

WELCOME

to the

WHIDBEY ISLAND AREA FAIR



Grand Marshals Vicki and George Lawson

Vicki and George Lawson filled many shoes during their 20 years as 4-H Leaders, Board Members, Superintendents, Directors, Judges, and Mentors and Fair Representatives. Vicki continues to serve the community as a Teachers Aid for the Oak Harbor School District, and George as a Volunteer Firefighter/E.M.T for North Whidbey Fire and Rescue. Their talent and grit in getting the job done will be truly missed in 4-H and the Fair Board.

ISLAND COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Jason Kalk

VICE PRESIDENT
Michael Hastings

SECRETARY
Megan Ollis-Williams

TREASURER
Elise Gabelein

DIRECTORS
Glenda Campbell
Marilyn Gabelein
Virginia Keck

FAIR MANAGER
Carol Coble

FAIR ASSOCIATION HISTORY

Roots of the Island County Fair go back to 1912, when it was established in Coupeville by a private company as the Island County Fair Association. But the fair needed to draw its audience from all of Whidbey Island, and for South Whidbey residents back then, the trip to Coupeville was difficult and expensive. Traveling by horseback or carriage, it was a 20- to 30- mile journey, which necessitated an overnight stay. Excursion boats brought passengers from Camano Island and various points on Whidbey Island, but the fair attendance remained poor and the fair died out in 1916 for lack of support.

Langley resurrected the fair in 1917 on the town's waterfront. In 1922, it was moved to the town's school gymnasium, and the following year the fair was organized as a nonprofit organization funded by memberships. By the late 1920's, there were better roads and auto travel. The fair prospered and in 1934 - one of the worst years of the Great Depression - the Fair Association built the pole building on property adjacent to the school. Using support from the WPA (Works Progress Administration), the Association purchased a six-acre chicken ranch near the school and construction began on a large fair building, completed in 1937. During the next three decades horse barns and exhibit halls were added.

The Fair Association deeded the fairgrounds to Island County in 1962 with the understanding that the property could not be sold without a majority vote of the island's pioneer descendant's. The Association continues to operate the fair (held annually in August) and members are proud that no tax dollars support it. The fairgrounds are located at 819 Camano Avenue in Langley.