&S Auto
- Ricksgers Rockys
- Ritt Family
- Sandy's Candies
- Sandy's Stables
- Send Bros.
- State Farm – Mark Riedy
- The Blue Pelican
- The Chief Golf Course
- Tim's Tire & Off Road
- Tommy's Toys
- Tony Marshall
- Torch Lake Tree Pro
- Torch Tip Ironworks
- Wildlife Food Plots