



DIRECTORS' ELECTION: Acton Agricultural Society members elected a new Fair Board executive at their annual general meeting on Saturday at the Dufferin Rural Heritage Centre. The Directors include. Front from left: Marg Aitken (Homecraft President), Brad Swackhamer (President), Kathryn Lynch (1st Vice President), Brian Kuechler (2nd Vice- President) and Jill Medland (Secretary-Treasurer.) Back: George Henderson, Bill Lasby, George Marsh, Hank Walsma, Anjali Viegas, Mary Walsma, Dominique Evans, Janeen Swackhamer, Susan Kuechler, Stacey Hewitt, Ken McIsaac and Russ Murray. Absent: Dale Hewitt, John Miller, Willy Tallon and Natalie Tuitman. – Submitted photo

Acton Fall Fair was a 'success': president

The highest beer sales ever, increases in most Homecraft Division entries and great weather all contributed to the success of last September's Acton Fall Fair. Acton Agricultural Society members were briefed on the highlights of the 2011 fair as they

crowded into the board room at the Dufferin Rural Heritage Centre on Saturday for their annual general meeting and executive elections.

"I'm happy how it all turned out," outgoing Fair Board president John Miller said during a break. "It's a great group

of volunteers who put on an excellent fair – it's an excellent time, I think it's been a success," Miller said, noting that he'll step back a bit, he's still "right there" for the fair.

Fair Board officials did not publicly release any details of the Fair's three revenue sources – beer tent sales, the mid-way and the gate, but beer tent – or Spot in the Park – spokesman Brian Kuechler said it was an "excellent" weekend with "probably the best profit we've ever made."

In a release after the meeting, Fair officials

said approximately 10,000 people went through the gates for a four per cent increase in net gate revenue over the 2009 fair. No actual figures were released, but the 2009 record attendance generated \$80,000. Officials said sponsorship money was down "a little" over last year's fair, which almost \$17,000 was handed out in prize money, up over the 2009 fair because of the increased number of exhibitors in the Homecraft Division, as well as the addition of an English Hunter Jumper show.

Fair favourites – the Baby Show, Education Day and Miss Acton pageant – went off without a hitch, and most Homecrafts exhibit entries were up according to Homecrafts chair Marg Aitken who reported the Penny Raffle raised \$665 towards paying the building mortgage. Mel Bailey received the most points in Roots, Fruits and Vegetables, and there was a huge increase to 287 entries. Baking entries were also up significantly. Entries to both the light and heavy horse pulls were up, the parade, again sponsored by Giant Tiger, drew 38 entries, and the truck and tractor events continued to draw large appreciative crowds.

Dufferin Centre general manager Mike O'Leary reported a "good" year at the in-door soccer centre, and is looking to a "reasonable return" on rental rates this year. He said they would discuss raising their rental rates, unchanged in three years, at next month's building committee meeting. O'Leary suggested that repairing the building's

vapour barrier, being split by errant soccer balls, should be the big project at the facility this year.

O'Leary said they also need more summer rentals, but even with dropping the hourly rental rate to \$60 – the regular rate is \$180 an hour – but there have been "no takers," leading him to suggest that some times it is cheaper to leave the building empty.

The Acton Agricultural Society selected three members to attend the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies annual general meeting in February, where they will support a motion to hire a paid general manager for the group whose aim is to build and expand the profile of fairs in Ontario.

The newly elected Fair Board executive includes President Brad Swackhamer, Kathryn Lynch, first vice-president and Brian Kuechler, second vice-president.

The theme of the September 21, 22, 23, 2012 Acton Fall Fair is "Tractors – Harvesting 99 years of Success," a nod to the Fair's 100th anniversary next year.

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